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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

MONDAY, JUNE 20, 2011

1:00 P.M.

412 KNOTT BUILDING

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

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 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: The Administrative
3 Assistant, please call the roll.

4 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Representative
5 Precourt.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Here.

7 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Adkins.

8 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Here.

9 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Albritton.

10 REPRESENTATIVE ALBRITTON: Here.

11 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Baxley.

12 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Here.

13 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Bernard.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Here.

15 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Boyd.

16 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Here.

17 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Brodeur.

18 REPRESENTATIVE BRODEUR: Here.

19 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Caldwell.

20 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Here.

21 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Campbell.

22 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Here.

23 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Clarke-Reed.

24 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Here.

25 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Corcoran.

1 Cruz.

2 REPRESENTATIVE CRUZ: Here.

3 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Drake.

4 REPRESENTATIVE DRAKE: Here.

5 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Frishe.

6 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Here.

7 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Fullwood.

8 REPRESENTATIVE FULLWOOD: Here.

9 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Holder.

10 REPRESENTATIVE HOLDER: Here.

11 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Hooper.

12 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: Here.

13 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Hukill.

14 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Here.

15 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Jones.

16 REPRESENTATIVE JONES: Here.

17 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Julien.

18 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Present.

19 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Legg.

20 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: Here.

21 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Nehr.

22 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Here.

23 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Passidomo.

24 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Here.

25 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Reed.

1 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Here.

2 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Rogers.

3 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Here.

4 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Schenck.

5 REPRESENTATIVE SCHENCK: Here.

6 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Stargel.

7 REPRESENTATIVE STARGEL: Here.

8 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Taylor.

9 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Here.

10 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Trujillo.

11 REPRESENTATIVE TRUJILLO: Here.

12 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Williams, A.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Present.

14 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Young.

15 REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: Here.

16 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Mr. Chairman.

17 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: The Senate, if we

18 could get the roll call for the Senate as well.

19 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Senator Gaetz.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Here.

21 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Senator

22 Margolis.

23 SENATOR MARGOLIS: Here.

24 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Senator

25 Braynon.

1 SENATOR BRAYNON: Here.

2 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Senator Flores.

3 SENATOR FLORES: Here.

4 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Senator Hays.

5 SENATOR HAYS: Here.

6 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Senator Joyner.

7 SENATOR JOYNER: Here.

8 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Senator Lynn.

9 SENATOR LYNN: Here.

10 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Senator

11 Montford.

12 SENATOR MONTFORD: Here.

13 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Senator Negron.

14 SENATOR NEGRON: Here.

15 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Senator Sobel.

16 SENATOR SOBEL: Here.

17 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Senator

18 Thrasher?

19 SENATOR THRASHER: Here.

20 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very

21 much. We are also pleased to be joined today

22 by names of non committee Legislators attending

23 the hearing. Would you please read those as

24 well?

25 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Representative

1 Abruzzo?

2 REPRESENTATIVE ABRUZZO: Here.

3 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Klar?

4 REPRESENTATIVE KLAR: Here.

5 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Mr. Chairman.

6 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
7 much. First of all, I want to thank everyone
8 for coming out today. We are very grateful to
9 both the House and Senate staff for setting up
10 this great facility.

11 We are grateful to have such a terrific
12 turn out, and we are also here to share what I
13 believe and come to share the comments and
14 recommendations to help shape both the
15 Congressional and the Senate and House
16 Districts for the next decade.

17 My name is Will Weatherford, and I along
18 with my Senate colleague, Senator Don Gaetz,
19 will be chairing today's hearing which is also
20 being webcast statewide by the Florida Channel
21 over the Internet.

22 Ladies and gentlemen, our sole purpose
23 here is to hear from the public about how you
24 believe the legal standards governing
25 redistricting should be applied in your

1 community so that you are represented in both
2 Washington and in Tallahassee fairly, equitably
3 and sensibly.

4 Our procedures today are simple but they
5 are very important. It is important that you
6 sign in so that we can create an accurate
7 public record of all attendees and speakers.

8 Also you may opt to join our e-mail lists
9 so that we can keep you informed about how the
10 redistricting process is working over the next
11 few months. If you have not signed in, please
12 raise your hand and a staff member will give
13 you an attendance card.

14 If you wish to speak today and you haven't
15 yet filled out an attendance card, please raise
16 your right hand and we will get you a card so
17 you can be called on and we will make sure not
18 to miss your testimony. It is the same
19 attendance card, whether you want to speak or
20 if I want to just sit and listen.

21 Before we begin the Chair will recognize
22 Co-Chairman, Senator Don Gaetz to explain how
23 today's hearings fit into the redistricting
24 process. Chairman Gaetz.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,

1 Mr. Speaker, and I notice there are a couple of
2 folks there who need to have either appearance
3 cards or speaker cards, and will a member of
4 the professional staff please get to those
5 folks as soon as possible.

6 Mr. Speaker, and those of us who are
7 gathered here today, every ten years the
8 Legislature is required by the Constitution to
9 redistrict the state based on increases,
10 decreases, or movements of population within
11 the state.

12 Because Florida has grown more than other
13 states in the last ten years we will move up
14 from 25 to 27 members of the U.S. House of
15 Representatives, and because some parts of our
16 state have increased or decreased
17 disproportionately, many Senate and House
18 Districts will change, either by adding or
19 losing population.

20 When redistricting is complete
21 Congressional Districts must be equal in size
22 and each Congressional District plus contain
23 696,345 people. The 40 Senate Districts must
24 also be nearly equal at 470,033 people, and our
25 120 House Districts must also be nearly equal

1 at 156,678 persons.

2 There is a map at the front of the room
3 that you can see over there. You are welcome
4 when we take our breaks come up and have a look
5 at it that shows this area of the state, north
6 Florida, particularly northwest Florida.

7 The map shows the current boundaries of
8 existing districts and the number of persons of
9 which each district is short or the number of
10 excess population to be adjusted in order to
11 achieve equal representation.

12 But Mr. Speaker, equality of
13 representation is not the only requirement that
14 redistricting plans have to meet. The laws and
15 important court cases governing redistricting
16 are explained in detail on the House and Senate
17 websites.

18 Those websites are listed on the
19 Redistricting 2012 brochure that was available
20 when you came in. If you didn't get one of
21 those brochures you can get them on your way
22 out.

23 The Redistricting 2012 brochure summarizes
24 Federal and State laws and outlines topics we
25 hope you will discuss at today's hearing and

1 the other 25 hearings across Florida. If you
2 didn't get a brochure our staff will be happy
3 to get you one.

4 Those same websites have available to the
5 public all of the demographic information from
6 the U.S. Bureau of the Census that will be used
7 in drawing districts and the redistricting
8 software the Legislators will be using.

9 These websites will allow any member of
10 the public to see all of the district maps
11 proposed by Legislators and for citizens,
12 themselves, to propose their own district maps
13 for their own communities, or for the whole
14 state using all of the tools available to the
15 Legislature.

16 Before, during, and after this hearing,
17 Senate and House professional staff are
18 available to show you the simple steps to
19 getting on-line and making your submission for
20 your suggestions now or in the weeks to come.

21 Every recommendation from any member of
22 the public or any group will be made publicly
23 available to everyone else. In fact, some
24 public submissions are already available on the
25 web.

1 The submission of proposed maps that make
2 sense for your community is the single most
3 effective form of public participation in this
4 process.

5 The redistricting schedule under which we
6 are operating is imposed by our State
7 Constitution. This is critical. The
8 Constitution does not permit our Legislature to
9 act on legislative maps before the second year
10 after the census.

11 In other words, the Constitution doesn't
12 permit us to act on legislative or
13 congressional maps before 2012. We have
14 accelerated this process as much as possible by
15 moving up the 2012 legislative session from
16 March to January, and beginning our statewide
17 hearings today, five months in advance of the
18 2012 session.

19 It has been suggested that the Legislature
20 should draw maps first and then ask the public
21 to comment on the Legislature's maps. We
22 believe that puts the answer ahead of the
23 question.

24 There should be no preconceptions created
25 by politicians, but rather public testimony

1 should be free and unrestricted.

2 Our intent is to use the recommendations
3 made of the 26 public hearings and through the
4 Internet sites where we are gathering input as
5 the basis for developing one or more options
6 for district maps.

7 We will share those options in open public
8 meetings before any vote is taken, even in
9 Committee.

10 Throughout the process we will solicit
11 additional public comment so that proposed maps
12 can mature with the public involved all before
13 the Legislature approves any maps.

14 Whatever the Legislature votes on is then
15 submitted for judicial review to insure that
16 the plans meet every legal requirement.

17 Because our mission today is to hear from
18 you, all of the remaining time between now and
19 8:00 p.m. tonight will be used to insure that
20 every member of the public who is here and
21 wishes to speak will have time to present
22 testimony and be listened to respectfully
23 without interruption or argument.

24 If, after every citizen has his or her
25 say, there is time remaining before our

1 scheduled adjournment, then any member of the
2 Committee may make any statement or offer any
3 observation, and, of course, any member of the
4 Legislature may today or at any time propose a
5 map or a plan and we will make it available to
6 the public immediately on our websites.

7 Mr. Speaker, I hope this description of
8 our schedule and process helps set the stage
9 for successful hearings across Florida.

10 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
11 much, Mr. Chairman. By Senate and House rules
12 we will adjourn promptly at this first meeting
13 at 4:00 p.m. There are already dozens of
14 individuals signed up to speak.

15 If there is anyone else who wishes to
16 speak that has not gotten their public
17 appearance card, please make sure and get one
18 by raising your right hand again.

19 To insure that each person is heard we
20 will divide the time equally and ask that each
21 testifier to limit his or her remarks to three
22 to five minutes.

23 That being said, as we get more cards in
24 if time becomes crunched we may come to a hard
25 clock of three minutes.

1 Our first speaker is Ms. Diane Wilson,
2 Ms. Diane Wilson is with Wakulla County
3 Democratic Women's Club, and after Diane we
4 have Ms. Carolyn Land and Ms. Marty Monroe.

5 What we would like, Ms. Marty Monroe, what
6 we would like, Mr. Marty Monroe. What we would
7 like to do is we will announce the first
8 speaker and then the two subsequent speakers to
9 follow to make sure that you can be prepared to
10 bring your comments forward.

11 So we would ask as we announce your name,
12 that you get in the cue and be prepared to
13 speak.

14 Ms. Wilson, the floor is yours and you are
15 recognized for three to five minutes. Thank
16 you, Ms. Wilson declines to speak at this time.

17 Next up we have Ms. Carolyn Land followed
18 by Mr. Marty Monroe. Ms. Land.

19 MS. LAND: Thank you for asking --

20 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: I would like, just
21 for the record purposes we would love it if you
22 could come and speak at the podium. Thank you
23 very much.

24 MS. LAND: Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: There is a button

1 to turn the microphone on there. Thank you,
2 Ms. Land.

3 MS. LAND: Try that. One more time.
4 Thank you for asking for public input on a very
5 important decision, and I am from Lafayette
6 County. When you compare population,
7 registered voters to most of the counties, we
8 are one of the smallest counties in the state,
9 and to me it is extremely important as we draw
10 the districts that our entire county be within
11 one district.

12 Also, as much as possible, that we be
13 grouped with people who share the same
14 industries and issues that we share as a small
15 rural county. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
17 much, Ms. Land, we appreciate your comments.
18 Next up we have Marty Monroe, followed by
19 Mr. Herb Shelton.

20 Ms. Monroe, you are recognized?

21 MS. MONROE: Thank you. Thank you very
22 much. Good afternoon. Marty Monroe. I have
23 lived in Tallahassee since the 1980s, and it
24 almost makes me home grown. I am proud to be a
25 recovering Civics teacher, and I care a great

1 deal about a healthy democracy.

2 And I am here today because I think this
3 is a very sick process. My parents are in
4 their 80s. They, too, live here in
5 Tallahassee. They live in the Westminster
6 Oaks.

7 Now, there are more trees between my house
8 and Westminster Oaks than there are people, and
9 my parents don't have a Senator Bill Montford,
10 thank you very much, I am proud to have you,
11 and they were very upset.

12 They moved from a garden apartment to the
13 main building, and you know what that created,
14 a change of address. Now, a change of address
15 seems very simple to people, but when you are
16 in your 80s, it gets very complicated.

17 Most people do not have driver's license,
18 thankfully, in retirement communities, and my
19 parents, they don't pay bills, Westminster does
20 all of that.

21 So they had to go find paid staff to write
22 them a letter to say my parents live there, and
23 fortunately, my parents travel a lot and they
24 had a passport. I am telling you folks this is
25 suppressing votes, creating problems in the

1 democracy.

2 That is very difficult for people in their
3 80s. You all think it is just a, well, you
4 just go down there and get a change of address,
5 but for real people that is real problems.

6 Monday morning, I am in chemotherapy, I
7 just came out of it this morning. Cancer
8 doesn't discriminate, and I sit in chemotherapy
9 with homeless people, the working core. I sit
10 in there with all types of people. In fact, it
11 breaks my hard to see the classroom teacher in
12 there grading papers and writing lesson plans
13 during a six-hour chemo treatment.

14 Our lives are very complicated navigating
15 the medical model. And we talk a lot. I
16 always talk politics, I am a recovering Civics
17 teacher. So we talk and we share our concerns,
18 and, yes, we are sick, but we are basically
19 heart sick, heart sick about the declining
20 democracy in the state.

21 Yes, I read the leadership letter to
22 instruct you not to speak and I don't think you
23 need to. I was laid up on the couch in chemo
24 and watched the day in the Legislature every
25 day, and I think you have spoken real loud.

1 I think your actions speak louder than
2 yours words. You had no money for the working
3 core, no money for state employees, and no
4 money for public education, and now I learn you
5 got \$30 million set aside to fight the will of
6 the voter. That is \$30 million to fight me and
7 my 80-year-old parents. \$30 million to leave
8 no lawyer behind is what I think.

9 The leadership in Florida talks about
10 saving the state money, money, money, and
11 running it like a business.

12 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Ms. Monroe,
13 Ms. Monroe, if I could for just one second, I
14 am sorry to interrupt you. We are trying to
15 focus the comments today on redistricting and
16 on the future of Florida's maps, and we
17 certainly want to hear your thoughts in regards
18 to the budget and in regards to the different
19 issues that we face as a state, but we would
20 really ask you to focus your comments today on
21 the redistricting, on the redistricting
22 process.

23 MS. MONROE: This is part of the
24 redistricting process as far as I am concerned,
25 Representative Weatherford. Okay.

1 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Just please keep it
2 tailored to the redistricting process, thank
3 you.

4 MS. MONROE: I will try if you will let
5 me. I want to know what business in Florida
6 sends their employees on a road show to ask
7 other people to do their jobs. I want to be
8 perfectly clear, it is the job of the
9 Legislature to draw the Congressional
10 legislative maps, and I understand that many
11 other states out there have completed their
12 redistricting process.

13 Their citizens were able to comment on
14 actually proposed maps, and by the way, that
15 has been the practice in Florida for the past
16 years.

17 There were prepared maps here at these
18 meetings that we could speak on. That has been
19 the practice in the past.

20 Fair District Amendment was won by a super
21 majority of voters to clarify how we want the
22 maps drawn. That is a lot of input, folks.
23 That is -- that is how we amended the
24 Constitution, because we wanted to give you
25 direction on how to draw those maps, and I am

1 just going to gently suggest what our Governor
2 always likes to say, let's get to work and quit
3 wasting time in drawing those maps.

4 By the way, I want to comment on your
5 timeline. It really looks like an incumbent
6 protection plan here, because you are delaying
7 and prolonging the process to the last possible
8 date. This creates chaos for candidates and
9 very little time for the education of
10 campaigns.

11 It is very highly unlikely that
12 Floridians, the voters, will know their new
13 districts before qualifying, and, of course,
14 the process could take much longer if you don't
15 draw maps that comply with the law.

16 So I am wondering today, Senators, House
17 Reps, aren't you just tired of being Flori-da,
18 the stupid state that holds up National
19 elections just because we can?

20 I want you to stop the delays. I want you
21 to stop stalling and I want you to get to work
22 as the Governor likes to say, let's get to
23 work. I have been ready. I think you should,
24 too.

25 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very

1 much, Ms. Monroe. Next up we have Herb
2 Shelton, followed by Barbara Day, Herb is
3 representing himself.

4 Mr. Shelton, thank you for being here.
5 You are recognized, sir.

6 MS. SHELTON: Thank you for this time, but
7 actually there is a fellow here that is much
8 more knowledgeable about this than I am and I
9 would love to cede my time to him, and his name
10 is Matthew Isbell, if that is permissible.

11 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: What we could do,
12 sir, is if he will fill out a card we will
13 certainly make sure and find time for him, but
14 we are reading the cards off in the order that
15 they were turned in.

16 And so if he would fill out a card we will
17 make sure and give him an opportunity to speak.

18 MR. SHELTON: Okay, sorry.

19 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Would you still
20 like to speak, sir?

21 MR. SHELTON: Sure, I can speak a thing or
22 two. You know, it takes courage to do this.
23 You folks are learned, lawyers and whatever,
24 but, you know, I am just a citizen of Leon
25 County here, and you know, I want to first of

1 all thank you for this forum, you know, to
2 discuss fair districting.

3 I just want to add my voice to the sister
4 that just spoke about getting the job soon,
5 please. Sixty-three percent of Florida voters
6 wanted to see this thing finished and fairly.

7 As you know, I am Herb Shelton. I have
8 friends across the state from Pensacola to
9 Lauderdale. They vote, we have watched a tax
10 on early voting, I have watched State employee
11 pension funds being attacked. There is an
12 ultrasound mandate, there is a Supreme Court
13 attack, the Supreme Court of Florida is being
14 attacked.

15 I have watched distinguished clergy and
16 vote God for guidance on your behalf and yet
17 seen policies that are to me reveal a deep
18 sickness, and the burden of my soul for you
19 today can be best described, summed up in the
20 words of Isaiah, 520, "Woe unto them that call
21 evil good and good evil. That pit darkness for
22 light and light for darkness, that pit bitter
23 for sweet and sweet for bitter. Woe unto them
24 that are wise in their own eyes and prudent in
25 their own sight, but God's invitation to you is

1 this, come into me and be healed, for why will
2 you die." And there is a quote from a man
3 named Uriah Smith back in 1884.

4 I don't know if I should say this, but
5 anyway, he spoke and wrote, "Fraud, dishonesty,
6 usurpation lying, cheating and stealing will
7 largely determine the count and the party which
8 can do most of this work will probably win."
9 Thank you for your time.

10 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
11 much, Mr. Shelton. Next up we have Ms. Barbara
12 Day from the AARP, followed by Henry Kelly.

13 Ms. Day, thank you very much for being
14 here today. You are recognized.

15 MS. DAY: Good afternoon, Chairman Gaetz
16 and Chairman Weatherford and the Committee
17 members.

18 My name is Barbara Day. I live in Panama
19 City, Bay County. I appear today as a
20 volunteer for -- as a volunteer for AARP.

21 I urge the Legislature to make
22 redistricting process to be all you can be. As
23 you exercise your constitutional duty to draw
24 voting districts for ten years beginning with
25 the 2012 elections, AARP urges you to insure

1 transparency of the legislative redistricting
2 process every stay of the way.

3 Keep transparency in place with
4 redistricting discussions among members and by
5 members, should be noticed and open to the
6 public, too.

7 Also keep transparency in place, meaning
8 the public has opportunity to comment and to
9 have those comments meaningfully considered by
10 the Legislature during our legislative --
11 legislative redistricting proceedings and on
12 redistricting proposals, that is before
13 Legislators make decisions.

14 Insure timeliness of the redistricting
15 process and insure public input. The
16 Legislature has an obligation to meet the
17 constitutional dictates as already expressed by
18 the Florida voters. The Legislator owes
19 Florida's residents and voters professionalism
20 and timely completion of the redistricting
21 process.

22 The Legislature knows the procedural steps
23 that redistricting plans will need to complete
24 in order for there to be a timely qualification
25 of the 2012 candidates under the new district

1 and for the vigorous campaigns before voters
2 cast their ballots.

3 That means the Legislature should complete
4 its portion of the process sooner rather than
5 later.

6 Remember to take steps to insulate the
7 redistricting process from the appearance of a
8 conflict of interest. For example,
9 subcommittees of Legislators could research and
10 develop alternative redistricting proposals for
11 areas of the state remote from the sub
12 committee members.

13 Geographic residence, perhaps, just as an
14 example, perhaps four areas of the state and
15 then refine and reconcile for two halves of the
16 state, then refine and reconcile by the full
17 chambers into one state plan.

18 When it is time for your performance, the
19 Florida voters will not count as undue expense
20 and delay in that performance. It is up to the
21 Legislator.

22 What will it be? Will it be
23 redistricting, presentment or voter resentment?
24 I am confident the Legislature and its staff
25 have professional competence and technical

1 assistance to research and propose new voting
2 districts in accord with all the constitutional
3 and Federal requirements.

4 Wishing you good luck and make your best
5 effort. Thank you so much for your time.

6 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
7 much, Ms. Day. We appreciate your comments.
8 Next up we have Ms. Debbie Walsh from the
9 Center for American Women in Politics.
10 Followed up by Mr. Daryl Nall.

11 Ms. Walsh, thank you very much for being
12 here.

13 MS. WALSH: Thank you very much for having
14 me. I want to thank the members of the
15 Commission and good afternoon. I am Debbie
16 Walsh, Director of the Center for American
17 Women and Politics, a unit of the Eagleton
18 Institute of Politics at Rutgers, the State
19 University of New Jersey and I probably used up
20 half my time, right?

21 For 40 years, CAWP or the Center, has been
22 monitoring and analyzing women's status and
23 prospects in American politics, tracking the
24 numbers of women office-holders and conducting
25 research about their impact.

1 I am here today because in recent years we
2 have noticed a deeply disturbing trend. The
3 stagnation and even decline in the number of
4 elected women, and we want to make sure that
5 trend is not exacerbated by the redistricting
6 process, yet the early evidence suggests that
7 unless careful attention is paid, women may
8 lose even more ground.

9 As part of our 2012 project a non partisan
10 campaign to increase the number of women in
11 Congress and State Legislatures across the
12 country, we are monitoring the redistricting
13 process nationwide.

14 We have analyzed the new map in New
15 Jersey, the first state to complete its
16 legislative redistricting and the results are
17 alarming.

18 In a state where 28 percent of the current
19 Legislature is female, women make up at least
20 57 percent of the Legislators who will retire
21 as a result of redistricting.

22 In other words, women incumbents were
23 disproportional forced out by redrawn district
24 lines. We all know that women are more than
25 half the nation's population, and on that basis

1 alone, the paucity of elected women is a
2 problem.

3 Today women hold 16.6 percent of the seats
4 in Congress, six Governorships out of 50,
5 24 percent of seats in State Legislatures, and
6 Mayor's offices in eight of the 100 largest
7 cities in the nation.

8 Here in Florida women hold one quarter of
9 State Legislative seats making it rank 20th in
10 the nation and just over a quarter of the
11 Congressional seats.

12 So although Florida has done better than
13 many states, it still fails to represent women
14 in anywhere near their proportions in the
15 population, but we are not just playing a
16 numbers game.

17 Research carried out by scholars and CAWP
18 and elsewhere demonstrates clearly that gender
19 balance changes the way government works,
20 altering the policy agenda, procedures, content
21 and outcomes on issues as varied as job loss,
22 national security and health.

23 Adding women makes a difference, and this
24 is not a partisan divide, both Democratic and
25 Republican women bring distinctive experiences,

1 prospectives and priorities to public office.

2 That is not only good for women, it is
3 good for Florida. Studies cutting across the
4 public and private sectors underscore the value
5 of gender balance. A recent article on
6 Forbes.com cited a Harvard conference that used
7 extensive scholarly research to make the
8 business case for gender equality.

9 The author reported, there is irrefutable
10 verifiable evidence that women in greater than
11 token proportions improve decision-making,
12 improve shareholder value and lower risk
13 taking. While the business of government does
14 not have shareholders, it certainly does have
15 stakeholders.

16 Citizens for whom better decision-making
17 and improved value are critically important.
18 Under the circumstances we can ill-afford to
19 diminish women's representation in government.

20 That is why I wanted to bring to your
21 attention this issue. We understand that women
22 are not legally protected in the redistricting
23 rules, but I would ask you to adhere to a
24 higher standard than merely following the basic
25 requirements which should be seen as a floor,

1 not a ceiling.

2 As you assess the various options before
3 you, don't simply do the least harm, instead,
4 aim to do the most good. I encourage you to
5 insure that women incumbents present only
6 through hard won progress are treated fairly in
7 the redistricting process. Thank you very
8 much.

9 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
10 much, Ms. Walsh, and thank you for making the
11 trip all of the way down from New Jersey. We
12 appreciate you being here.

13 Actually, I skipped Mr. Kelley, Mr. Henry
14 Kelly. You are recognized, sir, and then we
15 will follow that up by Daryl Nall. Sorry about
16 that, Mr. Kelley. You are recognized, sir.

17 MR. KELLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and
18 I would like to on behalf of the Ft. Walton
19 Beach Tea Party thank the Joint Committee for
20 having an open and transparent process, and I
21 would like to thank Representative Weatherford
22 and the Senator from my district, Don Gaetz,
23 for their leadership on this.

24 Tea parties around the state will be
25 participating in all of the meetings and we

1 will be submitting plans, and I for one, it was
2 very disappointed to see criticism of the
3 committee process already.

4 With the growth of our population I am
5 glad to start with a blank slate and that the
6 public will have the opportunity to input
7 plans.

8 I have personally created already a
9 Congressional District and a Senate House plan.
10 I have to be honest, Representative
11 Weatherford, 120 is a lot of districts in the
12 House, but I have found the software easy to
13 use.

14 It took me about 15 minutes with the help
15 of the videos to become proficient and several
16 hours to draw the plans.

17 I will have some comments specific to the
18 panhandle tomorrow night at the meeting in Ft.
19 Walton Beach, but I wanted to say that it is my
20 view, having actually worked on the software,
21 that any group in the state of Florida,
22 particularly those with a complete staff, have
23 no excuse for not spending a few hours, which
24 is all it requires, to at least put together a
25 plan.

1 And we prefer that the redistricting be
2 resolved here in the Legislature where the
3 people have a voice rather than going to the
4 courts where they appear to be the worse
5 gerrymanders of all. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
7 much, Mr. Kelley. We appreciate your comments,
8 sir. Next up we have Mr. Nall, Mr. Daryl Nall,
9 Ms. Nall, I am sorry, I apologize. Followed up
10 by Peter Butzin.

11 MS. NALL: Okay, I didn't prepare any
12 remarks, but I got signatures for the Petition
13 that got the issues on the ballot and I was
14 really happy that the people of Florida want to
15 have fair redistricting and that is why I am
16 here.

17 I really want the process to be fair and
18 not -- I am a Democrat, but even if the
19 Democrats were in power it should be fair to
20 everybody and not slanted anymore than you have
21 to to comply with the Federal laws, because the
22 State Constitution doesn't allow it be slanted.
23 Thank you very much.

24 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very much
25 for your comments. We have Peter Butzin up

1 next, followed by Chris Moore. Peter Butzin
2 with Common Cause. Thank you for being here,
3 Mr. Butzin.

4 MR. BUTZIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
5 Good afternoon, everyone, my name is Peter
6 Butzin.

7 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: I am sorry.

8 MR. BUTZIN: I am on the national
9 governing board of Common Cause. I reside here
10 in Tallahassee and I have been involved in
11 reapportionments process that goes way back to
12 1982, and I wanted to talk a little bit about
13 my experience in 1982, when the Republicans had
14 about 30 percent of the Legislature under its
15 control and worked very closely with Common
16 Cause to try to insure the fair drawing of the
17 legislative districts.

18 And I worked with people like Pete Dunbar
19 and Curt Kiser, John Guthrie, Jack Latvala was
20 one of our organizers. We worked closely
21 together around the state to encourage people
22 to be involved in this process, and I remember
23 asking Pete Dunbar, I said, well, why are the
24 Republicans working so closely with Common
25 Cause on this issue.

1 And he said, look, we have been -- we have
2 been unfairly treated by reapportionment for as
3 long as the reapportionment process has existed
4 in Florida.

5 All we want is a fair process, because we
6 know that if it is a fair process, we will be
7 able to better represent our constituents, and
8 that is really all Common Cause is asking for
9 in this process, is that you be fair in the
10 drawing of legislative district lines.

11 That you not draw lines for incumbent
12 protection, that you not draw lines to protect
13 political parties or even communities of
14 interest, but instead that you follow the
15 standards, the 63 percent of Florida voters
16 added to the Florida Constitution in the form
17 of Sections 20 and 21, and if you uphold your
18 oath to uphold the Constitution, you will abide
19 by those anti gerrymandering standards to
20 insure a fair reapportionment process for
21 everyone.

22 I would also hope that you have a second
23 round of public hearings and encourage the
24 public to comment on your plans.

25 Now, I realize that you can't pass the

1 plans until the 2012 Legislative session, but
2 that does not mean that you can't go ahead and
3 in committee pass plans prior to January 1st of
4 2012, have another round of public hearings
5 where we are encouraged to react to those plans
6 and to have our public input.

7 Also, I would say produce those plans
8 early in the session so that we can accelerate
9 the process of court review, so the candidates
10 and voters will know the district boundaries
11 well before the elective process, and
12 ultimately I encourage you to remember that
13 Legislative Districts, Congressional Districts,
14 belong to the people, not to individual
15 Legislators or to political parties.

16 So I encourage you to uphold your oath of
17 office, support the Florida Constitution,
18 including Sections 20 and 21, the 63 percent of
19 Floridians added to the Constitution in
20 November of 2010. Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you much,
22 Mr. Butzin. I appreciate you being here today,
23 sir.

24 Next up we have Mr. Chris Moore, who is
25 the Leon County Supervisor of Elections, works

1 with the Leon County Supervisor of Elections,
2 and also we have former Senator Al Lawson is up
3 after that.

4 Thank you very much for being here,
5 Mr. Moore.

6 MR. MOORE: Thank you. My name is Chris
7 Moore. I am the demographics and GIS manager
8 for the Leon County Elections Office here in
9 Tallahassee, and I am here to talk about the
10 technical and financial ramifications of
11 redistricting, not so much the demographics and
12 the mandates that you have in front of you. I
13 think those are well documented.

14 I have a unique perspective of looking at
15 districts, in that I have to look at them
16 collectively. I have to look at the Senate,
17 the House, the Congressional Districts as well
18 as Local Districts and one thing that I haven't
19 seen talked about that I would like to submit
20 for consideration is looking at these districts
21 collectively, because when you look at the
22 districts collectively there is places in Leon
23 County that the House District and the Senate
24 District may be very close by, and if there is
25 opportunities to get those lines in sync then,

1 you know, that is a financial savings to the
2 taxpayers.

3 We have to have ballots for every precinct
4 specific style, everywhere there is a hard
5 district line there is a precinct line. So the
6 more you can get that in line with each other,
7 we have an opportunity for financial savings at
8 the county level.

9 The other thing I would like to say about
10 the savings, it is the course of a decade. It
11 is not just for one year, it is for ten years,
12 and it affects equipment, it affects supplies,
13 it affects training. It ripples its way all of
14 the way through our system for a very long
15 time.

16 And as far as the statistics for the
17 districts, I think last time around you were
18 able to get down to like a zero deviation or a
19 one person deviation in the numbers, and I
20 would implore you not to hide behind the
21 numbers being so close, because what happens
22 oftentimes when you are trying to get to those
23 numbers you start to ignore other criteria that
24 is out in front of you, and if you just need to
25 get the numbers right, you start grabbing

1 pieces out of neighborhoods here and there and
2 that is where some of the fracturing that you
3 see of neighborhoods occurs, because you are
4 trying to get to a deviation that, to me is not
5 the most important criteria, nor should it be.

6 So those -- those are my suggestions for
7 -- from the Leon County Supervisor of
8 Election's Office and I thank you for your
9 time.

10 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very much
11 for those good suggestions, Mr. Moore.

12 Next up we have an old friend and former
13 Senator and House Speaker, Senator Al Lawson.
14 Senator, you are recognized.

15 Thank you for being here, sir.

16 SENATOR LAWSON: Thank you very much,
17 Mr. Chairman Weatherford and Chairman Gaetz.
18 To members I would like to say good afternoon.

19 It is a real privilege for me to appear
20 before this committee today, especially having
21 gone through reapportionment twice in the last
22 28 years, and it is very encouraging to see
23 many of you that I know on this committee,
24 because I have had the opportunity to work with
25 you.

1 And one of the things I would like to say
2 before I get started is that I know that there
3 is going to be numerous hearings. I don't want
4 any of the public to really think that just
5 because we have a hearing here, that there are
6 not other hearings, because there will be many
7 committee meetings for the opportunity for you
8 to have input.

9 And I know the last two times I have been
10 through reapportionment, it hasn't been any
11 difference. I had an opportunity to go through
12 reapportionment with the Democratic majority,
13 had opportunity to go through reapportionment
14 with the Republican majority, and there haven't
15 been any changes in those regards.

16 I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for
17 your time to listen to the citizens of Leon
18 County today. I know firsthand tasks what you
19 all are faced with, and I know that you all are
20 going to make the right decision.

21 I had the privilege to serve during the
22 time where we had great strides in the
23 representation of racial and language
24 minorities in the State Legislature and
25 Congressional Districts.

1 My hope is that the work that we started
2 with will continue. The way I read the
3 amendment, the new standards of intent gives
4 priority over -- give priority over to the
5 preservation -- does not give priority over to
6 the preservation of minority access districts.

7 Though the organization claims that this
8 does not exist, but from the way I interpret
9 the law, it does not give claims to those
10 access seats.

11 Let me give you a good example. Prior to
12 1982, there was no African-Americans or
13 Hispanics in Congress, none in the Senate, and
14 only five in the Legislature, but because we
15 took minority access districts into
16 consideration, after 1982, we had two
17 African-Americans that was elected to the
18 Senate and we had three African-American that
19 was elected to Congress.

20 So that become very critical, and I want
21 to make sure that as we address these issues,
22 that we preserve and do not have retrogression.

23 Although paragraph three says that the
24 standard is not listed in order of priority, it
25 is clear that several minority access seats are

1 at risk, and I have said that these minority
2 access seats have been at risk for the last
3 three years, and especially the last year when
4 I served on reapportionment.

5 It is very important that you recognize
6 that and you identify that. My point today as
7 a citizen, I will just state is to use this
8 public hearing to tell you one simple message,
9 preserve minority districts in Leon County and
10 throughout the state of Florida.

11 When I got elected in 1982, they hadn't
12 been an African-American elected since
13 Reconstruction, but because the Legislature in
14 its wisdom during reapportionment saw to make a
15 minority access seat, this was the first time
16 that an African-American had been elected since
17 Reconstruction.

18 We have come too far to see some
19 considered vague standards that does not come
20 to the right interpretation. We have worked
21 too hard and too long to allow this to really
22 happen.

23 As a citizen of this state I am begging
24 you not to stop the progress that has been made
25 for racial equality in this state. To not stop

1 the good work that we have accomplished
2 together, Republicans and Democrats over the
3 last 30 years.

4 Please apply what these new standards may
5 say, I want it very clear, that the citizens of
6 this state, especially the minority citizens,
7 African-American and Hispanic, would like to
8 have preserved minority access seats.

9 I think it is very important for this
10 state because we are a very diverse state, and
11 we should have the representation of our
12 citizens.

13 Thank you very much and it is an honor for
14 me to appear before you today.

15 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
16 much, Mr. Lawson. We appreciate your services
17 to the state and for you sharing the historical
18 perspective with us. Thank you very much. It
19 is good to see you, sir.

20 Next up we have Ms. Deirdre Macnab.
21 Deirdre, I apologize, I didn't tell you ahead
22 of time, but you are recognized to be our next
23 speaker, and following Ms. Macnab, I apologize
24 if I don't say this right, but Juvais
25 Harrington from the NAACP.

1 First up we have Ms. Deirdre Macnab with
2 the League of Women Voters. Thank you very
3 much for being here today.

4 MS. MACNAB: Thank you very much. Chair
5 Gaetz and Chair Weatherford, thank you for
6 having us here today, and esteemed members of
7 this Committee.

8 I am Deirdre Macnab, and I am the State
9 President of the League of Women Voters of
10 Florida.

11 There is an old Chinese saying, "The
12 journey of 1,000 miles begins with one step."
13 The League of Women Voters has a lot of
14 experience in the area of 1,000-mile journeys,
15 and one of them began almost 200 years ago when
16 we fought for the right for women to vote, and
17 Susan B. Anthony was one of my favorite heros,
18 criss-crossed America, not by automobile, but
19 by foot, by stage coach and she had to sit on
20 the stage usually with a Sheriff with his guns
21 drawn so that she could speak. Luckily we are
22 not in that situation today, nor do we have to
23 travel in this same mode.

24 However, I am here to talk today about a
25 different 1,000-mile journey. This one started

1 a long time ago, also for the League of Women
2 Voters of Florida, almost 70 years ago when we
3 began, and that was back in 1939, when we did
4 our first study of government, which had two
5 findings.

6 One, an outdated Constitution, and two, a
7 malapportioned Legislature. Since those days
8 we have worked on the subject of redistricting
9 and the need for fair standards and we have
10 continued that fight to today.

11 With a vote in November, we have come very
12 close to the end of that journey. The League
13 of Women Voters has fought for this effort when
14 the Democrats were in charge in Tallahassee,
15 and we have fought for that effort with the
16 Republicans today in charge of Tallahassee.
17 This is a non partisan issue. It is also not
18 an anti incumbent issue.

19 The League of Women Voters opposed term
20 limits when it was proposed as an amendment.
21 We believe simply in fairness and fair rules.
22 After four Petition drives over these last many
23 years and with our members across the state of
24 Florida asking other Floridians to sign their
25 Petition, some might say, accosting, I have two

1 friends who are in their 80s who would stop
2 people in their nursing home elevator to sign
3 the petitions.

4 We were, along with our partner groups,
5 able to succeed in collecting 1,600,000
6 petitions and in persuading 63 percent of
7 Florida's voters in a conservative election
8 year to support and ask the Legislature to
9 follow these simple and straightforward rules.

10 Today, on behalf of our thousands of
11 members across the state of Florida who have
12 collected signatures, who have spoken to
13 groups, who have written to newspapers and
14 explained the importance of these changes to
15 their neighbors, we ask you to do the
16 following.

17 Number one, stop using taxpayer dollars to
18 fight the amendments. Imagine your family's
19 horror if you came home and told them that you
20 were paying attorneys to both fight and defend
21 the same case. That is what you are doing for
22 your constituents.

23 We the voters are paying to both prosecute
24 and to defend that which 63 percent of
25 Floridians have instructed you to follow.

1 Please drop these lawsuits and follow the will
2 of the voters.

3 Number two, move the timeline up. We
4 agree completely with your attorney who
5 encouraged you to start drawing the maps
6 immediately, and that to do otherwise is likely
7 to result in chaos and confusion in the 2012
8 election.

9 The current timeline makes it very likely
10 that there will be little or no time for
11 candidates to know what districts they are in
12 before the filing deadline to be able to
13 organize and prepare their campaigns, and
14 importantly, to communicate and inform voters
15 before they make their choices.

16 Florida deserves elections where the
17 people have time to understand their choices.
18 This timeline benefits only incumbents and is
19 likely to diminish competitive election and
20 certainly the time that our voters need to
21 inform themselves about their choices.

22 The current plan is to vote on final maps
23 at the end of session next year. Why not draw
24 them earlier, debate and discuss them in
25 committee meetings in the fall, and vote on

1 them in the first week of session in early
2 January of 2012.

3 This would add two months for court and
4 Justice Department reviews, and will create a
5 real chance for voters and prospective
6 candidates to know the districts before
7 qualifying.

8 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Ms. Macnab.

9 MS. MACNAB: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: We are over five
11 minutes. I certainly want to allow you to
12 finish, but if you could, just try to wrap it
13 up as much as you can for us so we can get to
14 all of the other speakers.

15 MS. MACNAB: Thank you. It would be my
16 pressure.

17 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Yes, ma'am, thank
18 you.

19 MS. MACNAB: Finally, we ask you to lift
20 the gag order placed on the Legislators during
21 these redistricting hearings. The people of
22 Florida deserve a chance to hear what is on
23 your mind. Let's make these hearings
24 substantive and productive.

25 We urge you to get your staff to work now

1 drawing the district maps so that we can have a
2 substantive conversation and discussion as you
3 follow the rules that the people of Florida
4 voted on in November by 63 percent. Let's get
5 to work. Thank you very much.

6 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
7 much, Ms. Macnab, thank you for being here and
8 for participating. We appreciate it. Next up
9 we have Juvais Harrington and after
10 Mr. Harrington we have a Bishop Holifield will
11 be next.

12 Mr. Harrington is with the NAACP. Thank
13 you very much for being here, sir, you are
14 recognized.

15 MR. HARRINGTON: Thank you, and that is
16 Juvais, but when in doubt phonetics always
17 works, oftentimes people put letters in there
18 that aren't there, so thank you very much.

19 The comments from the NAACP here in Leon
20 County, the Tallahassee branch and as we will
21 be speaking throughout the state, first of all,
22 I want to echo what AARP said that this forum
23 remains and this process remains transparent,
24 that everyone knows what is going on, when it
25 is going on, and when it happens.

1 Also, that the -- we keep in mind that
2 63 percent of the voters voted on this. So
3 that the intent of the voters come forth and we
4 have and we process and we do what the voters
5 said.

6 It is almost like, you know, when you are
7 growing up someone takes, they don't get picked
8 to play on a team, it is like, I am going to
9 take my ball and go home.

10 Well, the Legislature, you cannot take
11 your ball and go home. The people have spoken
12 and they say this is what we want. Also, we
13 want to look at the anti gerrymandering
14 portions that we want to make sure that
15 everyone is included, that everyone is fairly
16 represented and that everyone has a right.

17 NAACP is non partisan, so we speak not on
18 behalf of Democrats nor Republicans, we are
19 policy centric, so we speak to the issues, not
20 to the parties.

21 We want to make sure that fairness -- that
22 we know that and we realize that fairness
23 should be, it is not party centric, but it
24 should be to both parties, Republican,
25 Democrat, Independent, what-have-you, and that

1 we move forward in the spirit of fairness which
2 means that some of you may lose your seats, but
3 if you are being fair, if you are serving the
4 public, does it matter if you lose your seats
5 or not?

6 Nearly 30 years ago one of the statesman
7 from Florida told me that the first job of an
8 elected official is to get reelected. That is
9 your very first job.

10 Well, let flip that script. Let the first
11 job be to serve your constituents, let that be
12 the first job, to serve the people of Florida,
13 to make sure that they get what they voted for.

14 And finally I would like to say that,
15 again, stop using the taxpayers money to fight.
16 It doesn't make sense. It doesn't make sense.
17 For those of you who say that you have, you
18 weren't chosen and you want to take your ball
19 and go home with it, well, don't go home, just
20 come back, you get to play next time, but this
21 time the people have spoken.

22 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
23 Mr. Harrington. We appreciate those comments,
24 sir.

25 Bishop Holifield is next, followed up by

1 Mimi Jones. Mr. Holifield is with Leon County
2 Democratic Black Caucus. Thank you very much
3 for being here, sir.

4 MR. HOLIFIELD: Thank you for the
5 opportunity. My name is Bishop Holifield. I
6 am appearing before you as the President of the
7 Leon County Democratic Black Caucus.

8 I would like for my fellow members to
9 stand, please, and be recognized. The Florida
10 Legislature -- thank you.

11 The Florida Legislature has the duty of
12 creating legislative and congressional
13 districts that, A, at the very least, preserve
14 current levels of black membership in the
15 Florida Legislature and the United States House
16 of Representatives.

17 B, the Legislature also has the duty to
18 end and correct the current situation in the
19 State of Florida that sees the votes of those
20 living in densely populated urban areas diluted
21 in a fashion that confirms, that confers an
22 unfair and disproportionate number of districts
23 on more sparsely populated suburban and rural
24 areas.

25 The Legislature should utilize available

1 scientifically measurable numbers to achieve
2 these laudable goals. The articulated outcomes
3 should be made required deliverables on the
4 part of anyone the Legislature contracts with
5 to draw its redistricting maps.

6 Finally, the Florida Legislature should
7 conduct meaningful public hearings after its
8 redistricting maps are drawn. That would allow
9 for a substantive rather than an illusory
10 public comment. Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
12 much, Mr. Holifield. We appreciate that, sir.
13 Next up we have Ms. Mimi Jones, followed up by,
14 it is Rachel Sutz Pienta, I believe that is
15 right, but Ms. Rachel Sutz, but first we have
16 Ms. Jones. Thank you, Ms. Jones, for being
17 here, you are recognized.

18 MS. JONES: Hello, thank you. Thank you
19 to the Committee Chairs and to the Committee.
20 I speak to you as a private citizen who has
21 been involved in the political process for, I
22 think it started in middle school, okay.

23 I have done everything from serve, even
24 though I speak for myself, as President of the
25 League of Women Voters in Florida, all of the

1 way down to carrying trash and being a
2 petitioner. I have done it and I have enjoyed
3 it, and I still have faith in the process.

4 I would like to give you just a little bit
5 of my history. In 1982, I was working at the
6 State level. I was involved in the Petition --
7 excuse me, in the reapportionment process.
8 That was the first year that Florida had come
9 into the computer age with redistricting.

10 We then as now suggested fair and
11 equitable standards that we take from our
12 studies of government. We joined other groups
13 around the state, including Peter Butzin, we
14 worked together long and hard, and we came to
15 no avail.

16 And I have to tell you that I was pretty
17 upset with the Democrats, and I don't want to
18 be upset with the Republicans.

19 It is all a matter of who is in charge,
20 but I will tell you what, I think the people
21 are in charge. Sixty-three percent of those
22 who voted, that is a good solid majority, and
23 they have told you they want it fair and they
24 want it square, and I hope that we can thank
25 you for it when we are through with the

1 process. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
3 much, Ms. Jones. Next up we have Ms. Rachel, I
4 apologize if I am not saying this correctly,
5 Pienta, Ms. Rachel Sutz Pienta with the Wakulla
6 Democratic Executive Committee.

7 Ms. Pienta, thank you very much for being
8 here. She will be followed by Joe Conte. You
9 are recognized, thank you.

10 MS. PIENTA: Thank you, Representative
11 Weatherford. I am really here as a citizen of
12 Wakulla County today, full disclosure, yes, I
13 am a Democrat.

14 One of my -- one of my State Legislators I
15 see here today, Senator Montford, but I don't
16 see Representative Bermbry and Representative
17 Coley, and that is a shame.

18 As a citizen of Wakulla sometimes I feel a
19 little bit like a red-headed stepchild, because
20 Representative Coley and Representative
21 Bermbry's districts meet in Wakulla. And on
22 the eastern side we are a part of a district
23 that goes all the way along the coast in
24 Wakulla, down to Cedar Key, and then up to the
25 Georgia border and it sort of curves and winds,

1 sort of does this half circle thing around
2 Alachua County.

3 And so that is the east side, and then on
4 the west side my Representative goes all of the
5 way in the southern part of Leon County, like I
6 really wonder if the people in Woodville and
7 Southwood know that Representative Coley is
8 actually their Representative and not Senator
9 Rehwinkel, I am sorry, Representative
10 Rehwinkel-Vasilinda, and then that district on
11 the west side goes all the way over into the
12 panhandle over towards Destin.

13 So my Representatives are really nice
14 people and they do their best, but it is a lot
15 of ground to cover, and we don't see them very
16 often in Wakulla. And I am a fairly engaged
17 citizen, so both Representatives, Republican
18 and Democrat to their credit, both take my
19 calls.

20 So I get to talk to them, but I know that
21 the constituents, the average person in Wakulla
22 does not see them very often, and Senator
23 Montford, bless his heart, does his best, but
24 he also has a pretty large district that covers
25 a lot of ground.

1 So down in Wakulla we sit there on the
2 coast, a bedroom community for Leon County,
3 that doesn't really have full representation,
4 and I have to give some kudos actually to my
5 Leon County Representative delegation, because
6 Alan Williams and Michelle Vasilinda actually
7 speak for Wakulla quite often, because they
8 know that so many citizens in Wakulla drive
9 north on Woodville Highway and Crawfordville
10 Highway every day to work in Leon County.

11 So they are working here and they are kind
12 of subject to things that happen here in the
13 state government. It is sort of like not being
14 fully represented though.

15 So again, as one of the red-headed
16 step-children living down in Wakulla county I
17 would like to see some changes. I would like
18 to see my Representatives once in a while, and
19 again, it is not their fault. Those are
20 ridiculous districts, they cover way too much
21 ground.

22 So I would like to see something changed
23 with redistricting so that I can be fully
24 represented down in Wakulla county. Thank you
25 very much for your time today.

1 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
2 much, Ms. Pienta, we appreciate those comments.
3 Next up we have Jo Conte, and followed by --
4 following Jo will be Joseph Schweitzer.

5 MS. CONTE: Just a couple of comments, I
6 am Jo Conte, I am from Tallahassee. I ask you
7 to follow the will of the people on this, show
8 us some maps and then we can talk seriously. I
9 waive the remainder of my time.

10 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
11 much. Next up we have Mr. Joseph Schweitzer.
12 Mr. Schweitzer, thank you very much for being
13 here.

14 Following Mr. Schweitzer will be Walt
15 Dartland, and Joseph Schweitzer, it looks like
16 a student at Florida State University.

17 MR. SCHWEITZER: Yes, sir.

18 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very much
19 for being here, sir.

20 MR. SCHWEITZER: Thank you. I am just
21 here to really wave against a lot of the ways
22 this process has taken place. I speak on
23 behalf of many of the students of Florida State
24 University, and as the founder of The Student
25 Caucus of Florida to say that from, again, the

1 Legislature's opposition, through suits against
2 the Fair Districts Amendments, the lack of
3 really any visible map for a long time to come
4 to see what we are basing our future lines and
5 future districts off of.

6 A complicated process is already overly
7 complicated for constituents of everybody in
8 the room. In my age group redistricting is
9 going to have a similar effect as the Voter
10 Registration Bill did in this past legislative
11 session, and again and again we find that it
12 becomes more difficult to mobilize a
13 constituency, a constituency that takes much
14 longer to mobilize than many others do.

15 We have a shorter time frame and we don't
16 know what we are working with. So as
17 complicated as the districts are and as
18 vehemently as I might disagree with the way
19 that they might be drawn as well as, I am sure,
20 the majority of the people in this room, the
21 timeline that is being presented in this effort
22 is going to cause a lot of struggle for many
23 who wish to organize on both sides of the
24 aisle. So thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very

1 much, Mr. Schweitzer. We appreciate your
2 comments, sir. Next up we have a Walt
3 Dartland.

4 Walt, thank you very much for being here,
5 sir, following Mr. Dartland we are going to
6 have Paul Harvill. You are recognized, sir.

7 MR. DARTLAND: Thank you so much, sir,
8 Walt Dartland. Just as a matter of disclosure,
9 I served on the Board of Common Cause, National
10 Board for about eight years, with such really
11 great people that I would hope you all had a
12 chance to meet like Archibald Cox, and with
13 John Gardner, a Republican who actually founded
14 Common Cause.

15 It was a great experience. I learned a
16 lot. I also served as Deputy Attorney General
17 for Bob Butterworth. So I am somewhat familiar
18 with the process that we all go through and
19 appreciate the opportunity to participate.

20 However, I want to first say this. I want
21 to -- I don't want it cover the same stuff that
22 everybody else covered, and I just want to --
23 in the Public Service Commission hearings we
24 use the, I adopt, I adopt the other testimony,
25 and I certainly adopt the testimony of the

1 League of Women Cities -- League of Women
2 Voters, I am sorry, and of Common Cause and
3 Peter Butzin, I think they are right on, and
4 there are a number of other people I think are
5 right on.

6 So I will just focus on a few things to
7 sort of bring, that I want to cover that wasn't
8 covered so far.

9 One is that common, I chaired Florida
10 Common Cause for about eight years. At that
11 time we initiated our own petition, if you
12 remember, and we moved right along until, and
13 we had an independent commission, sort of
14 modeled after California, and at that point
15 what happened is the Supreme Court ruled that
16 there is no such thing as an independent
17 commission, and therefore, it was an
18 unconstitutional -- they were not going to
19 allow us to vote on that deal.

20 Now, that may have been correct.
21 California still has it, and I will say this,
22 that I follow the California situation closely
23 because Arnold Schwarzenegger offered to come
24 here and testify on behalf of our initial
25 Common Cause Petition. They did pass it.

1 You have an independent commission and I
2 read the L. A. Times, I have two children and
3 grandchildren in California, so I follow what
4 is going on, and what they have found is that
5 what they have done is that the Independent
6 Commission meeting, they are going to -- the L.
7 A. Times has opined that even if they do the
8 very best job of doing it, there is not going
9 to be that much change in this stuff, itself,
10 even though there are a lot of Democrats
11 control Legislature there.

12 Now, I got to tell you, whoever has this
13 lady as a Civics teacher, I think that is the
14 greatest thing ever. We need more civic
15 education and I want to put my -- my word in
16 here that civic education is really critical.

17 I want to also comment on the second
18 effort that we are doing now, and try to set it
19 a little differently. You know, Bobby Kennedy
20 one time said that our population is the most
21 entertained and less informed, least informed
22 population in the world, and that is probably
23 true.

24 And one of the reasons I want to emphasize
25 here on this thing is that having taught at the

1 Law School in Miami and having taught at a
2 number of others, Florida International
3 University, the teaching process of the public
4 is going to be difficult for you.

5 Here we have informed people, people
6 really engaged. How about the general public?
7 That is why I would have preferred that you had
8 a map put up, and a Tea Party person said, hey,
9 this is simple, anybody can do it, get on the
10 web.

11 Like -- why couldn't the Legislature have
12 come up with a map that we could then look at
13 and see how it affects Wakulla County and
14 Lafayette County and then have them testify and
15 see what is going on.

16 The scary thing is that we may not get a
17 second chance if this thing prolongs itself and
18 we may not get a chance to comment on what is
19 eventually done.

20 The procedures as you all know who have
21 been in government, and I think Senator
22 Montford has, most of you had, know that what
23 we did in the Attorney General's Office or the
24 Department of Motor Vehicles or if you are
25 preparing an ordinance, you first prepare the

1 ordinance and you put it out for public
2 comment, I mean, that is the way it works.

3 You have the comments, they come in, you
4 take a look at the comments, you decide what is
5 reasonable, not reasonable, you adjust it and
6 then you vote on what you think is now the
7 appropriate, you know, legislation that should
8 go forward.

9 That is not going to happen here without a
10 second round of hearings. It is not going to
11 happen with a map that can be distributed to
12 all of the dealers and wheelers and dealers and
13 shakers in all of these communities are going
14 to look at that district and have a chance to
15 do an input on it.

16 You know, when I -- when I look at what we
17 are trying to accomplish here, I don't doubt
18 and I have made this clear, we are going to end
19 up in the courts. We always have. We always
20 will, and the sooner we get the process
21 resolved and the Legislature has a map and the
22 public is informed, I think at that time the
23 courts are going to deal with it and it will be
24 an extensive process this time, because it
25 involves Federal law, and you are talking about

1 the Department of Justice and it involves our
2 Constitutional Amendment, which is, by the way,
3 just so you will know, this isn't just a couple
4 of people sat down to come up with these
5 standards.

6 This was a very deliberate process in
7 which we have two former Chief Justices
8 participate, we had learned counsel, we had
9 academics come in and we worried and worked on
10 these standards for months and months and
11 months to try to come up with something that
12 would help guide this Legislature.

13 So we hope you will follow through on
14 this, you will do your best. Just remember
15 this, it won't be long, you will all be gone.
16 All of your friends will be gone and what you
17 accomplish here will probably last. So it is
18 your heritage to make this happen. Thank you
19 so much.

20 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
21 much, Mr. Dartland, we appreciate that, sir.
22 Next up we have Mr. Paul Harvill and following
23 Mr. Harvill we have Joseph Sierra.
24 Mr. Harvill, you are recognized, sir.

25 MR. HARVILL: Thank you, Senator Margolis,

1 a long time ago. I was born and bred here in
2 Florida, Tampa and Tallahassee. I was involved
3 intimately with the '81 and '82 redistricting
4 battles, with H. Lee Moffit and Dempsey Barron
5 as the respective Chairs.

6 In fact, Dempsey about punched me out, he
7 got so mad with me over the reapportionment
8 battles.

9 Now, for the real brief important
10 comments. Today and for essentially all of our
11 states and our nation's history we have had a
12 cancer on the body politic.

13 Amendments V and VI are radiation and
14 chemotherapy. The cancer will hopefully go
15 into remission, yet cancer is always lurking in
16 the body politic.

17 Another cancer is legalized extortion,
18 legalized bribery in this legislative process.
19 Remember that you are sworn to both uphold and
20 obey the Florida and United States
21 Constitutions.

22 As the old ad campaign said, come to
23 Florida, the rules are different here. The
24 rules here now are Amendments V, VI and all of
25 the other constitutional law, statutory law and

1 case law.

2 One suggestion from '81/'82, was Lee
3 Moffit came up with a very interesting idea,
4 and that would be to nest three House Districts
5 within one Senate District.

6 I think that was brilliant and I hope this
7 Legislature will adopt that concept, too. Last
8 thing, any questions? Any comments?

9 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
10 much, Mr. Harvill, we appreciate those
11 comments, sir. Next up we have Mr. Joseph
12 Sierra, followed by Linda Edson and after
13 Ms. Edson goes we will probably have a five
14 minute recess for members to use the restroom
15 and stretch for a moment, but it will only be
16 for five minutes and we will get going again.

17 But before that, Mr. Joseph Sierra, you
18 are recognized, sir, unless you are not here.
19 You are not recognized. Okay, he is not here
20 so we are going to move forward to Ms. Linda
21 Edson.

22 Ms. Edson has asked not to speak at this
23 time, okay, so what we will do is we will take
24 a five minute recess, members, and we will be
25 back here in five minutes. Please do not go

1 far. Thank you very much.

2 (Brief recess taken.)

3 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: If we could get
4 everyone to grab their seats, we are going to
5 get started again. Please grab your seats.

6 (Brief pause.)

7 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: If we could get
8 everyone to grab their seats, please, we are
9 going to start, please grab your seats.

10 (Brief pause.)

11 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Members, please
12 grab your seats. We want to get started.
13 Representative Rehwinkel Vasilinda, if you
14 could please grab your seat. Representative
15 Williams, if you could please grab your seat,
16 Senator Smith, if we could get you to grab your
17 seat, sir.

18 If you could please grab your seats, thank
19 you, please. Representative Baxley, if you
20 could grab your seat, please, sir.

21 Okay, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for
22 allowing us to take that break real quickly.
23 There was a Joseph Sierra who we missed earlier
24 and if Mr. Sierra is here I would like to give
25 you an opportunity to speak.

1 You were not here when we called your name
2 before. If you are here, please raise your
3 hand, we will have you come first, Mr. Sierra,
4 I do not believe you are here.

5 Okay, moving on, we are going to go to
6 Mr. Doug Croley, Mr. Croley is with the Gadsden
7 County, he is a Gadsden County Commissioner.

8 Mr. Croley, thank you very much for being
9 here, sir. You are recognized for your
10 comments.

11 MR. CROLEY: Thank you. I do appreciate
12 the opportunity to appear here and many of you
13 I do know and I thank you for your service.

14 And let me start by -- I have some
15 handouts here for the Chair, and if I may,
16 Mr. Chair, present this to you, I would
17 appreciate it.

18 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you, sir.

19 MR. CROLEY: Mr. Chair, as a County
20 Commissioner for a large segment of northeast
21 Gadsden County, I appear before this Honorable
22 Committee to request your most sincere and
23 serious consideration of the Havana area within
24 the Florida House of Representatives District
25 serving northern Leon County, that this be

1 included.

2 This request for realignment is based upon
3 the serious need to better join together in a
4 traditional manner communities of common
5 interest and to do so in compliance with State
6 and Federal law.

7 To this were the end, please allow me to
8 reference the following key points in support
9 of this redistricting request.

10 One, because of its geographical location,
11 northeast Gadsden County is closely aligned
12 with northern Leon County, as evidenced by a
13 shared county line on the eastern side and with
14 all east, west connector roads tying together
15 both counties.

16 Two, most of the business interest,
17 employment, higher education, retail consumer
18 shopping, social, medical, transportation,
19 recreational and cultural needs and
20 requirements of northeast Gadsden County are
21 closely tied to northern Leon County.

22 And third, northeast Gadsden County has
23 transitioned into a suburb of northern Leon
24 County with most families having a close
25 day-to-day presence within the Tallahassee area

1 north of west Tennessee Street, and north of
2 east Mahan Drive.

3 The attached Florida Department of
4 Transportation county map has been highlighted
5 in yellow to indicate northeast Gadsden County
6 in a manner that lends both simplicity and
7 reasonableness to this specific redistricting
8 request, and a description of the boundaries
9 are set forth in the attachment two.

10 Now, having discussed this matter with
11 numerous citizens, I am confident that this
12 proposal will be well received if implemented.
13 I have also touched upon this subject with each
14 of our present State Representatives, both
15 Representative Williams and Representative
16 Vasilinda, who are now serving Gadsden County
17 as well as Representative Coley, on the west
18 side, and I believe that each of them fully
19 appreciate the rationale that underlies this
20 proposal.

21 Now, I want to thank this committee for
22 its time and its attentiveness, and should any
23 member now have any questions I would be happy
24 to respond, otherwise I will be available to
25 your staff to provide any information needed.

1 And I thank you very much for the
2 opportunity, Mr. Chairs, Chairs, to present
3 this information to you. And I would like, if
4 I may, provide a copy to Representative
5 Vasilinda. I missed her earlier.

6 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Yes, please do so,
7 and thank you for being here today and for your
8 comments and for your public service to Gadsden
9 County and our state.

10 MR. CROLEY: Yes, thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you. We also
12 have next up Ms. Betsy Barfield with the
13 Jefferson County Commission. Commissioner
14 Barfield, thank you very much for being here
15 and followed after Ms. Barfield will be Susan
16 Watson.

17 COMMISSIONER BARFIELD: I did not bring
18 enough copies for everybody.

19 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: We will get copies
20 made, Ms. Barfield, thank you very much. You
21 are recognized to speak.

22 COMMISSIONER BARFIELD: Thank you very
23 much. I am honored to come before you today
24 and speak out for common sense and the
25 constitutional principle of one person and one

1 vote. I am Betsy Barfield, Commissioner for
2 District IV in Jefferson County.

3 Jefferson County is your neighbor to
4 Tallahassee, Leon County to the east. I come
5 before you to speak about two topics on
6 redistricting.

7 First, the unbalanced aspect of including
8 prisoners in the drawing of the district lines.
9 And second, the gerrymandering of Congressional
10 Districts II and IV.

11 I have given you some statistics for the
12 Jefferson County voting districts, and I am
13 sorry I don't have more for everybody else.

14 I am asking that you do not include in the
15 prison populations the drawing of the
16 districts. The reason for redistricting is to
17 make sure that everyone is properly
18 represented, and normally the voter numbers
19 somewhat track with the district population,
20 except when the prison population is included
21 in the counts.

22 Here are some facts. Prisoners are
23 convicted felons and they cannot vote. They
24 should not have district representation.

25 Prisoners are temporarily housed in Jefferson

1 County and are not residents of the surrounding
2 community and they should not be placed on an
3 equal footing of law abiding citizens.

4 Including the prison population in the
5 drawing of the districts drastically affects
6 small counties like Jefferson which I am going
7 to use as my example today.

8 Our population base is 14,000 people plus.
9 Jefferson County is split in to five single
10 member districts.

11 Each commission district should represent
12 approximately 2,100 voters, a very manageable
13 size. If all is even on the dais in Jefferson
14 County, then each Commissioner should represent
15 20 percent of the population and the voters,
16 not so in District III, because the prison
17 population is included in the drawing of that
18 district.

19 That Commissioner represents only
20 14 percent of the voters. Therefore, he is a
21 super voter on the Commission. There are two
22 Commissioners that represent 51 percent of the
23 voting population in Jefferson County.

24 So when super Commissioner votes, his vote
25 is weighted and the voters in that district

1 have more political clout than the other voters
2 in the county.

3 People, this is wrong. The practice of
4 including prisons in local districting plans
5 lead to serious distortion of political power
6 in county and state governments. How fair is
7 this to the people to whom we all represent and
8 answer to?

9 I ask you, please, do not include the
10 prison populations while drawing the lines for
11 the district in the state of Florida.

12 Next, I am not quite finished. Next,
13 Congressional District II and IV. It is
14 182 miles from Tallahassee to Jacksonville
15 Beach.

16 In this corridor there is a swath cut out
17 of the middle of north Florida that is
18 gerrymandered for Congressional District IV.
19 If you take a look at the district map for this
20 example you might wonder what do rural
21 communities in this swath have in common with
22 Jacksonville? None. I ask that you take a
23 hard look at correcting the representation of
24 these congressional districts.

25 I respectfully submit these comments to

1 you. Thank you. I am Betsy Barfield,
2 Commissioner, District IV.

3 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Commissioner, thank
4 you very much for your comments and for your
5 public service. We appreciate you being here.
6 Next up we have Ms. Susan Watson followed by
7 Bradley Maxwell.

8 Ms. Watson, you are recognized. Thank you
9 very much for being here.

10 MS. WATSON: Thank you very much.
11 Chairman Gaetz, Chair Weatherford and Committee
12 members, my name is Susan Watson. I am the
13 Regional Director of the American Civil
14 Liberties Union.

15 This process and these hearings are very
16 troubling. The Legislature has invited the
17 public to comment, but you don't give us
18 anything to comment on. Where are the maps?
19 This isn't a conversation.

20 You are not saying anything and you are
21 not giving us anything to talk about. I would
22 love to meet and talk to some of the people
23 running to represent me, but you have to draw
24 the districts to let me know who they are.

25 Make a map now. Present it to the public

1 now and start a meaningful conversation.
2 Otherwise, you are just wasting everybody's
3 time. We don't want fake hearings and
4 meaningless talk. We want fair, non partisan
5 districts.

6 The people of Florida overwhelmingly voted
7 to add Amendments V and VI to our Constitution.
8 Don't make a mockery of our vote and don't make
9 a mockery of democracy. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
11 Ms. Watson. Next up we have Mr. Bradley
12 Maxwell. Followed by Mr. Maxwell we will have
13 Nathalie Shortal or Shortal. Mr. Maxwell, you
14 are recognized, sir.

15 MR. MAXWELL: Thank you, Representative
16 Weatherford. My name is Bradley Maxwell. I am
17 a local business owner here in Tallahassee and
18 I want to thank all of you all for taking your
19 time to be here and to hear from the citizens,
20 and the main thing I wanted to say is I
21 appreciate the process.

22 I appreciate the opportunity for us to --
23 to have some input on these districts. I have
24 been to the website and I feel bad for you
25 guys, because in a lot of ways you are in a no

1 win situation.

2 If you would -- if you would come in with
3 maps drawn then we would be hearing from all of
4 the naysayers that, you know, you met in a back
5 room, smoke filled room and drew the maps
6 yourself and now you are just wanting us to
7 rubber stamp them.

8 So I appreciate the process, I appreciate
9 the website and the opportunity for us to have
10 input and thank you all for being here.

11 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
12 much, Mr. Maxwell. We appreciate that, sir.
13 Next up we have Ms. Nathalie Shortal, I hope I
14 am saying that right, Ms. Nathalie. She is not
15 speaking? Okay, well, thank you.

16 Thank you very much for being here. We
17 have Matthew Isbell. Did I say that right,
18 Isbell? Okay, thank you very much for being
19 here, Mr. Isbell, and after that we have got
20 Mr. Bob Fulford. Matthew is a student at FSU.

21 Thank you for being here, sir, you are
22 recognized.

23 MR. FULFORD: I have got to give you
24 credit, you are one of the few people that ever
25 get my last name right.

1 I do want to thank you for holding these
2 hearings. But the first thing I do want to
3 comment is I do feel like we should have a map
4 by now.

5 I understand that the Constitution does
6 say that a map cannot be voted on before 2012,
7 but I do feel like there is no real reason that
8 we can't see a proposed map, an idea.

9 Bigger states like California and Texas
10 already have maps coming out and I do suggest
11 this one thing.

12 I understand that the Constitution says
13 that we can't vote, you guys can't vote on a
14 map, then I highly recommend that we put you
15 guys who can do this as the Legislature, put it
16 on the ballot to become for the next ten years
17 from now redistricting, a map can be voted on a
18 year beforehand, because there is really no
19 reason to wait until the year of the elections
20 to have the vote.

21 The census came out a while ago. We have
22 the data, and maps can be done now. I don't
23 understand that delay, but beside the point,
24 basically I just want to advocate -- excuse me,
25 I just want to advocate that fair districts be

1 upheld as we passed it.

2 As many people have said, 63 percent of
3 us, of us voters supported fair districts which
4 say that parties, politicians, where they live
5 should have no effect on how the boundaries are
6 drawn.

7 Observe county and city boundaries and
8 just draw the lines as equal to population as
9 possible. Forty-eight out of the 67 counties
10 voted for fair districts.

11 Several of these counties, like Hendry,
12 Desoto, Sumter Counties, which always vote
13 Republican, voted for it, it is not a
14 Democratic, Republican issue. It is a non
15 partisan issue.

16 Over 28 counties voted over 60 percent for
17 it. I am from Broward, Palm Beach, we voted
18 over 70 percent because our area is already,
19 our districts look like spiderwebs and so we
20 especially were looking to see some more fair
21 districts that are drawn compactly and
22 succinctly.

23 I live in a small town of Cooper City
24 which is actually divided into two
25 Congressional Districts for no reason at all.

1 It has got like 40,000 people in it and my dad
2 moved across the street and we were in a new
3 district suddenly, and especially here for Leon
4 County and Tallahassee area, right now, as we
5 all know, District IV which goes all of the way
6 down to Jacksonville eats in, not just into
7 Leon County, but into Tallahassee, itself, and
8 I mean, beside the fact that rural Leon County
9 has nothing in common with Jacksonville,
10 Tallahassee especially doesn't.

11 I have actually, when I was in a different
12 apartment complex a few years ago was in
13 District IV and then I am back in District II.
14 I mean, if I move to a different apartment
15 complex because I am a student I shouldn't be
16 changing districts like that. This isn't a big
17 enough town to warrant it.

18 The same thing goes for our State Senate
19 districts. Right now I am in Senator
20 Montford's district. I voted for you in the
21 general election, but I used to actually also
22 be in the Third District back when I was in --
23 when I was in the IV as well, when I was living
24 a little further away outside in the county.
25 There is just no reason for that.

1 Leon County should be especially compact.
2 District IV also eats into part of Monticello
3 in Jefferson County and I know people have
4 talked about preserving compact minority
5 districts.

6 Monticello which is a majority black city
7 is divided between the second and fourth
8 district. I can't figure out why. So there is
9 clearly some problems with the lines now, and I
10 am just hoping that as we move forward that we
11 adhere to fair districts which was passed
12 overwhelmingly, it was passed fairly and by all
13 means, please start looking at these maps now.

14 Have a vote at the very beginning of
15 January, because we don't want to be dragged
16 into a long court battle. We don't want to be
17 waiting and seeing for candidates to see what
18 district they are going to be in.

19 It should be done now, the people have
20 spoken, and you know what, even if this creates
21 more competitive elections, it is good for
22 everybody here.

23 If you get put into a safe seat, you can
24 place and you can never run statewide. If any
25 of you guys end up in a more competitive

1 district because of fair districts, hey, you
2 become a better candidate, you can run for
3 statewide office one day, you can become
4 Governor, you know, Senator, whatever.

5 So there is plenty of benefits for you
6 guys and I just hope you will take that into
7 consideration. Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
9 much, Mr. Isbell, we appreciate that. Mr. Bob
10 Fulford is up next, followed by Christian
11 Camara.

12 Mr. Fulford, you are recognized, thanks
13 from being here.

14 MR. FULFORD: I am Bob Fulford, I live
15 here in Tallahassee, always have. I am a
16 private citizen. I saw in the paper I guess
17 yesterday my friend Alan Williams, had written
18 a letter and Senator Gaetz had written
19 something, you can be my friend, too, I just
20 don't know you, even though you represent me, I
21 don't know you.

22 Anyway, the substance of those two things
23 in the paper was that this meeting was going to
24 be here, everybody ought to come and it was
25 going to be open and transparent. And has been

1 alluded earlier, I had a notion that open and
2 transparent, I was going to ask Senator
3 Thrasher something, because he is an old pal of
4 mine, and he would be able to answer me.

5 But, I opened up my e-mail last night and
6 I belong to a whole bunch of rebel rouser
7 groups like League of Women Voters and Common
8 Cause and it wasn't them, but somebody said
9 that your leadership, that is to say the
10 President and the Speaker, had put a gag order
11 on you, and so what I want to know, is that
12 true.

13 Is there -- are you not going to be able
14 to talk to us? You can't even answer that,
15 okay, I got it, okay, I got it.

16 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Why don't you
17 finish your statement and we will answer that
18 question for you, how about that.

19 MR. FULFORD: Okay, one other thing. I
20 used to work in this building. I used to come
21 here every day up on the third floor. I was
22 here when they put the top two floors on. That
23 was interesting.

24 Today is the first time I have been here
25 in over ten years, and the reason I was here

1 ten years ago was for this same thing and we
2 did the same thing and we did it the same way.

3 And if you cross a mule and a jackass, a
4 horse and a jackass, you get a mule, and we
5 crossed mules -- I mean, horses and jackasses,
6 I will get it right here in a minute, but if
7 you want to see the mule, see what came out of
8 the last session like this.

9 Look at these ridiculous districts. No
10 matter what the content is, just to look at
11 them, they are not right. If it is not square
12 or a circle or maybe an oblong or an oval, but
13 these things look like the original gerrymander
14 which was some sort of a dragon.

15 I hope, I hope we can do better. I rather
16 doubt we can, but we will see. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
18 much, Mr. Fulford and thank you for asking a
19 very direct question. I am going to give you a
20 very direct answer.

21 The answer is that there is no gag order,
22 and this is a listening tour and our thought is
23 that we are going to spend the next three
24 months hearing from the citizens of Florida
25 just like you talking about what districts look

1 like today and how we can make them better.

2 And that is why we are here and that is
3 why we are giving the public an opportunity to
4 participate.

5 There certainly is no gag order, but we
6 are here to listen first and if there is time
7 afterwards, then to speak. I think that
8 everyone could agree that politicians spend
9 lots of time talking and very little time
10 listening and we are going to change that in
11 this process and we are going to listen more
12 than we talk.

13 So thank you very much for your comments,
14 sir, and we are going to move on to
15 Mr. Christian Camara, and after Christian we
16 are going to go to Ms. Sandra Mortham.

17 Christian, you are recognized, sir.

18 MR. CAMARA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, my
19 name is Christian Camara. I am a resident of
20 Tallahassee, Florida. And first of all, I want
21 to thank and commend all of you for the
22 opportunity that you have given the public to
23 give input on this very important issue.

24 I personally think the timeline that you
25 all adopted as prescribed by the Constitution

1 is the right one because it gives opportunity
2 for the public to give input before and during
3 the redistricting process in an open manner,
4 you know, like these special hearings that we
5 are having now around the state and through the
6 legislative session.

7 From what I understand, the meetings that
8 you all are going to be conducting during the
9 legislative session will also be open for
10 public testimony. So I do want to commend you
11 for the ample opportunity you all are giving to
12 hear us before you go ahead and deliberate and
13 proceed with the process.

14 I do want to stress, however, the
15 importance in my opinion of ethnic
16 representation. I was born and raised in
17 Miami, Florida. I have been a resident of
18 Tallahassee now for six years, and in -- in
19 Miami I can honestly say that we have in our
20 State and Federal delegation, it is a microcosm
21 of our diverse community, and I think that
22 although Tallahassee is not as complex in the
23 diversity that we see down in south Florida, it
24 is, nevertheless, a diverse community and I
25 would like to see that ethnic representation be

1 taken into account.

2 So I will be brief with my comments, so I
3 want to thank you all for listening to us.
4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
6 much, Mr. Camara. We appreciate your comments,
7 sir. Next up we have Ms. Sandra Mortham. She
8 is here to watch the process.

9 All right, thank you very much,
10 Ms. Mortham. After Ms. Mortham we have
11 Mr. Derron Bennett. Mr. Bennett. Sorry I
12 didn't give you more lead time there, sir, but
13 we will give you time to come up, and after
14 Mr. Bennett we are going to have Darnell
15 Lumpkin will be next.

16 Mr. Bennett, thank you very much for being
17 here, sir. You are recognized to address the
18 Committee.

19 MR. BENNETT: Okay. My question is mainly
20 based on the technical aspects of the software
21 being used. I have seen many errors in it
22 already. With the correctional maps they are
23 meant to be -- there is a goal of a zero, a
24 zero deviation over each map, but the actual,
25 the number that you all have as the mean for

1 each district is wrong.

2 It is one off. So when you get down to,
3 if you draw the maps like they are currently
4 drawn from the northwest corner of the state
5 down to the southeast corner, you will get down
6 to your last district, you will have 21 extra
7 individuals.

8 Well, if you correct the mean you will be
9 left with six extra individuals. So there is a
10 problem in the actual numbers in the software.

11 Also questions are, if other states are
12 using the My Districting Software, they
13 provided a, then called an AMI file, which is
14 so that you can put it on the Amazon web server
15 which is actually listed on the server
16 software.

17 The question is, will the State of Florida
18 actually provide that, because by providing
19 that it will actually save the state money,
20 because the servers, the server will not need
21 to be used at the same level as if they provide
22 it so private industries can actually build
23 their districts by themselves. What else?

24 There is also errors in the software where
25 if you attempt to lock a district that splits a

1 block or a voting district, and then you build
2 something else elsewhere, where you cut into a
3 higher level, say you locked, you attempt to
4 lock a block but you build something with a
5 voting district later or destroy the previous
6 block lock and build the voting district over
7 it.

8 And I had also had a question. Will the
9 State provide a deviant, it is called, it is a
10 type of linux, which My District Builder
11 suggests it is called linux which the State
12 should be providing an image file of the, My
13 District Builder with the appropriate data and
14 datasets so that the private industry could
15 just download a file which would probably be
16 about a gigabyte and no longer have to use
17 their server. That is all.

18 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: That is all? Well,
19 Mr. Bennett, I will tell you, your tech
20 suaveness is much above my pay grade and
21 probably most of the people on this Committee,
22 but you raise very interesting points, and in
23 fact, if you could stick around for a few
24 minutes we have got some staff that is here, we
25 have Mr. Alex Kelley who is one of our, is my

1 Staff Director and can probably answer some of
2 those questions.

3 And members of the Committee, what we will
4 probably do, is once we answer his questions,
5 if he feels like they are, if they suffice, we
6 may at least explain to everybody what the
7 answers are to those, because I frankly don't
8 have that, and, but I do think you bring up
9 good points.

10 We certainly want to have comments on our
11 software. We appreciate you very much for
12 being here, sir, so thank you for your
13 comments. Yes?

14 Next up we have Mr. Darnell Lumpkin.
15 Okay, thank you very much for being here,
16 Mr. Lumpkin. He is going to pass that up.
17 Next we have Mr. David Mock, I believe,
18 M-o-c-k.

19 Mr. Mock? Okay, we will keep moving
20 forward. Next after Mr. Mock we had Ms. Teri
21 Cariota, C-a-r-i-o-t-a. Ms. Teri, great, thank
22 you very much for being here. After Ms. Teri
23 we will have Adam Anthony Biblo, I believe is
24 how you say it, but Ms. Cariota, I hope I am
25 saying that right, you are recognized.

1 MS. CARIOTA: It is close. Good
2 afternoon, yes, it is Teri Cariota. Some of
3 you may recognize me, having seen me walking
4 around the halls during session.

5 For those of you who don't know me, I wear
6 several volunteer hats in Leon County. I am a
7 resident of Leon County, originally from Miami,
8 I am a retired law enforcement officer, but I
9 moved back here five years ago, and in fact,
10 retired on March 4th, 2006, and on March 5th of
11 2006, I was here working in Tallahassee, not
12 because I enjoy the politics but I enjoy the
13 public service.

14 In an interest of open disclosure as my
15 predecessor from Wakulla County did, I, too,
16 just so you are aware, I am a Democrat, and I
17 am in fact the Chair of the Leon County
18 Democratic Party.

19 However, I am not here on behalf of any
20 organization. I am here as an individual
21 citizen, as a resident and registered voter of
22 Leon County, and I am speaking from the heart
23 when I tell you that I consider myself a poster
24 child for unfair districts.

25 I live in Piney Z here in Tallahassee and

1 Senator Garcia can tell you, I see him in the
2 back of the room, if any of you have ever -- if
3 you don't know where Piney Z is, if you have
4 ever been to his house for any events, that is,
5 that is Piney Z and his -- and I don't mean to
6 embarrass you, Senator, but here is why I
7 mention that.

8 When I moved here I didn't realize I was
9 moving into that one tiny sliver of Tallahassee
10 and Leon County that is not represented by
11 people, not from Tallahassee, not from Leon
12 County, not from anywhere even close to
13 Tallahassee or Leon County.

14 And no disrespect intended to Senator
15 Dean, in fact, I appreciate the fact that you
16 actually do show up for delegation hearings
17 here in Tallahassee.

18 I know it is a long drive for you all the
19 way from Citrus County. My Senator lives in
20 Citrus County. Regardless of whether you are a
21 Democrat or Republican or you know, whatever,
22 that is just wrong.

23 When you look at the current maps, I know
24 we don't have the projected maps, but when you
25 look at the current maps, you will see, I call

1 it not that sore thumb that sticks out, but
2 that sore pinkie that sticks out.

3 And I do have respect for you, sir,
4 because, like I said, I, too, am a retired law
5 enforcement officer. And then my Congressman
6 lives all the way over in Jacksonville, and
7 that would be Linda Crenshaw.

8 I think the last time I ever saw
9 Congressman Crenshaw in Tallahassee or Leon
10 County is when he was in the Legislature
11 himself here many years ago, I believe.

12 It would be nice to see my elected
13 officials, the people who I can vote for a
14 little more frequently. Senator Montford can
15 even tell you, I, while I was not a volunteer
16 on his campaign, I was a volunteer for his
17 opponent for a man I couldn't even vote for.

18 I can't even vote for Senator Montford if
19 I wanted to, in the general election and I
20 apologize for that, but again, my Senator lives
21 all the way down in Citrus County, and while I
22 have visited your county, I just think that is
23 a little too far away for my representation.

24 I wholeheartedly believe in a two party
25 system and as strange as this sounds, I think

1 you all need to keep the politics out of
2 redistricting, keep the public service in
3 redistricting.

4 You all elected to serve all of the
5 public, not just the people who happen to be
6 the same registered party as yourselves. It is
7 not fair. Please do the right thing. Thank
8 you.

9 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
10 Ms. Cariota, and if you would, please let us
11 know next time the Senator is having a party,
12 because we never get invited. So if you could
13 let us give us a heads up.

14 Next up we have got Mr. Adam Anthony
15 Biblo, I believe is how you say it, and after
16 Mr. Biblo we have got Charles Parrish.
17 Mr. Biblo, thank you very much for being here,
18 sir, and you have the floor.

19 MR. BIBLO: Thank you, Chairman Gaetz, and
20 it is Biblo for the record, but very close,
21 very close.

22 I am going to make a few quick points,
23 many of them, what has already been said, so I
24 don't want to belabor them.

25 My main point is when you go through the

1 process and you slice up smaller jurisdictions,
2 and I mean smaller than Miami or St. Petersburg
3 or Jacksonville, that is populous and you slice
4 Tallahassee or Leon County into multiple
5 districts and we extend to, for example, Citrus
6 County as pointed out, our representation is
7 not what we -- we would expect.

8 And again, this is not in any way a
9 reflective of our current Senator who is very
10 good and I get e-mail from, and it is not
11 saying that, but in general, urban area should
12 be served by, should be an urban district,
13 should be a compact district, shouldn't be
14 divided.

15 When it is divided, whatever the intent
16 is, it gives the appearance that it is divided
17 for the wrong purpose. That is to dilute,
18 diminish the effect of the voters of the
19 political power of that urban area.

20 The same with a rural area. Why frustrate
21 the intent of the rural area by combining it
22 with slices or trenches of urban areas. So,
23 again, without trying to get into why the
24 districts have been set up that way, it gives
25 the impression that it is not serving the

1 public purpose.

2 So I ask you that as you go about
3 redistricting to make sure that the public
4 purpose is served.

5 When we study demographics one of the
6 things we look at, there is various measures,
7 indexes of similarity and dissimilarity, and
8 when you get two-thirds representation,
9 two-thirds one party an one-third the other,
10 but the population is closely split 50/50
11 throughout the state, it -- something doesn't
12 seem right.

13 I am going to leave you with that point
14 and ask you to fix it since it is in your
15 hands.

16 Lastly, I am going to point out, I agree
17 with Ms. Macnab, Mr. Harrington, and many other
18 speakers, the State voted the last election and
19 there was a consensus, if not overwhelming
20 majority, that passed two new Constitutional
21 Amendments and I would ask you to follow that
22 respectfully.

23 I would ask you to, excuse me, to respect
24 that mandate, and I want to thank you for your
25 time and I want to wish you all of the best in

1 this effort. All right.

2 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
3 much, sir, we appreciate your kind words. Next
4 up we have Mr. Charles Parrish. Mr. Parrish,
5 thank you so much for being here.

6 Mr. Parrish is with the Jefferson County
7 branch of the NAACP. After Mr. Parrish we will
8 have Ms. Linda Williams. Mr. Parrish, you are
9 recognized, sir.

10 MR. PARRISH: Thank you both, gentlemen,
11 from the House and the Senate. My primary
12 purpose here before this hearing is to
13 emphasize the fact that the smaller counties in
14 this state really don't have any representation
15 when you really boil it down to the way the
16 districts are drawn.

17 For example, Jefferson County, we don't
18 really have any representation, and I say it in
19 this manner because if a person, the
20 Representative for one section of our county
21 really doesn't need the few votes that the
22 county has in order to get elected.

23 Therefore, we don't have any
24 representation because that person really is
25 not concerned about us. He doesn't need us to

1 get elected.

2 It seemed to me when we teach in our
3 public schools, our civic classes, we teach one
4 thing about Florida government and we do the
5 opposite.

6 It seemed to me that representation should
7 be based upon population, true enough, but the
8 way our Legislature is designed, we are two
9 Legislature, the population is not really
10 represented in the House of Representatives,
11 especially in the small counties of Florida,
12 whereby a county is cut into three sections.
13 We don't really have representation.

14 You just got us as a figure on the book,
15 but we really don't have representation, and I
16 wish you would consider that when you start
17 redistricting the state.

18 As it was made my Commissioner from
19 Jefferson County made a comment about not
20 including the prison population in District
21 III.

22 In Jefferson County we have five
23 Commissioners who are elected by districts. If
24 you take the population, the prisoner
25 population out of District III, where would you

1 put it?

2 If that is the case, where are you going
3 to put all of the prisoners in the state of
4 Florida? Where are you going to put them?

5 So I am saying to you that you need to
6 look at the makeup of the whole state and give
7 the smaller counties better representation.

8 Now, when you legislate you mandate that
9 the 67 counties do this and thus and that, but
10 those small counties don't have representation
11 to really fight for the welfare of that county,
12 because if we are split up the way we are in
13 Jefferson County, we don't have any
14 representation. So I think that you will
15 consider that in your redistricting. Thank
16 you.

17 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
18 much, Mr. Parrish, for your comments, sir. We
19 next up have Ms. Linda Williams with the League
20 of Women Voters, followed by Mr. Don Curtis.

21 MS. WILLIAMS: I am just representing by
22 poor old family.

23 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Okay.

24 MS. WILLIAMS: In a snaky district of
25 Leon. So it is a pleasure to be here and I am

1 sorry I am not dressed better. Over 50 years
2 ago in high school civics, a nice old lady
3 named Ms. Blair brought up gerrymandering, and
4 I haven't thought about it for a long time,
5 until, say, the last ten years.

6 So we, you know, we are happy for the City
7 of Mayport and Jacksonville when they get
8 Federal funds to do something, but it doesn't
9 do a hang for us in Leon County or our morale.

10 I mean, I don't know whether we are so
11 important they need us in Duval or we are such
12 bad people they don't want us in Leon, but
13 please, be fair, and before I die, let me vote
14 in Leon County, because I live here.

15 I pay taxes here, as do my neighbors at
16 Piney Z and our friend from Wakulla County,
17 give us some local representation, and I am
18 glad to meet my Senator.

19 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
20 much. Thank you very much, Ms. Williams. Very
21 peppy and to the point. Next up we have
22 Mr. Don Curtis, Mr. Curtis, old friend, thank
23 you for being here, sir, and after Mr. Curtis
24 we have got a Ms. Kathleen Wallmeyer, you will
25 be next. So Mr. Curtis, the floor is yours,

1 sir.

2 MR. CURTIS: Well, thank you, and thank
3 you to all of you that are taking your time to
4 spend this summer. I am taking a little time
5 as well. We have been on the wild fires non
6 stop for weeks now, and as soon as I make my
7 comments I will have to leave. We have got a
8 13,000-acre wild fire knocking at our door step
9 above Lake City.

10 Having said that, again, I am Don Curtis
11 from Lake Bird, Florida, which is in Taylor
12 County, about 50 miles from here.

13 In this rural part of Florida we are a
14 conservative group of people, but you can't
15 always tell it from the election choices that
16 we have had, and historically redistricting has
17 been used to accomplish many objectives,
18 including routing past problems and bringing
19 balance to the choices the government have when
20 selecting representation, and we applaud that.

21 However, I am going to make a few comments
22 focused on House District X, Congressional
23 District II and Senate District III. When I
24 was preparing these remarks I was reminded of
25 my grandmother making biscuits.

1 She would roll out the dough, she would
2 take a jar and cookie cut the biscuits, and
3 then she would take the scraps and put them
4 altogether and make the dog biscuit. That was
5 the throw away. You didn't serve that at the
6 table.

7 And when you look at some of our
8 districts, for instance, in 2002, House
9 District X was gerrymandered in such a way that
10 the last time I collected it, it was 70 percent
11 one party, 20 percent another party and
12 10 percent of the miscellaneous.

13 In fact, that party that has had
14 70 percent has elected or reelected itself
15 without interruption since Reconstruction. So
16 for over 100 years.

17 The word disenfranchise comes to mind if
18 you are a conservative. That is wrong and we
19 just want hopefully this time to right a wrong
20 so that when you redraw House Districts in this
21 part of Florida we hope there can be balance so
22 that we want be the throw away House District
23 again.

24 And in 2002, though, a good start was made
25 to draw Congressional District Number II with a

1 bit more balance, and it took eight years, but
2 this past November, we were able to elect a
3 conservative of a different party to Congress
4 and that was the first time since
5 Reconstruction as well.

6 Change comes slow in the rural areas of
7 the Big Bend of Florida. Over 100 years
8 though, that is a little too slow.

9 Now, also in 2002, Senate District III was
10 redrawn with a bit more balance. So we had a
11 choice and we could elect a conservative and
12 Senator Dean is my district, and I am okay with
13 you being from Citrus County. That is not a
14 problem.

15 And just to close, I just, you guys are
16 going to analyze umpteen scenarios, and we just
17 ask for balance in this rural part of Florida
18 just to not be the throw away, to give us
19 something that gives us meaning full
20 representation that changes what we have had
21 for 100 years. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
23 much, Mr. Curtis. We have got Ms. Kathleen
24 Wallmeyer up. Did she have to leave? Okay, I
25 am sorry. Okay, well, thank you very much for

1 being here earlier.

2 We have got Mr. Joe Cain. Joe Cain is
3 with the Democratic Executive Committee, and I
4 think Mr. Cain, you have a presentation that we
5 are going to pull up on the screen, is that
6 right? Okay. Come on up.

7 Following Mr. Cain we are going to have
8 Ms. Laura Forster. Mr. Cain, you are
9 recognized, and I believe it is four or five
10 slides I think that you got with it.

11 MR. CAIN: Well, I just wanted to -- I am
12 kind of a newcomer to politics here, though I
13 helped the Obama with communication and my
14 background is science, not politics, and I have
15 only become involved with the Democratic
16 Executive Committee for the past year.

17 But there have been a lot of really good
18 points made and it seems to me that one thing
19 that should come out of this particular session
20 is following the idea that you all should go
21 ahead and make up something to shoot at. I
22 mean, a saw-man to go for.

23 Now, for example, go back a couple of
24 slides if you could do that, and -- we can't
25 get them bigger, okay, well, no problem.

1 I think that the -- what everybody has
2 been saying here and most of you really know,
3 but haven't -- it is really clear that there is
4 no -- not very much compactness and I am
5 thinking just to the technical, in a technical
6 way, draw a circle, that is pretty compact, but
7 for example, like Congressional District III,
8 oh, come on, now, how in the world, why in the
9 world would you draw something like that? Go
10 back another -- the previous one.

11 Now, this is the one that was complained
12 about earlier, Congressional District IV, which
13 has a little finger right into Tallahassee, and
14 that there is no real reason for that either.

15 And go back one more, yes. Well, yes,
16 that one, that is fine. I think that -- well,
17 somehow it didn't get all of it, but that is
18 all right, okay, well, okay, this is District
19 II and that is sort of an absurdity, too, in
20 terms of the topography of it, because why in
21 the world -- look off to the left there,
22 Pensacola and you are splitting a county for no
23 reason at all as far as I can tell.

24 I mean, if you just slice that
25 mathematically down the left edge and added a

1 couple of counties on the right, it would be a
2 lot more compact.

3 Then the last slide is the -- the same
4 thing happens in your State Senate Districts as
5 well as the Congressional Districts. I mean,
6 they don't really make much sense. So what I
7 am suggesting is, go ahead and give it a shot,
8 don't wait until all of the rest of the
9 sessions and the input are here.

10 I think it is real clear from all of us
11 and you will get the same kind of input from
12 the other people, the rest of the people in the
13 state, that go give it a shot, make, put up the
14 strawman and let us -- let us have at it then.
15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
17 much, sir. Thank you very much for that and
18 also for your presentation. We have Ms. Laura
19 Forster. Ms. Forster? Thank you very much.
20 After Ms. Forster we have Ms. Cynthia
21 Henderson.

22 Ms. Forster, you are recognized and thank
23 you very much for being here today. Forster, I
24 am so sorry.

25 MS. FORSTER: Forster.

1 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: I know. It is hit
2 and miss with we up here, I got to tell you.

3 MS. FORSTER: Okay, my name is Laura
4 Forster for the record.

5 Thank you, gentlemen, for being here, and
6 ladies. I came here today originally to say
7 thank you for having this meeting. It was very
8 well advertised. I knew about it.

9 I also was getting e-mails today saying
10 that it wasn't an open session here and you
11 couldn't speak and all of that kind of stuff.
12 So I don't know who is sending that out, but
13 that is not true, because from what I have seen
14 here you are listening well and I have a couple
15 of questions, a couple of other things I wanted
16 to say that I have seen here.

17 I have seen a lot of special interest
18 groups here, and I am not a Tea Party person,
19 per se, I am a registered Republican and I was
20 that up until the 2000 election, I was an
21 Independent and I felt that I needed to take
22 this country, what I saw was happening was
23 going way to the left.

24 And I don't think our forefathers intended
25 that to ever happen and I really feel it is due

1 to special interest groups and redistricting is
2 a very important part of the way we vote in
3 this country.

4 And I do see the funny lines and so forth
5 in all of the different places, but that is
6 based on population, and I really feel that you
7 guys have been hired by the public, you are our
8 Representatives, just like when I was a
9 teacher, I was expected to teach the children.

10 I didn't like, the reason I quit teaching
11 is I did not like the special interest groups
12 that were telling me, the professional, how to
13 teach children.

14 I have hired you. The other people in
15 this room have hired you. If we don't like
16 what you are doing, we will fire you. That is
17 how it works.

18 I expect you to have integrity, if you
19 don't have integrity then I will fire you.
20 Now, the courts are also there to watch you as
21 well, and if you don't have integrity, the
22 courts will step in because someone will sue,
23 that is why we have the right, I don't like
24 lawyers, I am a doctor's wife, I don't like any
25 of you who are lawyers.

1 I feel like I am -- but, you know, I am
2 having to learn that if I want the things to
3 happen in my country I have got to get
4 involved. So I am learning, so here today was
5 a very good learning. I thank you for that. I
6 thank you.

7 I am learning from the people who have
8 gotten up and spoken. I have learned a lot of
9 things from you as well, but I just want to let
10 you know, these special interest groups, the
11 Florida League of Women Voters, the NAACP, I am
12 calling you out, the ACLU, you do not represent
13 me. You do not represent me, and we need to
14 get off this color business. I don't see your
15 color here.

16 I don't see your ethnicity. You are
17 Americans. We need to start acting like
18 Americans and stop this ethnicity thing. I was
19 raised in Miami since 1969, that is not my
20 country anymore. It is chaos down there
21 because there is no leadership.

22 We joke about it up here, the -- down
23 there in Miami. We left Miami because it was
24 chaos during the Illion crisis. That is not
25 America, that is not how we run our --

1 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Ms. Forster, I
2 would ask you to keep the comments related to
3 redistricting.

4 MS. FORESTER: Yes, but the redistricting
5 area down there is going to have the same
6 problems, they are an olden district. They
7 don't represent the rural districts. I don't
8 know how you guys do that.

9 I can't make -- I have no way of knowing,
10 nobody here knows how to do this. They have
11 been hired to do this. That is my point. You
12 guys have been hired to do this, be informed,
13 listen to the people, the people really want it
14 to be fair.

15 They do, 63 percent wanted it to be fair,
16 but we can't do it without integrity, and the
17 last thing I want to say, I am sorry I got off
18 on a tangent there.

19 Please think about God, think about God,
20 because this is a big task before you and you
21 cannot do it without his help. You really
22 can't.

23 Our forefathers under the Fourth of July
24 presentation at my church, and I have read a
25 lot about George Washington, that is the man

1 you need to read about. He did not make it
2 through that war.

3 He did not make it through coming up the
4 rules of redistricting and things like that
5 without God's help, and that is all I have to
6 say. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
8 Ms. Forster, very much.

9 SENATOR GARCIA: Mr. Chairman?

10 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: I am sorry, yes,
11 Senator Garcia, you are recognized.

12 SENATOR GARCIA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman
13 and I do appreciate your comments and I am glad
14 you are getting incorporated into a political
15 process, but I can't go without making a
16 comment in reference to those that you said
17 about Miami-Dade County.

18 I live in Miami-Dade County, and I
19 represent Miami-Dade County and I am proud to
20 represent the diversity that exist in that
21 community.

22 Unfortunately, we spoke, we spoke -- let
23 me speak for a minute. Unfortunately, you may
24 have left, but I stayed there to fight and make
25 sure that we do the things right.

1 We have had our issues in Dade County,
2 absolutely we have, like every part of this
3 state has had their issues, but to stand up
4 here and criticize that Miami-Dade County is a
5 different country, no.

6 Miami-Dade County is part of the United
7 States of America. Miami-Dade County is a lot
8 of --

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
10 Senator.

11 SENATOR GARCIA: -- citizens that work
12 there, fight there and make sure that we do the
13 right thing. So I don't appreciate, I am
14 sorry, Mr. Chairman. I am sorry, Mr. Chairman,
15 I don't appreciate when those comments are made
16 about a community of hard working people who
17 came to this country to make sure that they
18 leave a better place for their families.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ma'am, you
20 are not recognized to speak. We have moved on.
21 No, he is not, he is not, he addressed the
22 body, and thank you very much, Senator, we
23 appreciate your comments.

24 SENATOR GARCIA: Thank you very much.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you

1 very much. We are going to continue to move
2 forward in the process. We only have about 30
3 minutes left. We are going to hear from
4 Ms. Cynthia Henderson, Ms. Henderson, you are
5 recognized to address the committee --

6 A VOICE: She had to leave.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: -- okay, she
8 had to leave, okay, so we will move forward.
9 Next up we have Mr. Daryl Barowicz.
10 Mr. Barowicz. Thank you very much for being
11 here, sir. After Mr. Barowicz we are going to
12 have Dorothy Inman-Johnson, but Mr. Barowicz,
13 thank you, sir, you are recognized, and you
14 have the floor.

15 MR. BAROWICZ: I don't know how to follow
16 that. My name is Daryl Barowicz, and I am a
17 resident of Tallahassee. I have been a
18 resident of the state of Florida for 40 years,
19 28 down in Pinellas County and the rest of it
20 up here in Tallahassee, and I am a retired
21 proud public servant in the state of Florida
22 for 38 years.

23 Just a few points. Some of them were
24 reiterated but I think they need to be
25 repeated. When your process of redistricting I

1 urge all of these hearings and based on fair
2 distribution of population, that these
3 districts are contiguous with each other, that
4 these districts do not focus on particular
5 parties.

6 They do not focus on particular party
7 Representatives or Senators, and above all,
8 after all of your public hearings and after all
9 of the money that is spent on the public
10 hearings, that you come back to the citizens of
11 the state of Florida with the outcome of these
12 hearings and show us the maps and show us how
13 they were based on, the comments that were
14 derived from these public hearings.

15 These meetings should take place after the
16 maps are drawn and brought back to the
17 citizenry so that they understand how they were
18 based and what they were based on. Thank you
19 for being here.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
21 very much. Next up we have Ms. Dorothy
22 Inman-Johnson, followed by Ms. Inman-Johnson we
23 have Curtis Baynes. You are recognized, thank
24 you for being here.

25 MS. INMAN-JOHNSON: Good afternoon. First

1 of all I thought I would be speaking on
2 redistricting before a non-political,
3 non-partisan commission that was appointed in
4 accordance with the referendum items that we as
5 citizens voted for.

6 The purpose or intent of that referendum
7 and what the take away was for Florida citizens
8 was that we would have a body that did not have
9 a dog in the hunt on the outcome of this
10 redistricting process.

11 I don't see how that can happen when
12 seated elected officials are overseeing the
13 drawing of these districts.

14 So making that point first, these points
15 cannot be emphasized often enough. There
16 should be no gerrymandering in this process.
17 People have spoken about that over and over
18 again since I have been sitting here.

19 There is no good reason why you have to
20 run a district line down an Interstate highway
21 to pick up some more people in order to elect
22 anybody to the Legislature.

23 Second, all of the districts should be
24 compact and contiguous so that the people that
25 those Representatives are being elected for

1 know their constituents, know the areas they
2 are representing, and can put themselves there
3 often enough so that their citizens have real
4 input into the process.

5 Third, do not divide urban communities.
6 Do not chop up and divide counties.
7 Representatives should represent people who
8 have interests and needs in common. There is
9 no one size fits all in the state of Florida.

10 I hope that at some point in this process
11 I will see that non-political, non-partisan
12 commission we thought we voted for, but if not,
13 I hope at least the body will abide by the
14 principles that ensure fair elections,
15 representative government, and a government
16 that the people can feel really represents
17 their interests. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
19 very much, Ms. Inman-Johnson. Next up we have
20 Mr. Curtis Baynes, followed by Alejandro
21 Posada.

22 Mr. Baynes, you are recognized, sir.

23 MR. BAYNES: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman
24 or Mr. Chairman and everybody. My name is
25 Curtis Baynes, 1323 East Tennessee Street in

1 Tallahassee. I am here representing no one
2 other than a group of one. As anyone in
3 Tallahassee can tell you, I represent no one.

4 I, although I don't have represent -- I am
5 representing anyone, I do echo some of the same
6 comments that you have heard here this evening
7 and the only visuals I have got for you are
8 these.

9 My State Representative's office is
10 75 miles west of my house. My Congressman's
11 office is 158 miles east of my house. I think
12 that while they may be nice people, they are
13 not representative of me and I would certainly
14 like to see compact districts. Well, more
15 compact districts anyway.

16 Based upon book closings at last election,
17 now, they may be a little bit different now, I
18 would like to see no district in Florida with
19 more than 37 percent Republican, no more than
20 43 percent Democrat, and at least 20 percent
21 Non-Affiliated voters such as myself. That is
22 what the state registration roles show. I
23 think that would be helpful in producing more
24 fair districts, thank you.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you

1 very much, Mr. Baynes. Next up we have
2 Alejandro Posada, followed by Phillip Howard.

3 Mr. Posada, thank you very much for being
4 here, sir. You are a college student at FSU?

5 MR. POSADA: Yes, sir.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Good to see
7 you.

8 MR. POSADA: First off I would just like
9 to thank the Committee for allowing me the
10 chance to speak.

11 I think one of the primary goals of this
12 whole process has to be transparency and I
13 think ya'll have done a great job here today.

14 You mentioned earlier how a lot of times
15 we hear politicians talk, but rarely do we see
16 them listening to us, so I really appreciate
17 that.

18 I think something that needs to be of
19 primary concern is that we don't rush anything
20 here because I know there have been a few
21 people that have come up and said we need to
22 get this taken care of now, immediately, we
23 need maps now, what-have-you.

24 But I think it is important that in the
25 interest of transparency that everyone's views

1 be allowed to be heard, and it seems like today
2 we have had a good bit of that going on, but I
3 think that needs to continue until, you know, I
4 feel that everyone has gotten a chance to voice
5 their opinion.

6 So essentially I would just like to urge
7 you not to rush this, to think it through, to
8 listen to all of your constituents and to keep
9 that in mind. Thank you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
11 very much, Mr. Posada, we appreciate your
12 comments. We have one last comment card from
13 Mr. Phillips Howard. Mr. Howard, you are
14 recognized, sir. It looks like you are also a
15 student at FSU. Thanks for being here.

16 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, thank you
17 Mr. Chairman. I will just keep brief, because
18 I know --

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: If you could
20 speak into the microphone a little bit, too.

21 MR. HOWARD: Yes, I would just like to
22 also thank you for having such an open
23 procedure between the maps you put online. I
24 have had a lot of fun playing with them and
25 these meetings, it was very well advertised. I

1 was able to hear about it with no problem.

2 One thing that I would just like for the
3 Committee to consider is to make sure more than
4 anything that districts are fair and balanced
5 as opposed to being nearly compact.

6 In this day and age I can take this little
7 device right here and contact my Congressman or
8 any other Representative regardless of where he
9 is. So if districts do have to be divided a
10 bit or certain areas, it is okay as long as it
11 is in the general interest of the people and
12 once again, just thank you for holding these
13 meetings and have a wonderful day.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much. We appreciate those comments.

16 Members, that is the end of the list of
17 the comments of those who told us they wished
18 to speak. Is there anyone in the audience who
19 wishes to speak who has not had the
20 opportunity? Now would be a good time to raise
21 your hand and we would get to you. Anyone who
22 has not had the opportunity to speak?

23 Okay, with that we have actually an e-mail
24 someone who sent us during the meeting, and we
25 are going to try to do this at all of our

1 meetings to give you the opportunity for some
2 public input. So many could not be here from
3 Franklin county.

4 A gentleman by the name of Ned Pooser and
5 Ned is from Sopchoppy, and he said, "First, I
6 would like to thank the Senate President, Mike
7 Haridopolos and this Committee for allowing
8 public access to the redistricting project.

9 Second, I am from Franklin County, and as
10 a small rural county our issues differ from our
11 larger urban neighbors. We would like to be
12 included in the district of other rural
13 counties so that our voices are not smothered
14 by larger urban counties. I hope you will
15 consider this in your redistricting plans.
16 Thank you." Ned Pooser, who could not be here,
17 but asked that that would be on the record.

18 Okay, we had someone who had spoken
19 already but we do have a minute. He asked if
20 he could have one minute, and Mr. Harvill, we
21 will give you one minute, sir, but please make
22 it quick, yes, sir, thank you.

23 MR. HARVILL: Greetings, again, I just
24 want to say as Former Speaker Moffit's
25 brilliant idea to reiterate it. Three House

1 Districts within one Senate District, that
2 would be beautiful. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
4 very much. Okay, members, that is the end of
5 the public testimony and kind of step one in
6 our process.

7 Before we close out I would like to ask
8 the members, is there any, any public comment,
9 any comment from members of the committee or
10 anything specific that anyone would like to
11 address or any questions from any members the
12 of the committee, now would be the time to do
13 that? Real quickly, yes, we have
14 Representative Cruz for a question.

15 REPRESENTATIVE CRUZ: Thank you, Chair
16 Weatherford, thank you very much. I just have
17 a quick question. I notice that we have
18 essentially an interpreter here for the deaf
19 and I appreciate that very much.

20 My question is relative to mostly I would
21 suspect the south Florida population, when
22 these hearings go down in the south Florida
23 area, perhaps in the Haitian communities or in
24 the heavy Hispanic communities, will there also
25 be interpreters for that?

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I believe
2 that that is in the plan, Representative Cruz,
3 and we will do everything we can to make sure
4 and accommodate all of the ethnic and language
5 groups that are out there that would need to
6 have some interpretation necessary.

7 So the answer to that is yes, but we will
8 work to try to make sure that that happens at
9 all of the locations.

10 REPRESENTATIVE CRUZ: Thank you very much.

11 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Thank you,
12 Mr. Chair. I had someone to call and wanted to
13 know if they cannot e-mail or do anything with
14 computers, they want to send a handwritten
15 entry to the Committee. Who do they send it to
16 and is that a possibility?

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Just to
18 reiterate. Your question is, if someone wants
19 to send a handwritten note or a letter that is
20 typed but they don't have the ability to
21 e-mail, where would they send it?

22 They would -- I will tell you what we will
23 do. We will get you an address, because I
24 don't have that in front of me, but we will get
25 you an actual mailing address and we will get

1 an address for the Committee.

2 I think if you go on to our website, the
3 Redistricting Committee actually has an address
4 that you can mail to. That would be the
5 address, but we will make a public statement
6 about that tonight at the 6:00 hearing.

7 Next we have Representative Rehwinkle
8 Vasilinda for a question. Never mind, am I
9 missing anybody?

10 Okay, I think Senator Gaetz, you had a
11 comment. Mr. Co-Chairman, you are recognized.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Mr. Chairman and thank you for the fair and
14 thoughtful way in which you conducted today's
15 hearing. No matter what anyone's point of view
16 might be, I don't think anybody can leave here
17 today saying that they did not have the
18 opportunity to be heard and that is a credit to
19 you, Mr. Chairman, and I know it is the way we
20 will conduct our hearings in the upper 25
21 hearing locations across Florida.

22 I can tell you that I have filled a legal
23 pad with three pages of notes, very good
24 constructive suggestions and comments from
25 individuals who -- who brought concerns from

1 their local community and their neighborhood
2 about problems that need to be rectified in this
3 redistricting process.

4 I wanted to just reiterate something that
5 we indicated in the opening, because there may
6 be folks who weren't here for the opening, and
7 therefore, did not hear what our procedure is
8 going to be.

9 There were some people who asked the
10 question, well, why don't we produce maps first
11 because the public won't have an opportunity to
12 know about or comment on any maps that might be
13 drawn in, later in the process.

14 First of all, as the Chairman indicated,
15 the Speaker indicated, we believe that it is
16 probably better to listen first before we
17 commit ourselves to starting to draw maps so
18 that we will have the benefit of the kind of
19 advice and guidance that we have received today
20 from a number of people who have made some very
21 constructive suggestions about their own
22 neighborhoods.

23 Secondly, let me just reiterate, if I may,
24 Mr. Speaker, what we said at the beginning, and
25 there may be some folks who wanted to know why

1 we didn't have the answer here before we had
2 the question and they may not have been here
3 for the beginning of the hearing.

4 Let me repeat what we said and this is our
5 procedure. Our intent is to use the
6 recommendations made at 26 public hearings and
7 through our Internet sites, and I may say, we
8 are already getting suggestions, including
9 proposed maps on our Internet sites and they
10 are there for you to look at.

11 Our intent is to use the recommendations
12 made at hearings and through our Internet sites
13 as the basis for developing one or more options
14 for district maps. This is important.

15 We will then share those options in open
16 public meetings, take comments from the public
17 before any votes are taken even in Committee,
18 so you will see maps before the first vote is
19 taken even in Committee.

20 And then as we said at the beginning,
21 throughout the process we will solicit
22 additional public comment so that proposed maps
23 can be matured with the public involved at
24 every step all before the Legislature approves
25 any maps.

1 So if there were people who may have had
2 prepared remarks about why we didn't do maps
3 first or maybe you weren't here at the
4 beginning, perhaps this will help clarify what
5 our process is.

6 And then, Mr. Speaker, there was some
7 questions about the timeline and again, let me
8 reiterate what we laid out at the beginning
9 that perhaps not everyone had an opportunity to
10 hear.

11 That is, first, according to the Florida
12 Constitution we cannot meet in legislative
13 assembly to vote on maps until January. What
14 we did is to move up the legislative session by
15 two months so that we could begin voting
16 earlier than we ordinarily would.

17 Some individuals asked and it was a very
18 good question, well, why does some other states
19 have their maps already done? Well, the state
20 of Illinois did theirs in a back room, came out
21 and said here are the maps, and that was that,
22 but the way the Bureau of the Census, and we
23 don't choose to operate that way.

24 The way the Bureau of the Census works,
25 not all of the census information comes to all

1 of the states at once. They come in tranches.
2 They come in groupings, and Florida was in the
3 last grouping to get our census information, so
4 that is why we are a little bit later in the
5 process than some other states.

6 However, our President, President
7 Haridopolos, and our Speaker, Speaker Cannon,
8 told Representative Weatherford and me that we
9 needed to begin immediately after the
10 legislative session and we have begun literally
11 the month after the legislative session to have
12 public hearings to gather input so that we can
13 meet a timeline that we laid out for you.

14 Our timeline is listed on the House and
15 Senate websites so you can see how the timeline
16 works, and you can see the various stops that
17 we are obliged to make by law before we can
18 vote on any maps and before any maps are
19 finalized.

20 Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would mention that
21 any Legislator, any member of this Committee or
22 any Legislator who is not a member of this
23 Committee or any special interest group or any
24 citizen can produce maps at any time and those
25 maps will be immediately placed on our website

1 so that the public can see them.

2 So there is no requirement that people be
3 silent about their views. Any member of this
4 Committee, any Legislator can produce any map,
5 any time and we will make it available to the
6 public.

7 And the groups that are very interested
8 this year, and of course, they are interested
9 each time there is a census in how
10 redistricting is carried out. Those groups as
11 well have the opportunity to produce a map.

12 They did ten years ago, but sadly,
13 apparently not so far this time, but as soon as
14 they do produce a map, those maps will be made
15 available on the website, the Senate and House,
16 as soon as those maps are provided to the
17 Senate and the House.

18 I would just reiterate that there will be
19 an opportunity for the public to review any
20 plan before that plan is voted on. The House
21 has already adopted rules. We will recommend
22 to the Chair to the Senate, that the Senate
23 adopt similar rules so the public has an
24 opportunity to see every amendment, every plan,
25 every iteration and have the opportunity to

1 comment to before it is voted on.

2 So again, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank
3 you for your work today. I want to echo what
4 you said when you were interviewed about
5 Amendments 5 and 6, and that is that they are a
6 part of our Constitution, and I, like you, like
7 all of the members here, swore an oath to
8 preserve, protect and defend the Constitution
9 of the United States and of the State of
10 Florida, and those provisions are in our
11 Constitution. They will be faithfully abided
12 by.

13 But I would also point out that there are
14 other requirements of redistricting, such as
15 the Federal Voting Rights Act and various
16 Federal case law that we must also take into
17 account. Those aren't secret. They are on the
18 Senate and House websites in their entirety.
19 You can read them and see where there may be
20 some opportunities to comment or provide your
21 input on how your neighborhood, your community
22 can be best represented by applying the
23 standards that are in the Federal Voting Rights
24 Act and in our State Constitution.

25 I look forward to the continuation of our

1 hearing tonight beginning at 6:00. If there
2 are those who would like to come back, we would
3 welcome you, and we will be in Pensacola and in
4 Ft. Walton Beach tomorrow, in Panama City the
5 next day, and then moving through the entire
6 state to give all of the people of Florida a
7 chance to be heard on the Internet, as well as
8 face to face with their Legislators.

9 So thank you, Chairman Weatherford, for
10 your presiding at this hearing and for the good
11 work that you have done.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
13 very much, Mr. Chairman. We are looking
14 forward to working with you. If I could just
15 quickly say, for the members of the public who
16 have had an opportunity to speak or would like
17 to add more, please feel free to e-mail us.

18 You can also mail us, we actually do have
19 a pamphlet representative that has the address
20 on it, if you could pick that up on your way
21 out.

22 We look forward to working with you, and
23 of all of the legal records from today's
24 meeting, video, podcast, transcripts will be
25 available in the coming days on the House and

1 Senate websites.

2 We will be here at 6:00 this evening and
3 going until 8:00. Members, please be on time,
4 and with that, Senator Gaetz moves we rise.

5

6 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Have a seat,
7 everyone. We appreciate everybody coming back
8 for the part two of our hearing, Joint
9 Redistricting Hearing today.

10 My name is Will Weatherford, and I am one
11 of the Co-Chairs of this Committee, along with
12 Senator Don Gaetz, who is the other Co-Chair.

13 We took three hours of public testimony
14 earlier today. I thought it was very
15 productive and I want to thank again the
16 members of the public who are here today who
17 were here earlier this afternoon and have also
18 come back.

19 We are very grateful for the public
20 participation that you have given us and we are
21 going to continue in that mode.

22 And so, members, what we are going to do
23 is so far we have probably got eight or ten
24 cards here. We expect to get a few more, but
25 we are going to go through them one at a time

1 and give people the opportunity to speak before
2 this Committee, and then we will move forward
3 and move on and hit the road and go to
4 Pensacola.

5 So with that in mind we are going to start
6 with our first person here, and that is
7 Mr. David Best, if Mr. Best is here. Mr. Best
8 represents the Coffee Party, and Mr. Best,
9 thank you for being here, sir.

10 You are recognized to address the
11 Committee. Please give Mr. Best your
12 attention, please.

13 MR. BEST: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Touch the -- there
15 is a button there, sir.

16 MR. BEST: Hello, hello. Better, better.

17 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Yes, you are on.

18 MR. BEST: Okay. My name is David Best, I
19 am here as a citizen first and a voter. I have
20 voted in every election that I can remember in
21 the last 30 years. I know I have missed one or
22 two, but the ones I remember, in almost all of
23 them.

24 I am also here as a member of the Coffee
25 Party, USA. I work with the Coffee Party of

1 Florida, the local Coffee Party group. The
2 Coffee Party strives to maintain independence
3 from all political parties and labels.

4 We are grassroots volunteers who want to
5 restore stability to the political process that
6 we believe has suffered from extreme
7 polarization by both parties, and we too often
8 see parties, as a matter of fact, every day in
9 the paper I see it.

10 I think parties are working too often in
11 their own interest for the next election rather
12 than the common good of the people. To that
13 end I also want to say I believe in the
14 Constitution of the United States and the
15 Constitution of the State of Florida.

16 My goal here is to insure that the voice
17 of the people, not the power of the dollar and
18 special interests are the most considered and
19 will decide the policies and directions of our
20 state.

21 To that end I wish to compliment the
22 Florida Legislature on the openness that it has
23 shown so far in this process, particularly for
24 the things you have put on-line and made
25 available to me, just the common person, and I

1 want to encourage you to continue with that
2 openness and transparency when the rubber hits
3 the road down the road. Okay.

4 Unfortunatly the absence of maps. I
5 don't know what you heard this afternoon, but
6 it just seems like we could have had some maps
7 with some ideas of where you are going. Have
8 got to believe that you have studied this and
9 probably everyone of you, particularly with
10 incumbency, knows what you are planning to do
11 in this redistricting process.

12 So I would request that rather than wait
13 until the end and receive a lot of public
14 hearing input, that you go ahead and get some
15 maps out there and give us some ideas of where
16 you are going so that at least the people later
17 in the hearing process will have more ideas
18 what is going to happen beyond what we have got
19 now.

20 I believe that the voters have already
21 given you -- whatever we say, the will of the
22 voters was made clear in the last election, V
23 and VI Amendments passed, 63 percent of the
24 vote, that is pretty telling right there.

25 To me when I read them they are fairly

1 clear. So I believe the intent of those
2 amendments is clear, but I also believe that
3 the intent of many political incumbents,
4 particularly those in high ranking positions,
5 has been made clear as well by actions more so
6 than by words. Time is fleeting.

7 I think this timeline is going to be a
8 very difficult one to maintain. I have been on
9 projects where I looked at and I thought this
10 project is going -- there is no room at all for
11 any error.

12 It is going to be hard enough to stay on
13 this timeline as it is. So I encourage you to
14 really get real and certainly you have all
15 worked on these project plans and you have got
16 to know this. I can't tell you this. You know
17 more than I do.

18 So lastly I guess as a Coffee Party
19 activist I pledge to support leaders who work
20 towards positive solutions and to hold
21 accountable those who obstruct them. I am here
22 to ask that you be leaders that I can support,
23 and I thank you very much for the opportunity
24 to comment.

25 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very

1 much, Mr. Best. We appreciate your comments
2 here today. One thing I did not point out
3 earlier and you certainly fell within this time
4 frame, Mr. Best, but for those who did not get
5 a chance to speak earlier, we are going to try
6 to keep the comments between three and five
7 minutes.

8 That kind of seems to be the wheelhouse
9 that has worked so far. We are going to
10 continue to work during in that direction and
11 also I will announce the name of the person who
12 is going to be speaking and then try to put you
13 on deck so if you are next, you will hear your
14 name as well and just be prepared it come up
15 and speak when that person ahead of you is
16 done. So again, Mr. Best, thank you very much
17 for being here.

18 The next speaker that we have is, I
19 believe, Jayce Michael Hill, if I am saying
20 that right. It could be Joyce, but I frankly
21 can't tell. I apologize.

22 You are good, okay, all right, he is
23 waiving and I don't know, usually with Bills we
24 say waive in support or so we will just say he
25 waives. We have Matthew Isbell.

1 Matthew spoke to us earlier, certainly you
2 are welcome to come back and speak. No
3 problem, we are happy to have you. Thanks for
4 being here. After Matthew we will have Dan
5 McDaniel.

6 MR. ISBELL: Thank you again for letting
7 me speak. I know I spoke to you guys earlier
8 today. I kept this short earlier because I
9 wanted to let other people speak, but I decided
10 to sign up again just to address some.

11 One other key thing and it was brought up
12 at the end of the meetings and that was the
13 issue of minority districts and minority
14 representation in not only in the Legislature
15 but Congress.

16 Specifically the Congress right now of our
17 25 seats we are going to go to 27 I know. We
18 have three majority African-American districts
19 and several majority Hispanic districts.

20 The comment and there has been questions,
21 okay, well, fair districts has passed, what
22 about things like the Third District which
23 stretches from Jacksonville down to Orlando.

24 You also have the Hastings District which
25 stretches over about three or four counties in

1 south Florida, and, you know, there has been
2 some arguments made by some Legislators, some
3 activists, on both sides of the aisle saying
4 that, you know, if something like the Third
5 District is eliminated that will hurt minority
6 representation.

7 And I just want to offer a different point
8 of view on that, that, you know, especially in
9 terms of the Voting Rights Act which was passed
10 back in '65, to insure minority representation
11 not only being allowed to vote, but also be,
12 drawing majority African-American districts,
13 but the key thing about that is that was
14 designed to insure that, especially in the
15 south where they have been in the process for
16 100 years, Legislators did not draw lines to
17 carve up a compact African-American community
18 that already existed.

19 Where there was a compact area and people
20 would draw three or four districts between it.
21 The VRA does not require those drawings, you
22 know, a district that stretches from
23 Jacksonville all the way to Orlando, basically
24 packing every African-American imaginable in.

25 In fact, there are districts similar to

1 that in North Carolina and Georgia have been
2 struck down in past Supreme Court cases as
3 basically racial gerrymandering where you are
4 packing every Democrat, every African-American
5 in, and I just don't feel, you know, this is
6 not stated for anybody specifically, but I just
7 want to say for the record, I don't feel that
8 is needed.

9 We have plenty of white, majority white
10 districts, majority white states that have
11 elected African-Americans, Hispanics, anybody.
12 We are not, we are no longer in the, pardon my
13 words, the Jim Crow, south, where you needed,
14 you need a majority minority district to elect
15 a minority.

16 It is just not the case and I just want to
17 make that point clear, that is what I feel
18 that, you know, if there is, if you can create
19 a majority minority district that is compact
20 like we have now for the Rico Wilsons down in
21 south Florida where I am from, where I have
22 lived in at different points in my life, that
23 is a compact district, but something, a
24 district that stretches from Jacksonville to
25 Orlando, it is just not needed. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
2 much, Mr. Isbell, we appreciate your comments
3 again. Next we have Mr. Dan McDaniel,
4 following Mr. McDaniel we have Dustin Ponder.

5 Mr. McDaniel, thank you very much for
6 being here, sir, you are recognized.

7 MR. MCDANIEL: Yes, thank you,
8 Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee. I
9 appreciate you taking the comments from the
10 public. I don't envy the job that you have. I
11 know that in past committees, if I can just
12 preface by saying this, the members that I have
13 known of this Committee while the charges have
14 always seemed to be that they are going to do
15 something in their favor, it seems that they
16 always came away and found that it was more of
17 a punitive appointment rather than one that
18 managed to allow them to cash in on any kinds
19 of favor.

20 What I wanted to do in the 30 years of
21 business and government that I have had is just
22 share for a moment a perspective on the, both
23 the analysis and process management sides of
24 the redistricting, or really anything that you
25 wanted to tackle, business or government-wise,

1 at least looking back at some of the more
2 difficult projects I have, and I don't want to
3 compare them with the enormity of your task.

4 But in analysis we are always, my
5 background, just to let you know, is an
6 economist and IT manager, and what we are doing
7 in an analysis is always taking these complex
8 problems and trying to break them down into
9 something manageable, and clearly, at the IT
10 management level or any kind of higher upper
11 management level, you can't understand every
12 detail, even though we try and we want to.

13 On the process management side we are
14 trying to come up with some simple rules that
15 we can follow as we are dealing with the
16 analysis, and what I just wanted to present is
17 what I think would be a fair way to perhaps
18 deal with the constraints, not just of the past
19 and of the political, but also of the
20 amendments that are in place.

21 And in three simple steps what I might
22 propose is to first look at the state of
23 Florida and rather than start drawing from
24 Escambia or start drawing from Key West or
25 somewhere in between, instead recognize that

1 you as members of different districts currently
2 have so many different composite makeups within
3 your district.

4 And it might be best if we tried to keep
5 these districts not just contiguous and not
6 just community oriented, but also to favor the
7 interest within that particular area, whatever
8 they might be, agricultural, urban, whatever,
9 and my proposal simply would be to start with
10 the urban cities in the state of Florida.

11 And by the populations I looked at, if you
12 took the House Districts, for example, I think
13 you would have nine cities in the state of
14 Florida that had populations over the size of
15 one House District.

16 Jacksonville would fit five House
17 Districts, a couple of cities would fit two and
18 the rest one, a couple of cities, I don't know,
19 if my numbers were exactly right, number ten
20 and eleven were about the size of a district,
21 maybe not quite.

22 But if the principles of the redistricting
23 were applied then within each of these cities,
24 then a lot of the political problems and
25 accusations that might arise at a statewide

1 level would at least go away within the locale.
2 You are creating urban.

3 And then the second step would be to look
4 at SMSA's, something of that sort, we have got
5 a lot of them around the state and fill the
6 rest in that way. They would leak over into
7 some of the urban cores, but cover more of the
8 suburban areas and you would have suburban
9 styled districts, and then when you are done,
10 some may argue and some always will that you
11 have a gerrymandered looking district.

12 I would argue that rather than being
13 gerrymandered, they would probably look more
14 like swiss cheese, maybe donuts here and there,
15 but they would be the more rural and exurbia
16 type districts, and I think they would
17 represent a more common interest in that
18 respect, but if you looked at those cities and
19 those SMA's, then the rest of the state, if it
20 filled out and looked like a gerrymander, I
21 think that under the provisions as the way I
22 have read Amendments V and VI, I think it could
23 all be justified and that is just presenting
24 things from an analytical and process
25 management standpoint.

1 I want to thank you all for your time.

2 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
3 much, Mr. McDaniel. We appreciate those
4 comments. Next up we have Mr. Dustin Ponder,
5 who is here. After Mr. Ponder we will have Jay
6 Liles.

7 MR. PONDER: Thank you, sir. I was here
8 earlier, you know, and I have heard a lot of
9 talk today about democracy and listening to the
10 will of the public before we put out maps on
11 redistricting.

12 And I just have to say, I mean, who are we
13 talking about democracy for, you know? I mean,
14 you look at the last redistricting maps and the
15 result was 50 percent of our Senators and
16 Representatives are millionaires. When I think
17 in the general population, it is about five
18 percent, and I don't think people are naive
19 here.

20 I don't expect to convince you all to draw
21 up maps with my arguments and to implement fair
22 districts. I mean, I think we all know how
23 politics works.

24 The politicians have the interest of
25 working families, people of color and the poor

1 in mind first, instead of as one woman per
2 earlier, the people that hire them, we would
3 already have maps.

4 We wouldn't be having a lawsuit where the
5 people are both defending and paying for the
6 prosecution to overturn the Fair Districts
7 Amendment.

8 So all I got to say is you all are saying
9 you are listening to the public. You are
10 saying you support democracy, not just for the
11 top two percent, but for everybody.

12 Well, my father always used to say,
13 actions speak louder than words, no matter how
14 eloquently put. So, I mean, I am hoping that
15 the rest of the public will join me and just
16 say, let's get to it, you know, we know what
17 the game is.

18 The people know what the game is. I mean,
19 we have been through it all already. Let's see
20 the maps, let's move forward.

21 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
22 Mr. Ponder. Next up we have Jay Liles, after
23 Mr. Liles, we have Jack Davis.

24 Mr. Liles, thank you very much for being
25 here, sir.

1 MR. LILES: Thank you, Chairman
2 Weatherford, thank you, Chairman Gaetz, and the
3 members of the Committee.

4 I am Jay Liles. I reside at 1962 Vineland
5 Drive here in Tallahassee. Prior to living in
6 Tallahassee I was raised in Plant City,
7 Florida. I went to school in Gainesville,
8 Florida. I lived in St. Pete for ten years.

9 My father was a member of this august
10 body, along with Ron Saunders's father back in
11 the 1960's.

12 I only say all of that because I want you
13 to know I feel your pain. I understand what
14 you are up against and I appreciate what you
15 have agreed to do, and I hope you will take the
16 input of the citizens of this state and come up
17 with the best plans you can as you go forward.

18 Some of you may know me as an advocate for
19 environmental issues here in the Legislature.
20 I want you to know that today I don't speak for
21 those groups. I speak as a citizen of the
22 state of Florida.

23 Let me further preface my comments with a
24 few facts if you don't mind and I will be very
25 brief about this.

1 I live in the Ninth House District. I am
2 a resident of the Third State Senate District
3 and I am in the Second Congressional District.
4 To visit with my State Senator, Senator Dean,
5 in his home office I would need to travel
6 211 miles, a six-hour trip back and forth.

7 To visit with my Congressman in his home
8 district, that is another 4.5 hour drive,
9 110 miles in Panama City. Some of my
10 neighbors, very near neighbors in eastern
11 Hillsborough County are represented by
12 Congresswoman Corrien Brown who lives in
13 Jacksonville. In a district that some people
14 say is that the most gerrymandered district in
15 the nation.

16 According to the 2010 Census, Senate
17 District III and Congressional Districts II and
18 III need to be reduced in size to be
19 proportional correct.

20 The Fair Amendment District -- the Fair
21 Amendments Amendment, Fair Districts Amendment,
22 pardon me, approved by 63 percent of the voters
23 tells us that the committee should strictly
24 adhere to, quote, compact and contiguous
25 districts in order to end gerrymandering by

1 political parties.

2 In keeping with the amendment I sincerely
3 hope that this Committee and the Legislature
4 will approve a reduced, geographically reduced
5 size, District II, Congressional District II
6 and Senate District III and bring my neighbors
7 in Leon County into the Second Congressional
8 District.

9 In the 2010 election cycle there were
10 4,631,068 registered Democrats. There were
11 4,039,000 registered Republicans and 2,186,000
12 Independents, yet in the State legislature, as
13 you all know, it is 81 to 39 Republicans versus
14 Democrat.

15 In the State Senate it is 28 to 12
16 Republicans versus Democrats. Our
17 Congressional Delegation and most of the major
18 offices, with the exception of one U.S. Senate
19 office are held by Republicans, and I know many
20 of you, some of you anyway on this Committee
21 think that is just because your campaign
22 strategies were better, but honestly, let's get
23 real.

24 There is something wrong in that. As some
25 of my friends have said, the politicians in

1 Florida are picking the voters rather than
2 voters picking their candidates.

3 In a civics lesson would fully tell us
4 that a representative form of government
5 insures the will of the majority is and it
6 prevails, while strenuously protecting the
7 rights of the minority.

8 When people feel their voice is not heard
9 by their elected representatives they begin to
10 lose confidence in the institution as a
11 government, and then they lose interest in the
12 rights of others, and at its lowest point they
13 lose interest in civil law.

14 That is something none of us can afford to
15 have happen no matter what our party. So as
16 you conduct your work I would ask you to
17 suspend your loyalty to party and as I know you
18 are, be loyal Floridians in your thinking and
19 in your efforts.

20 Consider that the decisions you are making
21 here are going to be for ten years, long after
22 many of you are out of this institution, out of
23 this process.

24 Please ask yourselves, how can your
25 successors govern effectively that the policies

1 they craft are the product of an echo chamber.

2 I have worked with many of you on a lot of
3 issues. I know that one to one environment we
4 tend to agree more often than not, or at least
5 find accommodation. It is the group thing that
6 concerns me and I hope we are able to get past
7 that and I thank you for the time.

8 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
9 much, Mr. Liles.

10 Next up, members, we have got Jack Davis.
11 Do you want to say ditto? Okay. We can do
12 that. Ditto for Mr. Jack Davis. Thank you
13 very much, sir, for being here. We appreciate
14 you participating in this process.

15 We next have Alex Belk, I believe that is
16 a K. Alex, did I say that one wrong, buddy?

17 MR. BELLOA: Yes.

18 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: I apologize. 680
19 West Virginia Street. All right.

20 A VOICE: Repeat that.

21 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: That is right,
22 after Alex we have got Mr. Carlos Ray, you are
23 going to be next. You are recognized, sir, and
24 sorry for not pronouncing your name right.

25 MR. BELLOA: I have chicken scratch for

1 writing, that is okay.

2 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Your handwriting is
3 still better than mine, I can assure you.

4 MR. BELLOA: I want to thank everybody
5 first of all, for giving me the opportunity to
6 speak here today and the rest of the citizens
7 in the room.

8 It is, I want to state that openness is
9 extremely important and that is the key in all
10 of this.

11 I know it is going to be a hard fought
12 battle. There is a lot of disagreement on both
13 sides how things should be run and written, but
14 ultimately if we remain open and this continues
15 to be an open process I think what is going to
16 come out of this, you know, what is good, it is
17 going to be contentious, but hopefully it will
18 be good for everybody.

19 And in addition to this I think that we
20 need to stick to the spirit of the law. We
21 need to have compact districts that are
22 reflective of the people that are living there.
23 I am in Senator Montford's district, and I am
24 in Senator Alan Williams -- I am sorry,
25 Representative Alan Williams' district.

1 If I cross the street, literally 40 feet
2 from my door I am in someone else's district.
3 I think that it is Marti Coley's district. So
4 I mean, we are talking literally 40 feet and it
5 is not like there is a totally different
6 community between us, it is the same community,
7 the same people.

8 A lot of the folks that live on one side
9 are predominantly African-American, the other
10 one are students. And so if we have anything
11 that affects us in this district that has to do
12 with transportation, which is Tennessee Street
13 is a major corridor in Tallahassee, there is a
14 lot of transportation issues with the city, who
15 do we go talk to?

16 If we are African-American you talk to
17 Alan Williams and if you are a student you go
18 talk to Marti Coley, and that to me pits these
19 two groups against each other.

20 There is not one Representative in that
21 district that knows exactly what happens on
22 both sides of the street that pay attention to
23 that, and I think that is wrong for the people
24 that live in that community.

25 I agree with everything that Mr. McDaniel

1 spoke about earlier, that we need to start with
2 the bigger urban cores and work our ways out
3 there, because the situations that effect
4 somebody in the city are not going to be the
5 same that effect somebody out in a rural
6 county, like Union.

7 African-American issue, Hispanic issues
8 are very important to me, and, but they are not
9 the same in Duval County that they are in
10 Orange County. They are not the same that they
11 are in Union, they are not the same that they
12 are in Ocala, that is not a county, in Marion
13 County. So we need to keep our communities
14 together.

15 We all need to work together and we need
16 to encourage that by having districts that
17 encourage us to go talk with one another and
18 our Representatives that are going to know
19 their districts well.

20 When you have somebody who has to travel
21 400 miles from one point of the district to
22 another, how are they really going to get to
23 know anybody other than what is within the
24 20 miles that they live in.

25 So let's use a little bit of a common

1 sense approach. I know sometimes common sense
2 is not very common, but I think that we have
3 come a very long way, as one gentleman
4 mentioned, the Jim Crow south, we have grown a
5 lot from that period in time, and if we have
6 faith in our constituencies and our folks,
7 people are going to do what is best for them
8 and their communities and they are going to
9 come together.

10 We have just got to have a little bit more
11 faith in ourselves to do so. Once again, just
12 thanks again and please keep in mind that the
13 most important in all of this is keeping
14 communities together.

15 We need to have people who are going to be
16 advocating for their communities, not for 65
17 different communities of who they have met
18 maybe five or six people along the way. Thank
19 you very much, and that is all I have.

20 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
21 much, sir. We appreciate that very much. Next
22 up we have Mr. Carlos Rey, followed by Beatriz
23 Macia. Mr. Rey, thank you for being here, sir,
24 you are recognized.

25 MR. REY: Thank you, Chairman Weatherford,

1 thank you, Chairman Gaetz. Again, thank you
2 for this opportunity and making this an open
3 and transparent process.

4 The only reason I am coming up here is to
5 present to you a study that took place in
6 Columbia Law School where they have a program
7 where students are given the opportunity to
8 learn the redistricting laws and given the
9 tools to redistrict certain states.

10 At the end of that program those students
11 are required to take a state and actually
12 redistrict the state based on the projected
13 census reports, and here I have before me the
14 report, itself, which takes into account
15 compactness and the VRA laws as well, and it
16 addresses only congressional districts, but I
17 think it gives you an idea of what are some
18 considerations you can you look at when you are
19 making your decisions, and I don't know if I
20 can present this to the Board.

21 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: We are actually
22 very familiar with that. We actually have it
23 on-line. On our website at Florida
24 redistricting.org. The Senate has it up and to
25 be, to be even more direct, we think that is

1 actually a perfect example of the steps that we
2 have taken to be open and transparent to where
3 we are soliciting that type of participation,
4 and that, the young man, the student who
5 produced that map of the Congressional
6 Districts of Florida spent a lot of time on
7 that and I believe gave it to us three or four
8 weeks ago.

9 MR. REY: Very good.

10 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: We have it, and if
11 you want to give members a copy you can, but I
12 believe, members, you can hand it maybe down
13 here, but it is on-line. We have it up and
14 on-line and there are actually other maps as
15 well, but again, I think that speaks to the
16 process we have created and what technology now
17 allows us to do, to allow people to take
18 advantage of the software we have.

19 So I am glad that you are here to talk
20 about it. I didn't want to interrupt you, but
21 wanted you to know we have it.

22 MR. REY: I wanted to make sure you were
23 aware of that, and also I think that people can
24 look at this report and see the, that the
25 issues that have been brought up in this,

1 before this Board has been addressed and other
2 people are looking at it and it shows that
3 individuals can have an impact as far as what
4 considerations are taken when making these
5 decisions, and you have given us the tools, the
6 redistricting tool, itself, and it is one of
7 those things that we should take advantage of
8 as well.

9 And I want to thank you again for this
10 opportunity and I am kind of embarrassed that
11 this is on there, but thanks again for this
12 opportunity.

13 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: That is quite all
14 right, Mr. Rey. We appreciate you being here
15 and we echo your comments. We think that there
16 will be many opportunities in the future for
17 people to participate and do exactly what this
18 young man from Columbia University has done.

19 So thank you. Next we have Beatriz Macia,
20 I hope I am saying that correctly, and after
21 that we have Brian Lupiani.

22 Ms. Macia, thank you for being here today,
23 and we would love to hear from you. You are
24 recognized.

25 MS. MACIA: Thank you, Representatives. I

1 guess I need to let you know something. It is
2 Macia, but I will say Macia, and being Cuban,
3 Macia is a whole other family. The accent on
4 the I, not the A.

5 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: I am sinking in my
6 chair as you are talking, so thank you.

7 MS. MACIA: How would you know that. Good
8 evening, Senators and Representatives. As I
9 said, I am Beatriz Macia, I am a Board member
10 of the Tallahassee Tea Party and I am a
11 Hispanic voter.

12 I know that Florida is a long narrow and
13 diverse state. It is difficult. I recognize
14 the fact that whether you all held these
15 listening meetings or not you were going to be
16 criticized, and I appreciate the fact that you
17 chose to listen to us anyway.

18 I understand that you are going to be
19 looking at a lot of factors and I hope that one
20 of the things that you will look at is the
21 concept just like that when our Congress was
22 originated it had two Houses to balance the
23 needs of the large states with the small
24 states.

25 We have large counties, urban and diverse

1 and we have small rural counties that have less
2 resources and are just important that they are
3 heard and represented.

4 I know that there are interests in the
5 different regions that need to be acknowledged,
6 you know, we have tourism, we have fishing, we
7 have agricultural, we have new technologies
8 that are coming.

9 Our Governor is working hard to bring, you
10 know, interesting businesses to Florida, as
11 well as many of our regional development
12 councils.

13 I have worked in a lot of different parts
14 of government. I have worked in Departments of
15 State, in the Legislature, I have worked in the
16 Governor's Office, and I am a small business
17 owner, so I have, you know, a pretty
18 appreciative understanding and working
19 knowledge of the processes that you work in and
20 how those policies and all of those things are
21 actually implemented, and then the affects on
22 the diverse folks that are impacted.

23 So I look forward to the day that we don't
24 have to talk about minorities and that we
25 didn't have to talk about selfish interests.

1 I really look forward to the day that we
2 are talking about building a better Florida. I
3 just want you to know that I choose to put my
4 faith in your good intentions. I have watched
5 you all. I was here during the session. I
6 have watched you all talk to each other.

7 I have watched you work through problems,
8 and very difficult issues. I have an
9 appreciation for what you do, and also know
10 that I will also still be involved and I will
11 be a part of the process, so thank you very
12 much.

13 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
14 much. We appreciate you being here. Next up
15 we have Mr. Brian Lupiani, followed by
16 Mr. Eutn, and I would try to read your first
17 name, but I can't make it out. So Mr. Eutn,
18 but first we have Brian.

19 Thank you for being here, sir, you are
20 recognized.

21 MR. LUPIANI: Thank you, gentlemen and
22 ladies. I wasn't necessarily going to say
23 anything. I just wanted to be sure that I had
24 a chance to if something came up, but having
25 only gotten into the room just a couple minutes

1 ago, I am not sure what has come before.

2 But first I appreciate ya'll having these
3 hearings. I wish there were drafts that we had
4 a chance to respond to. Maybe there will be a
5 second round that you all can come around the
6 state with a proposal and get some comments on
7 it.

8 I would just like to say that it is
9 paramount to me that you all go by the
10 amendments that the citizens just recently put
11 into the Constitution. I don't like that it is
12 being challenged and delayed by some. It was
13 overwhelmingly approved by voters and I have
14 been in favor of those standards, not that it
15 matters to you what I have done, but I have
16 been a Democrat since I could vote and I was
17 originally for these standards back in 1978,
18 when the Democrats ran everything.

19 I think it is good for everyone. It needs
20 to be fair and we really need to just go by as
21 much as possible just based on raw population,
22 demographics, racial demographics to the extent
23 that we need to to comply with the Voting
24 Rights Act, but there should be no -- and I
25 realize it is, this isn't going to count for

1 much with many of you, but there should be no
2 consideration given to partisan registration or
3 to incumbents current location.

4 Some of the things we see on the current
5 map, it is -- it is almost incredible to have
6 to point out anything like this, finger for a
7 Congressional District, whatever it is, from
8 Jacksonville that comes cutting across, snakes
9 into all of the way over into Leon County.

10 There is a State House District X and I
11 don't mean this, I am not picking on anybody in
12 particular here, but it is insane to me that
13 somebody in Apalachicola is in the same State
14 House District as people I know in Ocala.

15 It is, you know, you have to do better. I
16 plan on -- I haven't had a chance yet to look
17 at the software you all have made available. I
18 appreciate that that is out there and I, you
19 know, I hope a number of groups will use it,
20 but as I said, just keep partisan political
21 party affiliation completely off the table.

22 Go strictly by population and follow
23 existing political and geographic boundaries as
24 much as possible. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very

1 much, sir, and it is not too much to ask that
2 we keep partisan politics out of this process.
3 We believe that is exactly what this body will
4 do. It is what the Constitution asked us to do
5 and it is a very good suggestion and we will
6 certainly take it to heart and make sure that
7 we do so.

8 Next up we have Mr. Eutn. In fact this is
9 the last card that we have and if you are here
10 and you would like to speak and we have not
11 called your name, please raise your hand and we
12 will find someone who will give you a card to
13 fill out.

14 We want to make sure that everyone here
15 has the opportunity to speak and while we are
16 looking for that, Mr. Eutn, you are recognized
17 to speak. Thank you for being here, sir.

18 MR. EUTN: Thank you. I would only like
19 to say is this, that the people of Florida are
20 watching what your body does today. And we do
21 not want to see a situation where this body
22 decides to take political affiliation into
23 consideration when it comes to setting up these
24 districts.

25 The people of the state have voted on this

1 matter. The people of this state have made
2 decisions how they want to have their districts
3 drawn, and I think this body should adhere to
4 that.

5 And it concerns me that this body has done
6 things that usurp, usurp the rights of the
7 people. And so I would hope and I would hope
8 that everyone here takes it very serious to do
9 the right thing and do the thing that the
10 people of Florida, this fine state of Florida
11 have asked you to do. Thank you very much.

12 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you, sir, and
13 that is the last, I think that is the last of
14 our public testimony.

15 We do have someone, okay, great, while we
16 are waiting for that, as mentioned earlier, as
17 people e-mail us or give us information they
18 would like to make on the record but could not
19 be here, we want to oblique them.

20 Mimi Jones, who sent us an e-mail saying
21 she could not be here, wanted us to know that
22 she wanted us to follow the Constitution and we
23 plan on following that.

24 And then we also were reached via Facebook
25 from a lady by the name of Diane

1 Blackford-Wilson who just wanted to restate
2 that Wakulla County is an extension of Leon for
3 all practical purposes and should have the same
4 Representatives as Leon County, and we
5 appreciate them contacting us and knowing that
6 not everybody can be at a meeting, but that
7 their comments can be on the record.

8 So last up we have Ralph Wilson.
9 Mr. Wilson, we would love to have you come
10 forward. Thank you for being here, and you are
11 recognized to address the Committee.

12 MR. WILSON: Thank you very much. Thanks
13 for holding this hearing. I really appreciate
14 it, and I think a lot of us are here for a
15 pretty simple reason.

16 I feel like the voters have spoken and
17 feel like it is just another of many affronts
18 to the voter's will and the people's will in
19 the state for this to be challenged in the way
20 it is.

21 So I think, yes, I think that that is
22 really all there is to say, so I thank you for
23 your time.

24 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
25 much, Mr. Wilson. We appreciate your comments.

1 Any other comments from the public, last call?

2 Okay.

3 Any comments and/or questions from members
4 of the Committee?

5 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Mr. Speaker.

6 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Yes, Representative
7 Williams, you are recognized.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Thank you,
9 Chair. I just want to say for the record that
10 I was glad to see so many individuals from this
11 area, parts of which I am proud to represent,
12 along with Senator Montford.

13 Had an opportunity to come out and share
14 their thoughts and concerns about this process
15 that we take very serious, and thank you for
16 the opportunity given to this area for them to
17 be heard. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
19 Representative and thank you for hosting us
20 here in Tallahassee. We are very grateful for
21 that. Senator Gaetz, I think you had a comment
22 that you --

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Just quickly,
24 Mr. Speaker, I wanted to thank you for
25 presiding over the hearings today. Some of

1 those who were here tonight were not able to be
2 here earlier today.

3 We certainly are not going to repeat all
4 of the comments that we made about the process
5 and the schedule, but I think given that some
6 of the comments that were made tonight, it is
7 only fair that we indicate the process and
8 schedule in a couple of ways.

9 So let me, let me refer to introductory
10 comments that were made at the very beginning
11 of the session today so that those who may not
12 have been able to hear those comments would
13 have the benefit of knowing which way we are
14 headed.

15 The redistricting schedule under which we
16 are operating is imposed not by our own wishes,
17 but by the State Constitution. The
18 Constitution does not permit the Legislature to
19 act on legislative maps before the second year
20 after the census.

21 In other words, until 2012, but we did
22 accelerate the process as much as possible by
23 moving up the 2012 session, from March to
24 January, and by beginning our statewide
25 hearings five months in advance of the 2012

1 session.

2 It has been suggested by some that the
3 Legislature should draw maps first and then put
4 them out and ask the public to comment.

5 We believe that that puts the answer ahead
6 of the question. There should be in our view
7 no preconceptions created by politicians, but
8 rather public testimony and public input should
9 be free and unrestrained.

10 Our intent is to use the recommendations
11 made at all 26 of the public hearings we will
12 be holding and to use the input we are
13 receiving over the Internet, and I might
14 mention, Mr. Chairman, that we have been
15 heavily followed on-line this afternoon and
16 this evening, very heavy on-line traffic with
17 individuals saying they want to participate
18 on-line, they want to submit plans, they want
19 to offer comments and we welcome that.

20 And our intent is to use all of that input
21 we are gathering as the basis for developing
22 one or more options for district maps, and then
23 we will share those options in open public
24 meetings before any votes are taken, even in
25 Committee.

1 Let me state that again. First we are
2 asking for public input via the Internet,
3 getting heavy Internet traffic and via our 26
4 public hearings, and then once we have that
5 information and as we develop one or more
6 options for district maps, we will share those
7 options in open public meetings before any
8 votes are taken even in Committee.

9 Throughout the process we will solicit
10 additional public comment so that all proposed
11 maps can mature with the public involved, all
12 before the Legislature approves final maps.

13 And finally, Mr. Speaker, just for the
14 record and for those who may not have been able
15 to be here this afternoon, whatever the
16 Legislature then votes on, it is submitted for
17 judicial review at the State and Federal level
18 to insure that final plans meet every legal
19 requirement.

20 So on behalf of our Senate colleagues,
21 Senate members of the Committee, Mr. Speaker,
22 thank you for doing a great job today, and we
23 look forward to seeing you tomorrow morning in
24 Pensacola as we continue our statewide tour.

25 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very

1 much, Mr. Chairman, for those comments, and
2 members, if I could have everyone's attention
3 for one minute before we break.

4 I think everyone knows that we have
5 several days ahead of us. We are now moving
6 tonight to head over to Pensacola where we will
7 meet with citizens in Pensacola tomorrow
8 evening.

9 We will be in our good Senator's backyard
10 in Ft. Walton Beach, and then finally finishing
11 Wednesday in Panama City, but I want to thank
12 the staff for putting this together. This was
13 very well orchestrated, it was perfectly placed
14 where people could see what the maps look like,
15 you could get information, everything was
16 waiting for folks and I just really thank the
17 staff for making this a seamless process.

18 I also want to thank the members who are
19 here, not just the members on the Committee,
20 but we have dozens of members who traveled from
21 all over the state of Florida who don't even
22 sit on this Committee that wanted to be a part
23 of this process to see how it works and it
24 engage the public and I thank them for that as
25 well.

1 Lastly, and most importantly, we want to
2 thank the public who is here tonight and who
3 were here earlier this afternoon.

4 We are going to make this process the most
5 open, the most transparent, the most engaging
6 process, not only that Florida has ever had,
7 but anyone in the country has ever had, and
8 that is our goal and we will fulfill it and we
9 thank you for being here today and with that,
10 Senator Gaetz moves we rise.

11 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
12 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 173 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 7th day of August, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2011

7:00 P.M.

FORT WALTON BEACH HIGH SCHOOL

FORT WALTON BEACH, FLORIDA

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 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Good evening, everyone,
3 we are delighted that we have such a good large
4 and obviously interested crowd here tonight.

5 The Joint Senate House Redistricting
6 hearing is called to order, and we want to
7 thank Principal Charlene Cuveon of Ft. Walton
8 Beach High School, Dr. Alexis Tibbets, the
9 Superintendent of Schools here.

10 In case you didn't know, this is Ft.
11 Walton Beach High School, the home of the
12 Vikings, one of the historically highest
13 performing schools in the United States, not
14 just once, but for year after year after year,
15 so you are in a great school.

16 And we thank the administration of Ft.
17 Walton Beach High School and Superintendent
18 Tibbets for allowing us to use this facility
19 this evening for what is our third public
20 hearing in a series of 26.

21 We started yesterday in Tallahassee. We
22 had a hearing earlier today in Pensacola. This
23 is our third hearing, and tomorrow we will be
24 in Panama City, and then on to the rest of the
25 state.

1 Thank you all for being here, especially
2 members of the public who have come to share
3 their comments and recommendations to help
4 shape Congressional Senate and House Districts
5 for the next decade.

6 My name is Don Gaetz. I serve as Chairman
7 of the Senate Reapportionment Committee.
8 Typically the Speaker Designate of the Florida
9 House, Will Weatherford, would be with us
10 tonight. He has been with us in the preceding
11 hearings and he will be with us going forward,
12 but he had a family commitment come up and so I
13 can guarantee you that he will be watching the
14 pod cast of this hearing and he will be fully
15 informed by professional staff and given copies
16 of all of the testimony that is being given
17 tonight.

18 Tonight's hearing is being webcast
19 statewide by the Florida Channel and over the
20 Internet, and I can report to you that we have
21 extraordinarily heavy Internet traffic for this
22 issue, and for our Joint Committee hearings,
23 and we are delighted to report that to you.

24 Before we go further I would like to ask
25 each member of the Committee if they would just

1 identify themselves as to whether they are a
2 Representative or a Senator and indicate where
3 in the state you live, where you represent, so
4 that the folks here in northwest Florida and
5 Okaloosa County can have an opportunity to see
6 how diverse the House and Senate Committees
7 are.

8 And if we may start with our Former Senate
9 President, and still Senator, Senator Gwen
10 Margolis.

11 Senator, would you, and I apologize that
12 we don't have microphones, so we are
13 politicians, so we will talk loud.

14 SENATOR MARGOLIS: My name is Gwen
15 Margolis, and I represent the eastern part of
16 Broward and Miami-Dade.

17 SENATOR HAYS: I am Alan Hays from
18 Umatilla. I am a Senator from District 20,
19 which represents a portion of five counties.

20 SENATOR DEAN: My name is Charlie Dean,
21 and I am Senator for District III. I have the
22 largest Senatorial district east of the
23 Mississippi River. It goes from Palmetto,
24 Citrus to the Hernando County line, to Baker,
25 and Duval County lines, all a part of 13

1 counties.

2 REPRESENTATIVE GAETZ: I am Representative
3 Matt Gaetz, and I live two miles down the road.

4 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: I am Kathleen
5 Passidomo, representing Collier County,
6 representing parts of Collier County,
7 representing Naples, Marco Island.

8 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: My name is Tom
9 Goodson, District 29.

10 REPRESENTATIVE CRUZ: My name is Janet
11 Cruz, and I represent District 58.

12 A VOICE: (Inaudible).

13 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Matt Caldwell,
14 District 73, that would be Ft. Myers.

15 REPRESENTATIVE STARGEL: I am
16 Representative Kelli Stargel, north of Polk
17 County, Lakeland.

18 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: I am Ed Hooper,
19 Representative from Clearwater and Pinellas
20 County, the most district populated county.

21 A VOICE: (Inaudible)

22 REPRESENTATIVE BURGIN: Hello, my name is
23 Rachel Burgin, and I represent District 56.

24 SENATOR THRASHER: Thank you, I am Senator
25 John Thrasher. I live in St. Augustine. I

1 represent District 8, which is parts of Nassau
2 County that starts at Fernandina Beach, parts
3 of Duval County, parts of St. Johns County,
4 which is where St. Augustine is located, part
5 of Flagler County and I end up in Volusia
6 County at the International Speedway.

7 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: Clay Ford,
8 Representative for District 3, ninety-five
9 percent of Pensacola, five percent Gulf Breeze,
10 I talk just like ya'll do. People down south
11 have trouble understanding me.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: I am
13 Representative Steve Precourt from down south
14 at House District 41, a little area that
15 includes University Studios and Walt Disney
16 World.

17 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Hi, I am Janet
18 Adkins, Florida District 12.

19 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: I am
20 Representative Gwendolen Clarke-Reed, Broward
21 County, House District 92. I serve seven
22 cities, Deerfield Beach, Pompano Beach, Oakland
23 Park, Rose Manor, Tamarac (inaudible).

24 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Hazel Rogers,
25 Representative of District 94, parts of Broward

1 County.

2 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Mack Bernard,
3 Representative for West Palm Beach.

4 SENATOR MONTFORD: Senator Bill Montford,
5 District 6, (inaudible).

6 A VOICE: My name is (inaudible). I
7 represent the most conservative county in the
8 state, Broward County.

9 A VOICE: (Inaudible)

10 A VOICE: (Inaudible).

11 A VOICE: (Inaudible).

12 A VOICE: (Inaudible)

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you all very much.
14 I am sorry, fire away, we got the second row.

15 REPRESENTATIVE DRAKE: Brad Drake,
16 Representative for House District 5, and I am
17 also very privileged to represent Okaloosa
18 County, as well as Holmes, Washington. My
19 district runs all the way to the Georgia line,
20 up in Marianna.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Senator Evers.

22 SENATOR EVERS: I am Senator Evers and I
23 cover everything north of Senator Don Gaetz,
24 Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton,
25 Washington, Holmes and north Bay.

1 REPRESENTATIVE ABRUZZO: I am Joseph
2 Abruzzo from District 85, which is Palm Beach
3 County (inaudible).

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Anyone else? If not,
5 thank you very much, Senators and
6 Representatives for introducing yourself to the
7 folks here in Okaloosa County where I am very
8 proud to live and proud to represent.

9 Our sole purpose tonight is to hear from
10 the public about how you believe the legal
11 standards governing redistricting should be
12 applied in your community, in this community so
13 that you are represented in Washington and
14 Tallahassee fairly, equitably and sensibly.

15 And I know there may be folks who are
16 already prepared to admonish us that Amendments
17 V and VI need to be followed.

18 Let me tell you on behalf of Speaker
19 Weatherford and myself and every member of this
20 Committee, we all took an oath to preserve,
21 protect and defend the Constitution of the
22 United States and of the State of Florida.

23 Those two provisions are in our
24 Constitution. They will be faithfully adhered
25 to and they will be followed, and any

1 redistricting plan that this Legislature
2 presents to the Supreme Court of Florida will,
3 in our judgment, and to the best of our
4 ability, follow every constitutional and legal
5 requirement.

6 Our procedures tonight are simple, but
7 they are important. It is important, as I said
8 before, that you sign in so we can create an
9 accurate public record of all attendees and
10 speakers, and also you may opt to join our
11 e-mail lists or our mail lists so that we can
12 keep you informed about how the redistricting
13 process is working.

14 If you haven't signed in, please do so,
15 please raise your hand at any point tonight if
16 you wish to speak and a staff member will come
17 to you and pick up your card, either your
18 appearance card or your attendance card.

19 Before we begin I would like to recognize
20 Representative Steve Precourt who will give us
21 a few introductory comments on behalf of the
22 House of Representatives.

23 Representative Precourt will explain how
24 today's hearing fits into the redistricting
25 process. You are recognized, Representative.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, Chair
2 Gaetz, and as the Chairman said, I am Steve
3 Precourt, House District 41 from central
4 Florida, filling in for Chair Weatherford.

5 I am Vice-Chair of the House Redistricting
6 Committee and just wanted to give you a little
7 outline of where we are going in today's
8 meeting and of the overall process.

9 Every ten years the Legislature is
10 required by our Constitution to redistrict the
11 state based on increases, decreases and
12 movements around the state of the population.

13 Now, because Florida has grown more than
14 the other states over the last ten years, we
15 will be growing from 25 Congressional Seats to
16 27 members of the U.S. House of
17 Representatives. That is one of the major
18 things that we will have to do in this process.

19 Now, because some of our -- parts of our
20 state have either increased or decreased
21 disproportionately in population, many of our
22 Senate and House Districts are going to have to
23 change.

24 We are not going to get any new House or
25 Senate Seats, but we are going to have to move

1 the boundaries around because they have either
2 added too much or too little population.

3 Now, when the redistricting process is
4 completed the Congressional Districts must be
5 equal in size of population and each contain
6 696,345 people.

7 The 40 Senate Districts must also be
8 nearly equal at 470,033 people, and our 120
9 House Districts must also be nearly equal at
10 156,678 people.

11 Now, there is some maps over on the side
12 of the room that there to ya'll's left as you
13 are facing us showing this area of the state,
14 and the current boundaries, the current
15 boundaries of the districts, and the number of
16 people which must be added or subtracted from
17 those districts to achieve that equal
18 representation.

19 Now, the equality of representation isn't
20 the only legal requirement that our
21 redistricting plans must meet. The laws and
22 important court cases governing redistricting
23 are explained in detail on the House and Senate
24 websites.

25 Now, those websites are listed on the

1 Redistricting 2012 brochure that was available
2 when you came in, and if you don't have one,
3 staff has them available for you as well.

4 Please make sure and pick one up before
5 you leave. Our Redistricting 2012 brochure
6 summarizes the Federal and State laws and
7 outlines the topics that we hope that you will
8 discuss here at today's meeting as well.

9 If you didn't go a brochure, as I said,
10 they are available from staff, but also on the
11 tables outside of the meeting hall, and if you
12 want one right now our staff would be happy to
13 get a copy for you. If you need it just wave
14 to them.

15 Those websites that we have, we have made
16 available to the public all of the demographic
17 information from the U.S. Bureau of Census that
18 will be used in drawing the districts and used
19 in the redistricting software that we as
20 Legislators will be using.

21 Now, these websites will allow any member
22 of the public to see all of the district maps
23 that are being proposed by the Legislators and
24 for the citizens, ya'll, to propose your own
25 district maps for your own communities or for

1 the whole state if you would like, using those
2 same tools that are available to us as
3 Legislators and to our staff.

4 Now, before, during and after this hearing
5 tonight the Senate and House professional staff
6 are available to actually show you the simple
7 steps to getting on-line and making your
8 submission either now if you care to or in the
9 weeks to come.

10 We want to assure you that every
11 recommendation from any member of the public or
12 any group will be made publicly available.

13 In fact, we already have some public
14 submissions available on the web for review.
15 The submission of proposed maps, the drawings
16 that you might come up with is one of the most
17 effective, if not the single most effective
18 form of public participation in the
19 redistricting process. That is why we
20 encourage you strongly to avail yourself of
21 these resources that we put out there for you.

22 The redistricting schedule under which we
23 are operating is imposed by our State
24 Constitution. The Constitution does not permit
25 the Legislature to act on legislative maps

1 before the second year after the census, in
2 other words, before 2012.

3 Now, we have accelerated this process as
4 much as we possibly can by moving up the 2012
5 legislative session from, where typically it is
6 in March and April, to January and February of
7 next year, by beginning our statewide hearings.

8 We have also accelerated the process by
9 beginning our statewide hearings five months in
10 advance of that 2012 advanced session.

11 Now, it has been suggested that the
12 Legislature should draw maps first and then ask
13 the public to comment. We believe that puts
14 the answer ahead of the question.

15 There should be no preconceived notions,
16 no preconceptions created by politicians or
17 anyone else, but rather your public testimony
18 should be free and unrestricted and untainted
19 and give us something to work with.

20 Now, our intent is to use the
21 recommendations made by you tonight and at our
22 other 25 public hearings, as well as
23 information that we get through the Internet
24 and social networking and stuff that is hard
25 copy that is mailed to us and any other way

1 that we get it, as the basis for developing one
2 or more options for these district maps as we
3 go forward.

4 And once we developed those options we
5 will discuss them in open public meetings
6 before any votes are taken, even in committee
7 votes.

8 Now, throughout the process we will
9 solicit additional public input, not just these
10 initial meetings so that the proposed maps can
11 mature and develop with the public involved
12 deeply in the process.

13 All of this is going to be done before the
14 Legislature votes on or finally approves any of
15 those maps.

16 Whatever the Legislature votes on during
17 session next year is then going to be submitted
18 for judicial review to insure that the final
19 plans meet every legal requirement, not only in
20 our State Constitution, but the Federal laws as
21 well.

22 Now, because our mission today is to hear
23 from you, 100 percent of the time tonight
24 between now and I believe 9:00 o'clock as we
25 are scheduled will be used to ensure that every

1 member of the public who is here and wishes to
2 speak will have time to present the testimony
3 they would like heard and will be listened to
4 respectfully without interruption or argument.

5 And if after every citizen has had his or
6 her say there is still some time remaining
7 before our scheduled adjournment, any member of
8 the Committee may make any statements or offer
9 any observation, and we are also going to read
10 some feedback that we have recently gotten via
11 social media.

12 Of course, any member of the Legislature
13 may today or at any time propose maps or plans
14 or we will make all of that available to the
15 public as it is prepared and developed.

16 Mr. Chairman, I hope this description of
17 our schedule and the process helps to stage
18 tonight for a successful hearing and I will
19 turn the microphone back to you.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much.
21 Let's get into it with those who have signed up
22 to speak. We have at the moment 24 individuals
23 who wish to speak.

24 What that means is that we will have time
25 for everybody. If everybody can keep their

1 comments to say three to five minutes, and we
2 are not going to be really restrictive on time,
3 but if we get more people who show up later in
4 the hearing and they would like to speak, then
5 I hope you will forgive me if I try to hold
6 people to a time limit, because I am an
7 advocate for the last person on this list just
8 like I am an advocate for the first person to
9 be able to speak and let everyone on the
10 Committee know what their views are.

11 President Margolis has admonished me to
12 make sure that you know that the maps that are
13 there on my right and on that side of the room
14 are available for you to look at so that you
15 will see what the current districts are.

16 So there are maps and we can use those
17 maps as a take off point to either criticize or
18 find fault or find value or virtue in any of
19 the districts that exist now.

20 If Chairman Weatherford were here he would
21 remind us all that none of us, nobody in the
22 Legislature, has a district. The districts are
23 developed based on the population data and
24 based on the redistricting software that is
25 used in conformance with the law.

1 So this is not about trying to find a way
2 to protect somebody's district. It is to find
3 a way to listen to your views as to how the
4 laws ought to be carried forward here in
5 northwest Florida.

6 With that said, what we will do is I will
7 call two testifiers at once so that the second
8 person can be on deck and ready, and our first
9 testifier are Mary Blackwell representing the
10 League of Women Voters of Okaloosa County.

11 Ms. Blackwell, it is good to see you
12 again.

13 MS. BLACKWELL: It is good to see you,
14 too, Don. First, I would like to thank the
15 Committee members for being here and for
16 providing this opportunity to comment on
17 redistricting, and I commend you for
18 encouraging citizen participation in the
19 process and I thank everybody who has come.

20 This is really important and I am glad you
21 are a part of it. I only have three points to
22 make.

23 First, the Legislature's timeline for
24 drawing the districts is too slow. The last of
25 the scheduled public hearings is September 1st.

1 Your timeline shows four months, as you
2 mentioned, for interim committee meetings, from
3 September through December.

4 Your own Committee staffs who work on the
5 redistricting and reapportionment issues year
6 around and some of whom, like John Guthrie, for
7 example, have been there for decades, should be
8 able to present you with several options right
9 now.

10 But as you said, you wanted to start with
11 a clean slate, that is fine, but after the end
12 of the hearings on the first of September, and
13 you absorb the public input, you mentioned
14 yesterday, Don, at the hearing that this is the
15 Internet age.

16 So I would like to see some options for
17 maps out there for comment and by the end of
18 September, so the public can have a chance to
19 influence the actual maps and not just talk in
20 generalities about what we would like to see.

21 And actually, I don't think there is any
22 secret about what we want to see, since the
23 Fair District Amendments received about
24 63 percent approval rating from voters in
25 November.

1 So please get all of those things done
2 where you are looking at the maps and making
3 those up, that is the time, that four months of
4 interim Committee meetings so you can be ready
5 to vote in January.

6 Please don't be wringing your hands next
7 spring and saying there is not enough time.
8 There is plenty of time, so let's not waste it,
9 it is not fair to candidates, it is not fair to
10 constituents.

11 The second point, the Legislature
12 shouldn't be spending taxpayer money to oppose
13 implementation of the Fair District Standards.
14 As you all know, Representatives Brown and
15 Diaz-Balart have sued to have Florida's new
16 redistricting standards declared
17 unconstitutional even though they were approved
18 by the state Supreme Court before they were put
19 on the ballot.

20 The Florida House has joined this lawsuit
21 and the Secretary of State, Kurt Browning, is
22 the Defendant in the case. So this means
23 Florida taxpayers are now paying both to
24 prosecute and defend the same lawsuit. It is
25 just not right.

1 Senator Gaetz, you already said that you
2 and your colleagues were going to be upholding
3 the Constitution. I am counting on you, so
4 please stop spending our money trying to
5 undermine the provisions that were placed there
6 by 63 percent of the voters last November.

7 The final point, you mentioned you didn't
8 want to start out with any maps, and you are
9 having these 26 hearings, that is really
10 fabulous, but no maps are provided for citizen
11 comment.

12 Your Committee staffs, you already have
13 staffs working full time year round on these
14 issues, and I am sure they already have some
15 working drafts. I thank you again for taking
16 the time for citizen input and for the citizens
17 for making it, but it is hard to make
18 substantive constructive comments in a vacuum.

19 We have the technology as you mentioned,
20 to make the maps quickly with the available
21 census data. So I charge you to develop the
22 maps as soon as possible after the public
23 hearings conclude and you absorb all of that
24 citizen input so they can be out there for the
25 citizens to see well before you vote on them in

1 January.

2 And we do need to be ready to vote on them
3 in January, because only then will the public
4 have an opportunity for meaningful comment on
5 the real maps that are under consideration.
6 Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
8 Mary. We appreciate you being here. Henry
9 Kelley is our next speaker, and following
10 Mr. Kelley, Patricia Rowe. Henry Kelley and
11 then Patricia Rowe.

12 Mr. Kelley, thank you for being here
13 tonight for taking your time, and you are
14 recognized.

15 MR. KELLEY: Thank you, Senator. On
16 behalf of the Committee I saw you yesterday in
17 Tallahassee and had the chance to address it
18 and said I would be back in Ft. Walton with a
19 few comments.

20 On behalf of the Ft. Walton Beach Tea
21 Party I am still disappointed to see criticisms
22 leveled at the Committee.

23 I appreciate that we are starting with a
24 blank slate. I mentioned yesterday that I have
25 gone in and used the software. I have drawn

1 Congressional Districts and I have drawn Senate
2 Districts.

3 The 120 House Districts, it is a little
4 daunting, but there is no reason that we cannot
5 -- that any group that has a staff can --
6 everyone can participate in this after about 15
7 minutes of using the software. So a few
8 particulars.

9 Mary Blackwell just mentioned the Fair
10 Districts was approved by 63 percent, and
11 Senator, you referred to the Constitution which
12 I just happen as a Tea Party guy to bring one
13 with me, and as I have been drawing up the maps
14 I call attention to the Tenth Amendment of the
15 Constitution which reserves the power of this
16 to the states.

17 And it is my belief that there is going to
18 be a major conflict between the Fair Districts
19 Amendment and some of the Federal rulings that
20 have resulted in gerrymandering districts, and
21 I encourage you to listen to the will of the
22 voters because this has now been codified in
23 our Constitution.

24 And I would ask that you take the will of
25 the Florida voters into consideration above

1 that of what a Federal Court Judge says in
2 keeping with the Tenth Amendment to the
3 Constitution, and nowhere in the United States
4 Constitution does it give the Federal
5 government the right to draw our districts.

6 Now, a few particulars for the northwest
7 Florida area. As I said, I have drawn the
8 maps several times, and particularly as we look
9 at the Senate and House Districts, and as we
10 look at the maps, one of the things that the
11 Fair District Amendments does say that the
12 media has made a lot of comments on is the use
13 of geographic boundaries.

14 But Amendments V and VI also say existing
15 political boundaries, and I would ask you to
16 consider that due to the unique nature of our
17 geography that our interests have more in
18 common horizontally across northwest Florida
19 than we do vertically.

20 In other words, Pensacola beach, Ft.
21 Walton Beach and Panama City Beach, they all
22 have something in common, and despite what our
23 friend from Daytona Beach says, you know, we
24 are kind of proud of this stretch of beaches,
25 and if you are not familiar with northwest

1 Florida along I-10 is mostly agricultural and
2 rural interests.

3 And I believe in looking at the
4 populations that our region should be drawn
5 horizontally, both within the Florida House
6 Districts and within the Florida Senate
7 Districts.

8 And on that note I wish to thank the
9 Committee for their time and the hard work. We
10 intend to participate on behalf of Tea Parties
11 around the state at as many of the hearings as
12 possible.

13 We will be submitting plans on-line and
14 like I said, I am thankful we are starting with
15 a blank slate and I appreciate your time.
16 Thank you, Senator.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
18 Mr. Kelley. Next is Patricia Rowe and after
19 Ms. Rowe, Jan Dale.

20 MR. ROWE: I am Patricia Rowe, and I pass.
21 The people have pretty much said more than I
22 could possibly.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: As we say in the Senate,
24 those who pass give eloquent testimony. Thank
25 you. Jane Dale, no, no, no. Let's not let

1 this become a habit. Anybody who wants to
2 speak.

3 MS. DALE: I am just going to do it right
4 here.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Jane, we can't have you
6 do it there because we want to carry you on
7 statewide television. No pressure. No
8 pressure, and after Ms. Dale is Edward
9 Armbruster, please.

10 MS. DALE: It is too bad you know me so
11 well, sir.

12 First I want to thank everybody for being
13 here tonight, and please, you all, it is very,
14 very important that we, the grassroots as we
15 always say, we really need to come with an open
16 mind and learn and listen to what everybody has
17 to say tonight and the other meetings, and that
18 is very very important and I hope we all use
19 both of our ears. Thank you all very much.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Jane. Next,
21 Edward Armbruster and following Ed's comments,
22 we have, I believe it is Al, K-a-u-s-e-s.

23 MR. KAUSES: Al Kauses.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Al Kauses, of course. I
25 am sorry, Al, my handwriting is even worse than

1 yours. Ed, please go ahead.

2 MR. ARMBRUSTER: Thank you, Senator, I am
3 going to give back my time because your staff
4 out here answered my questions, and I thank
5 you.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir,
7 we appreciate your being here. Al, you are up,
8 followed by Howard Hill. Thank you very much
9 for being here tonight, Al, we appreciate your
10 presence and you are recognized.

11 MR. KAUSES: Well, thank you, and I thank
12 you all, ladies and gentlemen, for coming up
13 here and giving us a chance to yap before you.

14 I am here with the Florida Panhandle
15 Patriots as well as the Republican Party, and
16 as well as me, 23-year citizen of Okaloosa
17 County.

18 And we have one minor little thing here in
19 Okaloosa County that I would like to see taken
20 care of if at all possible.

21 We have got a little tail that runs in
22 Fred Drake's district out of Defuniak down here
23 in Okaloosa County, and being on just west of
24 Hurlburt here and I am on the shore side there,
25 I get caught up in this three or four-mile

1 segment down there.

2 And Brad gives me great service, and I
3 thank you, sir, and Matt, who's district kind
4 of runs up to that point and he has to jump
5 over my house to get to the rest of his
6 district, west of there, gives me great service
7 also. Thank you.

8 And we -- I would like to see that taken
9 care of. I think that would be very easy for
10 the Redistricting Committee and everybody else
11 to look into that and take care of it.

12 I totally agree with the beaches are the
13 beaches and the north end are the north end,
14 and I think those representing both up north
15 and down south have that in common and they can
16 take care of it a lot better.

17 I haven't had a chance to check out the
18 rest of the state, but I am going to do so,
19 your Redistricting cite is outstanding. It is
20 a little more construction coming up on it, but
21 I am going to delve into the south end down
22 there as well.

23 I think we will look at Daytona Beach as a
24 matter of fact. Again, I want to thank you
25 all, Magnolia Grill is outstanding, and enjoy

1 yourselves while you are up here and thank you,
2 Senator.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, Al,
4 we appreciate your testimony. Next we will be
5 privileged to hear from Howard Hill.

6 MR. HILL: As a retired politician, I
7 pass.

8 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Howard passes, and next
9 we hear from Judy Burn-Riley, and following
10 Judy Burn-Riley, we will hear from Don Riley.

11 MS. BURN-RILEY: No relation.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: No relation, at least as
13 far as we know. Mr. Riley is from Miramar
14 Beach, and Judy, of course, is from Niceville.

15 MS. BURN-RILEY: I am from Niceville, born
16 and raised in Okaloosa. First of all I just
17 want to say thank you for coming here.

18 Personally, I haven't seen so many elected
19 Democrats in Okaloosa County in, oh, too long,
20 and therein lies the issue, I suppose.

21 I want to thank you also for not skipping
22 Ft. Walton. I realize your Chair has a certain
23 bit weight and usually they go from Pensacola
24 to Panama City, and we have to travel if we
25 want anybody to hear what we have to say. So I

1 really appreciate what -- that you are here.

2 I have the same thing to say in terms of
3 the maps as has been said before. It is very
4 hard -- I went on the website. I found it a
5 little cumbersome quite frankly, and every
6 place it said it is under construction, it is
7 going to get better, trust us.

8 And so I will go back to it to try to see
9 what kind of input I can put to -- and put in
10 the numbers and see if we can get rid of the
11 rat tails and the packing and the stacking and
12 the things that have been done in the past.

13 I would caution you that the \$30 million
14 as I understand is what the redistricting costs
15 us, has been allotted in a budget that has
16 taken money from teachers and from a lot of
17 different areas that are very dear to our
18 heart.

19 If that is an incorrect figure, I
20 apologize, but there is a lot of money involved
21 in the hearings that you are going around 26
22 places in the state, and I would hope that, I
23 don't know if, now that you have come to Ft.
24 Walton, I don't care where you go, but if you
25 -- if you can cut those down.

1 I am concerned about the timing, excuse
2 me, but I am a little skeptical. When someone
3 says they are dragging their feet because they
4 don't want to get finished until it is so close
5 to the deadline that they won't have lines in
6 place.

7 So only an incumbent will have a real
8 advantage or will have a certain advantage and
9 that people who want to run won't know what the
10 districts are, they won't know where the lines
11 are, and a lot of time is being taken up by 26
12 public hearings.

13 And while I applaud the openness, I would
14 urge you to be ready on January when you do go,
15 be ready with your committees. Don't -- don't
16 -- don't make them right, make them wrong and
17 that is what I would like to say, thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
19 much, Judy. Appreciate your testimony, and
20 next we will hear from Don Riley and following
21 Mr. Riley will Susan Harris be on deck and
22 ready, please.

23 Thank you, Mr. Riley, for being here, and
24 you are recognized.

25 MR. RILEY: Thank you, sir. Thank you,

1 Senator Gaetz and the other members of the
2 Committee, both for your public service as well
3 as for allowing me to offer my thoughts here
4 tonight regarding Florida's redistricting
5 process.

6 My name is Don Riley, and I live in
7 Miramar Beach. I am President of the Grand
8 Dunes Condominium Association.

9 I have one simple request for the
10 Committee. Please keep the legislative
11 districts in northwest Florida as close as you
12 can to where they are today.

13 Our Constitution requires that no district
14 lines be drawn to favor or disfavor any
15 political party or an incumbent, and to me the
16 solution seems rather simple. Move the
17 district lines as little as possible and little
18 credence can be given to any charges that lines
19 were moved for anyone's benefit.

20 Further, the current legislative district
21 lines have worked well. In the Florida Senate,
22 the similar towns along the Gulf of Mexico and
23 south of the Eglin Reservation, such as Miramar
24 Beach, Niceville, Shalimar, Navarre, Pensacola
25 Beach have one Senator whom we like,

1 incidentally, Don Gaetz.

2 The similar towns in the northern
3 panhandle, Milton, Defuniak Springs, Pace and
4 Crestview are represented by Senator Evers.

5 Currently the boundary between Senator
6 Gaetz and Senator Evers' districts runs
7 parallel to the Gulf of Mexico as others have
8 noted before me, creating a coastal district
9 and a northern district.

10 And I think it is far preferable to having
11 the boundary between their two districts
12 running vertically, perpendicularly to the
13 gulf, creating eastern and western districts
14 instead.

15 Radically changing the district lines
16 would be devastating to our coastal community
17 interests and would weakened our representation
18 in the Legislature, and it would similarly
19 disserve the interests of our neighbors living
20 in the northern part of this part of the
21 Florida panhandle.

22 I would urge you, please, keep the
23 district lines as they are now. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
25 Mr. Riley. We appreciate your testimony.

1 Next, Suzanne Harris, please, Ms. Harris, and
2 following Ms. Harris, Ed Winkelseth. Suzanne,
3 thank you for being here tonight and we
4 appreciate your testimony before the Committee.
5 You are recognized.

6 MS. HARRIS: Thank you. I want to thank
7 all of ya'll for coming. I think it is a
8 wonderful open process and that makes me feel
9 so good about our government that people care
10 to hear what we have to say.

11 My name is Suzanne Harris, and I am a
12 Walton County resident, and I represent
13 Edgewater Beach Condominium Association Resort.

14 As a local business woman I see how
15 economically diverse the panhandle of Florida
16 is. I live in a condominium on the Gulf Coast.

17 When I walk outside of my condominium and
18 I stand on the beach and I look up and down the
19 beach as far as I can see in any direction, I
20 see like property of mine, condominiums, rental
21 resorts, houses, but they are all basically the
22 same.

23 If I were north of the bay I would see a
24 totally different geographical dimension. I
25 would see farm land instead of sand and I would

1 see cattle and chickens and I would see a lot
2 of different things that are due to farming and
3 not that relate to the sand and the beach and
4 the tourist industry that we have here.

5 Currently the legislative districts are
6 mostly drawn in a way that recognizes the
7 uniqueness of our coastal areas. For example,
8 Senator Gaetz is my Senator. He is always
9 there for the coastal community. It doesn't
10 matter when we ask him to come, day or night,
11 he is always available. Most of us have his
12 cell phone number plugged into our cell phone
13 and I can tell you, he will tell you, I have
14 called him many a night saying, help, we need
15 something done for us.

16 He understands our district. His district
17 line is along the coast from Pensacola, Ft.
18 Walton, Destin, South Walton and into Panama
19 City. He understands us. I can't say that to
20 you enough.

21 Likewise, Senator Evers represents the
22 northern portion of Walton County, along with
23 the northern portions of our panhandle
24 counties.

25 This should not change. Please, I am

1 begging you, do not replace the current
2 district lines with a strict adherence to
3 county boundaries, instead, link together the
4 cities, the towns and the communities along the
5 coast wherever possible for Legislative and
6 Congressional Districts.

7 This will also allow you to link together
8 communities in the northern panhandle that
9 share the same economic interests.

10 The Florida Constitution requires the
11 Legislature to respect geographical boundaries
12 when drawing districts. In the Florida
13 panhandle the most significant boundary is
14 created by the vast land owned by the United
15 States Department of Defense north of Freeport,
16 Niceville and Navarre.

17 If the Legislature will draw the districts
18 either north or south of the military land, the
19 district community south along the coast and
20 north along the Alabama border will be best
21 represented.

22 I thank all of you. I used to live in Ft.
23 Myers, Florida, I still have a condo in Sanibel
24 Island, so I am very familiar with your
25 district.

1 I just came back from Palm Beach, not West
2 Palm, but Palm Beach, and I think all of ya'll
3 that live along there understand that everybody
4 doesn't have the same interest, and the beach
5 communities are only interested in bringing
6 tourism here and prospering for businesses and
7 the northern part of our district is interested
8 in totally different areas, and it would be
9 such a shame to combine them.

10 Now, I am going to leave you with one last
11 thing. I live in Walton County on the beach.
12 All of my County Commissioners live over an
13 hour away from Walton County that represent
14 Walton County.

15 It is very hard when you go to a County
16 Commissioner meeting in Walton County and you
17 have people from Paxton and Mosey Head and
18 Freeport on the Commission. They don't really
19 have the true understanding, and I can tell you
20 this firsthand because I am also on the Tourist
21 Development Council of Walton County.

22 I can tell you firsthand, it is very
23 difficult for them to understand the problems
24 that we in the beach front communities have.

25 Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
2 Suzanne. Mr. Winkelseth, please, and following
3 Ed, Brenda Hall, Brenda Hall would be on deck,
4 please. Mr. Winkelseth, thank you for being
5 here.

6 MR. WINKELSETH: I am Ed Winkelseth, I
7 live over in Shalimar. I appreciate seeing all
8 of you folks. I am a 31-year -- 31 and-a-half
9 years in the military taught me to have fun.
10 So I am going to throw a hand grenade just like
11 I did at the staff meetings, and say I disagree
12 with all of the folks.

13 I believe in vertical alignment of the
14 counties. All I -- I live in the south end and
15 all I hear about is the beaches and we got to
16 refurbish the beaches, and we got to do this
17 for the tourists.

18 I believe if our Representatives are
19 representing north to south in the county, they
20 will learn the south part. They will know the
21 north part, and they will be fighting for their
22 whole counties.

23 I have got things drawn up just with
24 numbers. I won't hit a whole lot, but the big
25 thing is, Escambia County has got two

1 Representatives.

2 It would be slightly less than the ideal
3 district population. Hopefully the Committee
4 is smart enough to realize ideal is something
5 to go with.

6 Somebody like Matt, he picked, he would be
7 24,000 people over, but he is young and he can
8 handle that kind of thing. Brad Drake, he
9 wouldn't have to run out to see Al. I wouldn't
10 want to go see Al anyhow, but I have laid it
11 out, I have laid out the numbers. I have laid
12 out the differences.

13 The biggest thing is, we are counties, our
14 Representatives should be fighting for the
15 whole county, not for the beach people, not for
16 the tourism.

17 We have got people that live here year
18 round, and I did the same thing with the
19 Senators' list and I changed the one for
20 Congressman Miller, took one county away so
21 maybe he will be available to conduct Town Hall
22 meetings in our various counties.

23 Like I say, I just believe we got to get
24 over this north end of the county and south
25 end. I went to high school in that quote,

1 unquote, conservative district down there in
2 Broward County, south Broward. I learned
3 enough to get out of Florida because them
4 people are flaming Liberal.

5 No offense to you flaming Liberals on the
6 panel, and I went in the military for 31
7 and-a-half years and then eight and-a-half
8 years civil service. I screamed at the TV and
9 I did everything.

10 When I finally retired I ran into guys
11 like Henry. We still disagree a lot. Al, the
12 other folks, folks in the Republican Party, and
13 I decided to get involved.

14 Five years ago you wouldn't have seen me
15 at one of these meetings. I would have been
16 sitting home drinking a beer and cussing you
17 people out for not doing what I think should be
18 done. So as a result I have laid it out.

19 You can look at it, Henry will probably
20 crucify me when I leave here but that is
21 another story.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Ed, thank you very much.

23 MR. WINKELSETH: I have got it on a USB,
24 too.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Okay. Thank you, thank

1 you, and we will make this information
2 available to all members of the public.

3 Brenda Hall is next. Can we have a little
4 order there in south Florida? Thank you.

5 Brenda Hall is next and following
6 Ms. Hall, Mayor Sam Seevers from the City of
7 Destin.

8 Brenda, you are recognized. Thank you for
9 being here tonight.

10 MS. HALL: Brenda Hall. I have lived in
11 this area for 45 years, and I would like to
12 reiterate just a little bit about the maps not
13 being available and the public hearings before
14 the maps.

15 I think the public has already voted and
16 provided you with the guidelines for
17 redistricting. We paid for the software and
18 these engineers that are going to run it to
19 build new districts.

20 Until you provide the maps for comment,
21 this hearing process is a waste of precious
22 time and money. However, I would like to use
23 some of you time and my money.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Yes, for a sham it is
25 pretty well attended.

1 MS. HALL: Well, it is a shame, because on
2 June 8th, I would like to remind you that you
3 came and met with the Democrat Women's Club and
4 that you agreed that we would have hearings
5 like this after the maps were made.

6 So I just wanted to remind you that you
7 made that commitment, and -- but what I would
8 like to tell you all is what hasn't been said
9 is that what we voted for, what the public
10 voted for, what the citizens wanted was a fair
11 process.

12 I think that came out in fair districting,
13 and what we feel is always seems to be the most
14 important thing to you folks in the Legislature
15 is what the party wants, not what the citizens
16 want.

17 It is what the party wants, and I am here
18 to say that if -- and Mr. Gaetz said that when
19 his Senate Committee took this up we would not
20 be using party modifiers in deciding who was
21 going to go in which little box on the page.

22 And I would like some sort of a commitment
23 from the House of Representatives that they
24 would do the same thing.

25 If we don't have -- if we take away and

1 make ourselves color blind to red or blue, I
2 think that everybody in the state would agree
3 that they are getting a fair process.

4 We are just working with numbers. I
5 realize that we have to work with other
6 modifiers. We have to work with
7 African-American and Hispanic modifiers, but
8 there is nowhere in our Constitution that says
9 we have to work with Republicans, Democrats,
10 Independent modifiers.

11 So if we just got rid of those modifiers I
12 feel like we would get fair districts. We
13 would get rid of all of those little tail ends,
14 those little rat ends, those little squirrels
15 over on the side, and I think that both our
16 Legislators and the citizens would be happier,
17 and I know the Supervisor of Elections would be
18 a lot happier.

19 So that is my comment and I would like to
20 thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
22 Ms. Hall. We appreciate your testimony. Next
23 we will hear from Mayor Sam Seevers from the
24 City of Destin and following the Mayor, William
25 White, please.

1 Madam Mayor, thank you for being here and
2 you are recognized.

3 MAYOR SEEVERS: Thank you so much for
4 allowing me this opportunity to speak. First
5 of all I would like to thank each and every one
6 of you guys for all of the time that you are
7 spending up here and hopefully you will be able
8 to go fishing in the morning, red snapper are
9 biting right now like crazy. So if you get
10 that opportunity, do that and we have got
11 fabulous restaurants all over this area, so
12 please take advantage of it. We could
13 certainly use the income, especially after the
14 oil spill last year.

15 Senator Gaetz, again, thank you so much
16 for your leadership on this Committee. We
17 greatly appreciate it. On behalf of the Destin
18 City Council, we respectfully request that in
19 our city, our small city of 12,305 people, that
20 we have one House District, one Congressional
21 District and one Senate District.

22 Even though we are a very, very small
23 city, an example of one of the issues that we
24 have is Congressman Southerland has about 19
25 homes in our city in his district, and

1 Congressman Miller has all of the rest.

2 It may not -- it may seem like a really
3 good thing, having all of that representation,
4 but what happens is when individual citizens go
5 to vote, they get very confused. And in our
6 last election we had people standing in City
7 Hall wanting to know why they couldn't vote
8 when their neighbors across the street voted,
9 you know, for certain individuals and it just
10 makes it difficult.

11 And if you look on the maps it is really
12 interesting how they have these little tiny
13 juggernauts drawn on it. So we are just asking
14 it to clean it up, no one is asking for a
15 particular person, a particular party,
16 anything, just that the City of Destin is under
17 one House District, under one Senate District
18 and under one Congressional District.

19 So I appreciate your time this evening and
20 you guys have a good night.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Madam Mayor,
22 we appreciate your testimony. William White is
23 next and following Mr. White's testimony, we
24 will hear from Mary Nielsan.

25 Mr. White, thank you for being here, and

1 you are recognized.

2 MR. WHITE: My pleasure. Just as a favor
3 to me, would all of the Democrats on the panel
4 please raise your left hands? Okay. That
5 wasn't exactly an aphrodisiac, but as a Liberal
6 who has lived in Okaloosa County for 35 years I
7 can assure you it is a difficult row to hoe.

8 What I would like to say, it is probably
9 early on in the game if we were to really
10 change the system out of this castle like
11 grotesqueries that get to be districts
12 sometimes and we have got a lot, a lot more
13 shovels full after tonight.

14 Perhaps seeing as no one can comment, I
15 would just like to ask the question
16 rhetorically, perhaps if we were sinical we
17 would say what we are doing here tonight is
18 rearranging the seats on the Titanic.

19 Particularly in a nation where democracy
20 has been shredded to the point where, for
21 example, it takes \$80 million to run for a
22 Senate Seat.

23 We are missing something, and I hope that
24 when it all comes out in the wash, mixes into
25 your equation, because the popular

1 misconception is that, you know, we do have the
2 best government money can buy. Let's prove
3 they are wrong. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
5 Mr. White. We appreciate your testimony. Mary
6 Nielsan is next and following Ms. Nielsan, Jim
7 Bagby, also with the City of Destin.

8 Ms. Nielsan, you are recognized. Thank
9 you for being here.

10 MS. NIELSAN: Thank you, thank you. Thank
11 you all for coming. This is a wonderful
12 opportunity. My name is Mary Nielsan, and I am
13 a resident of Walton County, in a community
14 along the beaches of south Walton.

15 We would like, many of us in this area
16 would like to have our beaches along the Gulf
17 of Mexico more contiguous with our
18 representation, and although that differs for
19 many people who spoke earlier, I believe that
20 there is opportunity to align things more
21 horizontally as compared to vertically.

22 I don't see that. Another gentleman spoke
23 about it being incongruous and we should all
24 run north, south, but there is opportunity to
25 be had by those communities that differ so

1 greatly amongst themselves from the north to
2 the south.

3 So sometimes you can look at something
4 that seems wrong or seems to be divisive, and
5 instead, you can take that and make a wonderful
6 opportunity out of it. So I would like our
7 leaders to be along the beaches where they have
8 common interest, common problems, and they are
9 working with all of these communities towards a
10 similar goal instead of being fractionated.

11 So that was my theory and I think we
12 should look horizontally a little bit. Thank
13 you.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
15 Ms. Nielsan. We appreciate your testimony, and
16 Jim Bagby, a member of the City Council, City
17 of Destin, thank you for your service to our
18 community, and you are recognized.

19 COUNCILMAN BAGBY: Well, thank you,
20 Senator Gaetz, and I want to thank you. One
21 thing you didn't mention is you were
22 Dr. Tibbett's predecessor, and one of the
23 reasons we have great schools in this county is
24 in large part due to your efforts and your work
25 and I just wanted to thank you for everything

1 you have done for this county and for this
2 school in particular where two of my daughters
3 graduated.

4 I would like to thank all of you for
5 coming from all across the state to take time
6 out of your busy summer schedule. Some of you
7 may be off or whatever, and to come and just
8 spend a little time with us to learn our
9 interests, I appreciate it.

10 My name is Jim Bagby. I do sit on the
11 Destin City Council, our Mayor, our beautiful
12 Mayor, just spoke. I am also -- that is my non
13 paying job.

14 My paying job is I am the Town Manager of
15 Rosemary Beach, a little community down in
16 Walton County, as another bench front community
17 and so I go about 30 miles every day along the
18 beach, along the beautiful beaches of northwest
19 Florida.

20 And your job is difficult. I know it is,
21 because you have a lot of things you have to
22 deal with. You have to balance populations,
23 you have to look at geographic boundaries, you
24 have to make sure everything is contiguous.

25 You have to protect the rights of

1 minorities, you have to look at communities of
2 common interest and existing political
3 boundaries and make sure these districts are
4 compact, and a million other things, and I
5 understand that.

6 You know, Representative Ford would
7 understand where Mayor Seevers and I are coming
8 from as a former member of the Florida League
9 of Cities, because Destin is, we have got 12 or
10 13,000 people, and I live in Steve
11 Southerland's Congressional District, and I am
12 happy to live in Steve Southerland's
13 Congressional District and I live in Marti
14 Coley's House District.

15 And I am glad to live in Marti Coley's
16 House District, even though she lives about two
17 hours east of me, okay, but if I go about a
18 mile to the west of me I would be in Matt
19 Gaetz's, excuse me, Legislative District, and I
20 would be in Jeff Miller's Congressional
21 District.

22 And a town that small shouldn't be split
23 that many ways, that many times. And so I
24 would ask you to really look at putting all of
25 Destin in one district.

1 The other thing I would ask you to do is
2 put a lot of weight on these communities of
3 common interest. I think there have been some
4 people that alluded to it, you know, if you
5 represent a beach community in south Florida,
6 just think if you went due east or due west for
7 40 miles into that, into the heartland of
8 Florida as opposed to right there in Pinellas
9 County or around the Tampa Bay or whatever.

10 Entirely different issue, entirely
11 different issues being dealt with by those
12 Representatives.

13 We have three main communities of interest
14 in northwest Florida. We have our agriculture
15 on the north, we have our military slash
16 industrial, but mainly military in the center
17 and we do have our tourism, and while I respect
18 the gentleman's view that, well, you know, just
19 keep it in Okaloosa County or keep it in Santa
20 Rosa County, that makes your job harder, okay,
21 because that makes you a mile wide and a
22 quarter of an inch thin, when you are trying to
23 represent interests, our interests in
24 Tallahassee and you have to be an expert in
25 military affairs, you have to be an expert in

1 tourism, you have to be an expert in
2 agriculture.

3 You have to be an expert in 40 other
4 different topics, that, that is not fair to you
5 and that is not fair to us, fair to us, the
6 people that we -- you are representing.

7 So I would ask that you not spread
8 yourself too thin, that you keep Senator Evers
9 in the north who does a great job representing
10 agricultural interests and the interest of our
11 farmers, and you keep Senator Gaetz in the
12 south representing the beach communities, the
13 military and they both do a great job with the
14 military, but we are communities of common
15 interest and I just ask that you put at least
16 as much weight, if not more on that, than you
17 do on some artificial geographic boundary that
18 was created 150 years ago. Thank you very
19 much.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 Councilman. Next we will hear from Charlotte
22 Flynt, and after Ms. Flynt speaks we will hear
23 from Christy Walker, please.

24 Ms. Flynt, I am sorry, I didn't give
25 Ms. Flynt as much warning as I would have

1 liked, but we are delighted to have you here,
2 and we welcome your testimony. You are
3 recognized.

4 MS. FLYNT: My name is Charlotte Flynt. I
5 am in Precinct 29, Walton County, and a lot of
6 things have been said tonight and I concur with
7 the vast majority of them, but I do hope that
8 you will also keep your hearts that in the
9 south part of the counties not only do we have
10 tourism, we have permanent residents, too, who
11 fund these counties. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Ms. Flynt. Christy Walker, Ms. Walker?

14 MS. WALKER: I will pass, thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
16 Ms. Walker, thanks for being here tonight.

17 Next, Morgan Doolittle and following
18 Morgan Doolittle, and I think it is Ann, is it
19 Ann Hering, yes, it is. Morgan Doolittle.

20 Thank you very much for being here,
21 Mr. Doolittle, and we appreciate your testimony
22 and you are recognized.

23 MR. DOOLITTLE: Well, I actually live in
24 Panama City, Florida, but I work over here in
25 Okaloosa County, and I probably wouldn't have

1 come up and said anything, but I wanted to go
2 on record saying thank you very much for doing
3 this.

4 But also I wanted to support that the
5 Council member's testimony there from Destin.
6 I have heard a lot of different ideas about the
7 vertical separation and all of the ways to
8 break the districts down, but I would also like
9 to, I guess ask that when we do go through this
10 redistricting process, that we -- we cut off
11 those little tidbits, and, you know, you know,
12 like how neighborhoods have sort of been broken
13 up.

14 And I think that is, when you look at some
15 of these maps, you wonder how were these drawn
16 and maybe ya'll weren't there. I think when
17 you look at them yourselves, and you go, well,
18 some of this needs to be fixed obviously, and I
19 would just like to go on record as requesting
20 that and supporting his testimony right there.
21 That was excellent.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Doolittle.
23 We appreciate it. And for the record, none of
24 us were here. That is a great thing about term
25 limits, we can blame our predecessors and our

1 successors. Ann Hering, Ms. Hering? We will
2 come back to Ann Hering if she had to step out
3 for a moment.

4 Next, Brenda Rees, Ms. Rees. It is great
5 to see you again and thank you very much for
6 being here tonight. You are recognized to
7 speak before the Committee, and following
8 Ms. Rees by the way, is Vickie Ritchson.
9 Ms. Ritchson, if you could be on deck.

10 MS. REESE: Thank you, Senator Gaetz and
11 Committee members and Representatives. I am a
12 Walton County native. I was born in Defuniak
13 Springs but I live on the beach off of 30A in
14 South Walton, so I know the area well.

15 I also would like to let you know that
16 haven't been here before that Walton County is
17 the eighth county created in Florida, nearly
18 200 years old.

19 But thank you for holding these 26 or so
20 redistricting meetings across the state. They
21 are very helpful and will help Floridians and
22 you as we craft our fair districts.

23 I would like to ask you to consider
24 perhaps adding two or five super regional
25 meetings at the end so that those of us that

1 are here early might benefit from all of the 26
2 Committee groups that testify so that we might
3 update our comments somewhat.

4 You have provided maps and I thank you.
5 By taking these current maps into consideration
6 with the census numbers and extensive
7 redistricting guidelines, an individual can
8 quickly see where some changes need to be made.

9 Congressional District I is 2,000 short,
10 and Congressional District II is 45,000 over.
11 That is 696,000 ideal district. Obviously,
12 changes need to be made.

13 You have also offered generous tools for
14 individuals to construct their own maps. I
15 hope to do so soon. Thank you.

16 A quick look at the State House and Senate
17 maps you have provided, along with the numbers
18 indicate change. The 10 percent deviation
19 should be utilized here. Thomas Hanna was a
20 Speaker of the House, by the way, from Pointe
21 Washington, some of you might know that.

22 Congressional District I should take back
23 Blue Water Bay and consolidate as much as
24 Okaloosa County as possible. Congressional
25 District II may need to continue to look to its

1 historical roots. South Walton even has a long
2 history of being with the county next to it,
3 Bay County for a long time.

4 So keeping South Walton with Congressional
5 District II would meet not only the new state
6 requirements of compactness, but also Federal
7 redistricting guidelines of ensuring one
8 person, one vote. Following the Voting Rights
9 Act of 1964, as amended in 1965, being compact
10 and contiguous to name some of the guidelines
11 used for many years in case law by the United
12 States Department of Justice.

13 Two new areas that are very blue, this is
14 a map that I printed off your website so it is
15 very helpful to go on to that Florida
16 Redistricting.org and people can go to that and
17 print material and see all of the very helpful
18 U-Tube explanations of how to draw their maps.

19 But if you look on this map, it is very
20 obvious, there is a very blue area that is
21 extremely over populated that the new
22 Congressional Districts, perhaps one of them
23 may need to come from that area. Maybe the
24 Orlando and the Tampa areas particularly look
25 like that is where you might need to be working

1 on those Congressional Districts.

2 It is practicable to make substantive
3 comments now. It will be good to wait and see
4 what some of the citizens come up with in areas
5 we aren't familiar with, especially the House
6 and Senate Districts where we can have a
7 10 percent deviation.

8 In the Congressional Districts it might be
9 a little bit hard because there is only that
10 one vote that separates them. So once you get
11 to Pensacola you can't go any further west, and
12 so, but again, with the State and House Seats
13 having a 10 percent deviation, that will help
14 us later on to do that.

15 So I look forward to meeting you with
16 again and participating and continuing dialogue
17 to produce a fair redistricting plan for
18 Florida. Thank you very much.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
20 Ms. Rees, and Ms. Rees makes a good point when
21 she asks about being able to update your
22 comments based on information that might be
23 presented on the web, or presented by
24 Legislators in Committee.

25 You will have the opportunity to do that

1 either by e-mail and the e-mail lists e-mail
2 addresses for the Senate and House Committees
3 are listed on the brochure that you got when
4 you came in, or the Snail Mail addresses are
5 listed as well.

6 And as a previous speaker from the
7 Democratic Committee indicated, there will be
8 additional opportunities for public input after
9 these hearings are concluded and after maps are
10 presented.

11 Thank you very much, Ms. Rees.
12 Ms. Ritchson, it is good to see you again.

13 MS. RITCHSON: It is good to see you
14 again, Senator Gaetz.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And thank you very much
16 for being here. You are recognized.

17 MS. RITCHSON: Thank you. I am Vickie
18 Ritchson and I am a concerned citizen. That is
19 how I am here today. I live in the city of
20 Niceville.

21 I happen to be running for the City
22 Council in the election in July, but I am just
23 here as a citizen right now.

24 I just read the article in the newspaper
25 that Senator Gaetz had put in and felt like I

1 needed to be here and be involved, and I want
2 to thank you for this opportunity and I want to
3 say, you know, I hadn't come here with any
4 preconceived notions, but it is wonderful to
5 listen to the people's perspectives to gather
6 my knowledge to be able to go later to the
7 website and give an informed opinion.

8 And I was listening to the vertical and
9 horizontal and I can see both points, and I was
10 thinking that it might be difficult if some
11 line took Eglin and split it down the middle,
12 that you might have two Representatives working
13 together, but at the same time you might end up
14 with two people butting heads.

15 And so in that respect I could see that
16 boundary lines being continuous in a certain
17 like category would make it much easier for
18 representation, making -- I draw maps for my
19 job.

20 I work for a contractor on Base, and part
21 of what I do is draw footprints for the
22 missions out on the property that they do, and
23 in that I do a lot of map drawing. So I am
24 looking forward to going out to your software
25 and playing with it, and I do know it is much

1 easier for me to draw to boundaries that are
2 locateable, a river, a road, an air space,
3 county line.

4 And that makes sense to me, and most
5 cities are not split by county lines. So
6 following, following boundaries makes sense to
7 not split groups of people with like interests.

8 I had a misconception maybe like other
9 people that the last time we had a
10 redistricting, that it was a power play for
11 political power play to grab new areas with new
12 people and for there to be a juggling of
13 Republican and Democratic powers, and I feel
14 like your process here is going to be a more
15 transparent process that will prevent people
16 from feeling that they are being over powered
17 by some political game.

18 The logical lines, the military presence,
19 the beaches and tourist industry are all
20 pertinent things to consider, and I will be
21 taking the rest of the comments that come today
22 and what you present for us in software and
23 maps, and I will be involved in that and make
24 some comments at a later time that where I have
25 an informed decision.

1 But I do appreciate the process you have
2 here, opening it up to just normal people as
3 well as power -- people in power for the cities
4 and the Representatives, but I was just very
5 impressed that there were so many of you who
6 came out tonight for us.

7 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
8 Ms. Ritchson, appreciate it very much. Next we
9 will hear from Aaron Thrush, Aaron Thrush, and
10 following Aaron Thrush, from Jeanne Ashley,
11 please. Mr. Thrush, are you here?

12 MR. THRUSH: I pass.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir,
14 for being here tonight. Jeanne Ashley,
15 Ms. Ashley, and following Ms. Ashley, Ben
16 White, Mr. White. If you will be on deck.

17 Ms. Ashley, thank you for being here, you
18 are recognized.

19 MS. ASHLEY: Thank you, I appreciate it.
20 I have lived all over the country, mostly in
21 cities, so I have not really been part of the
22 gerrymandering until now, and I found out
23 accidentally the night before we were to vote
24 for our delegates, I had been, immediately when
25 I moved here, registered to vote, joined a

1 political party, got to know the people, was
2 anxious to vote for the delegates.

3 The night before I was to go to Crestview
4 I thought I found out that I was in that little
5 split of land right off of 98 that is in a
6 totally different district.

7 And then I was expected to go to
8 Tallahassee to vote for people I have never met
9 and had no clue, you know, who they were and
10 certainly was going to be out voted.

11 I felt disenfranchised. I felt taken,
12 really. I understand that the beach issues are
13 much different from the northern part, and I
14 would like to keep that maintained, but to have
15 an area so spread out that you go from Destin
16 to Tallahassee, that gives us no representation
17 whatsoever.

18 We are totally outvoted. So if you can
19 possibly do something with, I don't know,
20 Walton, Okaloosa, maybe even closer to
21 Pensacola, at least it is not 150 miles away,
22 you know, I would very much like to have a
23 personal relationship with my representation
24 rather than somebody who is way off in the wild
25 somewhere. Thank you very much. Appreciate

1 it.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Ashley.
3 We appreciate you being here tonight. Next may
4 we please hear from Ben White? Ben White?

5 Mr. White, thank you for coming all the
6 way down from Crestview. We appreciate you
7 being here, and you are recognized.

8 MR. WHITE: Thank you, Representatives,
9 and Senators as well, that make up our
10 government for the State of Florida.

11 One of the things from representing the
12 North Okaloosa Republican Club in Crestview,
13 one of the things that the north looks at if
14 you sat in the middle of 85, on the left is
15 Brad Drake, I mean, on the right is Brad Drake
16 and on the left is Doug Broxson, and then we
17 have Senator Evers.

18 One of the three common, one of the common
19 denominator between those three Representatives
20 is they all live in our district. They know
21 what we are dealing with. They understand it.

22 If I go to the south I do have Matt Gaetz,
23 Mr. Gaetz, and Don Gaetz, that represent the
24 south.

25 They live down there. They understand the

1 rules and problems that those individuals have.
2 So being in Crestview, it doesn't matter
3 whether you turn right or turn left, those two
4 individuals understand the north end of the
5 county.

6 They live it, they understand it, most of
7 them is also born and raised in that area, or
8 grown up from there. I moved in from Crestview
9 from Panama City Beach after serving 23 years
10 in the military and I made it my home, but I
11 can talk to all three of those individuals and
12 they all understand what we are going through.

13 Now, if you do go vertical, not to say
14 Mr. Gaetz isn't a smart man, but his whole idea
15 is that the tourist industry down there and he
16 can flip it down there, but at the same token I
17 want to say this, every one of you represent
18 every one of us.

19 At the end of the day it is your vote that
20 represents the State of Florida, whether you
21 are a Liberal, whether you are a Democrat,
22 whether you are a Republican or Conservative,
23 whatever it be, we are looking for you to lead
24 the State of Florida, so thank you, sir.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,

1 Mr. White, we appreciate you. Our next two
2 testifiers are Mike Brown and Kim Christopher.
3 Mike Brown and then if Kim Christopher would be
4 on deck, please.

5 Mr. Brown? Mike Brown? If not, Kim
6 Christopher, are you ready? May we take you
7 next? And following Kim Christopher we will
8 hear from Diana Van Oeveren.

9 MS. CHRISTOPHER: Good evening. Thank you
10 all for being here. I really appreciate seeing
11 all of these great faces. I know what you do
12 for us is a tough job, it is a good job and
13 often not rewarding.

14 What you are doing here should be very
15 rewarding for what you are doing for the state
16 of Florida and the citizenry.

17 I have lived in Florida since 1986. I
18 married a native. I came from Texas and I now
19 call myself a Floridian after all these years,
20 and Senator Montford, thank you, I have a
21 doctor in my family because of you as
22 Superintendent of Leon County Schools.

23 I have been through this process three
24 times. this is the third time since 1986.
25 This is probably the most clear and fluid

1 process since I have watched it happen, and I
2 know that the media, the system is better, more
3 transparent because we do have things like the
4 Internet.

5 We do have more conversation, we do have
6 hopefully all of the papers on board, but one
7 thing that I noticed when they were doing the
8 census, I own a piece of rental property. When
9 they did the census they counted my renter.

10 My renter no longer lives in the State of
11 Florida. That happens frequently when you are
12 in areas that surround military bases. It is a
13 very transient population that I don't think
14 has been considered.

15 The renters that I have currently will not
16 be here to vote in the next election, though
17 they are registered to vote. They are required
18 by their military mission for their time here.

19 That is causing issues that I can see. We
20 have across the state of Florida, specifically
21 the panhandle, a large number of people that
22 are on a limited military mission. It could be
23 as short as eight months, or as long as 18 to
24 24 months.

25 Those are for the people being trained in

1 the special missions at Eglin, Tyndall, White,
2 name them all.

3 I would ask, caution you to please
4 consider that demographic when you are drawing
5 these lines, because what we are having now is
6 the influx coming from the new mission at Eglin
7 of a large number of people.

8 Those persons were not counted in the
9 census. So your numbers immediately are
10 inaccurate. So with that I would thank you
11 very much again for your time for being here,
12 for your tremendous effort and I look forward
13 to following your progress. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
15 Ms. Christopher. Thank you very much. Very
16 thoughtful testimony. Diana, are you ready?
17 Very good, and following Diana, Dick Troop.
18 Thank you for being here tonight and you are
19 recognized.

20 MS. VAN OEVEREN: Diana Van Oeveren, I
21 live in Destin, and I would like to reiterate
22 what Mayor Seevers and our Destin Councilman
23 said about a small community that usually talks
24 to each other should be able to talk to each
25 other about who to vote for, and it didn't work

1 this time, either in the House race or the
2 Congressional race.

3 So, and as an example, I wanted to talk
4 only about House District 7, Marti Coley's
5 district. It would be 106 miles for a Destin
6 constituent to drive to Marianna to contact
7 Ms. Coley about anything.

8 If you went 100 miles in the other
9 direction or north, you would be in Alabama.
10 So I think you ought to keep that in mind.

11 The media covers areas perhaps differently
12 than county lines, differently than district
13 lines, but I think that may be something that
14 you should consider as much as you can. Is
15 Ms. Coley covered in the Panama City or the
16 Marianna paper? I don't know, because I don't
17 even have access to those papers unless I can
18 find them on-line. They are not sold in
19 Destin.

20 Our local newspaper tries to cover about
21 three counties, but that is only about half of
22 Marti Coley's district. Her district includes
23 nine counties. The main parts of two and lots
24 of little pieces of seven others, I believe.

25 So I think that is something you should

1 consider. The compactness just is not there.
2 Horizontal districts could be more compact,
3 vertical districts could be more compact in a
4 different way, but right now we have got these
5 little tails and Destin got caught in two of
6 the tails.

7 The suburbs of Marianna, for an example,
8 don't even have Marti Coley as their
9 representative. They are in another district.
10 So give her all of Marianna and take us off and
11 add us to somebody else.

12 The same thing happens in Tallahassee with
13 Steve Southerland's district. Their
14 Congressman on the east side of Tallahassee is
15 not Steve Southerland. He is the Congressman
16 only for a piece of Tallahassee. So I think
17 you ought to keep that in mind and when you get
18 to Tallahassee or near Marianna I am sure they
19 will be addressing these issues in the same
20 way. Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN WEATHERFORD: Thank you very
22 much. We appreciate your testimony. Dick
23 Troop is next and following Mr. Troop is Sabu
24 Williams from the Okaloosa County NAACP.
25 Mr. Troop.

1 MR. TROOP: The first thing I would like
2 to thank everybody that came from the long
3 distances to be with us tonight. I know you
4 would rather be somewhere else.

5 Something that came up early in the
6 meeting was a discussion of the imaging
7 software, and as I look around, I am happy to
8 see some young people in the group.

9 There is also some of us older folks, and
10 so I started with software when new versions
11 come out. You have imaging software, as I
12 understand it, that is, you know, being built
13 now and so I would like to know that every one
14 of you, all of the Representatives, can turn on
15 your computer, boot up the software, go through
16 and run the software and show how the lines are
17 manipulated north, south, east or west.

18 And it is fine to get help from your staff
19 to learn it, you know, that is part of the
20 game, but I would like to know if you come in
21 by yourself in the morning at 7:00 o'clock, you
22 got it up and you can see how the numbers move
23 around. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
25 Mr. Troop. I will tell you, Mr. Troop, that

1 when this software was first developed we did
2 get an orientation and we got individual
3 tutoring. So if we don't know how to do it, it
4 is our fault. Sabu Williams, Mr. Williams, and
5 following Mr. Williams we will go back to those
6 individuals who we called earlier who were not
7 able to be present. Perhaps they were out of
8 the room.

9 Mr. Williams, thank you for being here.
10 You are recognized.

11 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you for having me,
12 Senator Gaetz and I thank all of you for being
13 here. I just walked in the door and somewhat
14 just got home from New York and thought I had
15 to be here and I wanted to make sure that the
16 NAACP's points were made clear to this
17 Committee in terms of how we feel about
18 redistricting.

19 Number one the state of Florida we believe
20 should ensure transparency and fairness in
21 compliance with the Voting Rights Act and with
22 equal protection. You should ensure one
23 person, one vote. You should redistrict in a
24 way that avoids minority vote delusion and you
25 should avoid drawing district lines so that the

1 minority population is over concentrated or
2 packed into election districts.

3 You should also be careful to avoid
4 cracking or fracturing, if you will, which is
5 drawing district lines so that an area of
6 concentrated, concentrated minority population
7 which is large enough for separate
8 representation in that it could constitute one
9 or more majority, minority or majority black
10 districts is divided and spread among several
11 districts that are predominantly White.

12 You should be careful to avoid stacking,
13 which is drawing district lines so that a large
14 minority population concentration is included
15 with a larger white population with a purpose
16 or effect of depriving minority voters of a
17 voting majority.

18 We also respectfully request that you
19 avoid drawing plans that erode minority rights
20 relative to the status quo. That is, that you
21 avoid creating retrogressive redistricting
22 plans.

23 A key traditional redistricting principles
24 to respect for communities of interest. These
25 are defined by three characteristics, the

1 extent to which non members identify members as
2 a distinct community. The extent to which
3 members identify themselves as a distinct
4 community, and the extent to which members are
5 similarly affected by governmental action.

6 African-American citizens form one of the
7 strongest communities of interest in this
8 state, and the redistricting plan should have
9 as a priority the fashioning of districts that
10 accord appropriate representation to
11 communities of interest.

12 We are aware of the redistricting
13 principles outlined in Sections 20 and 21 of
14 the Florida Constitution and they must be
15 adhered to. Specifically, it says, districts
16 should not be drawn with the intent or result
17 of denying or abridging the equal opportunity
18 of racial or language minorities to participate
19 in the political process, or to diminish their
20 ability to elect representatives of their
21 choice.

22 In addition, districts shall be compact
23 and contiguous. Additionally, we want to
24 ensure that the long established principles by
25 the Constitution and the Voting Rights Act of

1 1965 are continued, such as, ensuring one
2 person, one vote and avoiding minority vote
3 delusion.

4 Finally, in producing the data for the
5 maps we ask that you include precinct and
6 district voting age population, VAP, if will,
7 de-aggregated by race or national origin, and
8 would ask that the data also include VAP of
9 citizens who can vote, that is, the position,
10 if you will, of not only the Okaloosa County
11 NAACP, but the Florida State Conferencing
12 NAACP, and thank you for this opportunity.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, Mr.
14 Williams. I appreciate your testimony. Now we
15 will go back to two individuals who's name we
16 called originally, but they weren't able to be
17 present in the room or perhaps they stepped
18 out. We want to hear from them if they are
19 here.

20 Ann Hering, Ms. Hering?

21 Mike Brown, Mr. Brown? Okay. This
22 concludes all of the individuals who signed up.
23 Now let me ask this. Are there any -- are
24 there any people here tonight who wish to speak
25 and did not have the opportunity to sign up?

1 If so, if you will raise your hand we will
2 get you a speaker card and we will call on you,
3 because we want to make sure everyone has the
4 opportunity to speak if you wish to speak.
5 There is a lady back there.

6 Will a member of our staff please get a
7 speaker card to her? Is -- someone over here
8 as well, and a gentleman in the back, and a
9 gentleman over on the couch.

10 All right. While we are waiting to
11 collect those speaker cards and we will hear
12 from those individuals, let me recognize
13 Vice-Chair Precourt because we, while we have
14 been in session tonight we have received some
15 comments from people who have been following us
16 on the Internet and wish to have their comments
17 registered as well.

18 These may be people from our area who
19 weren't able to come to the hearing tonight,
20 but they want their comments read aloud,
21 Mr. Vice-Chair.

22 VICE-CHAIR PRECOURT: Thank you Mr. Chair,
23 and, yes, in fact, one of them is from this
24 area via Twitter from the Destin Chamber of
25 Commerce.

1 We have the following comment. The --
2 they want to notify everyone that redistricting
3 meetings are taking place. Let's hope that
4 they put the entire city of Destin into one
5 district, not split, and in a coastal district.

6 That is a great comment, and I want to add
7 a little commentary to it, because that is a
8 little bit open to interpretation.

9 This is a really good point to reiterate
10 that the single most effective way to have an
11 immediate impact on this as I believe the
12 gentleman, Al, did tonight, is to submit an
13 actual map.

14 You know, we have all heard over the
15 course of time, a picture paints a thousand
16 words, but it is also usually a lot clearer and
17 less open to misinterpretation. So to the
18 degree that you can submit maps I wanted to
19 reiterate that point. These aren't comments,
20 these are specific issues.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Okay, we will hear from
22 Tony, and is it Lengyel?

23 MR. LENGYEL: Lengyel.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Lengyel, I am sorry for
25 mispronouncing your name, Tony. Would you

1 please come forward? We are delighted you are
2 here tonight and anxious to recognize you and
3 hear your testimony.

4 And following his testimony, Jann Coulson,
5 please, would be on deck.

6 MR. LENGYEL: Thank you, sir. Thank you,
7 Senator, my name is Tony Lengyel and I am with
8 the Florida Panhandle Patriots.

9 I appreciate you all being here as well
10 and I see a lot of friends here and I really
11 appreciate the representation by the people and
12 you folks here this evening.

13 I would just, you know, I want to get to
14 these maps and look at these things and I just
15 want to say that I am, you know, a southern
16 California beach boy kid and I gravitated to
17 Florida and I love it here and I live down by
18 the beach.

19 To keep things simple with this process,
20 to look at things from a perspective that
21 everything doesn't need to be changed.
22 Possibly do some tweaking and look at the
23 things like some of the other folks here said
24 tonight, you know, where you have these tails
25 and this and that needs to be -- things need to

1 be straightened up or cleaned up.

2 I don't know that, how many people in the
3 room like all of the changes that have been
4 going on here lately, but, you know, I do think
5 that there needs to be some correction in the
6 process. I think that if you take that into
7 consideration. Let's not overhaul the entire
8 system, but let's kind of do the tweaking and
9 fix things as need be.

10 And by the way, I just wanted to stress
11 that this is my opinion, it is not that of the
12 Panhandle Patriots I am a member. If you ever
13 get a chance you ought to come to one of our
14 meetings.

15 But and also while you are doing this
16 redistricting, you might take a look at putting
17 all of the Tea Parties in one district. It
18 wouldn't be a real tough thing to do, I mean,
19 just keep it in mind.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: We might get some support
21 for that from some people that would surprise
22 you.

23 MR. LENGYEL: Thank you so much, Senator.
24 Thank you all for being here, and we do
25 appreciate your time.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Lengyel,
2 we appreciate your comments. And now, Jann
3 Coulson and followed by Steve Czonstka. Jann,
4 thank you very much for being here tonight, and
5 you are recognized.

6 MS. COULSON: Thank you. I came to
7 listen, and now that I have listened, my
8 greatest concern I don't hear being
9 articulated, and that is that I am hoping that
10 all of you will listen very carefully to the
11 local officials, especially your County
12 Supervisor of Election officials, because you
13 can draw pretty maps and you can do a lot of
14 things, but when you have a confused
15 electorate, they either don't show up or they
16 show up in the wrong place or they get
17 confused.

18 And in the last Presidential election we
19 turned 100 people away from our precinct
20 because they were confused about where they
21 voted. Because of early voting we were very,
22 very fortunate that none of those who were
23 turned away without an opportunity to vote, but
24 as it got closer and closer to 7:00 o'clock I
25 had real concern that we were going to

1 disenfranchise somebody because those maps are
2 sad.

3 And unless there is a compelling reason to
4 make them long and squiggly, please make the
5 lines logical and reasonable, and I understand
6 that each of you is, by charge, must represent
7 all of the people in your area, and when I see
8 a Senatorial District I know that they are
9 going to be representing not just the beach,
10 contrary to what people may attribute to you.

11 I know your view is broader than that,
12 Senator Gaetz. I am far more concerned that it
13 makes sense. I actually worked for another
14 election authority earlier in my life and I am
15 still trying to figure out what all of the
16 districts are that I live in, and I am very
17 frustrated by that.

18 Literally I have gotten an invitation to
19 go to the Supervisor of Elections Office and
20 look at maps in their office because it is so
21 complex. So please listen to your Supervisor
22 of Elections across the state. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, and
24 Ms. Coulson, before you leave, let me just say
25 because just you raised the issue that indeed

1 John Guthrie who is our professional staff
2 director in the Senate, has met with the
3 Supervisors of Elections statewide and they
4 were all invited to attend these hearings as
5 the hearings move into their communities.

6 So we are very interesting in their
7 feedback. So thank you for making that point.

8 MS. COULSON: Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, and next,
10 Steve Czonstka, and following Mr. Czonstka,
11 Gayle Jacobson.

12 Steve, thank you for being here, and you
13 are recognized.

14 MR. CZONSTKA: Thank you for giving us the
15 opportunity to speak. I think that the fact
16 that Okaloosa County is represented by four
17 members of the House, Florida House of
18 Representatives, two Senators and two
19 Congressmen is a positive thing, and so I would
20 just as like to keep that representation. It
21 gives us a voice on things that may come up in
22 the future.

23 I am -- also work for the Supervisor of
24 Elections and am a Precinct Clerk, and I want
25 to echo what the lady before me just said. We

1 had a special election for House District 4,
2 and I live out in Blue Water Bay, Precinct 46,
3 which is split by House District 4 and House
4 District 5.

5 Half of the people who wanted to vote for
6 Representative Gaetz couldn't because they were
7 in Brad Drake's district. Now I know you got
8 to worry about the School Board, you got to
9 worry about County Commission, you got to worry
10 about House and Senate Districts, but I want to
11 again emphasize that if there anyway possible
12 to coordinate with the Supervisors of Elections
13 when they are drawing their precincts, I think
14 that would really minimize voter confusion when
15 they come.

16 Now, a lot of it is the voter's fault.
17 They should know who their Representative is,
18 but we can't always educate the voter as much
19 as we can, so thank you for your opportunities.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 Steve. I appreciate your testimony. Next,
22 Gayle Jacobson and following Ms. Jacobson,
23 Albert Perez. Gayle, it is great to see you as
24 always, and you are recognized. Thank you for
25 being here.

1 MS. JACOBSON: Thank you all for being
2 here. We really appreciate you visiting our
3 pretty little corner of the world, and we thank
4 you for your service to this state. We realize
5 sometimes it is a very unthankful job.

6 I don't have a lot of comments. I just
7 have a couple. You know how hesitant I am to
8 speak in public. One thing that has been
9 mentioned tonight a couple of times is that
10 some people wish that you had maps already
11 drawn.

12 Now, we -- I happen to like this open
13 forum, this transparency that you are coming
14 with open minds to get our input.

15 We know that if you came with the maps
16 already drawn there would be those who thought
17 deals had been struck, and you know, in smoke
18 filled back rooms. So you kind of are in a no
19 win situation, but I personally appreciate this
20 opportunity for everyone to have input.

21 I feel kind of like I did in elementary
22 school. I live in the same house and I went to
23 three different elementary schools because the
24 boundary got moved several times, and that is
25 what happened to me in the last redistricting.

1 I am one mile from the Walton County line
2 and I am inside CD 2 by one mile. I have had
3 great representation no matter who's district I
4 was in.

5 I can honestly say that I have dealt with
6 Congressmen of both parties, certainly you are,
7 and I call on you a lot, so I have no complaint
8 on a party issue, but we do have some real
9 problems in these little key holes that were
10 cut out last time.

11 You have heard this all before, so we hope
12 that you will, and I know this isn't the only
13 area of the state that has these problems. So
14 I will reiterate what so many others have said.

15 Please keep that in mind, please try to
16 make it a little more compact and easier for
17 those at the polls, because it is problematic
18 for the voters and those who work at the polls,
19 and thank you again for your time.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you so much,
21 Ms. Jacobson. It is great to have you here.
22 And now, Albert Perez, Albert Perez.

23 Thank you very much for your testimony
24 tonight. We are anxious to hear from you, and
25 you are recognized, sir.

1 MR. PEREZ: Thank you. I just wanted to
2 say good evening to everyone here on the
3 Committee for traveling so far, most of you,
4 and to my fellow neighbors. I haven't had a
5 chance to, but it is great to see all of you
6 here.

7 I think I have a fairly unique
8 perspective. I am not originally from Florida,
9 but I have been here five years, but to this
10 area, but I did graduate from Barry University
11 in Miami Shores, Florida, very close to North
12 Miami.

13 So I am happy to see people from south
14 Florida up here, I am very proud of that, and I
15 am a four-year veteran in the Air Force, I am a
16 member of the Civil Air Patrol here in Eglin.
17 I work at Hurlburt. I served active duty in
18 Eglin, and I am a member of the Okaloosa Young
19 Democrats here.

20 My plead is simple, keep it simple, try
21 and respect county lines as much as possible.
22 I live and work in Okaloosa County. I am very
23 proud of that. I would not -- I know that a
24 lot of people here, my neighbors, some of them
25 work here in Okaloosa, they live in Walton,

1 some live in Santa Rosa.

2 That is great, that works for them and
3 that is great, but for my perspective, I am
4 very proud to live and work in Okaloosa County.
5 I wouldn't have it any other way.

6 So when I invest in my county I want to
7 invest in my county, whether it be property
8 taxes or whether it be working there, even just
9 going to lunch during my lunch break. I would
10 rather keep it that way. So by respecting
11 county lines, it also diversifies.

12 I know the status quo is one
13 Representative for the coast, one
14 Representative north for the north areas, the
15 more agrarian areas, the more agricultural
16 ones. I don't think monopolizing something
17 like that is going to work.

18 I probably agree with the person, the
19 gentleman who stood before me probably an hour
20 ago and threw the grenade. He said, keep, keep
21 it vertical. I am going to elaborate and I am
22 going to go into detail. Just say keep it
23 simple and try and respect county lines.

24 If we have -- during the BP Oil Spill that
25 occurred fairly recently, we only had one

1 Representative who really cared, just one,
2 because it affected their district and maybe
3 the Senator who it affected his district.

4 We won't have gone far, but if we four or
5 three Representatives or Senators who actually
6 cared, I think we would have accomplished much
7 more in the Florida Legislature.

8 Monopolizing has never got this country
9 far, monopolizing representation has never
10 gotten this country far. It is competition and
11 through diversification that we excel. So,
12 yes, we do need to challenge our
13 Representatives. We need to challenge our
14 Senators to diversify.

15 People, people who live in Okaloosa, they
16 should know who their Senator is. They should
17 know who their Representative is, there should
18 not be this crooked line somewhere in the
19 north, somewhere in the south. We have an
20 extension somewhere over here and for the
21 people that spoke on behalf of Destin, the
22 mayor of Destin, exactly, I don't see any
23 reason why Destin needs to be separated in
24 representation.

25 They deserve to be sovereign. I am very

1 proud that Destin is my choice city. That is
2 where I go clubbing, that is where I go
3 dancing. I am very proud of the culture of Ft.
4 Walton Beach.

5 If I wanted something a little more small
6 town, a little more simple, I will go north. I
7 will go to Crestview, I will go to Laurel Hill.
8 I am proud of Okaloosa County. I am proud to
9 know, and from a Civil Air Patrol perspective I
10 get to see it from the sky.

11 I like to keep it that way. It is simple
12 for them, it is simple for my neighbors, it is
13 simple for you, and I definitely also agree
14 with the Tea Party patriot who spoke a few
15 minutes ago.

16 We, if they can get one district, that
17 would be great, because one, you know, you can
18 give them one Senator, one Representative, that
19 is great. You could spread the Democrats out,
20 you know, give them more representation, that
21 would be great, I would go for that, too. So
22 keep Okaloosa sovereign.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Perez, and
24 thank you, Mr. Perez, for your service as well
25 in uniform and to our country.

1 This -- unless there is someone else who
2 wishes to speak tonight, this concludes the
3 public. Is there a hand up in the back? If
4 not -- yes, there is, there is a hand up in the
5 back, someone wishes to give the benediction.

6 Please, please come forward and we are
7 delighted to have your testimony, and if you
8 would simply articulate your name.

9 MS. GOSSOM: I can do that.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And address for everyone,
11 because I don't have your card yet, you are
12 recognized.

13 MS. GOSSOM: I can do that, thank you,
14 Senator Gaetz. My name is Joyce Gilley-Gossom.
15 I serve on the Ft. Walton Beach City Council,
16 although I am not representing the City Council
17 this evening. I need to make that very clear.

18 I am maybe not as smart as Mr. Kelley and
19 I may not be as smart as some of the other
20 individuals who said that they have gone on to
21 the website and have used the Map Builder
22 software program.

23 I attempted to do that. I was on a panel
24 earlier today and was asked to share my
25 thoughts about the process, and in preparation

1 for that I did go on to the website,
2 registered, received my certification, went
3 back in and started trying to construct a map.

4 After several days and at least eight to
5 ten hours, I was more frustrated than when I
6 was writing my dissertation. It was easier for
7 me to write my dissertation and do my
8 statistical analyzes myself than it was to use
9 that software program.

10 Now, I am not an IT person, and I am not
11 technological savvy or advanced, however, I do
12 know how to point and click, and I do know how
13 to read all of the symbols.

14 I couldn't even find the information I
15 needed in the 190-page help manual. So I would
16 ask respectfully, just as Mr. Perez said
17 earlier, please keep it simple.

18 When people face a daunting task that is
19 overwhelming to them, a paralysis sets in, and
20 they throw up their hands and say, I can't do
21 this. I don't know how. I don't know what to
22 do.

23 Fortunately I didn't do that. I went to
24 another site, printed a map, took some colored
25 markers and drew my lines on the map. I am

1 going to scan that and I am going to e-mail it
2 to you.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Okay.

4 MS. GOSSOM: So you will get my map, but
5 my plea is for not just the constituents in Ft.
6 Walton Beach that I represent and serve, but
7 for everyone in the panhandle area. Please
8 make it simple. Please simplify the process.

9 Yes, you had tutorial sessions and you had
10 orientation. We don't, we don't have that. I
11 even looked at the U-Tube videos trying to
12 follow the process and I will give you one
13 example.

14 There were 15 pages I had to go through
15 telling me to open this, click that, go back in
16 now and select this, name it this, name it
17 that, before I ever got to the sentence that
18 said, now it is time for you to draw your
19 lines, 15 pages it took me to do that.

20 So my request, whether it is vertical or
21 horizontal, I think that will come through the
22 process, especially for this area, make it
23 simple and keep it simple for people.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you,
25 Dr. Gilley-Gossom and I appreciate your

1 comments, but perhaps you weren't here earlier
2 when we did make an offer. We have
3 professional staff who are able, willing and
4 can meet with you if you have 15 minutes.

5 MS. GOSSOM: I do.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Afterwards they will be
7 happy to sit down with you and, believe me, as
8 un-tech savvy as I am, if I can draw district
9 lines with a Doctorate and your high
10 intelligence, I know we can help you, too.

11 Thank you very much. I appreciate it. Is
12 there anyone else who would like to testify
13 tonight? I am sorry, you have had your shot,
14 sir, we don't do second rounds unless you want
15 to come to Panama City tomorrow, and you are
16 welcome to do that.

17 Anyone else who has not had a chance to
18 speak who would like to speak? If not, let us
19 conclude just by getting back to a couple of
20 things that were raised, and before I do that,
21 let me ask if there are any members, and we are
22 going to defer to Chair Precourt as to the
23 House members, are there any members of the
24 Senate Committee who are here who would like to
25 make any observations or ask any questions.

1 Senator Hays, you are recognized.

2 SENATOR HAYS: Cay you all hear me back
3 over here in the corner? Thank you, Senator
4 Gaetz, and I want to say a sincere thank you to
5 each and everyone of you who come out tonight,
6 particularly for those of you who spoke to the
7 group, because many times public speaking is a
8 very intimidating experience, and you had the
9 necessary fortitude to put your fears behind
10 you and come up and speak, and I thank you for
11 that.

12 I am from central Florida. I grew up in
13 central Florida, but I truly, truly enjoy
14 coming to the panhandle for two major reasons.
15 First and foremost is the unashamed, unabashed
16 proud military presence up here in the
17 panhandle of Florida.

18 Thank each and everyone of you who served
19 our country and for those of you who did not
20 serve our country, you make this a wonderful
21 place for those who do serve, and I thank you.

22 It was my privilege to serve in the United
23 States Coast Guard for four years, some of the
24 finest years of my life, but this is America,
25 folks, and there is no finer country anywhere,

1 and I thank each and every one of you for
2 coming out tonight when you could have been
3 doing anything else, but you chose to exercise
4 democracy and that is what it is all about, and
5 I sincerely thank you.

6 We have heard several, several different
7 points yesterday in Tallahassee, today in
8 Pensacola and again here tonight. None of
9 those points are invalid. Many of those points
10 that we have heard are uninformed, but or
11 misinformed, whichever you might choose to
12 classify them as, but that is not important.

13 The important thing is, everybody needs to
14 realize, we as a group up here are tasked with
15 making the most fair division of this state
16 into Legislative and Congressional Districts
17 that we can.

18 And there is one, actually, there are two
19 foundational elements. First and foremost is
20 our Constitution, and the second is a spin off
21 of the Constitution which is one vote for one
22 person, which dictates the entire population of
23 the state must be divided by 120, and that is
24 the number of 156,000 plus, that goes into each
25 House District.

1 The Constitution doesn't say anything at
2 all about the city lines, the county lines, the
3 precinct lines or anything at all like that.

4 Now, Amendment V directs us to make them
5 as contiguous as we can, as compact as we can
6 and that sort of thing, but the 156,000 in the
7 House Districts and the 470,000 in the Senate
8 Districts, those are the two numbers we have to
9 deal with. Regardless of any other factor,
10 those are the two factors, 470 and 156.

11 My Senate District has to divest itself of
12 106,000 people. In the last ten years we have
13 grown that much in the central Florida district
14 that I am privileged to serve.

15 So instead of serving parts of five
16 counties, I am going to have to consolidate my
17 geographical district. Right now it is
18 85 miles east and west and 55 miles north and
19 south. So if I look at Amendment V and take
20 just two counties.

21 I live in Lake County. I can take the
22 adjacent county of Sumter County and if I take
23 the entire geographical area, those two
24 counties, I still have to go get 80,000 people
25 from some other county. There is not an

1 adjacent county that has only 80,000 people in
2 it, so I can't take just one whole county, and
3 have three county districts.

4 That is just a small glimpse of the
5 daunting task that we have. We absolutely have
6 to draw district lines. There are going to be
7 times when you live on one side of the street
8 and your neighbor on the other side of the
9 street is in a different district.

10 That is life, folks. As I told my three
11 daughters, deal with it. I still love you,
12 honey, but you got to deal with it.

13 It is not as simple -- Mr. Perez says keep
14 it simple. Believe me, I have found in my 65
15 years that is usually the best solution, and I
16 try to keep it simple, but this is not a simple
17 process. It is very, very complicated.

18 After we finish our task we then have to
19 have the Governor accept it or reject it, but
20 if he rejects it we have to go back to work
21 again. If he accepts our work then it goes to
22 the Florida Supreme Court. Then it goes to the
23 United States Department of Justice.

24 There, you know, that old adage about too
25 many cooks spoil the soup. It may very well

1 may be happening, so we need to keep it simple.
2 I say all of this not to, not to try to make
3 any excuses whatsoever.

4 Every one of us asked for the privilege of
5 serving the people whom we represent and we are
6 honored to be here. We are somewhat humbled by
7 your presence, and thank you for the
8 participation, but we just ask you for some
9 understanding, that this is far, far more
10 complicated than it really appears on the
11 surface, and you must dig into it, and so thank
12 you for being here, and when all else fails,
13 pray for us, people, we sincerely need your
14 prayers.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you. Senator
16 Thrasher.

17 SENATOR THRASHER: Thank you, Senator
18 Gaetz. I will try to talk loud so I don't have
19 to use the microphone. I have visited with
20 Senator Gaetz many, many times over the last
21 two and a half, three years that I have been in
22 the Senate, and he talks constantly about the
23 folks in this area, and having come here
24 tonight and seeing the servility, the
25 incredible ideas that you have presented to us

1 for consideration only goes to show that he is
2 absolutely right about the folks that he
3 represents.

4 And it is an honor and privilege, I know
5 for me and I think for probably all of our
6 colleagues who have sat here and listened to
7 the incredible amount of good ideas in a civil
8 manner in which you have presented them to us,
9 and I appreciate that more than I can tell you,
10 I really do.

11 It means a lot to all of us. It means --
12 it makes this effort that we are going through
13 to go around the state and listen to folks so
14 much more enjoyable, but also beneficial for
15 the end product that we will ultimately come up
16 with.

17 Senator Hays is absolutely right. We have
18 got to draw 40 Senate Seats. We got to draw
19 120 House Seats, we got to draw 27
20 Congressional Seats for 18 million people in
21 the state of Florida.

22 There are how many here tonight, 250. How
23 many will we reach in our 26 Senate and House
24 tour, who knows, several thousand perhaps, but
25 we have got to draw those lines for 18 million

1 people who reside in this great and wonderful
2 state.

3 But you have given us tonight the hope, I
4 think that we can get the job done, because you
5 have done it in a civil way, you have given us
6 ideas that make, that are material ideas that
7 will go to help us when we get ready to start
8 doing the process of drawing the maps to make
9 it, to understand what you all have cared
10 about, what you have said, what you have
11 pleaded to us for and what your dreams and
12 hopes are for this area.

13 Every single member, every single member
14 of this group, I don't know that I am the
15 oldest, maybe -- maybe there are a couple other
16 that may be a little older, but I want to give
17 you some example of the diversity of this
18 Committee.

19 This young lady right here is an
20 incredible Representative in the House of
21 Representatives. She is 28 years old. The
22 last time those maps were drawn she was 18. I
23 will be 68 years old this year. So there is an
24 incredible amount of diversity, there is an
25 incredible amount of new ideas, she has got two

1 computers here.

2 I wouldn't know how in the world to begin,
3 to begin to each begin what she has been doing.
4 She drew my district while we were sitting
5 here, and I drew my district earlier, and it
6 was on this map right here. So let me tell you
7 something.

8 We care about what you came here to talk
9 to us about, and I thank Senator Gaetz for
10 bringing us here. I thank each and everyone of
11 you for coming here. I can assure you that
12 this will continue to be a transparent process.

13 I have been around the Legislature in
14 different capacities for a long time.
15 Somebody, the lady who was the last speaker
16 said she had drawn a map with crayons or
17 colored pens or whatever, that is the way it
18 used to be done in the Florida Legislature.

19 These kinds of hearings and these kinds of
20 meetings were never done. The maps were drawn
21 in the backs of rooms at the end of the session
22 and presented to the Legislature for voting.

23 This is going to be entirely different.
24 It will be in my opinion the most transparent
25 process in this, in this type of activity that

1 the Florida Legislature has ever engaged in.

2 So God bless you for being here and thank
3 you for your great community interest, and I
4 promise you, we will do the best we can. Thank
5 you.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Chair Precourt, let me
7 yield to you for any comments that you and
8 members of the House of Representatives might
9 wish to make, comments or questions.

10 CHAIR PRECOURT: Thanks, and I will hold
11 my comments until after any of the other
12 Representatives that want to speak. Anyone,
13 Representative Gaetz?

14 REPRESENTATIVE GAETZ: Thank you,
15 Representative Precourt, and I sit right in
16 front of Representative Kair on the Florida
17 House of Representatives. We used to go back
18 and forth about how great our districts are.

19 So I hope that all of my colleagues in the
20 House can see how proud I am of the folks that
21 I continue to represent, and just on behalf of
22 the Representative Ford and Senator Evers, I
23 wanted to thank everyone who has come here from
24 all parts of the state to the panhandle. It
25 means so much to us.

1 It is unique for us to have so many
2 leaders all across Florida comment and
3 participate and to listen to our people and I
4 would say this.

5 We have heard a lot about north Florida
6 tonight and I hope that members of the
7 Redistricting Committee have heard what many of
8 us who represent this area know, and that is
9 that we don't have an entirely different
10 culture in northwest Florida, but there are
11 distinctions and differences just like there
12 are in your parts of the state.

13 So I have tremendous trust in my
14 colleagues on both sides of the aisle for all
15 of the state to take this input and put it to
16 use for some good for the people. Thank you
17 all very much.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Zack Taylor.

19 A VOICE: Thank you for the introduction,
20 ya'll, I wasn't able to finish and I started
21 talking about Daytona Beach.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I guess we don't need
23 that police escort after all.

24 A VOICE: I don't know. I don't know.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Representative Ford, you

1 are recognized.

2 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: I am going to use
3 the mike. I am not going to talk that long,
4 but Senator Thrasher and I were talking up here
5 earlier. We met in my district in the last
6 meeting this morning, and I just sincerely wish
7 I could have brought everybody at my district
8 meeting here so they could learn some
9 servility. We, and that is a sincere
10 statement.

11 There is a reporter here from Miami, I
12 hope she is not going to print this in the
13 paper. I see you, Mary Ellen, don't do that.
14 I would like to be reelected if I can next
15 time. I am in trouble. But I am sincere in
16 that.

17 You have given us good ideas. I have
18 served, personally served 16 years on the Local
19 City Council and many people here, Mayor
20 Anderson, Sam, of course, Mayor Sam and others
21 I served with many years. So I can appreciate
22 the problems that the cities face.

23 I can assure you that I will do everything
24 I can to avoid those problems. Small cities,
25 and I have two cities in my district, Gulf

1 Breeze and most of Pensacola. Pensacola is too
2 big for us to say we are not going to be able
3 to peel off some parts of that. It is
4 impossible to do.

5 Small cities though, that is something
6 that is doable and you have got a perfect right
7 to ask that we take a look at that, a valid
8 point and I appreciate the fact that it was
9 brought up here.

10 I can assure you that I and I think I can
11 speak for most everybody else, we are going to
12 try to avoid those kind of problems. There is
13 no, no use in doing that and it serves no
14 purpose, and I thank so much for having us
15 here. I appreciate the courtesy that you have
16 shown us since we have been here. Thank you.

17 CHAIR PRECOURT: Thank you. I believe
18 that is most of the Representatives that want
19 to talk. I just want to, if I could, Chair
20 Gaetz, address a few issues that were raised
21 here tonight.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Of course.

23 CHAIR PRECOURT: Thank you, and we have
24 actually heard some of these things around the
25 state and other places and in the media as

1 well, and I hope that we can clarify just a
2 half dozen brief items.

3 One thing that keeps getting kicked around
4 is that the Florida House has 20 million-dollar
5 or 30 million-dollar legal fund for
6 redistricting. That is just inaccurate.

7 We do have reserves, but they are for many
8 contingencies and I think this is just a news
9 report that was inaccurate from the start and
10 unfortunately it has been repeated frequently.

11 We in the House side have chosen to
12 include party data in the, that data that is
13 available for redistricting. We do have to
14 have this by Federal government dictate to test
15 the map alternatives against the requirements
16 of the Federal Voting Rights Act. So that data
17 will have to be accessed one way or another so
18 we are, our decision was to make it available
19 to everyone.

20 Another thing that has been kicked around
21 out there is that there is a gag order on
22 members of the Committee. I believe clearly
23 tonight we have established that there is no
24 gag order.

25 Also, this issue, and we heard both sides

1 of it tonight and you all did a terrific job,
2 several of you, of addressing this. The issue
3 of whether or not there are maps here that we
4 already have drawn and provided to you without
5 letting the public speak first.

6 If we did it any other way there would be
7 a huge criticisms of us. In fact, this process
8 that we are using as tried and true process and
9 for those of you who like the Federal
10 government's dictates, it is very similar to
11 the NEPA permitting process where we collected
12 the data.

13 The data wasn't available until April or
14 from the census, and presented you with the
15 existing conditions and the data so that we
16 could get feedback from you before we start
17 drawing lines.

18 It always, the general public brings more
19 information to the table than a bunch of
20 analysts sitting behind their computers are
21 going to have.

22 We are going to get public comment
23 throughout the process. That is another thing
24 that people think that this is their only
25 opportunity to speak to this issue now. That

1 is absolutely untrue. This is the beginning of
2 it. This is the data collection phase.

3 Once we have this we will prepare a number
4 of alternatives that you will have the
5 opportunity to look at again and that will be
6 in the various forms that Chair Gaetz
7 mentioned, as well as in the public hearing
8 process that is the normal process of passing a
9 bill in Tallahassee.

10 And then finally, to this, to this
11 question that we are moving too slow, again, we
12 have only had the information available to
13 present to you for a number of weeks and we are
14 trying, doing the best we can with a bunch of
15 really good staff to get this process moving as
16 quickly as possible. So, in fact, we can have
17 a credible process that meets all of the
18 requirements.

19 And then finally just from a personal
20 standpoint, being from central Florida as well,
21 this has been a great meeting.

22 Ya'll have been very, very constructive in
23 engaging in this conversation that we hope to
24 use to develop the best set of maps for the
25 citizens of Florida that we can. Thank you,

1 Chair Gaetz.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much. Are
3 there any other comments from members of the
4 Committee? If not, Representative Precourt
5 moves we rise.

6 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
7 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 109 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 11th day of August, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2011
10:00 A.M.
WSRE-TV AMOS STUDIO
PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

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 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Good morning, ladies and
3 gentlemen. The Joint Florida Senate, Florida
4 House of Representatives Redistricting Hearing
5 is called to order.

6 We want to thank WSRE Public Television,
7 Pensacola Jr. College, Pensacola State College
8 now, for allowing us to use this facility, and
9 thank you all for being here, especially
10 members of the public who have come to share
11 your comments and your recommendations to help
12 shape Congressional Senate and House Districts
13 for the next decade.

14 My name is Don Gaetz. I am proud to be
15 the Senator for northwest Florida, and along
16 with my House colleague, the Speaker Designate
17 of the Florida House of Representatives, Will
18 Weatherford, who is to my left and that is
19 interesting because often he is to my right,
20 but today he is to my left.

21 We are chairing today's hearing and we are
22 delighted to be here. This hearing is being
23 webcast throughout the state by the Florida
24 Channel over the Internet and we welcome the
25 many, many people who are following us today on

1 the Internet or over the Florida Channel.

2 Our sole purpose today is to hear from the
3 public about how you believe the legal
4 standards governing redistricting should be
5 applied in your community so that you are
6 represented in Washington and in Tallahassee
7 fairly, equitably and sensibly.

8 It is not debatable as to whether
9 Amendments V and VI will be applied. They are
10 in the Constitution and they will be applied.
11 The question is how those legal standards
12 should be applied to make sure that your
13 community is fairly, equitably and sensibly
14 represented.

15 Our procedures today are simple but
16 important. It is important that if you want to
17 speak, and we hope you do, that you will sign
18 in so that we can create an accurate public
19 record of all attendees and all speakers, and
20 also you may opt to join our e-mail list.

21 We hope you will so that we can keep you
22 informed about how the redistricting process is
23 working over the next several months.

24 This is hearing two of a 26 public hearing
25 tour that the House and Senate Committees are

1 taking together to hear from the people of
2 Florida.

3 If you have not signed in and you wish to
4 speak, please raise your hand now and a
5 professional staff member will get you a
6 speaker card because we want to hear from you.

7 Is there anybody here who wishes to speak
8 who has not filled out a card or who has not
9 signed in? Anybody? Great.

10 Well, if there are people who come in late
11 we will make that offer again. Before we
12 begin, the Chair would like to recognize the
13 Speaker Designate, Will Weatherford, to explain
14 how today's hearing fits into the redistricting
15 process. Mr. Speaker.

16 SPEAKER WEATHERFORD: Thank you very much,
17 Mr. Chairman. It certainly is an honor today
18 to be in God's country, the panhandle. We are
19 in step two of our process here.

20 We had a great day yesterday in
21 Tallahassee of public comment and input and we
22 certainly look forward to it today here in
23 Pensacola.

24 Ladies and gentlemen, every ten years the
25 Legislature is required by our Constitution to

1 redistrict the state based on increases,
2 decreases and movements of population.

3 Because Florida has grown more than other
4 states in the last ten years we will move up
5 from 25 Congressional Seats to 27 Congressional
6 Seats.

7 Because some parts of our state have
8 increased or decreased disproportionately in
9 population, many Senate and House Districts
10 will change, either adding or losing
11 population.

12 When redistricting is completed,
13 Congressional Districts must be equal in size
14 and contain 696,345 people. The 40 Senate
15 Districts must also be nearly equal and will
16 contain 470,033 people, and our 120 House
17 Districts must also contain nearly equal
18 amounts in population and will be at 156,678
19 persons.

20 There is a map at the front of the room
21 showing this area of the state. The current
22 boundaries of all of the Districts and the
23 number of the persons which must also be added
24 or subtracted from current districts to achieve
25 equal representation.

1 Equality of representation isn't the only
2 legal requirement that redistricting plans must
3 meet. The laws and important court cases
4 governing redistricting are explained in detail
5 on the House and Senate websites.

6 Those websites are listed on the
7 Redistricting 2012 brochure that was available
8 to you when you came in. Our Redistricting
9 2012 brochure summarizes Federal and State laws
10 and outlines the topics we hope you will
11 discuss here at today's hearing.

12 If you did not get a brochure they are
13 available on the tables outside the hall and
14 our staff would be happy to get you a copy of
15 that brochure if needed.

16 Those same websites have been available to
17 the public and all of the demographic
18 information from the U. S. Bureau of Census
19 that will be used to draw districts and the
20 redistricting software that Legislators will be
21 using.

22 These websites will allow any member of
23 the public, and hopefully you, to see all of
24 the district maps that are proposed by
25 Legislators and for the citizens, themselves,

1 to propose their own district maps for their
2 own communities or for the whole state using
3 all of the tools that are available to us as
4 Legislators.

5 Before and during and after this hearing,
6 Senate and House professional staff are
7 available to show you and anyone who wants to
8 see the simple steps in getting on-line and
9 making your submission for maps in the coming
10 weeks.

11 Every recommendation from any member of
12 the public or any group will be made public.
13 In fact, some public submissions of maps have
14 already been available on the web, and one I
15 will mention to everyone today is we had a
16 college student who is from Florida who goes to
17 Columbia University and weeks ago submitted a
18 Congressional map for the entire state of
19 Florida.

20 It was a very -- a lot of work that went
21 in to that, but that is the type of
22 participation that this body is looking for.

23 The submission of proposed maps that makes
24 sense for your community is the single most
25 effective form of public participation in the

1 redistricting process.

2 The redistricting schedule under which we
3 are operating is imposed by our State
4 Constitution. The Constitution does not permit
5 the Legislature to act on legislative maps
6 before the second year after the census is
7 done. In other words, before 2012.

8 We accelerated this process as much as we
9 possibly could by moving the 2012 Legislative
10 Session from March to January, and beginning
11 our statewide hearings five months in advance
12 of the 2012 session.

13 It has been suggested that the Legislature
14 should draw maps first and then ask the public
15 for comment. We believe that puts the answer
16 ahead of the question.

17 There should be no preconceptions created
18 by politicians, but rather public testimony
19 should be free and unrestricted. Our intent is
20 to use the recommendations made at our 26
21 hearings and through our Internet sites as the
22 basis for developing one or more options for
23 district maps.

24 We will discuss those options in open
25 public meetings before any votes are taken even

1 in a Committee. Throughout the process we will
2 solicit additional public comment so that
3 proposed maps can mature and with public
4 involvement all before the Legislature approves
5 any final maps.

6 Whatever the Legislature votes on, it is
7 submitted for judicial review to insure that
8 the final plans meet every legal requirement.
9 Because our mission today is to hear from you,
10 100 percent of the time between now and then,
11 and between now and 1:00 p.m. will be used to
12 insure that every member of the public who is
13 here and wishes to speak will have time to
14 present testimony and be listened to
15 respectfully without interruption or argument.

16 If, after every citizen has had his or her
17 say, there is time remaining before our
18 scheduled adjournment, any member of this
19 Committee may make a statement or offer any
20 observation.

21 Of course, any member of the Legislature
22 may today or at any time propose a map that
23 will be made available to the public.

24 Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for
25 giving me these few moments. I hope this

1 description of our schedule and the process
2 helps set the stage for a very successful
3 hearing. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker,
5 by Senate and House rules we will adjourn
6 promptly today at 1:00 p.m. There are so far
7 36 individuals signed up to speak.

8 We hope more people who may come in a
9 little later will let professional staff know
10 if they would like to speak, but to ensure that
11 each person is heard, and I am an advocate for
12 the last person who signed up, I want to make
13 sure they get a chance to speak, just as I am
14 an advocate for the first person.

15 So to ensure that each person is heard we
16 will try to divide the time equitably and I
17 would ask each testifier to try to limit her or
18 his remarks to somewhere between three and five
19 minutes.

20 Now, if later we pick up additional people
21 who would like to testify, and therefore, we
22 get pushed on a time crunch I may have to be a
23 little bit more specific about the time frame,
24 but if you would be cognizant that there are
25 people who also came here and want to testify

1 who are waiting behind you, I am sure everybody
2 will be civil and courteous and there will be
3 time for everyone.

4 What we would like to do is call out two
5 speakers at a time so that the first speaker
6 who is the Honorable Lynn Laird from the
7 Escambia Soil and Water Conservation District,
8 if Commissioner Laird will come forward, and
9 then behind Commissioner Laird is Stephen Rome,
10 and we will let you know if you are on deck and
11 next in line.

12 Commissioner, are you here? Thank you
13 very much. Welcome to the Committee, and you
14 are recognized, sir.

15 COMMISSIONER LAIRD: I am a supervisor.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Supervisor. We, I don't
17 know if we demoted you or promoted you there,
18 but we welcome you to the Committee.

19 COMMISSIONER LAIRD: For the record, my
20 name is Lynn Laird. I am Vice-Chairman of the
21 Soil and Water Conservation District Board of
22 Supervisors. Elected, this elected office is
23 for Escambia County voters only. The candidate
24 must be a resident of Escambia County.

25 Escambia County population is 297,619

1 residents according to the recent census.

2 Registered voters, Democrat, No Party,

3 Minority, et cetera, 110,000. Republicans,

4 84,000.

5 Escambia County, unfortunately, has been
6 divided into two Senatorial districts, both of
7 them held by Republicans. Three State
8 Representative Districts, all held by
9 Republicans. That means 212,791 individuals,
10 or 67 percent of Escambia County population is
11 disenfranchised, because in 2000 Escambia
12 County was divided up so that there would be
13 two Senatorial districts versus one, because
14 prior to 2000, Escambia County was a Senatorial
15 district.

16 Prior to that, State House Representative
17 District III was all of Pensacola, some of
18 Escambia County, but they had to cut that up
19 and now we got some of Santa Rosa. The
20 minority representation for Escambia County is
21 about 23 percent African-American.

22 Currently there are no minority
23 Representative in the State House, none,
24 period. Who are Escambia County State
25 Senators? I happen to live in south of

1 Escambia County, never met my State Senator,
2 hardly know where he is from, but he is Senator
3 Gaetz, our Chairman, hello. He lives in
4 Niceville, Niceville, wherever that is.

5 His District Office is in Destin, that is
6 over an hour away from Escambia County, I don't
7 know if I could find it if I get there. Greg
8 Evers, the other State Senator, he lives in
9 Baker, up in the country somewhere in another
10 county. His District Office is in Crestview.

11 How do the people from Escambia County who
12 would like to drop in, say something, give him
13 something, not too many people are going to
14 drive to Crestview if they could find it, it is
15 over an hour away.

16 We have a State Representative who basic
17 some of the districts in northern Escambia
18 County, Doug Broxson, I have no idea where he
19 is from. I have no idea where his office is,
20 and I don't know if anybody in Escambia --
21 maybe some of the people up north do. I don't.

22 Then, of course, we have Representative
23 Clay Ford, and most of us know, that is
24 District III. Almost 90 percent of the
25 geographical area and population lives in

1 Escambia County. Clay Ford lives in Gulf
2 Breeze. Until a number of years ago it wasn't
3 part of District III. Thirty percent of the
4 population in Pensacola is African-American.

5 Clay Ford lives in Gulf Breeze, which only
6 has one or two at the most African-Americans.
7 Basically Gulf Breeze is 100 -- almost
8 100 percent white, and Clay Ford lives over
9 there, and I do not believe the Pensacola
10 residents have any input at all, and only one
11 Representative, and I think he is here, Clay
12 Ingram, he lives in Escambia County, and he is
13 elected by the people of Escambia County.
14 Thank you for that person.

15 In other words, I will sum it up, 212,791
16 people in Escambia County or 67 percent of
17 Escambia County population is totally
18 disenfranchised. That means they are not
19 represented by the individuals who are sitting
20 at the round table up there.

21 We are supposed to have representation in
22 state government. I cannot feel that this
23 would go very far when 67 percent feel they are
24 disenfranchised. So all I can say is I hope
25 whoever is going to draw the lines will take

1 that into fact that Escambia County, the
2 largest county in the panhandle, should be a
3 State District by itself and should have at
4 least a minimum of not two, but maybe three
5 State Representative Districts so that the
6 221,000 people who are currently
7 disenfranchised might have a chance to, one,
8 run a candidate, and two, vote for the
9 individual who actually does and will represent
10 their ideology. Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
12 Mr. Laird. We appreciate your testimony, very,
13 very kind of you to come today, and now our
14 next presenter is Stephen Rome. Mr. Rome, and
15 behind Mr. Rome is Diane Mack from the Women's
16 Civic Forum.

17 Mr. Rome, you are recognized. Thank you
18 very much for being here today.

19 MR. ROME: Good morning, my name is
20 Stephen Rome. I reside in Pensacola, in
21 Escambia County. I appear today as an AARP
22 volunteer. I urge the Legislature to make the
23 redistricting process all it can be.

24 As you exercise your constitutional duty
25 to draw voting districts applicable for the ten

1 years beginning with the 2012 election, AARP
2 urges you to, first, insure transparency of the
3 legislative redistricting process every step of
4 the way.

5 Transparency means that redistricting
6 discussions among members and by members should
7 be noticed and open to the public.
8 Transparency means that the public has the
9 opportunity to comment and to have those
10 comments meaningfully considered by the
11 Legislature during all legislative
12 redistricting proceedings, and on
13 redistricting, on redistricting proposals,
14 interim and final.

15 This is before the Legislatures make any
16 decisions. We must ensure the timeliness of
17 the redistricting process and ensure public
18 input.

19 The Legislature has an obligation to meet
20 the constitutional dictates as already
21 expressed by 63 percent of Florida voters. The
22 Legislature owes Florida's residents and voters
23 professionalism and timely completion of their
24 redistricting process, hopefully before the
25 filing for the 2012 elections.

1 The Legislature knows the procedural
2 steps, legislative and non legislative, that
3 redistricting plans will need to complete in
4 order for there to be timely qualifications for
5 the 2012 candidates under the new districts,
6 and for vigorous campaigns before voters can
7 cast their ballots.

8 That means the Legislature should
9 consider, complete, should consider completing
10 its portion of the process sooner rather than
11 later.

12 Please take steps to ensure that the
13 redistricting process -- to prevent the
14 redistricting process from the appearance of
15 conflict of interest.

16 For example, subcommittees of Legislatures
17 could research, develop alternate district
18 proposals for the area of the state remote from
19 the member's geographic residencies.

20 Perhaps four areas of the state, and then
21 redefine, reconcile for two halves of the state
22 and then redefine and reconcile by the full
23 Chamber into one state plan.

24 It is now legislative's command
25 performance time. Your audience is Florida's

1 voters. We will not contenance undue expense
2 and delay in that performance. It is up to the
3 Legislature.

4 What will it be, redistricting
5 presentation or voter resentment? I am
6 confident that the Legislature and its staff
7 have the professional competence and technical
8 assistance to research and analyze and propose
9 new voting districts in accord with the
10 constitutional and Federal requirements.

11 Please make your best effort. Thank you
12 for the time to address the panel.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, Mr.
14 Rome, we really appreciate your testimony
15 today. Our next testifier is Diane Mack from
16 the Women's Civic Forum, followed by Claudia
17 Curry from the Democratic Executive Committee.

18 Ms. Mack, thank you for being here and you
19 are recognized.

20 MS. MACK: Thank you, Senator Gaetz,
21 Honorable Senators, members, staff members, let
22 me first express my appreciation for this
23 public hearing for the numbers of you who are
24 here.

25 When I entered I had no idea that we would

1 be in such august company. My remarks will be
2 brief.

3 The Women's Civic Forum is an informal
4 organization who's mission is to help
5 interested women learn about our community, to
6 further their civic interests, and in the end
7 also to further their political interests.

8 We want to see more women elected to
9 office. However, that is not the purpose of
10 redistricting. Those -- those goals have to be
11 accomplished in a much different way.

12 My remarks are simply brief. I am
13 concerned about the past horizontal divisions
14 in forming our districts. For different
15 reasons as our previous speaker said, I would
16 certainly ask this body to consider forming
17 districts with Escambia County, Santa Rosa
18 County vertically and not across the north part
19 of the counties and then the south part.

20 I realize communities of interest are
21 something you take into consideration, but I
22 believe that was in a Tier II criteria.

23 Finally, I realize the Constitution
24 requires that the process neither favor nor
25 disfavor incumbents, but we are human and I

1 would simply ask all of you to be statesmen,
2 stateswomen, not politicians. Put aside your
3 own interests and do what is best for the state
4 of Florida, but in this case also for northwest
5 Florida. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, Ms.
7 Mack. We appreciate you being here. Our next
8 speaker is Claudia Curry from the Democratic
9 Executive Committee, and followed by Paula
10 Montgomery from the League of Women Voters.

11 Ms. Curry, you are recognized. Thank you
12 for being here.

13 MS. CURRY: Good morning, my name is
14 Claudia Brown-Curry and I represent the
15 Escambia County Executive, Democratic Executive
16 Committee, but I don't want to be redundant at
17 this time. Everything has been well said, so I
18 pass. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, thank you for being
20 here. We really appreciate it. Next is Paula
21 Montgomery from the League of Women Voters, and
22 Ms. Montgomery, you will be followed by Richard
23 Mills.

24 Ms. Montgomery, we are grateful that you
25 took the time to come today, and you are

1 recognized.

2 MS. MONTGOMERY: Okay. Thank you, and
3 thank you for your attention. I am one of the
4 Co-Presidents this year of the League of Women
5 Voters of the Pensacola Bay area. Excuse me.
6 And I am speaking on behalf of the League in
7 general. I would like to make the following
8 three points.

9 The Legislature's timeline for drawing
10 districts is really unfair to the Florida
11 voters. The Legislature should not be spending
12 taxpayer money to oppose fair districts as
13 described in Amendments V and VI, and we would
14 like to know where our maps for us to
15 reasonably be expected to respond to.

16 First, according to the current plan, the
17 Legislature will be discussing new districts in
18 January and pass them in March of 2012. This
19 does not leave enough time for possible
20 litigation and the required pre-clearance of
21 plans before the date in June, when candidates
22 have to qualify to run for elections.

23 Therefore, potential candidates won't know
24 if they can run and voters will not know for
25 whom they can vote in time to prepare

1 adequately for the fall election.

2 Unfortunately it will result in chaos and
3 gives the impression that the timeline was
4 designed to benefit incumbents, which is
5 prohibited by the Constitution and its
6 amendments.

7 Secondly, the voters have already spoken
8 in their overwhelming support for Amendments V
9 and VI. This is the voter input to the
10 Legislature. It is what you need to hear from
11 us, that is that we really want redistricting.
12 We need to stop wasting time and money by
13 fighting these amendments and just, just do it.

14 Third, these hearings would be more useful
15 and provide more meaningful voter input if
16 there were maps to which we could respond. We
17 pay our Legislators and their staff to do the
18 work of the people.

19 Why are we being asked to provide you with
20 maps? What will be done with these maps? You
21 may get thousands of them. What will you do
22 with them?

23 We ask that you provide maps that we can
24 respond to. These hearings give the appearance
25 that you are listening to the citizens of

1 Florida, but in reality, they deny us means of
2 useful input. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
4 Ms. Montgomery. We appreciate you being here.
5 Next we have Richard Mills, and following Mr.
6 Mills is Deborah Nelson from the Santa Rosa
7 Democratic Party.

8 Mr. Mills, thanks for being here, and you
9 are recognized.

10 MR. MILLS: Thank you for the opportunity
11 to speak. I am Richard Mills, resident of
12 Escambia County.

13 First let me say I am not here to
14 represent any ideological group. I am just a
15 plain citizen, I certainly, most of all, do not
16 envy you people in the job that you have ahead
17 of you.

18 I know you are not going to make very many
19 people happy. That is just the nature of the
20 beast that you have to attack, and I just want
21 you to know that many of us will be praying
22 that you will do this job with the best of your
23 ability and with great consideration to the
24 rights of our citizens, and that you will act
25 in accordance with the constitutional

1 requirements upon you. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, Mr.
3 Mills. We appreciate those kind sentiments.

4 Deborah Nelson with the Santa Rosa
5 Democratic Party and then following Ms. Nelson
6 will be Jerry Couey with Santa Rosa Week TV.

7 Ms. Nelson, thanks a lot for being here,
8 and you are recognized.

9 MS. NELSON: Thank you very much, I am
10 Deborah Nelson, I am Chair of the Santa Rosa
11 Democrats. I also co-host Santa Rosa Week TV
12 on Media Com Channel 27.

13 I would just point out to you that
14 currently the population of Democrats in the
15 state versus the population of registered
16 Republicans is not reflected in the makeup of
17 Florida's House of Representatives and Florida
18 Senate, and I would just suggest that perhaps,
19 perhaps there is a political reasons for that,
20 but then again, maybe you need to seriously
21 consider that you have a gerrymandering problem
22 in the state when you go about this
23 redistricting process.

24 What happens when you have gerrymandering
25 present is that the populous is not accurately

1 represented in their political bodies, the
2 political bodies that belong to them.

3 When you have that problem it leads to
4 things like cronyism, it leads to special
5 interests being perhaps represented a little
6 more heavily than the people.

7 It leads to corruption. We have certainly
8 seen indications of corruption problems coming
9 out of Tallahassee in recent years.

10 We have had -- I would call it a
11 disastrous legislative session this year. We
12 have had a legislative session that I don't
13 believe in any way, shape or form reflects the
14 wants and needs of the Florida population.

15 You all passed SB 430 which will just
16 about guarantee to raise homeowner insurance
17 policy rates, at least by double over the next
18 five years. I don't believe any Floridian
19 wanted you to do that, and you did it anyway.

20 To me it represents a problem with special
21 interest influence. Maybe that is related to
22 gerrymandering, maybe it isn't. You have just
23 about destroyed growth management process in
24 this state.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Ms. Nelson, I apologize

1 for interrupting. Because today's hearing is
2 about redistricting, if you could narrow your
3 comments to redistricting. We would be
4 delighted to hear from you about these other
5 issues, and you are welcome to come to the
6 Legislative Delegation meeting that will be a
7 public meeting and discuss those or we will
8 provide other venues, but today just to respect
9 the other people who are behind you who wish to
10 speak, could you confine your comments to the
11 purpose of the hearing today, please?

12 MS. NELSON: I appreciate that. And my
13 point was that those problems do point to the
14 gerrymandering situation, but I will go ahead
15 and move on.

16 I would just ask you all if you could
17 answer at least, do you have any idea of a time
18 frame when you think this process is going to
19 be finished as far as how far in advance of the
20 2012 elections people are going to know where
21 the districts are?

22 Do you all have any plan for that or any
23 idea when that is going to happen?

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, Ms. Nelson, we have
25 a website that lists the schedule. It is

1 flsenate.gov/redistricting. You can go to that
2 and see the schedule, but also Speaker
3 Weatherford will remark at the end of the
4 willing to our timeline in case you didn't hear
5 his comments at the beginning.

6 MS. NELSON: Do you have a specific date?

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Ma'am, the date, the
8 dates depend upon when the hearings are
9 concluded, when Bills are introduced. Any
10 member of the Legislature can introduce a Bill
11 at any time, but any other comments you have,
12 ma'am?

13 MS. NELSON: Well, I would just again,
14 just like other speakers have done, just urge
15 you to be very transparent with this process.
16 I think there is a lot of mistrust of the
17 current sitting Legislature and I think that,
18 you know, it is not going to help you any if
19 you are behind closed doors making this happen.
20 So please, you know, just make sure people know
21 what is going on. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
23 Ms. Nelson, for being here and for your
24 comments. Jerry Couey, who is perhaps your
25 co-host on Santa Rosa Week TV, and then

1 following Mr. Couey, Dr. Calvin Avant, who is
2 with the Escambia Pensacola Human Relationship
3 Commission.

4 Mr. Couey, you are recognized. Thanks for
5 being here.

6 MR. COUEY: Thank you, and I appreciate
7 the opportunity to be here. There have been a
8 few things swirling, so I would like to get,
9 and Ms. Nelson asked a question and she didn't
10 get an answer. So let me just ask what a lot
11 of people are wanting to know.

12 Is anybody here going to answer a question
13 today with the cameras rolling?

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I am sorry, sir?

15 MR. COUEY: Will any question be answered
16 by any of our elected officials today, because
17 that seems to be a real concern for the
18 citizens of the state of Florida.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, let's spike that
20 rumor right now. At the end of this hearing,
21 assuming everyone in the public has the
22 opportunity to speak, we will invite any member
23 of this Committee to make any comment, answer
24 any question that has come up today if they
25 would like, or to offer any proposal they would

1 like, but now we would love to hear your
2 testimony, sir, and we are now up to 44
3 individuals.

4 So I am going to have to ask you to, if
5 you can, be as succinct as you possibly are
6 able to be.

7 MR. COUEY: Well, again, I will certainly
8 push forward the idea that this needs to be
9 transparent, but apparently what we are hearing
10 is true. Although you say questions will be
11 answered, you have been asked a question
12 already and you really didn't answer it. You
13 just put it off.

14 I would like to second the thought that it
15 is too late in the process. I see it as real
16 gamesmanship again. We really won't know until
17 late in next year, and I just really encourage
18 this Committee to reconsider that immediately
19 and not drag it out so long.

20 How -- how are we as voters going to --
21 how is anybody going to prepare a campaign?
22 How is anybody going to know who is running? I
23 just have some real doubts in this whole
24 process.

25 I realize it appears it be transparent. I

1 will tell you my perception is, and some of the
2 things that we are hearing now that questions
3 don't get answered, there is no maps available.

4 You know, I think it is kind of ridiculous
5 that the people that are going to be proposing
6 this haven't furnished a map yet, and I would
7 also like to second the thought that I don't
8 appreciate districts that are split north and
9 south.

10 I want you to truly consider that and I
11 will reserve any additional time in case
12 somebody will answer a question. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
14 Mr. Couey, and next we have Doctor, is it
15 Dr. Avant or Avant?

16 DR. AVANT: Avant.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Yes, sir, and following
18 you, Doctor, is Ray, I believe it is Ray
19 Huggins or Hudkins, with the Coffee Party.

20 Doctor, you are recognized. Thanks for
21 being here.

22 DR. AVANT: I am Dr. Calvin Avant,
23 Executive Director for the Escambia Pensacola
24 Human Relations Commission, and I come to speak
25 to -- the last time you redistrict, made your

1 redistricting, you took as a part of those who
2 would represent us in the Florida State, State
3 House, our State Representatives, and diluted
4 the minority vote in District III.

5 You took and the two, one of the two
6 larger and older minority communities and took
7 them out of District III and put them in
8 District II. That was communities of Wedgewood
9 and Lincoln Park.

10 Both of those communities were taken and
11 put into, and when I say diluted, these are
12 voters, these are people who are a larger block
13 of minority voters who actually vote, and they
14 were taken out of District II and put into, I
15 mean, out of District III and put into District
16 II.

17 Then they took and brought in Gulf Breeze,
18 which was explained to you which is the great
19 majority of the people who live in Gulf Breeze
20 are from the majority community, and we have
21 been -- the minority, as has been stated, the
22 minority community here in Escambia County has
23 not had a Representative in Tallahassee ever.

24 And to take and take, to move where there
25 was an opportunity, I think, I don't know if it

1 was the last time they voted or the time
2 before, but one of the candidates lost by about
3 800 votes, and it is well over about four or
4 five thousand votes out in the area that I just
5 got through speaking of.

6 And if we are looking at having an
7 opportunity for everyone to be represented, we
8 need to go back and revisit how you move, how
9 you set that district up and to assure that
10 minorities have an opportunity to have
11 representation in Tallahassee out of Escambia
12 County. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
14 Doctor. That is very helpful testimony. Next,
15 is it Ray Hawkins, and I apologize if I messed
16 up your name?

17 MR. HUDKINS: That is all right, it has
18 happened before.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And my handwriting is
20 even worse than yours, sir. Thank you for
21 being here, and we welcome you and you are
22 recognized, and following Mr. Hawkins will be
23 Dustin Ponder.

24 MR. HUDKINS: Thank you very much. If
25 your handwriting is worse than mine, I hope you

1 use a computer.

2 My name is Ray Hudkins. I live here in
3 Pensacola. As you stated, I am a member of the
4 Coffee Party USA, which is a nationwide
5 organization that is only 15 months old.

6 I coordinate the activities, both here in
7 Pensacola and for the state of Florida, and our
8 group is a democracy movement that seeks to
9 give voice to people of all political
10 persuasions.

11 We are grassroots volunteer, non partisan
12 citizens who are independent of all political
13 parties and labels. We strive to restore
14 stability to the political process to reduce
15 the extreme polarization of interest where both
16 Republicans and Democrats too often act in the
17 interest of their parties rather than of
18 people, and you have heard previous speakers
19 state to that fact.

20 One statement in the Declaration of
21 Independence stands out that essentially says
22 your task is to listen to the people, and I
23 quote, "Governments instituted by men derive
24 their just powers from the consent of the
25 governed."

1 My goal here today is to add to the voices
2 that you have heard and will hear following me
3 to take a message to your leadership and to
4 you, listen to the people.

5 Recent legislative actions by the
6 Legislature and the Governor indicate you are
7 not listening. Please do so.

8 You have heard a lot about the timeline
9 already, and I will echo the comments of the
10 folks that preceded me. And I have to ask, it
11 only took you 60 days to modify our election
12 laws which are probably in violation of the
13 Voting Rights Act.

14 Why can't you give us maps in 60 days? I
15 don't understand the process. I understand the
16 process that you would like to hear from the
17 public, but it is almost like a poker game.
18 You want us to show our hand before you show
19 yours, and I would offer that you have the
20 experts on the staff to come up with the maps
21 and then put those forward for public hearings.

22 These public hearings essentially are very
23 difficult for us as citizens who are not
24 familiar with the software, not familiar with
25 all of the demographics that go into that, and

1 I think it would be so much more open and
2 transparent if you actually provided the maps,
3 and I would ask you to think about suspending
4 public hearings until you can provide the maps
5 and then go back and do the hearings.

6 I wasn't aware of the comment that was
7 made about the Constitution forbidding the
8 Legislature from taking action until 2012.

9 I would assume taking action is actually
10 finalizing something. Preliminaries are not
11 action taken, they are action proposed. So
12 notwithstanding the 2012 Constitutional
13 requirement, I don't think there is any problem
14 with you providing maps prior to 2012.

15 And as previous speakers have said, you
16 essentially are putting a person who wants to
17 run for office in a position of not knowing who
18 their constituents are, and that is kind of
19 important when you are running for office.

20 The sad but true fact is that a lot of the
21 redrawn districts possibly will end up in
22 court. I think a way to avoid that is to have
23 the public input on what you are proposing,
24 because ultimately you are going to take your
25 version of the public input to the review

1 process, and if you get the public input you
2 can start building a consensus of the public
3 that ought to short circuit some of the
4 potential litigation.

5 And quite frankly, I with rather have the
6 Legislature and the citizens making decisions,
7 not lawyers and judges.

8 As a Coffee Party activist I am pledged to
9 support leaders who work towards positive
10 solutions and hold accountable those who
11 obstruct them. Please be leaders that we can
12 support and thank you very much for allowing me
13 to comment.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
15 We appreciate you being here. Our next speaker
16 is Dustin Ponder, who comes all of the way from
17 Gainesville. Thank you for driving all this
18 way to talk to us here in northwest Florida,
19 and following Mr. Ponder is Janet, I believe it
20 is Delorge, Janet Delorge. So if Ms. Delorge,
21 if you will be on deck. Mr. Ponder.

22 MR. PONDER: Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: It is good to see you
24 again.

25 MR. PONDER: It is good to see you again.

1 I was in Tallahassee yesterday, so I got to see
2 some of the process and full disclosure, I am
3 writing a story about it. So you will probably
4 be seeing more of me as we go on, hopefully not
5 speaking as much, but since there is no maps to
6 talk on today, I want to talk on the two points
7 that Representative Weatherford brought up, and
8 I want to talk about this process here today,
9 because ultimately if we want to get the
10 process of redistricting right, I mean, as
11 Weatherford said, it is going by public input.

12 It is going by what has to happen here
13 today. So this has to be correct, this actual
14 meeting, these 26 meetings, but first, the
15 first point that Representative Weatherford
16 brought up was that we are bound by the
17 Constitution, we can't act on maps until 2012,
18 because we can't vote on them, but that doesn't
19 mean we can't start the process now of looking
20 at maps.

21 Nobody is asking from the public to vote
22 on maps right now. I mean, I just don't think
23 that is a legitimate reason not to have maps,
24 and I would hope at the next meeting that that
25 is not brought up, because to me, that just

1 sounds like a sort of misleading talking point.

2 The second reason is that we don't want
3 any preconceived notions. That is why
4 supposedly we are having these 26 meetings, so
5 the voice of the people can be heard and this
6 process can be correct.

7 And if I was to take your word, that might
8 be a legitimate reason, but I would say the
9 actions here today say otherwise, and as great
10 as it is to see so many retirees and some paid
11 lobbyists from Tallahassee here, this meeting
12 is at 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and I know we
13 have 17 percent real unemployment right now,
14 and some of those folks might have been able to
15 make it if they weren't looking for jobs that
16 don't exist.

17 But the question I have and I would like
18 answered and I would like somebody to maybe
19 write it down if you want and make comments at
20 the end, is if you want public input from the
21 vast majority of people who work for a living,
22 how can you schedule a meeting at 10:00 a.m. to
23 1:00 p.m., and multiple meetings throughout the
24 process.

25 I mean, there is many more, I think my

1 actual meeting in Gainesville, I believe is at
2 10:00 to 1:00. That might be 6:00 to 9:00, but
3 one of those in my home district is actually
4 going to basically disenfranchise all of the
5 people who work for a living from being part of
6 this process, and that just tells me that we
7 don't care about working families here.

8 And it tells me that we don't care about
9 the people at NAS, the Naval Air Station or
10 military veterans, farmers, like Senator Evers,
11 we don't care about those people's input, you
12 know, and that is sad to see.

13 So one thing I propose, I encourage all
14 areas that are having meetings to have evening
15 sessions. I appreciated that in Tallahassee
16 yesterday, so that everybody could have their
17 input, because if we have a public meeting with
18 no working people, with none of the vast
19 majority of people you represent here, that
20 means we have a flawed process.

21 I mean, today is a failure in my opinion,
22 and if we have a flawed process, we are going
23 to have flawed districts, again, that
24 disenfranchise exactly who has been coming up
25 and saying here.

1 So I mean, that is all I got to say today
2 and hopefully we will see some maps and we will
3 see some working people here and we can have a
4 legitimate discourse and move forward. Thank
5 you.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Ponder,
7 and we look forward to seeing you tonight at
8 6:00 o'clock at Ft. Walton Beach.

9 MS. DELORGE: Hi.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Janet, how do you
11 pronounce your last name?

12 MS. DELORGE: Delorge, Delorge.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Delorge, and following
14 Ms. Delorge is Lonnie Hawkins.

15 MS. DELORGE: Thank you for allowing me to
16 express a couple of my concerns about
17 redistricting in Florida.

18 The Florida voters have spoken. Last year
19 Florida voters passed Amendments V and VI
20 setting standards for redrawing boundaries the
21 Census. These Amendments passed with a
22 63 percent favorable vote, greater than
23 lawmakers consider to be a super majority in
24 legislative settings.

25 Please recall that you as Legislators

1 increase the requirement that citizen initiated
2 proposals would have to meet the super majority
3 standards for approval rather than a simple
4 majority vote.

5 Supposedly this change was made so that we
6 could prevent frivolous issues from becoming
7 part of our State Constitution.

8 The citizens of Florida have met and
9 extended that requirement or those
10 requirements. Thus, as members of the
11 Redistricting Committee, have an obligation to
12 follow the constitutionally approved standards
13 of these Amendments.

14 Among the standards to be taken into
15 account is that of geographical boundaries.
16 That includes city and county boundaries. I
17 want to address that aspect of the provision.

18 At the present time, Escambia County, the
19 largest county in the area with the largest
20 population has no representation in the Florida
21 Senate.

22 Escambia County has a population of almost
23 300,000, and Santa Rosa's population is
24 slightly greater than 150,000.

25 That gives these two counties almost

1 enough population for one State Senate seat.
2 Only a small portion of Okaloosa County, of
3 their population would need to be added to
4 these two counties to reach the approximate
5 470,000 population that would be required for a
6 State Senate District. I encourage you to
7 consider that.

8 Further, a district drawn in this way
9 would meet the standards of being compact.
10 That was one of the standards approved by the
11 voters in Amendments V and VI. The entire
12 populations of Escambia and Santa Rosa would be
13 in one Senate District rather than having the
14 southern part of Escambia County in another
15 district as it is under the current designation
16 from the last census.

17 I understand your concerns about
18 incumbency and political party affiliation.
19 However, the Constitution is the document by
20 which we as Florida citizens live and our
21 future is dependent on it.

22 It is imperative that you set aside your
23 personal considerations, incumbency and that
24 you act as statesmen rather than political
25 politicians with party -- party affiliations

1 and follow the dictates of the voters when you
2 redraw the boundaries of the Florida
3 Legislature. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
5 Ms. Delorge. We appreciate your testimony, and
6 next is Lonnie Hawkins, and behind Mr. Hawkins
7 is Bea Thomas. Mr. Hawkins, welcome, you are
8 recognized.

9 MR. HAWKINS: Thank you. Let me give you
10 a proper welcome which has not been done yet,
11 and Mayor Vince Webbs is no longer with us, so
12 let me welcome you to the western gate to the
13 sunshine state.

14 This morning I had the privilege of
15 sitting on the shores of Pensacola Bay watching
16 the Blue Angels as they practiced. And now I
17 have the privilege of addressing our elected
18 representative government. What other country
19 in the world has that opportunity?

20 My concerns are that most of the people I
21 have heard speak today have it backwards. You
22 represent us. We are here to propose to you
23 our ideas, not you to come down and dictate to
24 us, here is the pre-drawn maps, what do you
25 think of the work I did.

1 We are to let you know what we think. So
2 let me tell you what I have done. Yesterday I
3 got on to the My District Builder, didn't quite
4 understood how it worked, so this morning I
5 came and asked, tell me how it works.

6 So I played with Escambia County just to
7 start. Mr. Laird, you are not going to get
8 three Representative Districts. You don't have
9 the numbers for two. So you going to have to
10 share with other counties.

11 The way they run now, I am not real
12 excited about long wide districts, but I
13 understand the logic from ten years ago that
14 the rural farming districts had a lot in common
15 and maybe they needed a farmer representative.
16 The southern districts that deal with tourism
17 and business, maybe they needed their own
18 Representative or Senator.

19 We could compact them and I have looked at
20 the maps and, yes, it will work compacted, but
21 in doing so do we dilute the representation
22 from the north and the south in our diverse
23 counties.

24 So I don't envy the job that you have to
25 do. I have heard this morning what you did ten

1 years ago. I look at our local delegation and
2 I think two members were freshmen ten years
3 ago, they didn't do anything. They sat back
4 and watched the process.

5 Now you have grown up and you get to deal
6 with it. Again, I don't envy what you are
7 doing, and yes, I do have a job, I took a
8 personal day of leave to be here today, and
9 also Mr. Laird, let me save you that drive to
10 Crestview. Senator Evers does have a Pensacola
11 office.

12 And the other thing I am confused about,
13 when I got here this morning, the doors weren't
14 closed, they were open. There is nothing here
15 but transparency. So thank you for doing open
16 transparent hearings. The good news is, two
17 down, 24 to go. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
19 Mr. Hawkins. We appreciate your testimony.
20 Next is Bea Thomas, and following Bea Thomas is
21 Susan Watson from the ACLU. Bea Thomas, you
22 are recognized, and thank you very much.

23 MS. THOMAS: Hi, and good morning to
24 everyone, and I just want to make it real, real
25 brief. I really thank God for people, thank

1 God for this awesome creation of the United
2 States of America, but we have to make sure
3 that we -- we step on people toes because we
4 always are voicing our opinion.

5 Somehow or another you never get it right,
6 okay. I represent District III, and I do see
7 my Representative. I do see the County
8 Commissioners at the County Commission, the
9 woman that is over District III. District III
10 do have some problems. It has got to be worked
11 out.

12 The redistricting of it, I have to study
13 it. The word of God say study thy self, show
14 thy self the proof, but you have to have wisdom
15 and knowledge of how to do it.

16 So what I represent is this is my motto to
17 everybody, we have what we voted for, we had a
18 chance, we voted, so what we have and we voted
19 for, we got to work with it one way or another.
20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
22 Ms. Thomas. We appreciate you being here, and
23 next up is Susan Watson with the ACLU of
24 Florida, and behind Ms. Watson is Jerry, I
25 believe it is either, I think it is Jerry David

1 from the Florida Farm Bureau, and I apologize,
2 Mr. David, if I -- if I am misunderstanding the
3 writing of your last name.

4 But Ms. Watson, thank you for being here
5 and you are recognized.

6 MS. WATSON: Thank you. Chairman Gaetz,
7 Chairman Weatherford and Committee members. It
8 was my honor a couple of weeks ago to attend a
9 public meeting when Chairman Gaetz was the
10 featured speaker.

11 Fortunately, Chairman Gaetz was not under
12 a gag order then, for he cheerfully explained
13 the process of redistricting, telling us that
14 if things go well and without a hitch, and
15 there is always a hitch, but if things go well
16 without a hitch, we should know nine days prior
17 to qualifying where the district lines are
18 going to be drawn.

19 Why, I wonder? If this isn't a recipe for
20 chaos, then I don't know what is. Florida's
21 process is one of the slowest, most secretive
22 in the country. There is no reason that it
23 needs to be like this, unless the goal is to
24 keep the people in the dark and confuse them.

25 Show us the maps now. You say that you

1 invite us to draw the maps, but that is your
2 job. It is your job. It is our job to comment
3 on them and give meaningful input.

4 We can't do that if we don't have maps.
5 It is a slap in the face to the voters of
6 Florida to cut us out of the process. You are
7 holding meaningless hearings with no proposals
8 and nothing for us to comment on.

9 The voters overwhelmingly approved the new
10 rules for redistricting. It is an insult for
11 you to ignore us and to play games with us.
12 Please stop playing games now. Please stop the
13 charade, please show us the maps. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
15 Ms. Watson. It is good to see you again.
16 Next, is it Jerry David?

17 MR. DAVIS: Davis.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Davis, I am sorry,
19 Mr. Davis. And following Mr. Davis is Brett
20 Ward, and Mr. Davis, it says here you are with
21 Farm Bureau, is that right, sir?

22 MR. DAVIS: Yes, I represent -- I am a
23 Director for Florida Farm Bureau, and represent
24 Escambia, Okaloosa and Santa Rosa Counties.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, you are recognized

1 and we are delighted you are here, sir.

2 MR. DAVIS: Thank you, and one thing I
3 wanted to say to the delegation that we
4 appreciate when we call that a Representative
5 or one of ya'll contact us back and we have
6 never had any problem having any communication
7 with our Representatives and Senators, and we
8 appreciate that fact.

9 And we represent agriculture in the rural
10 communities of the area, and agriculture is the
11 second leading economic generator for the state
12 of Florida, and we would like to see that
13 recognized, as well as the fact and appreciate
14 Mr. Hawkins' comment about the districting.
15 They are giving the rural areas a voice in the
16 Legislature.

17 Without these horizontal areas of it we
18 would be leaving off the large expanse of the
19 state that is rural and agricultural, and we
20 appreciate the continued focus on that through
21 the state, and also this redistricting process.

22 And as you see, we are working farmers and
23 several of us have taken off our days to come
24 down here because this is very important for us
25 to have a voice in our state government, too,

1 and we appreciate the fact that ya'll are here
2 to do that.

3 And we represent thousands of working farm
4 families there and we would like to continue
5 representation of them, and one of the
6 definitions of a good compromise is when all
7 parties go away semi mad and we don't, we do
8 not envy your job here of doing this
9 redistricting, but we appreciate your efforts
10 and we would like ya'll to keep these points in
11 mind as you go through the process.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very, very
13 much, sir. Next is Brett Ward, Mr. Ward, and
14 following Mr. Ward is Mike Godwin.

15 Mr. Ward, thank you for being here with us
16 this morning and you are recognized.

17 MR. WARD: Mr. Chairman, ladies and
18 gentlemen. It is a pleasure to speak with you
19 today on this redistricting. I guess I will be
20 in the minority.

21 I have heard a lot of speakers speak about
22 the south end of the county and how they would
23 like to encompass the north end into their
24 district.

25 We are Americans first, Floridians second

1 and that is about where it stops when it comes
2 to this county. The south end is the south end
3 and the north end is the north end. I am very
4 pleased right now with the way the district is,
5 the district lines are drawn. We have
6 representation.

7 If Escambia County is put together and
8 Santa Rosa County is put together, we will lose
9 our voice on the north end because the south
10 end of both counties is where the population
11 is.

12 Right now we can pick up the phone, call
13 Representative Broxson, Senator Evers, we can
14 get a response, they know who we are. That is
15 a good thing in state government.

16 The goals are different. The lifestyle is
17 different. Let us keep the districts where the
18 rural area is represented. If the districts
19 are put together we will lose our voice, and as
20 a member of Escambia County Farm Bureau Board
21 of Directors, we choose to lead and not follow
22 in this.

23 We will give you a map as it presents, as
24 it pertains to our rural area, not for the
25 whole county, but just for our area, and how we

1 would like to see it drawn. Thank you for your
2 time.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
4 We appreciate your being here. Mike Godwin is
5 our next speaker and following Mr. Godwin is
6 David A. Nelson.

7 Mr. Godwin, we appreciate your taking time
8 to come to speak to the Committee today and you
9 are recognized, sir.

10 MR. GODWIN: Thank you very much. I am a
11 farmer in the north end of the county and also
12 a Board member of the Farm Bureau. I have no
13 problem with the east/west boundary lines
14 district and the way it is laid out, because
15 that gives agricultural its representation and
16 that is why I came today to tell you that
17 agriculture needs its representation.

18 I am probably a minority here. I doubt if
19 anybody else has got spray planes and we
20 service two or three counties in the north end
21 of the county with ag planes and we don't need
22 to be tied in with Pensacola, because I doubt
23 if anybody down there has any concern other
24 than not to use it.

25 But we would like to stay in the north

1 end, all agricultural areas across the north
2 end of the counties be represented by one
3 Representative. Thank you very much.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
5 Our next speaker is David A. Nelson and
6 following Mr. Nelson, Ellen, I believe it is
7 Ellen Roston.

8 Mr. Nelson, thank you for being here
9 today. We appreciate your taking your time and
10 you are recognized in front of the Committee.

11 MR. NELSON: Thank you very much, Senator,
12 and Representative Weatherford and the rest of
13 the panel. I certainly appreciate the
14 opportunity to have this venue and have a
15 chance to make some comments about this
16 process.

17 It is a heck of a thing to follow these
18 three gentlemen who just talked eloquently
19 about the needs and the special demands of
20 farmers and we respect that.

21 However, going forward we all know that we
22 are in a tremendous crunch as it relates to
23 revenue. Our cost of everything is rising, and
24 unfortunately, even though for those who have
25 special interests in the south end of these

1 counties, like Escambia, Santa Rosa and
2 Okaloosa, the north very definitely has those
3 same kind of issues and respect that.

4 But unfortunately our counties are not put
5 together that way, and I think that it is
6 important that your emphasis be put on how we
7 can encourage the integration of these counties
8 in order to maximize our potential to develop
9 revenue, to encourage development and hold on
10 to our citizens.

11 Having grown up here and had to leave for
12 many, many years to make a living, I see that
13 process. I have got four kids, they are spread
14 all over the country. We need to keep our
15 people home, and I think we have to have
16 vehicles put in place that help to encourage
17 understanding and representation that brings
18 counties together and I don't think that your
19 job is going to be easy.

20 I certainly don't envy you, and this job
21 of redistricting is only a precursor to the
22 problems that you are going to face or those
23 who will sit in your seat will face in
24 providing for our government, and providing for
25 the needs of the citizens.

1 And I think the only way that is going to
2 happen is if we can find a way to bring
3 together these divergent needs and divergent
4 priorities and make the county entities that we
5 have, and unless we are going to change that,
6 unless we are going to redraw the lines of
7 counties, then I think it is incumbent upon all
8 of us to give the input and for you to do the
9 job to bring our alignment of districts back to
10 respect and maintain the integrity of our
11 counties and our communities. Thank you very
12 much.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, Mr.
14 Nelson, for your testimony. Next is Ellen, I
15 think it is Roston. Did I get that right,
16 many?

17 MS. ROSTON: Yes.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And following Ms. Roston
19 is Muriel Wagner. Ms. Roston, we appreciate
20 your being here, and you are recognized.

21 MS. ROSTON: Thank you. Escambia County
22 lacks full and fair representation in the State
23 Legislature. This is a statement made by when
24 Dr. Wynn Teasley, former Head of the University
25 of West Florida Whitman Center for Public

1 Service, and I agree with his statement.

2 The Senate District II is currently drawn
3 so that the northern sections of Escambia,
4 Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton and Bay Counties
5 are in District II.

6 Senate District IV is currently drawn so
7 that the southern portion of Escambia, Santa
8 Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton and Bay Counties are in
9 District IV.

10 The counties are effectively split between
11 north and south for their Senate Districts.
12 District IV is approximately 115 miles long. I
13 can tell you that as a resident of Escambia
14 County I rarely go to Bay County and feel I
15 have little in common with them.

16 I would like to see the district lines
17 drawn not between north and south, but county
18 by county. A combination of Escambia and Santa
19 Rosa Counties would nearly equal the population
20 required for one Senate Seat.

21 Escambia County residents do have a lot in
22 common with Santa Rosa County residents. We
23 are neighbors. Many people live in one county
24 and work in the other. Basing the Senate
25 District on county boundaries rather than an

1 artificial split between north and south, not
2 only makes more sense, but follows the
3 requirements of the Constitutional Amendments
4 passed in 2010 by the voters, that districts be
5 compact, contiguous and use existing political
6 boundaries. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
8 Ms. Wagner. We appreciate your coming today.
9 Next is Beatrice, I think it is, is it Belous?

10 MS. BELOUS: Yes.

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I am sorry, ma'am, could
12 you pronounce your name for us?

13 MS. WAGNER: My name is Muriel Wagner.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I am sorry, behind
15 Ms. Wagner is Beatrice Belous. I apologize,
16 Ms. Wagner, you are recognized. I am glad that
17 you are here.

18 MS. WAGNER: And her name -- her name is
19 pronounced Belous.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Is that right?

21 MS. WAGNER: Yes.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, we are delighted to
23 have you here to help us pronounce the name of
24 the person behind you.

25 MS. WAGNER: I am a former Escambia County

1 Commissioner. And I was the first woman
2 elected, woman elected in her own right, and I
3 ran a grassroots campaign.

4 So that meant that I had to have a very
5 experienced group of people mapping out my walk
6 routes, because you don't do grassroots
7 campaigns without walking.

8 That was a while back, and I don't intend
9 to do that again, but I just want to remind you
10 that I ran into a great many problems.

11 One of them was the fact that I would
12 sometimes have one side of the street but not
13 the other, and when you got into the northern
14 part of the District it was very confusing and
15 I found other candidates who were also
16 confused.

17 I just want to point out that Escambia
18 County's Districts are not perfect, and Wynn
19 Teasley's column about perfect districts should
20 be examined a little more carefully.

21 When I moved to the congregate living
22 facility where I live now I found out that I
23 live in a gerrymandered district. That the
24 person, a person running for School Board, I
25 guess, didn't want those old folks voting for

1 them. So I mean, I have in a gerrymandered
2 district.

3 I think we should look at the districts in
4 Escambia County with an eye to using the
5 natural resources to determine the boundaries
6 so that people can have a logical way of
7 examining them. And that is all I have to say.
8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very, very much
10 for being here and for your service to this
11 community.

12 And now Beatrice, you are up, and behind
13 her is Barbara Goggins, I believe it is,
14 Barbara Goggins.

15 Thank you very much for being here today,
16 ma'am, and you are recognized to speak before
17 the Committee.

18 MS. BELOUS: Well, I don't have much to
19 say, but I read in the paper that only the
20 leaders can make, can answer questions. So I
21 want to know why the others have taken the
22 Fifth Amendment so as not to be able to answer
23 our questions.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, ma'am, let me spike
25 that rumor for the second time. It is not true

1 and any member of this Committee will have the
2 opportunity after the public has been heard to
3 make any comments they wish. The floor is
4 yours.

5 MS. BELOUS: Well, all I want to say is
6 that we do need the fifth -- the fair
7 amendments to the Constitution of Florida and
8 hope that we can get a fair district and not
9 gerrymandering. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you
11 very much, ma'am, for being here. Next is
12 Barbara Goggins and behind Ms. Goggins is
13 Rosemary Hays-Thomas, with the League of Women
14 Voters. Ms. Goggins.

15 MS. GOGGINS: Yes, I am Barbara Goggins.
16 At one time I lived in the south part of
17 Escambia County and I was in a snake and the
18 snake went from the Alabama line all the way
19 down to Panama City.

20 Now, there is very little that the western
21 side of Pensacola has to do with Panama City.
22 I don't know whether you saw the joke, that
23 really the districting was a joke in the
24 newspaper where some of our districts looked
25 like Barney and some of our districts looked

1 like the Enterprise taking off someplace.

2 I would like to say that we live in a
3 county, this is Escambia County. We have
4 county government, we have county police and
5 the least we can do is have districts that are
6 within our county and close.

7 We have a lot in common with Santa Rosa
8 County and I am not even sure where Baker
9 County is. So the only thing I ask you is to
10 put our governments together, and I would like
11 to pass my thing to this gentleman and maybe
12 you can look at my jokes.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: We will be happy to. We
14 will be happy to. We need a little good humor.
15 Now, Rosemary Hays-Thomas from the League of
16 Women Voters, and beyond Ms. Thomas, the next
17 speaker is Jack Livingston, if you can be
18 ready, Mr. Livingston.

19 Ms. Hays-Thomas, thank you for being here
20 and you are recognized.

21 MS. HAYS-THOMAS: You are welcome, thank
22 you for giving us the opportunity to talk to
23 you today. My name is Rosemary Hays-Thomas. I
24 am Co-President with Dr. Paula Montgomery of
25 the League of Women Voters of the Pensacola Bay

1 area. The following comments are made on
2 behalf of our local League.

3 First we would like to make the point that
4 the timeline sent by the Legislature is
5 unrealistic and seems designed to cause massive
6 voter confusion, which is a quote from the
7 House's own redistricting attorney, Miguel
8 DeGrande.

9 The legislative plan to pass the maps in
10 March of 2012, at the end of the session does
11 not leave enough time for court approval and
12 Department of Justice review before the end of
13 the period to qualify to run for the election
14 in June, which is going to cause a lot of
15 confusion.

16 This seems calculated, regardless of what
17 the motive was, the appearance is that it is
18 calculated to give a big advantage to
19 incumbents, since challengers will not know the
20 districts nor have time to campaign.

21 This contradicts Amendments V and VI which
22 were passed as has been said previously by
23 almost two-thirds of the voters of the state.

24 Other states are drawing their maps early.
25 Why can't Florida? Prepare the maps earlier,

1 debate them in the fall and pass them at the
2 beginning of the session, which would double
3 the time available for challenges and
4 pre-clearance by the U. S. Department of
5 Justice.

6 Second, as other speakers have asked,
7 where are the maps? These hearings are not in
8 my opinion a good use of taxpayer time and
9 money, and I have thought a little bit today
10 about what it is costing the state to have
11 these hearings, looking around at the numbers
12 of those of you who have had to travel
13 distances to be here and the audio visual
14 equipment and the software, all of that stuff.
15 It seems to me pretty expensive.

16 There aren't my maps on which we can
17 comment. Legislators and their staff are paid
18 by us to do things, like draw maps for
19 redistricting and we are curious why you are
20 asking us to do it.

21 Considerable time and money has been spent
22 to develop the software for the public to play
23 with, drawing maps that give them the illusion
24 of inclusion. What will be done with these
25 maps drawn by citizens who do sign up to use

1 the system?

2 I also call your attention to the fact
3 that this system is restricted to people who
4 are computer literate and have access to
5 computer facilities. Why are maps not
6 available to which we can react?

7 Other states use hearings to solicit
8 public comment on maps. Why can't Florida? If
9 maps have been drawn, where are they? Why
10 aren't they made available to us for public
11 comment?

12 These hearings are spending our time and
13 money to give the illusion that the Legislators
14 are listening to the citizens, and I grant you
15 the attribution that that is what you are doing
16 today, listening to us, but the voters of
17 Florida have spoken loud and clear in approving
18 Amendments V and VI, and we expect our
19 Legislature to implement them.

20 Third, in this time of financial austerity
21 why is the Legislature spending taxpayer money
22 to oppose fair districts, as were specified in
23 Amendments V and VI which were overwhelmingly
24 approved by the voters?

25 The Legislature has hired expensive

1 lawyers and held Committee meetings to fight
2 the Amendments, argued to the Supreme Court
3 that they should be stricken from the ballot,
4 tried to confuse voters by adding a misleading
5 Amendment VII, which was stricken.

6 Worked to avoid pre-clearance by the U. S.
7 Justice Department, joined a lawsuit
8 challenging their constitutionality, thus using
9 taxpayer money to challenge Amendments that
10 were passed by two-thirds of our voters, and
11 finally chosen a course that requires the state
12 both to attack and defend these Amendments,
13 because our Secretary of State, Kurt Browning,
14 is the Defendant in this case.

15 This appears to me to be a giant waste of
16 money, which I wish you could spend for other
17 purposes, such as maintaining and creating
18 employment for our citizens. I thank you for
19 the opportunity to speak today.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 Ms. Hays-Thomas. Next is Jack Livingston and
22 following Mr. Livingston is Patti Hightower.
23 Mr. Livingston, thank you for being here.

24 MR. LIVINGSTON: Good morning.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And you are recognized.

1 MR. LIVINGSTON: Good morning, thank you,
2 sir. I am Jack Livingston. I am the President
3 of Escambia County Farm Bureau and we have over
4 4,900 members in Escambia County.

5 We have already had three of my friends
6 speak for Farm Bureau, and one of the persons
7 before I came up was talking about he didn't
8 know where the districts where, didn't know
9 where people's offices were. Jeff Miller, I
10 have called him numerous time, Greg Evers, I
11 did him when he was in the House. I visited
12 with him several times. I never called him
13 when he didn't help me out, didn't help out the
14 farmers of Escambia County.

15 Doug Broxson is new, Clay Ingram, Clay
16 Ford, I visited with all of them in Tallahassee
17 and in their offices locally, and speaking on
18 behalf of Escambia County Farm Bureau, we like
19 the way the districts are east or west and for
20 the benefit of the farmers, the people who grow
21 our food, we would appreciate it if it would
22 stay that way. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
24 Mr. Livingston, for your comments. And next is
25 Patti Hightower. It is good to see you again,

1 Patti. Thank you for being here. You are
2 recognized.

3 MS. HIGHTOWER: Thank you for this
4 opportunity, and just as a disclaimer, I am
5 speaking as Patti Hightower. Some of you may
6 know me as a School Board member in Escambia
7 County, and I need to tell Ms. Wagner I did not
8 draw those lines.

9 All of our School Board members are
10 involved in this process even as we speak. So
11 we know what an awesome task you have laid in
12 front of you and you know that you will be
13 lucky if you can please one or two people, but
14 I did want to get -- so many people have spoken
15 so eloquently about the issue here of trying to
16 draw the lines vertically rather than
17 horizontally.

18 I respect our Farm Bureau people because I
19 understand what their needs are, too, but I
20 would like to say that I would like to concur
21 in creating the Escambia, Santa Rosa County
22 District, if that is at all possible.

23 I would also like to ask you to be sure
24 that you publicize the hearings after the maps
25 are drawn as well as you have done this. I

1 really appreciate as a taxpayer, I know it is a
2 lot of money, but the opportunity to see where
3 our population is, how it has grown, be able to
4 play with the lines.

5 We have been doing that as our school
6 districts and it is a valuable tool and I want
7 us to be able to also be able to comment once
8 those lines are committed to paper or to the
9 computer, so that we all have the same
10 opportunity since the maps are not drawn now to
11 be involved afterwards.

12 And the other thing is, again, about the
13 contiguous lines and using the geographical
14 boundaries. So thank you very much.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Hightower.
16 Thank you for your service to the people of
17 Escambia County. Next we have Jeremy Evans and
18 behind Mr. Evans is Jeff Bergosh.

19 Mr. Evans, thank you for taking the time
20 to come today. You are recognized. We are
21 delighted to have you.

22 MR. EVANS: Thank you very much. First
23 off I am the Vice Chairman of the local
24 Republican Party in the nature of full
25 disclosure, and I have been involved in

1 politics since I was a little kid and this is
2 the first time I have ever heard of anybody,
3 any organization, government organization,
4 supplying the data to the citizens so the
5 citizens can then go and make the maps
6 themselves.

7 On top of that you are going to as many
8 places as you can throughout the state to speak
9 to anybody who wants to come and let us tell
10 you what we think, and I have never heard of
11 anybody being more transparent than that, and
12 there always can be calls for more
13 transparency, but I think you have done more
14 than anyone has ever done before, so for that I
15 thank you.

16 There has been several things said today
17 that I would just like to kind of offer a
18 rebuttal to.

19 The first is there has been a lot of talk
20 about vertical lines for the Senate and I would
21 like to remind the Committee as you know, and
22 everybody here, that you have to draw lines for
23 an entire state and if you make a vertical line
24 of Escambia and Santa Rosa, there has huge
25 population centers in the panhandle, the next

1 district over has to be ginormous in order to
2 encompass as many people as is necessary to
3 create a district.

4 And I think if, as many people get on to
5 My District Builder as they can, they will find
6 that it is not easy to do to make districts
7 that are geographically concise and have a
8 population, the population necessary to create
9 districts.

10 It is also true in the, with House
11 Districts. You have, you know, Escambia County
12 with a large part of the population in
13 Pensacola. So if you are going to have
14 multiple districts, a large parts are going to
15 come in and encompass part of Pensacola in
16 order to make the population centers necessary
17 to have a vote -- to have a district.

18 And the final statement I would like to
19 say, there has been a lot of talk about
20 disenfranchising voters based on, based on
21 partisanship, and I think that a lot of times
22 we cannot define people in their political
23 views by the party they choose to be registered
24 by.

25 If that were the case in the 2010

1 election, we have more Democrats registered
2 statewide than we do Republicans. I think we
3 have 4.7 million Democrats and 4 million
4 Republicans, and yet in the statewide election
5 that doesn't have anything to do with
6 geographical boundaries we elected an entire
7 Republican Cabinet for the first time, and by
8 the Democratic candidates in most of those
9 races garnered under 40 percent of the vote,
10 and what that says to me, at least somewhat, is
11 that if all Democrats voted for all Democratic
12 candidates, then we wouldn't have had that
13 election result.

14 And not at all times can we look at
15 people, look at, look at race, creed,
16 partisanship and say those are the people that
17 they choose to vote by and I think when we do
18 that we start to box people in unnecessarily
19 and I hope that as you move forward you choose
20 to look at more than just race, partisanship,
21 gender, whatever it is, and try to create
22 districts that best suit the state.

23 And I know that you are going to have
24 challenges, because the Supreme Court and the
25 courts are going to have to say whether or not

1 you chose to favor or disfavor any individual
2 or candidate.

3 So I don't envy you for the rest of what
4 you are doing. Thank you for being here today.
5 I appreciate it.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
7 Mr. Evans. Next, Jeff Bergosh who says he is
8 here on his own behalf as a private citizen,
9 but I know that people also are aware that you
10 are a public servant and an elected official,
11 serve with great distinction here in Escambia
12 County.

13 MR. BERGOSH: Thank you very much, Senator
14 Gaetz. First I want to welcome everyone to
15 Pensacola, again, I want to echo that
16 sentiment.

17 As Ms. Hightower mentioned, the School
18 Board and our counterparts and the County
19 Commission are doing a similar exercise on a
20 much smaller scale, thankfully, and so I know
21 what you are doing is difficult.

22 I appreciate the fact that you have taken
23 the time to come to Pensacola, and I appreciate
24 the fact that you are going to listen to all of
25 the people that want to speak.

1 I came in here with some things that I
2 wanted to say. I am glad that I am further
3 down the line so I could hear some of the other
4 folks speak, but I do have one thought and I
5 would like to leave that with you.

6 When you look at Escambia and Santa Rosa
7 County, there is a lot of similarities and
8 there is a lot synergy between those two
9 counties.

10 We have our news channel, we have our
11 newspaper. When you move over to Okaloosa you
12 lose a little bit of that. They have their own
13 identity, their own major newspaper.

14 When you go through the process I would
15 just like to say, there is enough population
16 there that we could do three State Reps Seats,
17 two from Escambia and one from Santa Rosa, and
18 a majority of one Senate District, and I have
19 heard the compelling arguments from the Farm
20 Bureau.

21 It makes sense to me, however, what I
22 would say to that is if you look at any group
23 of people you are going to have a Doctor living
24 next to a lawyer living next to a mechanic.

25 Just because you are a farmer doesn't mean you

1 are entitled to something special.

2 I mean, we all appreciate what you do,
3 believe me, I do when I go to Walmart and I buy
4 corn, but with that said I think it is more
5 important to keep geographic boundaries in
6 tact, and also as a School Board member I will
7 say this, too.

8 When you start moving things all of the
9 way over to Destin and Panama City, Okaloosa,
10 Walton county, when it comes to issues that
11 relate to schools, issues that we confront as
12 School Board members and representatives, we
13 have some unique challenges here in Escambia
14 County.

15 We have poverty. We have demographics
16 that are quite different. I think if you
17 consolidate the seats and you are able to put
18 one Senator and two Reps from Escambia, I feel
19 we would have a better connection with our
20 Legislators.

21 So I appreciate you coming here. Please
22 give some thought to what I said and thank you
23 for your time.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you
25 very much, Jeff. Marilyn Badessa is our next

1 speaker, Marilyn Badessa, and behind

2 Ms. Badessa is Vivian Faircloth.

3 Ms. Badessa, thank you for taking time to
4 be here today, and you are recognized.

5 MS. BADESSA: Okay, thank you. I just
6 want to say I agree.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Would one of the
8 Sergeants or one of the staff members please
9 pull the microphone down. There you go.
10 Sometimes those are hard to pull up and down.
11 I didn't know how flexible it was, but thank
12 you for being here and please start again.

13 MS. BADESSA: Well, I agree with many of
14 the other speakers, Lynn Laird, Paula
15 Montgomery and Jeff Bergosh.

16 I really think that it is unfair. The
17 current districting is unfair to the people in
18 Escambia County as a whole, and I really would
19 like to see the districting be more compact and
20 vertical, and also I would like to see, I hope
21 that you all would not keep fighting the
22 passage of Amendments V and VI.

23 That you would go ahead and let, get on
24 with the process so that we can get these
25 districts done in a good time.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
2 Ms. Badessa. Vivian Faircloth is our next
3 speaker, Ms. Faircloth, and behind her is Don
4 Richards.

5 Thank you for being here, Ms. Faircloth,
6 we are anxious to hear your testimony, and you
7 are recognized.

8 MS. FAIRCLOTH: Thank you very much. I am
9 Vivian Faircloth and I am a resident of the
10 city of Pensacola. I had looked forward to
11 being able to see your initial maps to get an
12 idea of your philosophy on how the lines for
13 the redistricting would be done, would be
14 drawn.

15 The differing points that prior speakers
16 have pointed to showing the different
17 philosophies really illustrates the fact that
18 we really need to have something tangible so
19 that we could have the beginning of a
20 conversation.

21 Escambia County is a population of
22 297,619. It is the largest county in the area
23 and has sufficient population for two
24 Representatives.

25 At the present time Escambia County has

1 one Representative in the House and none in the
2 Senate. At the same time, Okaloosa County,
3 population 180,822, has two Senators and one
4 House Representative.

5 Santa Rosa County, about half the size of
6 Escambia County with a population of 151,372,
7 has two House members residing.

8 The present structure is not really fair
9 in my view. The population in Escambia County
10 is 68.9 percent white, 22.9 percent black, and
11 9.2 percent of other races.

12 Santa Rosa County has 87.8 percent white
13 with 5.4 black and 6.8 other races. Using
14 existing count, Escambia County boundaries
15 would allow racial minorities to having more
16 equal opportunity to elect representatives of
17 their choice. Thank you for allowing me to
18 speak.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
20 Ms. Faircloth. We are delighted that you were
21 here, and Don Richards is our next speaker, and
22 following Mr. Richards is David Radcliffe.

23 Don Richards, thank you for being here, we
24 are grateful for your testimony.

25 MR. RICHARDS: Senator, thank you very

1 much, and Chairman, I appreciate you allowing
2 us the opportunity. I understand that
3 Representative Broxson must have known that I
4 was going to have a comment to say about him.

5 One of our previous speakers talked about
6 some of you in your freshman stint not
7 accomplishing much, and I was just going to say
8 and his ears were probably going to be burning
9 now that he is gone and I see Clay Ingram has
10 left as well, so they obviously knew I was
11 going to speak.

12 Representative Broxson was clearly a
13 statesman this year representing his people on
14 the south end of his area, and I just want to
15 say thanks for doing that.

16 Another spokesperson, I believe the first
17 person up was here chastising quite a few of
18 you in terms of what you have attempted to do.
19 If you listen to what went on today so far, you
20 have an unenviable task, a task of you can't
21 satisfy all of these people any of the time and
22 only some of them some of the time, and that is
23 going to be the way it is.

24 I live on the south end of Santa Rosa
25 County and I don't object to the districts the

1 way they are at all. I was born and raised in
2 Escambia County, and like one of the other
3 speakers, had to leave to earn a living. I,
4 too, have five kids and they are all in
5 Atlanta, not here.

6 Vertical districting, if you go back to
7 vertical districting, there are going to be
8 people that don't understand what they are
9 about to get into with that. Maybe it is
10 better representation.

11 I have no complaints and I can name
12 everyone of you and everyone of you can name me
13 because I have spoken and met with you on
14 numerous occasions from first year
15 Representatives to Representative Evers when he
16 represented us and now Senator Evers,
17 Representative Gaetz and Senator Gaetz, all of
18 you, I don't have any trouble getting access to
19 any of you.

20 I applaud you for being able to on one
21 hand represent farmers that have a very diverse
22 need for this county and the other counties,
23 and to some of the other gentlemen that have
24 been here, and ladies that have spoken about
25 this, think about what you said.

1 You want vertical districts and I want
2 Escambia and Santa Rosa County to come together
3 with one Senator.

4 Do you really? I am not sure that Santa
5 Rosa County would enjoy a one-third, two-third
6 representation. Maybe that is not the way that
7 it should be done, and I believe you have got
8 more representation right now with horizontal
9 districts, even though it is played forward
10 from the City of Gulf Breeze, that is the City
11 of Gulf Breeze with 5,000 some odd people, not
12 in proper Gulf Breeze that has 50,000 plus
13 people.

14 I happen to live out there, and we don't
15 have a problem saying we are from Gulf Breeze.
16 Some people have a problem understanding we
17 don't necessarily live in the city of, but I
18 have never had a problem of contacting
19 Representative Clay Ford and talking with him
20 about all of the interests of northwest
21 Florida, not just the city of Gulf Breeze.

22 Senator Evers, former Representative Evers
23 represented Gulf Breeze on the south end
24 equally well, although he is a farmer and I
25 happen to know where Okaloosa is and Baker,

1 been through them quite a bit, every week back
2 and forth to Atlanta.

3 I go right through the whole stretch of
4 Santa Rosa County. It is extremely diverse,
5 and the south end and the north end happens to
6 be represented right now by Representative
7 Broxson.

8 We have two Senators that we can call on
9 to help get together to be a block vote in
10 bringing some interest to something in the
11 state of Florida. If you go to all vertical
12 boundaries you are going to have Santa Rosa
13 County and Escambia County and that is the far
14 west.

15 It is fun to say we are the western gate
16 of the sunshine state, but it is also kind of
17 an appalling task if you are having to compete
18 for monies, as Senator Gaetz has found out on
19 the BP Oil Spill, the impact for the south
20 Florida people where the oil never got to.

21 So I think it is really a daunting task
22 that you have. I hope you will listen to what
23 has been heard loud and clear today by a
24 majority of the people, and that is we would
25 like to see some idea of what you have in mind

1 as far as maps go. I think that is kind of
2 important.

3 I have gone on My District Map and I have
4 played with that and I am fairly computer
5 literate, and I would venture to say that quite
6 a few people here would have a challenge
7 working on that if they even had the computer
8 to go on and get on that and not be confused
9 with exactly what that meant.

10 So please, think about that and when you
11 complete these, get back out as quickly as you
12 can with your ideas of what is going on.

13 And thank you all so much, you are elected
14 people representing us. Most of you, while we
15 may not always agree, I certainly applaud you
16 for the efforts that you have done this past
17 year and thanks again ever so much.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much.
19 Thank you, Mr. Richards. Next is David
20 Radcliffe, Mr. Radcliffe, you are recognized
21 and after Mr. Radcliffe is through we have John
22 W., I think it is Baker, from Pensacola.
23 Mr. Radcliffe, thank you for coming today.

24 MR. RADCLIFFE: Thank ya'll, thank ya'll
25 for letting me speak. I am from south Santa

1 Rosa County. I have no problems with the way
2 the Senate Districts are aligned and
3 everything. South Santa Rosa County though, I
4 felt for many years and everything, having us
5 split up into having three different
6 Representatives from our area and everything, I
7 do like to see it go back and have the
8 horizontal lines.

9 I think that the tourism, the financial,
10 the retail interests of the south Santa Rosa
11 County, south Escambia County, and if it
12 stretches far enough to get over into south
13 Okaloosa County, all of those people have the
14 same interest and everything and they are very
15 diverse from our, the interest of the rural
16 north of the county.

17 While I have had great results and great
18 communications with Representative Broxson and
19 Representative Ford, I do feel like
20 Representative Broxson's district goes way up
21 to much, way too far north and everything and
22 takes into too many, too much of the rural area
23 to represent of the interest of south Santa
24 Rosa County. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

1 Next -- is it Mr. Baker? Thank you very much,
2 Mr. Baker, for being here, and behind Mr. Baker
3 is Robert Rollo.

4 Mr. Baker, thank you for taking the time
5 to come before the Committee today, and we look
6 forward to your testimony. You are recognized.

7 MR. BAKER: Thank you so much. Thank you
8 for having this meeting to let the citizens
9 actually be involved and have some say. I
10 surely don't envy your task, because it reminds
11 me of a retarded school teacher mathematician
12 that says I am going to give you a test. You
13 have to give me the answer to these ten
14 numbers, but I am only going to give you seven.

15 So it is, you kind of got to get started
16 before you get started. So I don't envy your
17 process. All you need is a little magic.

18 I would like to say that in the interest
19 of public awareness that we, the notification
20 that I got of these hearings indicate that they
21 are going to be numerous and they are going to
22 go into the night. So the poor people that
23 work in the day time can also be heard if they
24 would like.

25 And I believe Senator Evers does have an

1 office here in Pensacola, down on Palafox and
2 he has been extremely responsive to any of our
3 needs, I believe.

4 I am here as a citizen. I have lived in
5 Pensacola for eight years, and the -- I am a
6 member and on the National Leadership Council
7 of the Social Citizens Group that numbers over
8 30 million people.

9 I have been at meetings with some of these
10 people at national meetings around the country,
11 and they all have the same problems that we are
12 having right here right now.

13 Everybody wants to be involved in the
14 process, but we want the process to be
15 completed so we can see what it looks like
16 before we get involved in it to see if we want
17 to be involved in it and it is kind of a
18 ridiculous situation.

19 So most of what I wanted to be said has
20 already been said and there is no need to
21 belabor that, but I do think that we should
22 give strong consideration to the farm industry
23 in the north end of our counties up here,
24 because they can't really move their farms and
25 come down to be included.

1 So I think we are going to have to give a
2 little bit and I would highly recommend strong
3 consideration to some east/west districts, that
4 the farmers are absolutely essential, and by
5 the way, I am not a farmer.

6 And in the interest of total disclosure
7 now that the Coffee Party has been recognized
8 here, our group here is the Tea Party. Thank
9 you so much.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
11 Appreciate your being here. Mr. Rollo, you are
12 up next and following that is Ronald McCollum.
13 Mr. Rollo, we appreciate your taking time to
14 come here today and you are recognized.

15 MR. ROLLO: Thank you, sir. My name is
16 Robert Rollo. I am a native of Santa Rosa
17 County. I didn't just come here over the
18 weekend to be a part of this thing.

19 I would like to say that I am here as a
20 member of the Tea Party. Like the Coffee
21 Party, the reason the Tea Party exists today is
22 we have not been totally happy with what our
23 elected officials have been doing.

24 I would say that I wrote several of you,
25 ya'll have responded nicely, I got no problem

1 with that, but the fact that you are having
2 these meetings, we don't have maps, we are
3 somewhat not informed as much as we would like
4 to be.

5 That is the reason the Tea Party exists
6 today. We exist to hold your feet to the fire
7 that you would do what you said you would do
8 during an election.

9 I for one am in favor of the east/west
10 districts, not up and down the county lines. I
11 think that would be a disaster for everybody.
12 I think that Representative Senator Evers is
13 doing a good job.

14 I think what happened last year was a sure
15 Bill to, the Septic Tank Bill tells me what
16 would happen if I had the municipal Pensacola
17 or municipal Gulf Breeze representing me.

18 Now I have got to dig up my septic tank
19 once every five years and have it inspected.
20 So I don't need no more of the city politicians
21 telling me.

22 I think you draw the districts to
23 represent the people, and as far as the people
24 I think they have the obligation to dig into
25 your backgrounds, all of the candidates and try

1 to find out how you would vote in similar
2 situations, educate the voters.

3 That is our responsibility, and I think we
4 should do it and then when politicians come
5 around knocking on our doors, we can ask them
6 educated questions about their philosophies and
7 try to determine how they are going to vote,
8 because so far we have been sorely
9 misrepresented.

10 I have been represented and everybody in
11 the state of Florida has, so they don't have a
12 problem with that, but I think there is a lot
13 of responsibility to be answerable to the
14 people and that is one of the reasons I am
15 here.

16 But I would like to challenge the audience
17 to get involved in the process and if you don't
18 like the way it is going, 2012 is when you have
19 your chance to make it right, and not only
20 that, people that ask for your vote in 2012,
21 they need to know that you are not going to
22 forget it and go home and go fishing, which I
23 love to do, or go hunting, which I love to do,
24 but I still want to know and am deeply
25 disappointed that I got to dig up my septic

1 tank every five years.

2 I don't have a problem with it, and I
3 don't like Tallahassee telling me I got a
4 problem with it, but I would just like to say
5 that I don't envy your job.

6 I have had the fortune or misfortune or
7 whatever it may be to be in sort of the same
8 situation, but I am looking forward to the
9 results. I personally would have loved to have
10 seen some kind of a map.

11 I think that would have been highly
12 helpful and I ask that you provide them as soon
13 as possible and then not go back to Tallahassee
14 and hold your hearings.

15 I attended hearings in Tallahassee over
16 the Septic Tank Bill, in the pecking order in
17 which people speak in Tallahassee is not what
18 it is in Pensacola or Ft. Walton Beach. The
19 lobbyists, the pecking order down there is
20 entirely different.

21 We were put at the end of the speaking
22 schedule and most of the time as you referred
23 to several times today, time cut us off. We
24 would have like 15 seconds to have our speech.

25 So I don't envy your job, but please take

1 into consideration the east/west, get the
2 Representatives to represent the districts such
3 as the farmers or what-have-you and I would
4 appreciate it very much. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
6 Mr. Rollo, appreciate your comments. Next
7 Ronald McCollum, and after Mr. McCollum speaks
8 we have Martin Simmons, but before Mr. Simmons
9 speaks, after Mr. McCollum speaks we will take
10 a very short break.

11 We will take a five minute break for
12 members of the audience and Legislators to use
13 the facilities if they care to or stretch their
14 legs.

15 But right now, Mr. McCollum, we are
16 delighted you are here and you are recognized.

17 MR. MCCOLLUM: Thank you, Senator Gaetz.
18 In all of the years that I have been down here,
19 lived here, we moved here in '04, I have not
20 had any problems getting in touch with my
21 Senator or Representative, as some of the other
22 earlier speakers have.

23 When you look at the past history of this
24 nation we have always had gerrymandering
25 throughout the history of this nation. When

1 the Democrats were in power and those of you
2 who spoke earlier in this hearing who have a
3 Liberal view point. I used to be a member of
4 the Union, 34 years in a trade.

5 About midway I changed parties and now
6 consider myself a Conservative, but when you
7 look back at the Liberals they were promoting
8 gerrymandering.

9 We have Liberals here today who are
10 arguing about the way it is done now, and have
11 tried to work to change the laws. I have an
12 ACLU member right next to me here who is very
13 opposed to what is going on here, and I oppose
14 the ACLU.

15 I think we have a party in control of this
16 nation right out of the White House who is very
17 difficult to work with, and I just want to
18 thank each of you. I feel for what you are
19 going through. It is difficult times we are
20 living in, we are trying to get men to work,
21 people with jobs and stuff in the state.

22 We have expenditures that have grown
23 beyond what is coming into the state and I want
24 to thank each one of you for what you are
25 doing, the way you are working hard for this

1 state, and that is about it today. Thank you,
2 again.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir,
4 for your testimony today. Representatives and
5 Senators, I would ask that we stay pretty
6 close, but we will take a five minute recess
7 and my clock says 11:42. So we will back here
8 at 11:47 and commence. This Committee stands
9 in recess.

10 (Brief recess taken.)

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Ladies and gentlemen, we
12 are going to reconvene. If you would all
13 please take your seats. If you will all please
14 take your seats we ask the Committee members if
15 they will find their spot as well. Thank you
16 all.

17 During the break there were -- there were
18 two suggestions just of procedure that were
19 made and we are going to follow those
20 suggestions.

21 The first was that there were folks who
22 thought that all of the people up here who did
23 not have name tags in front of them were staff.

24 That is not true. The fact is that
25 Speaker Designate Weatherford being a true

1 Conservative decided not to afford name tags
2 for the House members, but all of these folks
3 are members of the Florida Legislature.

4 They are elected Representatives or
5 Senators, and they have been chosen by their
6 respective presiding officers by Speaker Cannon
7 and President Haridopolos to serve on the
8 Redistricting Committee of the House and the
9 Reapportionment Committee of the senate.

10 So you may feel free to chat with any of
11 them about anything you would like after the
12 hearing or during any breaks we might take.

13 The second suggestion that was made to me
14 by several people was to ask that there be some
15 clarification at the end of the meeting, and I
16 will ask the Speaker Designate to do this.

17 A clarification as to the timeline of the
18 process, whether or not it is really true that
19 somehow it is preordained that maps would not
20 come out until the end of the process, to try
21 to provide a little information about that
22 since there seems to be some either
23 misconceptions or some scripts that were
24 written without knowledge as to -- as to what
25 the real facts are.

1 But now why don't we continue with our --
2 with our public testimony and Martin Simmons,
3 thank you very much for being here today, and
4 you are recognized.

5 MR. SIMMONS: Glad to be here. Thank you
6 all for being here. Full disclosure, I am
7 State Committee man for the Santa Rosa County
8 for the Republican party, but in my opinion on
9 this issue, I don't know if it is partisan or
10 not, because I haven't asked anybody, nobody
11 has told me anything about the lines, drawing
12 of the lines, the directions.

13 No matter where you draw the lines, north
14 or south, east or west you are going to have
15 Representatives and Senators that are going to
16 live in one county but have part of their
17 district that is in another unless you drew
18 them according to county lines.

19 For instance, Greg Evers, of course, as
20 Senator when he was Representative he lived in
21 Okaloosa County, but he represented the other
22 counties, did a fine job doing the same thing.

23 You are going to live, I know, Senator
24 Thrasher, you live in one county and others,
25 and no matter how you draw the lines, there is

1 not going to be county lines, east or west.

2 If the things are going correct now and
3 granted, we do have to trust that if you live
4 in one county and it is not our county, you
5 will still represent us, but I don't think that
6 drawing, changing the line direction is going
7 to change that much if any. Thank you very
8 much.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
10 We appreciate your testimony. Next we will
11 hear from Lee Smith and following Mr. Smith or
12 Ms. Smith, whichever it is, we will hear from
13 Jewel Cannada-Wynn. And so next, Lee Smith,
14 please, Mr. Smith, quite obviously.

15 You are recognized. Thanks for being
16 here, and we welcome your testimony.

17 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and
18 members of the Committee and staff. My name is
19 Lee Smith, I am a resident of Escambia County,
20 here not representing any group or
21 organization, as a private citizen.

22 However, I am a professional engineer, and
23 I am working today, I am approved leave so I
24 made time to come down here to be heard.

25 I am just, very briefly, wanted to speak

1 in support of the communities of interest of
2 the fact that coast communities have different
3 interests, different goals, different values
4 than the rural communities in the north.

5 Just the fact that I think the north part
6 of the county should have their own district
7 and this other their own. I wanted to thank
8 you all for allowing input before the maps are
9 drawn, but I would encourage you to make maps
10 available, you know, sooner than later. I
11 think the balance of having both is a good
12 thing.

13 Not wanting to be redundant I will
14 conclude and thank you all for your time.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
16 We really appreciate your comments today. Next
17 it is Jewel Cannada-Wynn, and following her,
18 Steve Bogan, please.

19 Thank you very much, ma'am, and you are
20 recognized.

21 MS. CANNADA-WYNN: Thank you, Jewel
22 Cannada-Wynn. Thank you so very much for
23 having this here and I know the question of the
24 process has been questioned. However, you have
25 to get all phases of opinions from everyone,

1 and thank you very, very much.

2 It had been mentioned in previous
3 speakers, they have covered most of the things
4 that I wanted to cover. This is not about
5 whether or not I can contact my Representative,
6 because I have contacted my Representative.

7 My Representative is Representative Clay
8 Ford, and his office has been very, very
9 helpful. However, the two main concerns that I
10 have is one, District III, a little history and
11 research on your part will go back to ten years
12 ago when that district was redistricted and you
13 took out a predominantly black district and
14 included the Gulf Breeze district which was a
15 predominantly white district.

16 I felt as a simple citizen that that was
17 wrong and that was a disenfranchise of my vote
18 personally that to have an opportunity for an
19 African-American to be elected from this
20 district was taken away from me by that
21 particular action by our State Legislature.

22 The second thing is the way in which the
23 districts are done now with the Senators. Here
24 in Escambia County sometimes I felt like we had
25 an absence of power to make things happen

1 economically.

2 I think the way the districts are run now
3 it impacts us economically. To our west we
4 have a state and counties who vigorously
5 support economic development in that area.

6 I feel like Escambia County does not get
7 its representation because of the way the lines
8 are drawn and focuses effort on increasing our
9 economic development so that we can be
10 competitive here in Escambia County when
11 compared to our sister county to the west.

12 Santa Rosa and Escambia County, we are
13 sisters, we do have many things in common and I
14 would hope that we can come together to have
15 one voice so that we can strengthen our
16 position in reference to economic development.
17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Ms. Cannada-Wynn, thank
19 you very much for being here today and for your
20 testimony.

21 Next, Steve Bogan. Mr. Bogan? We will
22 come back to Mr. Bogan in case he had to step
23 out for a moment.

24 Next is Anthony Washnool, Mr. Washnool.

25 And following Mr. Washnool will be Bessie

1 Vallianos, I believe and I apologize if I
2 butchered that name.

3 Mr. Washnool, thank you for being here.
4 You are recognized.

5 MR. WASHNOOL: May it please the public
6 servants and the public for which they serve,
7 D. Anthony Washnool, I am a trial attorney in
8 Arkansas, Tennessee and the state of Florida.

9 I reside in Chumuckla with my wife on a
10 family farm. Since the Spaniards occupied
11 Pensacola these people have been on this land
12 and I am humbled today to talk about the change
13 in a ten-year redistricting plan.

14 I think that over the last ten years the
15 logic for which the lines were drawn has
16 probably changed. I would ask that in the next
17 ten years we take greater concern for future
18 generations.

19 That we consider the economic
20 opportunities and growth. While dealing with
21 the actual line drawing, one of the things that
22 I noted from the charts that you had was that
23 for the most part in this north part of the
24 state, the districts aren't going to change
25 that much in terms of population.

1 I think the largest deviations in
2 populations are Districts III and IV in the
3 State House. The rest of it is pretty
4 standard, about the same. There is not a
5 tremendous need for redrawing the lines, except
6 under the considerations previously named.

7 And as an overarching principle I would
8 just have this prayer, that the special
9 interests not be the drive, that the actual
10 demographics be for a cross section of the
11 community and that our future generations are
12 considered when making any change, whether it
13 be specifically on redistricting or any other
14 vote for which you serve the public.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Washnool,
16 we appreciate your testimony very much, and I
17 apologize, is it Bessie, V-a-l-l-i-a-n, I think
18 o-s? Is she here? We will come back to her if
19 she had to step out for a moment.

20 Our next speaker then would be Art Rucker,
21 and following Mr. Rucker would be Johnny
22 Blackman. Mr. Rucker, if you are here we would
23 be delighted to hear from you. We will give
24 you a moment to come down.

25 We gave you no warning here, I am sorry.

1 You are Mr. Blackman. Is Mr. Rocker here? All
2 right, we will come back to Mr. Rocker as well.

3 Mr. Blackman, you were recognized. We are
4 delighted that you are here today, and
5 following your testimony we will hear from Gail
6 Honea, please.

7 MR. BLACKMON: Johnny Blackmon, Escambia
8 County, Pensacola. I am here to speak on
9 something that I wasn't aware of until probably
10 now, because I wasn't aware of the fact that
11 Wedgewood and Lincoln Park was taken out of
12 District III, in which Gulf Breeze was added
13 and I am here I think Dr. Avant and Ms. Jewel
14 Cannada-Wynn spoke to this, so I won't go any
15 further, other than to say that I wish you
16 would put Wedgewood and Lincoln Park back,
17 which is a black voting district, heavily black
18 voting district.

19 I am not asking you to take Gulf Breeze
20 out, but I am asking you to put back Lincoln
21 Park and Wedgewood, thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much for
23 your testimony, sir. Next is Gail, is it Honea
24 or Honea?

25 MS. HONEA: Honea.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you for being here,
2 and you are recognized before the Committee,
3 ma'am.

4 MS. HONEA: Thank you. My name is Gail
5 Honea. I am not here representing any group.
6 I worked in state government, actually, in
7 Virginia. I have worked in the private sector,
8 and I just retired from managing a non profit
9 in Escambia County for 15 years.

10 And when we were always worrying about
11 efficiencies, this is a little off the side,
12 but I would want to let you know that if you
13 want to have efficient people in office you
14 might want to try to recruit people from the
15 non profit sector, because they are the hardest
16 working and most efficient people I know.

17 For those of us who love and believe in
18 our democracy, we feel that enhancing the
19 ability for more citizens to participate in the
20 process of citizenship and feeling connected to
21 our government is a positive thing.

22 So I concur with previous speakers, that
23 districts should be drawn keeping counties
24 together and with folks that have something in
25 common together rather than the north/south

1 divisions that we currently have.

2 I would ask our elected officials to draw
3 lines that are conducive to citizenship
4 participation in government rather than
5 enhancement of the reelection of incumbents as
6 some folks feel is currently done.

7 This year unfortunately, our officials
8 have taken steps that many of us feel make it
9 each more difficult for citizens to vote and
10 feel connected to the process of citizenship.
11 And now that our elected officials are wasting
12 tax dollars fighting Amendments that two-third
13 of our citizens have passed, to me this shows a
14 disrespect for the citizens of the state of
15 Florida.

16 I hope that maps will be available sooner
17 than later so that we can see them and make
18 decisions and give you feedback.

19 I hope the process of giving feedback will
20 not be limited to Tallahassee where everyone
21 will have to travel in order to talk to you.
22 And while the work you have ahead of you is
23 difficult, I do remind you that you chose to
24 run for this office and do the work you have to
25 do. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Honea.
2 Thanks for reminding us we are all volunteers.
3 Clorissti Mitchell, Clorissti Mitchell? Thank
4 you for being here, Ms. Mitchell, and behind
5 Ms. Mitchell is Rebekah Johanson, who will be
6 our next speaker.

7 Ms. Mitchell, we appreciate you taking
8 time from your day and you are recognized
9 before the Committee.

10 MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, I took the day
11 off, because at 10:00 I am usually at work. I
12 do respect that there is a lot to consider in
13 drawing the lines, and I am going to be very
14 brief because I really do hope that you guys
15 address and answer some questions at the end.

16 One, the state of Florida should ensure
17 transparency, fairness in compliance with the
18 Voting Rights Act and with equal protection.
19 You should ensure one person, one vote.

20 You should redistrict in a way that avoids
21 minority vote delusion which to me is what
22 happened with District III. You should avoid
23 drawing district lines so that minority
24 population is over concentrated or packed into
25 election districts.

1 You should also be careful to avoid
2 cracking or fracturing, which is drawing
3 district lines so that an area of concentrated
4 minority population which is large enough for
5 separate representation and that it could
6 constitute one or more majority, minority or
7 majority black district is divided and spread
8 among several districts that are predominantly
9 white.

10 I also respectfully request that you avoid
11 drawing lines, drawing plans that erode
12 minority rights relative to the status quo,
13 that is, that you avoid creating retrogressive
14 redistricting plans.

15 I am aware of the redistricting principles
16 outlined in Section 20 and 21 of the Florida
17 Constitution and they must be adhered.

18 Districts shall not be drawn with the
19 intent or result of denying or abridging the
20 equal opportunity of racial or language
21 minorities to participate in the political
22 process, or to diminish their ability to elect
23 a representation of their choice.

24 In addition, districts shall be compact
25 and contiguous. Additionally, I want to ensure

1 that the long established principles by our
2 Constitution and the Voting Rights Act of 1965,
3 are continued and we ensure one person one vote
4 and avoid minority vote delusion. That is all.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much for
6 your comments. Next is Rebekah Johanson.
7 Ms. Johanson, you are our next speaker, and
8 then we are going to go back to those who we
9 missed.

10 Ms. Johanson, thank you for being here and
11 you are recognized.

12 MS. JOHANSON: Thank you. First of all, I
13 have to say, I live in Cantonment right now,
14 but I did grow up in Barineau Park. I think
15 Senator Evers might know where that is, but I
16 don't know if many of you do.

17 But it is north, it is in the north end of
18 the county, and I have to say that in contrast
19 to what a lot of speakers have said, there are
20 differences county to county, and I would
21 really like to encourage you all to keep that
22 in mind.

23 I live in Cantonment and when I go
24 downtown or when I go to the beach, I love that
25 part of my county, but I know it is very, very

1 different from where I live and from where many
2 of my fellow citizens live, and please keep in
3 mind the demographics and the interest of the
4 area and not just the arbitrary county lines in
5 moving forward, because it is very, very
6 different.

7 So you might be surprised to know this,
8 but I am not a farmer, I am a college student.
9 I just got my BA in Political Science Prelaw
10 and I am pursuing a Master's degree in
11 Political Science Public Administration, and I
12 find redistricting extremely confusing and
13 tedious and I -- you have my sympathy in moving
14 forward.

15 But please keep in mind that the vast
16 majority of the people you represent are most
17 likely going to be even more confused by this
18 process.

19 People don't choose to do this stuff and
20 the average citizen really doesn't know a lot
21 about what is going on as you, as you
22 redistrict. And so I would encourage you to
23 keep those concerns in mind while moving
24 forward. I am not here to complain.

25 I really appreciate you all being here,

1 but if I did have one complaint it would be the
2 time for now the fact that I am unemployed
3 during the summer until the fall term starts
4 has worked in my favor, but the majority of the
5 people my age, the people who are like me can't
6 be here because we do have jobs or class or
7 responsibilities.

8 So please keep that in mind while moving
9 forward. It is great to have this meeting, but
10 it would be even better if the average citizen
11 could attend. So do keep that in mind that the
12 citizens, the people are listening and we are
13 paying attention.

14 We are here to help, we appreciate the
15 chance to help, but we are also here to hold
16 your feet to the fire, because that is what you
17 elected us to do. I mean, that is what we
18 elected you to do, something like that. Thank
19 you.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very, very
21 much, Rebekah, for your testimony. We would
22 like to go back now to those who we missed who
23 may have stepped out. We want to make sure
24 everyone has an opportunity. Steve Bogon, if
25 Mr. Bogon is here we will take his testimony.

1 All right, Bessie Vallianos,
2 Ms. Vallianos, are you here? I thought that
3 was you, Ms. Vallianos, you held us in thrall.

4 Art Rucker, is Mr. Rucker here? If not,
5 that concludes the public testimony for those
6 who have turned in cards.

7 Let me ask, is there anybody here who
8 would like to testify but didn't turn in a
9 card?

10 If you are a little bit shy but you have
11 heard the testimony and now you would like to
12 testify, we are here to listen, is there
13 anybody? If so, would you raise your hand, we
14 will get to you with a card and take your
15 testimony now. Is there anyone?

16 Well, if not we thank all of those who
17 have testified, and also point out that the
18 face-to-face hearings are not the only way that
19 people are following the redistricting process
20 or having input into the redistricting process.
21 We have a very active on-line presence by many,
22 many, many Floridians.

23 We are picking up scores more almost by
24 the minute who are following us on the web and
25 through the Florida Channel and are giving us

1 their views by e-mail, by Snail Mail and by
2 telephone. So we thank, thank them very much
3 for that.

4 We would like to now go to any comments or
5 questions from any members, any Representatives
6 or Senators who are here that you would like to
7 make.

8 Okay. I would like now to turn to our
9 Speaker Designate, and I have asked him to be
10 prepared to answer some of the questions of
11 fact that have come up. I realize that some
12 folks may have had a script prepared for them
13 or in advance of the meeting and may not have
14 had the chance to hear the Speaker Designate's
15 explanation of the process and the timeline and
16 the calendar that he gave at the beginning.

17 So I would ask him to reprise some of
18 those key points and respond to the points of
19 information that we have had raised by
20 testifiers today. Mr. Speaker.

21 SPEAKER WEATHERFORD: Thank you very much,
22 Mr. Chairman. I want to thank again the
23 members of the public who took time to be here
24 today. We got a lot of offers of sympathy, and
25 I wish I could get the same sympathy from my

1 wife being gone so much, but she is not quite
2 as sympathetic.

3 So I will tell you that the members of
4 this body and this Committee, we have dedicated
5 ourselves and sacrificed a lot of time and
6 effort to be here today with you and with other
7 people around the state of Florida, because we
8 recognize how important it is that we get your
9 input and we thank you for taking time from
10 coming from the north end of the county or the
11 south end of the county to be here and to be a
12 part of this process.

13 I would like to, if I could, Mr. Chairman,
14 answer a few quick questions that were brought
15 up during the hearing to see if I can't clear
16 up a few things.

17 The first thing is in regards to
18 Amendments V and VI. We heard that referenced
19 many times. Make no mistake about it, the
20 Amendments V and VI were voted overwhelmingly
21 by the public to pass.

22 The Senator and myself and every member of
23 this chamber, both the House and the Senate
24 swears every two years to uphold and defend the
25 Constitution of the State of Florida, we will

1 do that and we will faithfully uphold the
2 Amendments V and VI that have gone into law.

3 They are the law. They are the
4 Constitution, we will faithfully uphold it and
5 I want to make sure that is extremely clear.

6 The second thing is, there was a term that
7 was used a few times today and I want to be
8 very clear on this, and that was in regards to
9 a gag order, or that somehow members were asked
10 not to speak.

11 As you noticed just now, the Chairman of
12 the Committee asked if any member wanted to
13 speak or have thoughts or ask questions.

14 Yesterday in Tallahassee we had some
15 questions that were asked from members of the
16 Committee and we answered those questions.

17 There is no gag order. We have not asked
18 members not to speak, simply we have reminded
19 them that this is a listening tour. This is
20 one of the few times I have seen in politics
21 where you don't sit back and listen to
22 politicians give speeches or pontificate for
23 hours and hours on end.

24 This is your opportunity to give input to
25 us and you have done so in a very thoughtful

1 manner today and we appreciate that very much.
2 So there is no gag order whatsoever.

3 Thirdly, in regards to the maps. There
4 has been a lot of questions in regards to the
5 maps and why we don't have them here today, and
6 I just want to point out a few things.

7 First of all, we believe in the
8 Legislature that allowing the citizens of
9 Florida to start the conversation first about
10 what you think before we start drawing the
11 first line is of the utmost importance.

12 Imagine if we would have shown up today
13 and said, here are the maps that we have drawn,
14 you know, here they are, what do you think. We
15 would have probably spent an hour of people
16 saying, how did you draw these maps and why
17 didn't you ask anyone who lives here their
18 opinion first before you drew them.

19 So we feel it is of the utmost importance
20 to make sure that we seek public input first as
21 opposed to coming before you and asking for a
22 rubber stamp from the public on maps that have
23 already been drawn without input whatsoever.

24 I also would like to point out that in a
25 letter that was sent to the Legislature just

1 recently from the crafters of the Amendments V
2 and VI and Fair Districts, they asked us to
3 produce maps and to bring them to the public
4 hearings, and what was interesting about that
5 was over a year and-a-half ago when they
6 testified before the Legislature under oath,
7 they specifically said when we asked them if
8 they could help us draw fair districts, they
9 said they could not even attempt to do it, both
10 Ms. Freeman and Former Speaker Mills
11 specifically said they could not even attempt
12 to do it until they got public testimony from
13 the citizens of Florida.

14 So we are simply doing what they stated
15 two years ago, which is seeking the public
16 testimony from you, and we are grateful that we
17 have gotten it here today.

18 Lastly, in regards to the timeline which
19 is very, very important, and I want to make
20 sure that I am clear about this as well.

21 In regards to the timeline it is important
22 to know, we were one of the last states to get
23 the census data from the Federal government.

24 We did not get the official census data
25 until April, which were in the middle of the

1 Legislative Session that went into the second
2 week of May. So we were not able to do
3 anything with that data and start to have
4 public hearings until the summer, which we are
5 now doing.

6 On top of that, the Constitution says very
7 clearly that we cannot take action on any maps
8 until January of 2012. And so what we are
9 doing is we starting seven months before then.

10 We are taking three and-a-half months of
11 testimony in every pocket of the state of
12 Florida and then we are going to take the Bills
13 that are filed by members and by the Committees
14 and they are going to work their way through
15 the process with public input at every step of
16 the way.

17 And finally go when we get to January and
18 have our session, that we have moved up two
19 months just so we could do this early, we will
20 then take action on formal maps and plans.

21 I think those are very important things to
22 bring to the light. We encourage you to
23 continue to be a part of this process. This is
24 the most interactive redistricting process that
25 the country has seen.

1 We have websites, we have social media, we
2 have e-mail, we have public hearings and all of
3 this public comment will take place throughout
4 the entire process, not in the beginning, but
5 through the middle and all of the way up until
6 the very end, and lastly, Mr. Chairman, I will
7 just say this.

8 I believe it is incumbent upon this body
9 to make sure that politics and partisan
10 politics specifically is not a part of this
11 process. The Constitution is clear about that.

12 We do not believe that politics has any
13 reason to be a part of this process and I think
14 it is incumbent upon us as Chairs and the
15 members of this Committee to make sure that we
16 put the citizens first and that we put the
17 voters and the districts and what is right for
18 the state of Florida ahead of anything that is
19 political, and I know that you will do that and
20 I will work with you as well and I look forward
21 to working with you and your leadership and
22 thank you very much for having us here in God's
23 country today.

24 Thank you, members, for being a part of
25 this process. I can assure you, we heard you

1 loud and clear. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
3 Mr. Speaker, and there being no further
4 comments from members, President Margolis moves
5 we rise.

6 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
7 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 117 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 9th day of August, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2011

11:00 A.M.

GULF COAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PANAMA CITY, FLORIDA

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 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you all for being
3 here this morning. The Joint House/Senate
4 Redistricting Hearing is called to order.

5 We want to first of all thank Gulf Coast
6 State College, the Board of Trustees and the
7 Administration for allowing us to use this
8 facility today.

9 And thank all of you for being here,
10 especially members of the public who have come
11 to help us by sharing your comments and your
12 recommendations to assist in shaping
13 Congressional Senate and House Districts in
14 Florida for the next decade.

15 My name is Don Gates. I Chair the Senate
16 Reapportionment Committee. My colleagues to my
17 immediate left is the Speaker Designate of the
18 Florida House of Representatives,
19 Representative Will Weatherford, he Chairs the
20 House Redistricting Committee, and together we
21 are chairing these hearings around the state.

22 This -- this hearing is one of a series.
23 We started in Tallahassee, then went to
24 Pensacola yesterday, then to Ft. Walton Beach.

25 Today we are fortunate to be in Panama

1 City, in Bay County, and then we will move on
2 to the rest of the state, and ultimately we
3 will be all of the way south to Key West. So
4 we will cover the State of Florida and hope to
5 hear from many, many people.

6 I would like to begin today so that you
7 will know who is here and where they have come
8 from, to ask the members of the House
9 Redistricting Committee and the Senate
10 Reapportionment Committee if they would just
11 state their name, whether they are a member of
12 the House or the Senate, and the community that
13 they represent.

14 And Mr. Guthrie, if you would hand the
15 microphone to our first member.

16 REPRESENTATIVE KIAR: Thank you,
17 Mr. Chairman. My name is Martin Kiar, and I
18 represent an area in south Florida called
19 Broward County, and thank you all very much for
20 giving us the opportunity to come and hear your
21 voices.

22 SENATOR MONFORD: I am Bill Monford. I
23 represent District 6, Senate District 6 and it
24 stretches from Madison County, that is Madison,
25 Jefferson, Leon, Wakulla, Franklin, Gulf,

1 Calhoun, Liberty, Jackson, Gadsden and a little
2 bit part of Bay, right down the street down
3 here.

4 So if you are my constituent, glad you are
5 here. If you are not, I wish you were. Glad
6 to be here.

7 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Hi, my name is
8 Janet Adkins, I serve in the Florida House and
9 I represent Nassau County, Baker, Bradford,
10 Clay, Union and Duval Counties.

11 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Good morning, my
12 name is Peter Nehr, and I am from District 48.
13 I represent Pinellas County.

14 SPEAKER WEATHERFORD: Hello, my name is
15 Will Weatherford. I am in the State House of
16 Representatives. I represent District 61,
17 which is in Pasco County.

18 REPRESENTATIVE MARGOLIS: Good morning, my
19 name is Sandra Gwen Margolis. I represent the
20 east side of Miami Dade County and a little bit
21 of Broward, just a very little bit.

22 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: I am Clay Ford,
23 Representative for District 3.
24 Ninety-five percent of my district is
25 Pensacola, five percent is Gulf Breeze, and we

1 have got a beach up in that area, too, sort of
2 like Panama City. I feel at home here.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Good morning, my
4 name is Alan Williams, native, north Floridian.
5 I represent parts of Tallahassee, Leon County
6 and parts of Gadsden county. It is great to be
7 here.

8 REPRESENTATIVE COLEY: I am Marti Coley.
9 I represent District 7 here and the panhandle,
10 including Bay County and encompassing nine
11 counties in the panhandle.

12 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: Good morning,
13 everyone, I am Ed Hooper, Florida House, I
14 represent District 50, which is about one
15 fourth of Pinellas County.

16 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Good morning, I am
17 State Representative Jim Frishe, I am from
18 District 54 which is the western edge of
19 Pinellas County, all of the beaches. I feel
20 right at home here.

21 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good morning,
22 Chuck Chestnut, District 23, a portion of
23 Alachua County and a portion of Marion County.

24 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good morning, I am
25 Betty Reed, I represent part of east Tampa,

1 Hillsborough County, parts of Riverview, and a
2 snibbling of west Tampa, and glad to be here.

3 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good morning,
4 I am State Representative Gwyndolen
5 Clarke-Reed. Don't let the New York accent
6 fool you, I am a native Floridian. I represent
7 House District 92, which is in Broward County,
8 representing the cities of Deerfield Beach,
9 Pompano Beach, Oakland Park, Wilton Manors,
10 Tamarac, and part of north Lauderdale, Victoria
11 Park area of Ft. Lauderdale. Thank you, I am
12 glad to be here.

13 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Good morning, my
14 name is Daphne Campbell, I represent District
15 108, part of Miami, Dade County, and as we have
16 four municipalities, North Miami. We have four
17 municipalities, North Miami, North Miami --
18 North Miami, Miami Shores, El Portal and
19 Biscayne Park and I am glad to be here.

20 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good morning,
21 State Representative Hazel Rogers representing
22 areas of Broward County. Seven cities,
23 Lauderdale Lakes, Lauderhill, Oakland Park,
24 North Lauderdale, Tamarac, Sunrise, Plantation
25 and, of course, Broward County, 1.8 million

1 residents.

2 It is good to be here. We are State
3 Representatives, representing the entire State
4 of Florida, so I thank you for being here.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BURGIN: Hello, I am State
6 Representative Rachel Burgin from the Tampa Bay
7 area, representing District 56 in Hillsborough
8 County.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good morning,
10 State Representative Mack Bernard, representing
11 District 84 in Palm Beach County.

12 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good morning, my
13 name is John Patrick Julien, proudly
14 representing the Florida House of
15 Representatives District 104 which encompasses
16 North Miami beach, North Miami, Miami Gardens,
17 Opa Locka, the City of Miami, the City of
18 Hialeah and Unincorporated Miami-Dade, and it
19 is truly an honor and a privilege to be here.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Good morning,
21 my name is Kathleen Passidomo, House District
22 76, which is Collier County and it includes the
23 City of Naples, the City of Marco Island,
24 Everglades City and as I indicated, less than a
25 ton of alligators. Thank you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: Good morning, my
2 name is Tom Goodson, I represent House District
3 29, which runs from Mims, Florida through the
4 Space Coast, Brevard County down into Indian
5 River County. Thank you for having us.

6 REPRESENTATIVE HAYS: Good morning, and
7 thank you for being here. I am Alan Hays,
8 State Senator from District 20 which includes
9 parts of Volusia, Seminole, Lake, Sumter and
10 Marion Counties, right in the heart of Florida.
11 Thanks are being here.

12 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Good morning, I am
13 Dennis Baxley, a country undertaker from Ocala,
14 Marion County, representing District 24 there
15 for the folks there, fourth generation
16 Floridian. Love to be back in Panama City
17 today. Thank you for coming and talking to us.

18 SENATOR THRASHER: Good morning, I am
19 State Senator John Thrasher in District 8. I
20 live in St. Augustine, Florida, and I represent
21 parts of Nassau County, Duval County, St. Johns
22 County, Flagler County, and I end up at the
23 International Speedway in Daytona Beach, and it
24 is great to be here and thank you all for
25 coming this morning.

1 REPRESENTATIVE CRUZ: Good morning, I am
2 State Representative Janet Cruz. I, along with
3 my colleagues, Representative Reed and
4 Representative Burgin, represent a portion of
5 Tampa, Hillsborough County. It is an honor and
6 a privilege to be here. For those of you who
7 took time off of work, I appreciate you being
8 here.

9 For those of you that took time from your
10 golf game or time from the beach, I appreciate
11 you being here even more. Have a good day.

12 REPRESENTATIVE STARGILL: Good morning, I
13 am Representative Kelli Stargel from District
14 64, which is North Polk County and a lot of the
15 City of Lakeland.

16 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good morning, I am
17 State Representative Dwayne Taylor from Daytona
18 Beach, Florida, where the world center of
19 racing and the world's most famous beach on the
20 Atlantic, on the Atlantic side.

21 CHAIRMAN GATES: He got in real trouble in
22 Ft. Walton Beach last night.

23 REPRESENTATIVE DRAKE: Thank you, I am
24 Brad Drake. I represent House District 5. I
25 live about 45 miles down the road in Walton

1 County. I have five counties here in the
2 panhandle, Okaloosa, Walton, Holmes, Washington
3 and Jackson. So thank you for letting me be
4 here with you today.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PATRONIS: Good morning.
6 Thank you all for coming today. Welcome to Bay
7 County, members. Constituents, I want to tell
8 you, this is probably the largest assembling
9 you have had of State Legislators in Bay
10 County's history, and please take your
11 opportunities to vet to them.

12 I am humble to have so many here in Bay
13 County and as I look at the audience, there is
14 members, you have the highest quality of folks
15 you are going to get testimony from here today,
16 and I am glad to be here with you.

17 I guess it would help, Peter Nehr pointed
18 out to me, I am State Representative Jimmy
19 Patronis, representing Bay County, proudly.

20 SENATOR EVERS: I am Senator Greg Evers, I
21 represent the northern portion of Escambia,
22 Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Washington,
23 Holmes and North Bay County. So I cover
24 everything between Senator Gates and the
25 Alabama line.

1 That is in District 2, and it is always a
2 pleasure to come to Bay County. I really enjoy
3 it. I guess I am from the what you call it,
4 the Sand Hills portion of Bay County is where I
5 represent. So thank you very much. It is a
6 pleasure to be here today.

7 CHAIRMAN GATES: Well, there are more than
8 one way to follow the redistricting process.
9 We have obviously a number of people who are
10 here today. We want to hear from you in a
11 couple of moments, but we also want to let you
12 know that the Florida Channel is broadcasting
13 these hearings, and there are literally
14 thousands of people following us on the
15 Internet.

16 We have had very heavy Internet traffic
17 for which we are immensely grateful, and if you
18 are interested in following the other hearings
19 on the Internet or through the Florida Channel,
20 before you leave today you might want to ask
21 one of the Florida Channel people for the way
22 to do that or check with one of our
23 professional staff.

24 Our sole purpose today is to hear from the
25 public about how you believe the legal

1 standards governing redistricting should be
2 applied in this community so that you can be
3 represented sensibly, fairly, equitably in
4 Washington and in Tallahassee.

5 Our procedures for today's hearing are
6 simple, but important. It is important that
7 you sign in so that we can create a record, an
8 accurate public record of all attendees and
9 speakers, and also you may opt to join our
10 e-mail list or our Snail Mail list so we can
11 keep you informed about the redistricting
12 process and how it will be working, and your
13 opportunities for further input.

14 If you have not signed in, please raise
15 your hand. If you want to speak, if you have
16 not filled out one of these speaker cards and
17 you would like to speak, we want to hear from
18 you.

19 So if you have not done that and you still
20 would like to speak, please just raise your
21 hand and we will have a member of our staff
22 come around and get you to sign a speaker card
23 so that we can add you to the list.

24 Is there anybody else who would like to
25 speak? We will ask later in case there are

1 some people who come in late and that often
2 happens.

3 Before we begin I would like to recognize
4 the Speaker Designate of the Florida House,
5 Representative Will Weatherford, and ask the
6 Speaker D to explain how today's hearing fits
7 into the redistricting process. Mr. Speaker.

8 SPEAKER WEATHERFORD: Thank you very much,
9 Mr. Chairman, and it is an honor to be here in
10 Bay County. We are very pleased with the
11 tremendous turn out that we have today.

12 We are wrapping up our tour of God's
13 country starting in the panhandle and we start
14 here and are working our way south, but we are
15 very happy to be here today in Bay County.

16 And I think it is important that we take
17 just a moment to walk everyone through why we
18 are here today and some of the laws and
19 specific things that we have to do as a body to
20 make these decisions and why we are here
21 listening to you first.

22 Every ten years the Legislature is
23 required by our Constitution to redistrict the
24 state based on increases, decreases and
25 movements in population. Because Florida has

1 grown so significantly over the last ten years
2 we are actually picking up two new
3 Congressional seats in the State of Florida.

4 Because some of our parts of our state
5 have increased or decreased disproportionately
6 in population, many House and Senate seats,
7 along with Congressional seats, will either be
8 adding population or losing population.

9 When redistricting is completed,
10 Congressional Districts must be equal in size
11 and each contain 696,345 people. The 40 Senate
12 Districts must also be nearly equal at 470,033
13 people and our 120 House Districts must also be
14 nearly equal at 156,678 persons.

15 There is a map at the front of the room,
16 right here behind us here, showing this area of
17 the state. The current boundaries of the
18 Districts and the numbers of persons which must
19 be added or subtracted from the current
20 Districts to achieve equal representation.

21 Equality of representation isn't the only
22 legal requirement that redistricting plans must
23 meet. The laws and important court cases
24 governing redistricting are explained in detail
25 on the House and Senate websites.

1 Those websites are listed on the
2 Redistricting 2012 brochure that was available
3 to you when you came in, and if you would like
4 a copy of that brochure and you do not have
5 one, this is what it looks like and we will
6 make sure that they are passed out to you as
7 well.

8 Our redistricting 2012 brochure summarizes
9 Federal and State laws and outlines topics we
10 will hope to be discussed here today at the
11 hearing. If you didn't get -- those same
12 websites have available to all of the public
13 the demographic information from the U. S.
14 Bureau of Census that will be used in drawing
15 districts and redistricting software that
16 Legislators will be using to draw maps.

17 These websites will allow any member of
18 the public to see all district maps proposed by
19 the Legislature and also citizens, themselves,
20 to propose their own district maps for their
21 own communities, or for the whole state using
22 the very tools that the Legislators are using
23 themselves.

24 Before and during this hearing Senate and
25 House professional staff are available to show

1 anyone the simple steps into getting on-line
2 and to making your submissions in the weeks to
3 come.

4 Every recommendation from the public will
5 be made available to the public, and in fact,
6 some public submissions have already been made
7 on the web. The submission of proposed maps
8 that makes -- that makes sense for your
9 community is the single most effective tool
10 that you can use to have a voice on how the
11 districts are drawn in the future.

12 The redistricting schedule under which we
13 are operating is imposed by our State
14 Constitution. The Constitution does not allow,
15 it does not allow us to act on legislative maps
16 before the second year after the census.

17 In other words, that means the 2012
18 legislative session. Now, this body and the
19 Legislature has accelerated that process as
20 much as we possibly can by moving the session
21 up from what is normally in March, up until
22 starting in January in 2012.

23 It has also been suggested that the
24 Legislature should draw maps first and then ask
25 the public to comment. And ladies and

1 gentlemen, we believe that that puts the answer
2 ahead of the question.

3 There should be no preconceptions created
4 by politicians, but rather testimony should be
5 free and unrestricted for you. Our intent is
6 to use those recommendations made at the 26
7 hearings around the state and through our
8 Internet sites and the base -- as a basis for
9 developing one or more of our district maps.

10 We will discuss those options in open
11 public meetings before any votes are taken on
12 the maps even in committee.

13 Throughout the process we will solicit
14 additional public comment so that proposed maps
15 can mature with the public's involvement. All
16 the public will have final approval and will
17 have final transparency before we vote on any
18 maps.

19 Whatever the Legislature votes on is then
20 submitted for judicial review to the courts to
21 insure that final plans meet every single legal
22 requirement.

23 Because our mission today is to hear from
24 you, 100 percent of the time between now and
25 1:00 p.m., will be used to insure that every

1 member here has the opportunity to speak and to
2 present public testimony and to be listened to
3 respectfully without interruption or argument.

4 If after every citizen has had his or her
5 say and there is time remaining before our
6 schedule is here for adjournment, any member of
7 the committee may make any statement or offer
8 observation.

9 Of course, any member of the Legislature
10 may also today or at any time propose a map or
11 a plan and we will make it available to you and
12 the public.

13 Mr. Chairman, thank you for indulging me.
14 I hope that this description of our schedule
15 and our process helps set the stage for a very
16 successful hearing.

17 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much,
18 Mr. Speaker, and let's get at it in terms of
19 public testimony. By Senate and House rules as
20 Representative Weatherford indicated, we will
21 adjourn promptly at 1:00 o'clock.

22 There are already over 20 individuals
23 signed up to speak. We hope more will sign up
24 to speak as we go. The last person who is
25 signed up to speak so far is Jamie Shepard, and

1 I am an advocate for Jamie Shepard.

2 I want to make sure she has just as much
3 time as Barbara Day, who is the first speaker.
4 And so what that means is that we ask you to
5 impose on yourself a polite and civil
6 respectful time limit of say, three or four or
7 five minutes. Try to get it said in that
8 period of time.

9 If someone else has said what you were
10 going to say, maybe you can think of something
11 else that might add value to the discussions
12 here today.

13 If we get closer to our adjournment time
14 and more people have come in and have signed
15 up, then Speaker Weatherford and I will
16 probably ask you to observe a tighter time
17 frame just so that everybody gets an
18 opportunity to speak.

19 Our first speaker, as I indicated, is
20 Barbara Day, and I am going to call two
21 speakers at once so that you will know who is
22 on deck and you can be ready.

23 John McDonald from the Bay County
24 Democratic Executive Committee is second, and
25 Ms. Day, representing the AARP, is first.

1 Ms. Day, thank you for being here today, and
2 you are recognized.

3 MS. DAY: Thank you. Good morning,
4 Chairman Gates and Chairman Weatherford and to
5 the Committee members.

6 My name is Barbara Day and I do reside in
7 Panama City. I appear today as an AARP
8 volunteer.

9 I urge the Legislature to make the
10 redistricting process to be all it can be. As
11 you exercise your constitutional duty to draw
12 voting districts for ten years, beginning with
13 the 2012 election, AARP urges you to insure
14 transparency of the legislative redistricting
15 process, every step of the way.

16 Keep transparency in place with
17 redistricting discussions among members and by
18 members should be noticed and open to the
19 public.

20 Also keep transparency in place, meaning
21 the public has the opportunity to comment and
22 to have those comments meaningfully considered
23 by the Legislature during all legislative
24 redistricting proceedings and redistricting
25 proposals, that is before Legislators make

1 decisions.

2 Insure timeliness of the redistricting
3 process and insure public input. The
4 Legislature has an obligation to meet the
5 Constitutional dictates as already expressed by
6 the Florida voters.

7 The Legislature owes Florida's residents
8 and voters professionalism and timely
9 completion of the redistricting process. The
10 Legislature should know the procedural steps
11 that redistricting plans will need to complete
12 in order for there to be a timely qualification
13 of the 2012 candidates, under the new district
14 and for vigorous campaigns before voters cast
15 their ballots.

16 That means the Legislature should complete
17 its portion of the process sooner than later.
18 Remember to take steps to insulate the
19 redistricting process from the appearance of
20 conflict of interest.

21 For example, subcommittees of Legislators
22 could research and develop alternative
23 redistricting proposals for the areas of the
24 state remote from subcommittee members.

25 Geographic residences, perhaps, example,

1 four areas of the state then refine and
2 reconciled for two halves of the state, then
3 refine and reconcile by the full chambers into
4 one state plan.

5 When it is time for your performance the
6 Florida voters will not favor undue expense and
7 delay in that performance. It is up to the
8 Legislator. What will it be, redistricting,
9 presentment or voter resentment?

10 I am confident that the Legislators, the
11 Legislature and its staff have the professional
12 competence and technical assistance to research
13 and propose new voting districts in accord with
14 all of the Constitutional and Federal
15 requirements. Wishing you good luck and you
16 make your best effort.

17 Thank you for your attention.

18 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you, Ms. Day. It
19 was great to see you again. And next we will
20 have John McDonald from the Democratic
21 Executive Committee, and behind John, Ray
22 Gaggis, please. Please be on deck. Thank you
23 for being here and we look forward to your
24 testimony, you are recognized.

25 MR. MCDONALD: Thank you, Senator. I

1 appreciate this opportunity and I would just
2 like to introduce myself.

3 My name is John McDonald, I am a Panama
4 City native, and, you know, I don't have a
5 prepared speech or anything. I am pretty much
6 an average Joe and that is what I look out for.

7 I ran against Mr. Patronis in the last
8 general election, Jimmy is a good guy. I am
9 not here to talk politics. I just want people
10 to understand what is going on.

11 We have got -- we are spending a lot of
12 money on this right now. I mean, upwards of
13 \$30 million is being spent on this process. At
14 the same time, we got state workers, teachers
15 being laid off. We have got an attack on
16 social services, our law enforcement, you know,
17 I think this is unacceptable, because I live
18 here and I know what the economy is like, and,
19 you know, our state economy, our state workers
20 are a big part of this economy.

21 CHAIRMAN GATES: And John, I apologize.
22 We would love to hear your views on economic
23 issues and you can come at a delegation meeting
24 or contact any of us, but if you could possibly
25 work your comments back into the purpose of the

1 hearing, the redistricting just to be fair to
2 the others who are waiting to speak.

3 MR. MCDONALD: Well, I did get this in the
4 mail the other day and it is from Nature Coast
5 Conservatives, and it says that as Tallahassee
6 politicians decide our future it is time we are
7 heard, Bay County needs a voice. Bay County
8 deserves our own State Senator and
9 Representative, and with all due respect,
10 Senator, your family has representation in both
11 the House and the Senate, but Bay County does
12 not.

13 So what I am wondering here is what is
14 going to happen, you know, what is this process
15 going to lead to? I am just concerned once
16 again about, I grew up here, I want this area
17 to succeed, and I just don't want, you know, so
18 much money being spent on a process of drawing
19 maps when we have teachers being laid off. We
20 have law enforcement being threatened, and, you
21 know, I am just -- I am sorry. I hope you
22 listen and I hope you heed the word of the
23 common man. Thank you, sir.

24 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you so much for
25 being here. We appreciate your testimony, and

1 Ray Gaggis is next and following Ray we have --
2 we have Larry who gave us his first name, but
3 not his last name. So we are going to ask to
4 know more about Larry when he speaks, but Ray
5 Gaggis, you are up.

6 Would you please come down here, sir,
7 because we want to put you on statewide
8 television. No pressure, no pressure.

9 MR. GAGIS: No pressure, but don't say
10 nothing about me, because --

11 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you for being here
12 and you are recognized, sir.

13 MR. GAGIS: Well, I am like the last man.
14 I am not for people being laid off, because if
15 you look, the money today is troubling. It is
16 poured out in sacks from the government in
17 Washington, and I would say today, everybody,
18 everybody should cut back. If we don't, we are
19 going to go like Greek.

20 Now, we got a Greek man back there. I
21 never can get to him, but I am a Greek. I
22 didn't mean to say this much.

23 CHAIRMAN GATES: When you are a hole now,
24 quit digging.

25 MR. GAGIS: But if we don't and you are

1 redistricting, back to that, are we going to
2 get more Representatives? Why? Why not use
3 the same amount of Representatives or cut back
4 on them or cut back on their pay?

5 I am not against anybody getting fired
6 from anything, if they can't do their job, they
7 can go. They should go. I spent 20 years in
8 the Navy. I learned all I could about my job.
9 I done as much as I could for my job.

10 I have run a business for 26 years after I
11 got out. I have never found the time that I
12 could not get a job, never, and today, the
13 people that is fed that won't work should not
14 be fed. It is a fact. Should not be fed.
15 Welfare is eating you to death.

16 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much,
17 Mr. Gaggis and thank you for your service to our
18 country.

19 Larry, can we learn more about you?
20 Larry, we hardly knew you. We will come back
21 to you in case you would like to come out of
22 the shadows.

23 Jean Miller is our next presenter, and
24 following Ms. Miller is Carolyn Herrera, if you
25 would be on deck, please, Ms. Herrera.

1 Ms. Miller, thank you for being here
2 today. We appreciate your taking time and you
3 are recognized.

4 MS. MILLER: Thank you, sir. I appreciate
5 you having this hearing. The only thing I have
6 to say is I am a common citizen. Please, when
7 you redistrict, try to make the districts as
8 equal as can be with different groups of
9 people.

10 Do not make beaches one and farmers one,
11 because then you have unequal money that can
12 buy influence. Please remember this is for all
13 the state of Florida, not just one district or
14 one group of people. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN GATES: Ms. Miller, thank you
16 very much for your testimony. Carolyn Herrera
17 is next, and following her Wayne Garnett,
18 please, Mr. Garnett, if you will be on deck.

19 Thank you, ma'am, for coming today. We
20 look forward to what you have to say and you
21 are recognized.

22 MS. HERRERA: Well, thank you very much
23 for having me here. I -- forgive the northern
24 accent, I will never lose it, okay. But I do
25 want to say that while you are cutting back on

1 everything, it needs to be cut back in
2 Tallahassee, too, as far as the government
3 goes.

4 But setting up the voting things I would
5 like to see it done by county. Keeping one
6 county together. I live in northern Bay
7 County, and I have no Representative, you know,
8 it is spread out over the whole area, and it is
9 very, very frustrating.

10 I would just like to see if they could set
11 like a block coming down from the Alabama
12 border to the Gulf of Mexico and fit in the
13 number of people that you need in that area and
14 then move over to the next block and do that so
15 we can keep as many counties together as we
16 possibly can, where the whole county has one
17 group. And that is all I would like to say.

18 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you, that is very
19 helpful. We appreciate it. And Mr. Garnett,
20 if you would come forward and behind
21 Mr. Garnett, Brenda Rees.

22 Mr. Garnett, we appreciate you taking time
23 from your day and you are recognized.

24 MR. GARNETT: Thank you, sir, I appreciate
25 being here. I thought I was signed up for a

1 drawing for a boat or fruit. I didn't know I
2 was really going to be on the program.

3 CHAIRMAN GATES: You are, you will see
4 Representative Patronis and his fellow Greek
5 afterwards.

6 MR. GARNETT: All right.

7 CHAIRMAN GATES: They have a bunch of
8 devalued drachmas for you.

9 MR. GARNETT: If I would have known you
10 was going to put me on television I would have
11 waited to come tomorrow, because I get better
12 looking every day.

13 CHAIRMAN GATES: And I thought we would
14 handle the jokes. Would you like to travel
15 with us?

16 MR. GARNETT: Well, in fact, I was just
17 looking at your itinerary. You are starting
18 off eating shrimp in Pensacola and you are
19 going to wind up eating conch in the Keys.
20 Now, that ain't a bad way to spend the summer.

21 CHAIRMAN GATES: Come on along.

22 MR. GARNETT: If you have time though, you
23 ought to stop by Tampa, go by Ebor City and get
24 you some Pompano and populi and some black bean
25 soup, black beans, white rice and onions.

1 I really, I came over here today because
2 when there is this many politicians all at one
3 place, you need to watch them. And I apologize
4 for the crowd because there is more of ya'll
5 than there are of us.

6 But I think what you are doing is a very
7 serious thing and I just want to say, just try
8 to do something that makes sense. That is all
9 I ask of you. Thank you very much.

10 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you, sir. We
11 really appreciate you being here. Next is
12 Brenda Rees, it is nice to see you again,
13 Ms. Rees, and following Brenda will be Roger, I
14 believe it is Straley or Stanley, if you will
15 be on deck, please.

16 Brenda, nice to see you, you are
17 recognized.

18 MS. REES: Senator Gates, Representative
19 Weatherford and Senate and House Committee
20 members, thank you for coming over to this part
21 of northwest Florida.

22 I live in Walton county, which is in the
23 middle, so part of my district is over there
24 and part is impacted over here, so I thought it
25 was important to come to both.

1 I will try to say something a little bit
2 different today and not the same testimony that
3 I gave last night.

4 But I am a Florida native. My family has
5 been here about seven generations, so there has
6 been a lot of map changes in the time that my
7 family has been in Florida, but thank you for
8 holding these statewide public redistricting
9 meetings. I believe you are getting
10 substantial evidence that you will be able to
11 use in your redistricting process.

12 I have lived in several states and have
13 witnessed several redistricting processes. In
14 Alaska I was on the State Redistricting Board
15 appointed by the Governor.

16 The five member Board redistricted, not
17 the Legislature. We had rules to follow just
18 as you. My brother is an NFL Referee. He was
19 the head referee for the Super Bowl this year.
20 He had rules to follow, and just like him, at
21 the end of the game I hope it is a good game
22 called, well done by the players in taking care
23 of the people at hand.

24 The ball is in the citizen's hand right
25 now and this is our chance to speak to you, so

1 thank you very much for giving us this
2 opportunity to come to you and give you our
3 opinions in developing the important
4 redistricting plans for the state of Florida.

5 I know how important redistricting
6 hearings are in Alaska. One day it was
7 50 degrees below zero and with had to go to
8 Fairbanks and the heat went out in the hotel
9 and people showed up. So I hope your weather
10 fares well for you in all of your meetings.

11 Follow the rules by adhering to one
12 person, one vote. The Voting Rights Act of
13 1964 as amended in 1965, that districts are
14 compact, contiguous and reflect communities of
15 interest as much as is practical as you heard
16 last night.

17 Follow the rule of 10 percent deviation
18 for the state Senate and House Districts. We
19 have 67 counties now in Florida. Well, we have
20 40 Senators, 120 Representatives and we will be
21 having 27 Congressional leaders. There is
22 going to have to be -- 29, have to be some
23 mixing of counties.

24 There is no way to divide 18 million
25 Floridians up with those numbers without some

1 cross counties. One vote difference for
2 Congressional will be challenging.
3 Redistricting by census block, what some people
4 don't understand is, you have to do it by
5 census block. The census wasn't by counties,
6 it wasn't by cities. It wasn't by other
7 municipalities. It was by census block.

8 So sometimes you may get that odd squiggly
9 little line that makes no sense, but you might
10 have to use it. I hope you can keep them as
11 compact as possible and contiguous, but the
12 public needs to understand, it is by census
13 block.

14 Thank you for providing maps, numbers and
15 extensive information. We know that our
16 Congressional District 1 is 2,000 short and
17 Congressional District 2 is 41,000 over the
18 ideal 696,000 ideal district. CD 1 is 2,000
19 short and CD 2 is about 41,000 over. So there
20 will have to be some adjustments made there.

21 Please try to keep South Walton. That is
22 where I live. I was born in Defuniak Springs
23 on the north end, but I live in South Walton on
24 the south end and it is a historical community
25 of interest.

1 It is -- I brought this picture here. It
2 is a beautiful little community, even Thomas
3 Hannah of Pointe Washington was a one time
4 Speaker of the House from Pointe Washington, a
5 little known fact. So we do, even though we
6 are small and we get juggled around a little
7 bit, we have had political importance.

8 Also, in redistricting South Walton it is
9 very important to keep us together as we are
10 down here, and what separates us from the
11 northern end is a large bay and also Eglin Air
12 Force Base which is one of the largest the Air
13 Force Bases in America and it is also a bombing
14 range. So sometimes roads are closed, so that
15 is just something to keep, keep in mind.

16 Congressional District 1, you heard last
17 night, should consolidate Okaloosa County as
18 much as possible, and Congressional District 2,
19 I have already discussed that.

20 You will eventually have to make the final
21 call on the redistricting plan going forth,
22 make the right call and follow the rules.
23 Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much,
25 Ms. Rees. We appreciate your testimony.

1 Mr. Roger, I believe it is Straley. I think,
2 could I possibly have that wrong. You are
3 going to help me out.

4 MR. STRALEY: It is Roger Straley.

5 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you, sir, welcome,
6 and you are recognized.

7 MR. STRALEY: I am from Bay County, a long
8 time resident of Florida. The only thing that
9 I would ask is it has been touched on here
10 before by previous people. Is that you would
11 make your districts based on common sense on
12 county lines, on geographic features that would
13 make sense and not consider the party
14 representation necessarily within the
15 districts.

16 I think that has been a great cause for
17 the spread out districts. No common sense at
18 all is purely political considerations, but I
19 would ask you to try to make them using common
20 sense and not political considerations. Thank
21 you very much.

22 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you, Mr. Straley,
23 we appreciate your comments.

24 Next is Dr. Rufus Wood, I believe, and
25 following Dr. Wood is Jim Anders.

1 Dr. Wood? As we are waiting for Dr. Wood
2 to approach the podium, President Margolis, our
3 former Senate President has admonished me to
4 point out that the maps that are behind us
5 which were in the front previously and will be
6 -- a number of people were looking at them and
7 they will be available later, are maps that
8 show the current districts, Congressional
9 Senate and House Districts, and those maps can
10 be used by you as a point of departure, a take
11 off point for where you specifically think
12 changes ought to be made.

13 Thank you very much, Doctor, for being
14 here, and you are recognized to speak, sir.

15 DR. WOOD: Thank you, Chairman and to all
16 of our Representatives and our Senators. We
17 are so delighted to have you in our community
18 and to all of the citizens who have come today
19 to share with, I appreciate this opportunity.

20 I am Reverend Dr. Rufus L. Wood, Jr. I
21 represent the Bay County Branch National
22 Association for the Advancement of Colored
23 People.

24 It was Dr. James Cone who once said that
25 we can never understand the political process

1 until we become active and be a part of that
2 process.

3 We are here today to that political power
4 is essential for all people in the state of
5 Florida and throughout this great nation. As
6 you all know, the 1965 Voters Right Act was a
7 landmark national piece of legislation which
8 was passed that outlawed discriminative
9 practices in the voting procedures, which had
10 been responsible for many years for the
11 wide-spread disenfranchisement of
12 African-Americans.

13 So we have come today to say again that we
14 believe that political power is essential for
15 African-Americans and, in fact, it is essential
16 for all of the citizens of the state of
17 Florida.

18 We appreciate this opportunity today to
19 appeal to our State Legislators, we want to
20 appeal to you first of all as you travel
21 throughout the great state of Florida to
22 conduct meaningful hearings. We want
23 meaningful dialogue.

24 Unfortunately, in Bay County and some of
25 our political forums that we have had here and

1 public hearings, we have had political leader
2 who have said, my mind is already made up. So
3 we are here today to request that your minds
4 are open to the input that is being given in
5 these hearings.

6 I believe that time is a gift from God.
7 Somebody once said yesterday is a cancelled
8 check, tomorrow is a promissory note, today is
9 cash, and that is all you have, so spend it
10 wisely.

11 So we hope and pray that as you travel
12 throughout the state that you will certainly
13 not waist the time of the citizens of the
14 various communities throughout this state.

15 Time is so important and is so valuable
16 and we hope that you are open to hear what is
17 being shared.

18 Secondly, we appeal to you, don't play,
19 with all due respect, don't play political
20 games with the citizens of this state. Certain
21 parties drawing lines to advantage themselves
22 and to benefit themselves, so that they are
23 more likely to have officials elected, so that
24 they are more likely to control the committee,
25 so they are more likely to control the

1 procedures.

2 So they are more likely to past the laws
3 which support their particular point of views.
4 So once again, with all due respect we do hope
5 and pray that you will not play games with the
6 citizens of the state of Florida.

7 Thirdly, we appeal to you to provide
8 equity in terms of representation for all of
9 the citizens of the state of Florida.

10 In Bay County, in the past ten years there
11 has been an increase in the African-American
12 population, 10 percent. There has been
13 114 percent increase in terms of the Latino and
14 Hispanic, and we certainly hope that as you
15 make plans to redraw the lines, that that will
16 be taken into consideration, and that there
17 will not be minority delusion in this process
18 as you redraw the lines in this state.

19 Finally, we appeal to you at the end of
20 the process that you again will remember all of
21 the citizens and we would love to have the
22 vital information which has already been stated
23 that after the maps have been drawn up, that
24 there still will be an opportunity for input.

25 We would like to know in terms of the

1 demographics, in terms of race, in terms of
2 national origin, in terms of the age, and in
3 terms of all of those people who will be
4 allowed and permitted to vote.

5 Thank you so very much, and as I go to my
6 seat, I always remember the words of the late
7 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who once
8 said, injustice anywhere is a threat to justice
9 everywhere. So we only appeal to you to please
10 be fair in this process.

11 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much,
12 Dr. Wood. Our next speaker is Jim Anders.
13 Mr. Anders, and following Mr. Anders is Wanda
14 Raley, who is the Supervisor of Elections here
15 in Bay County. Jim, it is good to see you.

16 MR. ANDERS: Good to see you.

17 CHAIRMAN GATES: And you are recognized.

18 MR. ANDERS: All right, thank you. Again,
19 I am Jim Anders and I am from South Walton
20 County over to the county to the west, Seagrove
21 Beach, but I was raised in Blountstown. As a
22 matter of fact, Bill Monford over there, he was
23 Student Body President and I was a
24 Representative of his in that class back in the
25 60's, so -- but having grown up in the rural

1 areas in the Florida here, north Florida and
2 living along the coast, I see a need to keep
3 the issues separate.

4 That we have coastal issues that are
5 needed to be done by Representatives who are
6 familiar with the coast, and then we have the
7 rural areas that need to be represented by
8 people that have an interest and need in the
9 rural areas.

10 So I think that was what I really wanted
11 to say, having lived in this area all my life
12 and all, and so I would like to make that
13 statement.

14 But also I just like the process, the way
15 you all allow people to open up and come and
16 speak and all. I can remember 30 years ago
17 when we had and I was a support of his, Senator
18 Barron, he, back then, you know, I think he was
19 President of the Senate, and I think there were
20 three Senators in north Florida.

21 You had W. D. Childers in Pensacola, you
22 had Pat Thomas in Quincy, and you had Senator
23 Barron here in Panama City, and back then I
24 think you could push a button, and I think
25 Dempsey got 70 percent of the vote where he got

1 70 percent of the vote and it was his district,
2 you know.

3 So, I mean, it has changed a lot. I think
4 that was done I think all over, but back then
5 we didn't have the process like we have now,
6 and what I am saying is, thank you all for
7 allowing the people to come and have public
8 input and all. I think that is much needed.

9 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much, Jim.
10 Appreciate it. And now our Supervisor of
11 Elections. Thank you very much for taking time
12 from your day and we look forward to hearing
13 your testimony.

14 I know that our professional staff has had
15 an opportunity to meet with many of the
16 Supervisors of Elections and we look forward to
17 your guidance. You are recognized.

18 MS. RALEY: Thank you. First of all, I
19 would like to say that I am not the Supervisor
20 of Elections. I am representing him today.
21 Our Supervisor is Mark Anderson.

22 CHAIRMAN GATES: That is what I thought,
23 but I thought perhaps Mr. Anderson went fishing
24 and you -- there was a codetta or something.

25 MS. RALEY: While he was away.

1 CHAIRMAN GATES: Well, since there was no
2 codetta, please give, please give him our best
3 wishes.

4 MS. RALEY: I will.

5 CHAIRMAN GATES: And I am glad that -- I
6 am glad there was not a power struggle or
7 anything like that in the office, but you are
8 here representing him.

9 MS. RALEY: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN GATES: And nonetheless, we are
11 delighted to have your testimony.

12 MS. RALEY: Thank you very much. He is
13 not able to be here so I would like to read a
14 prepared statement for him.

15 CHAIRMAN GATES: Please.

16 MS. RALEY: First I send my regrets for
17 being unable to attend this meeting. I am
18 currently at the State Association Conference
19 where Supervisors around the state are also
20 addressing redistricting issues.

21 For conducting elections, it is beneficial
22 to use large arterial boundaries, such as main
23 roads or county lines as much as possible to
24 ease and tabulation of voter population for
25 precinct districts.

1 With the current timeline and possible
2 legal challenges, as well as public concerns,
3 it is imperative to move as quickly as possible
4 to complete this task. This will allow
5 adequate time for my office to prepare for the
6 2012 primary election. Respectfully, Mark
7 Anderson, Bay County Supervisor of Elections.

8 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much, and
9 please give Mr. Anderson our best, and thanks
10 for your testimony today.

11 MS. RALEY: I will, thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN GATES: Next we have, I believe
13 we have someone who's handwriting is almost as
14 bad as mine. I think it is Richard, is it
15 Plant, or -- what is it, sir?

16 MR. PLANTEC: Plantec.

17 CHAIRMAN GATES: Plantec, okay. Well,
18 thank you very much for being here, and Danny
19 Smith is recognized following Mr. Plantec.
20 Thank you for taking time from your day. You
21 are recognized before the Committee.

22 MR. SMITH: Yes, I am retired. I could be
23 out at the beaches right now, but I came here
24 instead.

25 First of all I want to thank all of you.

1 I think this is a wonderful thing that you are
2 doing and I think it will really help your
3 process.

4 I know that the Constitution tells you to
5 consider geographical and political boundaries,
6 but I would also like you to think about
7 community boundaries, which may be different
8 from what some of the other people have said,
9 because I know for example, out on Panama City
10 Beach, parts of it are represented.

11 We have two wonderful State Reps and they
12 are both great, but parts of the beach are
13 represented by different ones. They are
14 basically, it is one community, you should have
15 one, one representative there.

16 By the same token, even the beach, Panama
17 City Beach and Panama City, Lynn Haven, are
18 part of the same community. People belong to
19 the same clubs, give to the same charities, go
20 to the same fundraisers and things. So there
21 is a lot in common beyond what the -- beyond
22 what the legal boundaries may be and the
23 geographical boundaries, and I would like you
24 to keep that in mind.

25 And also when you are grouping, you are

1 grouping communities together, group similar
2 communities together as much as possible,
3 because I have been around, I have seen a lot
4 of the Congressional District which is very
5 large so you have to diversify to a certain
6 extent, but I know like communities such as,
7 you know, the Panama City Beaches and the
8 Panama City downtown, it is still they have a
9 lot of the roots and the background with the
10 rural communities around here.

11 I see a lot less of a connection with
12 Tallahassee. You should keep in mind how the
13 communities blend, try to put people together.
14 I -- I guarantee you if you do this it will
15 make your jobs a lot easier, because you will
16 have those common interests together, and once
17 again I would like to thank you for this
18 opportunity.

19 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much for
20 your testimony. Very well said. Next is Danny
21 Smith and then after Mr. Smith is Tim Pugh.
22 Mr. Smith, thank you for coming, and you are
23 recognized.

24 MR. SMITH: Good morning, Senator Gates
25 and thanks for all of you for taking the time

1 to come here. I think you have put together a
2 wonderful process and I think most of us have
3 to remember that it is, you know, we really
4 want compact districts easy to understand where
5 you got to go to vote and all of that sort of
6 thing.

7 We don't want anymore of those snakes
8 along from one city to the other just to get
9 certain people in there, of course, and I know
10 you are not going to do that, because this
11 process that you have set up is really good and
12 it is open for everyone to speak.

13 Yes, it may be a little expensive to do,
14 but I think you are doing the right thing and
15 we appreciate the opportunity to come here and
16 just give you our little two cents worth, so
17 thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much, sir.
19 We really appreciate your time. Mr. Pugh?

20 MR. PUGH: Yes.

21 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much for
22 taking time from your day and you are
23 recognized to speak, sir.

24 MR. PUGH: Good morning, Senator Gates and
25 thanks for all of the communication, the

1 updated information that you give me all of the
2 time. I appreciate that.

3 Most everything I wanted to say was
4 already said today. The process should be
5 common sense, community based, and I hope that
6 through the whole process that gerrymandering
7 never comes up. We shouldn't have a bunch of
8 squiggly lines.

9 And the other thing I have to say is that
10 as an IT person, your online tools are
11 terrible. I mean, the interface is terrible,
12 and if there is anything we can do about that
13 to make it easier, because --

14 CHAIRMAN GATES: You are hired.

15 MR. PUGH: Huh? But, yes, it -- they are
16 just really clumsy at best.

17 CHAIRMAN GATES: Would you do us a favor?

18 MR. PUGH: Sure.

19 CHAIRMAN GATES: Since you are an IT
20 person and we have heard, you know, we had a
21 gentleman testify yesterday who said he spent
22 15 minutes with them and was able to navigate
23 easily and, in fact, had already drawn
24 Congressional and Senate Districts.

25 So would you -- where is John Guthrie? Do

1 you see that gentlemen right over there?

2 MR. PUGH: Yes.

3 CHAIRMAN GATES: Would you mind spending
4 10 or 15 minutes with him now or after the
5 hearing and share some of your concerns and
6 maybe he can offer you a couple of suggestions
7 as well, and I am sure you can have some
8 recommendations that will help us, because in
9 general we are getting very good responses, but
10 if there are difficulties and there are two
11 cites, a House cite and a Senate cite. So
12 anxious to have your help there, but please go
13 ahead, sir.

14 MR. PUGH: Okay, I will do, I will be with
15 you, but that is basically all I had to say,
16 just make sure it is a common sense approach
17 and that gerrymandering doesn't come up during
18 this entire process.

19 CHAIRMAN GATES: Okay, thank you, and if
20 you would spend some time with Mr. Guthrie,
21 that would benefit everybody.

22 MR. PUGH: Okay, thanks.

23 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you so much.

24 William Pritchard is next and then Candice
25 Harbison.

1 William Pritchard and then Ms. Harbison,
2 if you would be on deck, please.

3 MR. PRITCHARD: I thought I was going to
4 get the on deck sign ahead of time.

5 CHAIRMAN GATES: Well, it was my fault. I
6 was so wrapped up in trying to get some free
7 help here that I --

8 MR. PRITCHARD: Yes, I understand.

9 CHAIRMAN GATES: I am a conservative,
10 understand. Mr. Pritchard, you are recognized,
11 and thanks so much for coming today.

12 MR. PRITCHARD: Good morning, my name is
13 Bill Pritchard and I am representing myself, as
14 well as our Greater Bay Chapter of the ACLU of
15 Florida which I am President of.

16 Of course, you all know, everybody knows
17 that anybody that has been paying attention
18 anyway, that the majority of voters, in fact,
19 almost two-thirds voted for Amendments V and VI
20 to create compact, contiguous districts and to
21 put an end to gerrymandering no matter which
22 side you are on.

23 This is a non-partisan thing, it is
24 supposed to be anyway, and the thing that
25 bothers me about this process is that where are

1 the maps?

2 It is a good question, because all we have
3 is the old maps and ultimately you people are
4 going to draw the maps and vote on them, and I
5 think it would have been better had you
6 presented us with at least tentative maps that
7 we could comment on, because otherwise all we
8 can comment on here is the process.

9 And as some other people have said, they
10 have gotten right to work on this in other
11 states and why in Florida does it take so long
12 to develop maps of House, Senate and
13 Congressional Districts.

14 That information has been available for
15 months and if anybody can use the Internet to
16 draw a map, why can't you use the Internet to
17 draw a map so that we could see what your
18 intentions are?

19 But this is going to take too long, and I
20 understand that you can't vote on maps ahead of
21 time, but there is no reason why you can't
22 create some, because there is going to be a lot
23 of confusion and last minute problems because
24 people who want to run for office aren't going
25 to know what district they are in, and I won't

1 know who my Representative is going to be ahead
2 of time, and let me see here.

3 Another thing that I find as a problem
4 with this process is that after the maps are
5 proposed, are you going to conduct hearings
6 after that so that people can actually comment
7 on the maps that you are going to vote on?

8 I think people would want to know that.
9 The Florida process is one of the slowest and
10 most secretive in the country, and there is no
11 reason this needs to be like this unless the
12 goal is to keep people in the dark and confuse
13 them, and that leads us to more things about
14 Fair Districts Florida.

15 I am troubled that so many of you have
16 opposed, fought and continued to fight against
17 these amendments, and it is pretty much an
18 insult to the voters who overwhelmingly
19 approved these rules that you are trying to
20 ignore them or play games with them, and why
21 are you spending so much of my money and other
22 taxpayers' money to try to undermine my vote
23 and the vote of the majority of Floridians for
24 a fair process and fair districts.

25 I understand that there has been maybe as

1 much as \$30 million put away to try to work
2 against the Fair District Amendment. Still it
3 would be better to stop spending money on
4 lawyers and just to draw the maps.

5 If you are planning to spend that kind of
6 money to defend the kind of districts that you
7 are going to come up with in court, then people
8 are going to suspect that there is something
9 wrong with this process.

10 If you draw -- if you drew good fair maps
11 I think perhaps nobody would sue you, so that
12 is what I have to say.

13 CHAIRMAN GATES: Well, thank you,
14 Mr. Pritchard and you raised some very
15 interesting questions from your script that
16 others from the ACLU have raised and we are
17 going to ask the Speaker Designate to comment
18 on those because I think we want to make sure
19 that there are no questions of fact that remain
20 at the end of the hearing.

21 Thank you very much, Ms. Harbison, for
22 being here, and you are recognized to speak,
23 and behind you is James Gould.

24 MS. HARBISON: Thank you. I don't want to
25 sound like a broken record, but the reason we

1 are doing this now is because we have new
2 census data, and I don't understand why those
3 data weren't put together to draw up some
4 logical, sensible maps that we could all
5 comment on.

6 Perhaps this expensive process could be
7 drawn a little shorter and something more
8 meaningful to comment on could be proposed to
9 us.

10 Locally, a properly compact district would
11 not include a rat tail. It would not
12 concentrate special interests, but it would
13 represent the variety of interests in the
14 district.

15 It has been very confusing for the people
16 of Bay County to have been split up into
17 various districts. Unless there is a really
18 good reason for it, a county should be kept in
19 tact.

20 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you, and it is good
21 to see you again, Ms. Harbison. James Gould is
22 our next speaker and following Mr. Gould, Gary
23 Bechler, please.

24 Mr. Gould, thank you for taking time to
25 come, and we appreciate your presence today.

1 You are recognized.

2 MR. GOULD: Thank you all for coming and
3 opening up this to public comment. My name is
4 James Gould. I live in Southport, Florida.

5 My wife and I run a Tea Party and I would
6 just like to admonish you, the Constitution,
7 the Federalist papers say the end goal of the
8 Constitution is justice, that is justice for
9 all.

10 It also says that a Republic, which is a
11 form of government that we have, cannot stand
12 unless there is a self-reliant and virtuous
13 citizenry.

14 I admonish you as you go through this
15 process to put principle and high moral
16 standards above cheap partisan goals. Thank
17 you.

18 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much,
19 Mr. Gould. Good words for all of us. Gary
20 Bechler, please, and following Mr. Bechler,
21 Jamie Shepard would be on deck, and Jamie is
22 also with the League of Women Voters.

23 Mr. Bechler, thank you for coming, and you
24 are recognized.

25 MR. BECHLER: Thank you. I would also

1 like to ask where the maps are, why the other
2 states can get this stuff done and let their
3 constituents see what is being proposed or what
4 we are looking at. I feel like this is more or
5 less a farce.

6 We will not even get to comment on these
7 maps once you Legislators draw them up. So we
8 are being put out of the process, I feel like.
9 I feel like when you do redistrict you should
10 take into account how some of these counties
11 are split up.

12 As far as our Senate District here, if you
13 are not in the tourist industry you have no
14 representation. If the counties are kept more
15 whole you have the tourist industries in the
16 south of the counties, you have the farmers in
17 the north, you have, you know, other -- other
18 citizens involved. I don't even have access to
19 my State Senator, which is you, Mr. Gates.

20 By your own words, you know, I tried to
21 talk to you in Tallahassee when we had
22 sessions, after the sessions, when everybody
23 talks to their Representatives.

24 You flat out told me and my business
25 partner that you knew we were in the Union, you

1 knew we didn't vote for you, and you knew, and
2 you didn't have time for us.

3 CHAIRMAN GATES: Now, sir, sir --

4 MR. BECHLER: And I feel, I feel like no
5 matter what --

6 CHAIRMAN GATES: Excuse me. We are not
7 going to have an argument today, but --

8 MR. BECHLER: I am not having an argument.
9 I am making a statement.

10 CHAIRMAN GATES: Yes.

11 MR. BECHLER: I feel like rather I am an
12 Independent, a Democrat or a Republican. If I
13 vote, you know, if I am an Independent and I
14 vote Republican and a Democrat gets elected, I
15 should still have access to my Representative,
16 and I don't. That is all I have to say, thank
17 you.

18 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you for your time.
19 And Jamie Shepard is our next speaker, and
20 following Jamie Shepard we will hear from
21 Celia, I think it is either Fith or Fitz, and
22 Ms. Shepard is as well a representative of the
23 League of Women Voters. Nice to see you again.

24 MS. SHEPARD: Nice to see you.

25 CHAIRMAN GATES: Please, you are

1 recognized.

2 MS. SHEPARD: Thank you very much. On
3 behalf of the League of Women Voters of Bay
4 County and all of our citizens, we welcome the
5 committee.

6 We sincerely hope you will come back to
7 Patronis country. As you may very well know,
8 the League of Women Voters of Florida has been
9 front and center on this issue for 70 years.
10 We have been fighting for this for 70 years.

11 Fair election districts are a good
12 government, non-partisan issue, just like the
13 League. We have supported this measure,
14 regardless of which party was in control of the
15 State Legislature.

16 The League of Women Voters was, was not,
17 has not been and is not anti incumbent, because
18 we have a long history of opposing term limits
19 because we understand the importance of time in
20 office for clarity on the issues and
21 familiarity with the concerns of your
22 constituents.

23 We thank you for your website, Florida
24 Redistricting.org, which will allow us all to
25 monitor what the Legislature and our fellow

1 citizens are proposing, but we encourage the
2 Committee to go ahead and put something on
3 paper.

4 Everybody knows it is easier to edit than
5 create. We encourage the Committee to move the
6 timeline up as your own attorney suggested, to
7 preclude chaos and confusion in 2012.

8 This is kind of what we are paying you
9 for, and so as our Governor has succinctly
10 said, let's get to work on it. We encourage
11 you to drop your lawsuit. Sixty-three percent
12 of the voters has spoken, we passed Amendments
13 V and VI last fall. This is a waste of
14 taxpayer dollars to combat this.

15 What is the logic of this? Minority
16 districts are protected already, communities of
17 interest are a concern, but our compliance with
18 the national voting rights laws must take
19 precedence.

20 We thank you again for your time, your
21 time here across the state to listen to all of
22 us. Your consideration is truly appreciated
23 and we are hoping for the best. Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you so much for
25 being here, and it is good to see you again.

1 Now, Celia Fitz, nice to see you again. This
2 is like old home week, and Frederick, I think
3 its Croon or Crown may be next, please. You
4 are recognized, and thanks for being here.

5 MS. FITZ: I am a resident of Bay County.
6 I have been a citizen here for many years and I
7 just wanted to say a few things.

8 One, that Fair Districts was the will of
9 the vast majority of Floridians and I would
10 like very much for you to simply follow the
11 Fair District laws and to draw the maps first
12 before.

13 I know you have made up your mind and you
14 are going do this and I know I am not going to
15 change your mind, but I really wish you would
16 have drawn the maps first. I think it would
17 have made the process much more meaningful and
18 efficient.

19 And I am very concerned with the number of
20 cuts down to the bone for education and many
21 other agencies in Florida that we are spending
22 so much money. I assume taxpayers are paying
23 for all of you to travel all around the state
24 and do all of this, and that lady I am sure
25 gets paid quite well and other folks.

1 We don't have the money in Florida to be
2 just wasting it, and let's make the process
3 more meaningful and more efficient. Let's move
4 it forward. Let's move it along, and it will
5 be a real problem if we don't have these
6 districts drawn and in place in plenty of time
7 for people to decide who is going to qualify
8 for that district, what district, with won't
9 have any districts if you take until June to
10 make a decision.

11 The courts are going to have to review it.
12 So we really wish you would go ahead and draw
13 the maps and then let us speak on it. Okay.

14 Well, that was pretty much it, and also I
15 did want to bring up the legal challenges. I
16 have been very resentful of the State
17 Legislature using our tax dollars to go after
18 Fair Districts when it is the will of the
19 people. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you, Celia, and I
21 should have, I apologize, I should have
22 mentioned that Celia as well represents the
23 League of Women Voters or is a member. I am
24 sorry, you are wearing your League button and I
25 apologize.

1 Frederick Croon, and following Mr. Croon,
2 Beth Oltman from the Panama City Beach Chamber.
3 You are recognized, sir, thank you for being
4 here.

5 MR. CROON: Thank you, good morning to
6 everyone. I am with the Union, I am Union,
7 too, so but irregardless, my number one thing
8 is I am a citizen of the United States and I am
9 definitely a citizen of Bay County.

10 This -- we appreciate ya'll coming. This
11 is very important. You can tell by the number
12 of people here that it is important, but really
13 I think it should be more people here.

14 Even the local news here evidently didn't
15 think it was important enough, because it is
16 not on the front page, it is not on the local,
17 but I request that this Committee put the
18 information out to the people of the state of
19 Florida that how important this is.

20 How this will subject to effect our way of
21 life in the state of Florida for the next 10
22 years or even longer, because right now by the
23 number of people here, local newspaper, et
24 cetera, the people don't think it is important
25 as it is, and you up here do know that it is

1 important on how we draw our district lines and
2 who our leaders are for the state of Florida.

3 And I live in Bay County. I live on the
4 southeast portion of the county, and we have
5 three Senators in Bay County, and most people
6 in Bay County do not have a clue who the three
7 Senators are, and the only reason I know who
8 they are, because I do visit Tallahassee pretty
9 frequently, and Gates, yes, you are my Senator
10 according to my residential location.

11 I think Patronis is for the Callaway area
12 and the Tyndall Air Force base is our
13 Representative, but earlier people spoke on the
14 part that it needs to be made equally fair
15 where the people of the counties or the cities
16 will actually know who their Representatives
17 are and who their State Senators are.

18 And I know Mr. Evers, who is a Senator and
19 he quoted earlier in his comment earlier, he
20 said but he have the Sand Hills of Bay County.

21 He lives in Milton, Florida. You live in
22 Pensacola, but irregardless where you live at,
23 we need to know who represents us, and
24 Mr. Monford, when I was in Tallahassee he is
25 the only one that I got a chance to talk to. I

1 didn't get a chance to talk to you. I didn't
2 get a chance to talk to Mr. Evers.

3 Now, last year, Mr. Evers, I did talk to
4 you when you was a Representative, but as a
5 Senator I did not, but the people needs to know
6 who their Representatives are, not just Union
7 members or the League Voters or people that
8 have groups or organizations, but all of the
9 citizens need to know who their leaders are.

10 So when you are doing these redistricting
11 and setting these boundary lines or the area
12 you cover, try to think about we need the
13 citizens to know who we are, who we can e-mail
14 to, who we can write a letter to if we are
15 having a problem, and, you know, some things
16 are gripes or some grievances or whatever you
17 want to say about the problem, but with need to
18 know who you all are.

19 So if ya'll would think about that while
20 you are traveling the state of Florida, that
21 the people need to know who their leaders are.
22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much,
24 Mr. Croon. And Mr. Croon raises an interesting
25 point, and just informationally, is Nick Abrams

1 here, Nick? Do you see the tall guy in the
2 back, Mr. Croon, Nick Abrams, right back here,
3 I apologize, sir.

4 If there is anybody here who would like an
5 appointment with either their Representative or
6 their Senator, and perhaps when they were in
7 Tallahassee they didn't get a chance because of
8 a committee meeting or a conflict, if you would
9 like an appointment to see Senator Evers or
10 Representative Coley or Representative Patronis
11 or myself, that tall fellow back there, just
12 keep him in mind, give him your name and
13 number, we will call and set up an appointment
14 for any of you.

15 Ms. Oltman, thank you very much for being
16 here, you are recognized.

17 MS. OLTMAN: Well, hello there. My name
18 is Beth Oltman, and I am the President of the
19 Panama City Beach Chamber of Commerce.

20 I actually live in Lynn Haven. I am a
21 very proud resident of Bay County, and I want
22 to thank all of you for coming to our beautiful
23 part of the state, and I, too, wish that I know
24 all of your intentions are very positive, but I
25 want you to show your true leadership skills

1 and try to expedite this process.

2 Make quick decisions for the entire state,
3 because I know you all can, take away the
4 self-interests and do what is best for our
5 state as a whole.

6 Now, speaking for Bay County, I do wish
7 that we would hold -- keep all of Bay County
8 together. As Bay County has changed throughout
9 the years we now have our airport, we are
10 growing economically. We have our beach, we
11 care so much about our education system.

12 We have many of us are moving into this
13 area from other parts of the country and are
14 very proud to call this home. So I, too, wish
15 to ask that all of Bay County stays together,
16 even though I love Marti and Jimmy and Don, all
17 of you, I sincerely hope that we can expedite
18 this entire situation and keep Bay County whole
19 so we keep our power and grow continually.

20 Thank you for coming once again.

21 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much, and
22 I should have said also that Senator Monford I
23 am sure takes the same view that if there are
24 any citizens here who may have attempted to
25 reach him when he was in Tallahassee, we get

1 called away a lot for votes on the floor or
2 committee votes and you couldn't reach him, see
3 the tall guy in the back, Nick Abrams, and he
4 will make sure that Senator Monford gets your
5 name and number so that you can get a meeting
6 with him if you would like.

7 Next is Alvin Peters, and following Alvin
8 Peters is Kristy Terry from the Calhoun Chamber
9 of Commerce.

10 Alvin Peters, if you are here, we would be
11 delighted to hear from you.

12 I am sorry I didn't give you as much of a
13 heads up as you might have liked, but you are
14 moving quickly to the floor here and we
15 appreciate that.

16 MR. PETERS: Thank you, Senator Gates, and
17 thank you all of you panel members for
18 attending Panama City's public forum. It is
19 great to see you.

20 It is impressive to see so many of you
21 putting so much time into listening. I think I
22 echo some of the other comments that you may
23 have heard, that this conversation might have
24 been a little more substantive if we had had
25 some proposals and then we could talk about how

1 this might specifically impact different
2 issues, but since we are on the general level I
3 guess we can't help but have the conversation
4 be fairly general.

5 And the good news I think for all of you
6 is that Florida has spoken in a bi-partisan
7 way, I think, to encourage you to draw
8 districts that are contiguous and that show
9 communities of interest. And that is a good
10 thing.

11 I think each of you will have to deal with
12 a little bit of the history of how Florida has
13 gotten to where it is, and one of the things
14 that I would urge you to do is to think of your
15 self as Judges.

16 How would a Judge decide this matter of
17 drawing districts. Think about it. Think
18 about how a Judge would do it, not a
19 politician, you know, and what factors would
20 you consider.

21 Obviously they are different, so if you
22 think of, for example, how would it effect me,
23 that might not be a real judicial approach to
24 deciding, you know, the proper drawing of a
25 line.

1 If you allow factors to effect your
2 consideration, such as how would it effect my
3 party, right, that wouldn't be something that a
4 Judge might realistically consider or properly
5 consider in drawing these districts.

6 So I would ask each of you to put on a
7 Judge's hat as you make these decisions of
8 drawing, you know, these lines. Think about it
9 as a Judge and think about it in a non-partisan
10 uninvolved fashion where you are basically
11 creating fair districts, and to do so in good
12 spirit, not contesting the constitutional
13 changes that mandate you to do so, so that is
14 the first thing.

15 The second thing I think that you need to
16 think about a little bit is how we got here.
17 Florida has drawn these districts. A lots of
18 districts have been drawn largely based on
19 party and race, and I haven't really heard
20 enough of that in this conversation so far
21 today and I would encourage each of you to
22 openly acknowledge the history of how these
23 districts have been drawn.

24 I think Senator Monford comes in to Panama
25 City to get a couple of precincts, and you

1 basically your district goes, was Al Lawson's
2 district and it goes down the train tracks of
3 231.

4 Many of you will leave town and you will
5 drive up 231 on your way out and you will be
6 passing Senator Monford's district. Now, no
7 one lives there, but it goes down the train
8 tracks to get to a couple of precincts that are
9 predominantly African-American in Panama City.

10 And so what you are going to be doing is
11 deciding how to reshape that, and it will make
12 some sense probably for Senator Monford's
13 odometer if he doesn't have to do that, but how
14 will that effect each and every, you know,
15 district and how will that then, you decide,
16 how does it effect me.

17 How does that effect the amount of
18 minority representation in the Florida
19 Legislature. To what extent is that an
20 important factor in deciding how to draw these
21 districts. To what extent should we just go
22 across the state of Florida and draw straight
23 lines every time we get, you know, the right
24 number.

25 To what extent should we create districts

1 that are actually communities of interest that
2 relate to like the beach. Mr. Anders was
3 talking for example, sensibly, you could draw
4 bubbles across Panama City and Panama City
5 Beach and say that is a community of interest.
6 Those people are interested along the coast,
7 they share a community of values, draw that
8 district. Let the rural areas and cut the
9 county in half if necessary on the northern
10 side or respect the county line to the extent
11 you can, which I think everybody says makes
12 some sense.

13 So I would encourage you to have an open
14 conversation about the history and how much
15 party and race have affected the drawing of the
16 current lines. How much the citizens of
17 Florida have spoken to you to do less of that,
18 to weight that less importantly. To create
19 communities of interest and give it a try.

20 Let's see how grown up, how responsible,
21 how open minded, how less subject to party and
22 race the current voters are and we will see
23 where it goes, and that is what I would urge
24 you to do.

25 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you so much for

1 your testimony. Good testimony. Next is
2 Kristy Terry, and next after Ms. Terry would
3 be, I think it is Betty, and she has lovely
4 handwriting, Betty Briard, is it Briard?
5 Ms. Briard will be after Kristy Terry.

6 Ms. Terry, thank you for being here. You
7 are recognized.

8 MR. TERRY: Thank you. I want to tell all
9 of you how much we appreciate you coming and
10 listening.

11 CHAIRMAN GATES: Would you pull your mike
12 up because that way all of Florida can hear
13 you.

14 MR. TERRY: Wonderful. Thank you all for
15 coming. We certainly appreciate your
16 willingness to sit through these and listen and
17 take into account everybody's opinions and how
18 they feel about this issue.

19 I am just here to ask you to as you move
20 through this process, to consider the rural
21 counties. We -- it works well for us that we
22 are all in districts where we can partner
23 together and have a stronger voice when we are
24 partnered together.

25 We are limited in our resources. It is to

1 our benefit that we are able to join together
2 and work as a stronger, a stronger voice, and
3 so I just ask that as you move forward you keep
4 that in the back of your mind, that we have a
5 voice, too, and we have to kind of group
6 together, but that works for us. So please
7 just consider that as you move forward.

8 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very, very much
9 for being here and for your testimony. And
10 now, Ms. Briard, if you are still here, ma'am?
11 Did I pronounce your name correctly?

12 MS. BRIARD: Briard.

13 CHAIRMAN GATES: Briard, yes, okay.

14 Well, thank you for being here in any
15 case, appreciate it.

16 Next is Art Kimbrough with the Jackson
17 County Chamber of Commerce. Art, it is good to
18 see you. Thanks for coming all this way and we
19 appreciate your testimony. You are recognized.

20 MR. KIMBROUGH: It is always good to see
21 you, Senator, especially when we are not having
22 to battle over money.

23 CHAIRMAN GATES: That is right.

24 MR. KIMBROUGH: In a discussion we have
25 been through those wars before. My name is Art

1 Kimbrough, I am the President and CEO of the
2 Jackson County Chamber of Commerce up in
3 Marianna.

4 I was born and raised here in Panama City,
5 Lisnby Hospital just down the road longer ago
6 than I would like to remember, Jimmy, but I am
7 a seventh generation native of the panhandle
8 with roots in Jackson, Bay, Calhoun and Gulf
9 Counties.

10 So my family, my heritage, my history is
11 all about what we are trying to do today to
12 have good government and representing the
13 texture and culture of our communities.

14 I have got three messages that I have
15 crafted that are aimed at protecting and/or
16 strengthening the voice of Jackson County and
17 rural Florida in the Legislature.

18 These three positions or principles are
19 deliberately broad, but also very specific
20 and measurable in their goals, and I have extra
21 copies of this for you, Senator, for you to
22 take with you.

23 My basis for these messages includes years
24 of dialogue with Chamber members who have
25 watched the influence of rural Florida dwindle,

1 as well as discussions with our legislative
2 delegations and many other civic and business
3 leaders throughout Jackson County and beyond.

4 First, I believe rural areas do constitute
5 a community of interest that would benefit if
6 their influence is concentrated rather than
7 disbursed.

8 The beach economy, the bigger city markets
9 and rural markets each have unique needs and
10 concerns best served by the Legislators focused
11 on those needs and concerns.

12 Districts aligned according to these
13 communities of interest will be better equipped
14 to articulate their common cause and aggregate
15 the power needed to make sure their voice is
16 heard and their needs addressed.

17 Second, legislation and representation is
18 as much as about relationships as it is
19 district maps. Considering very personally
20 here, we have two Representatives in Jackson
21 County, Marti and Brad, and I can tell you,
22 they don't care where that line falls in
23 Jackson County in terms of representing Jackson
24 County in the state.

25 They don't know it. In fact, I can even

1 reach down and know that Jimmy Patronis, our
2 neighbor right there, he doesn't care about the
3 boundary either. If we need a voice I can call
4 on Jimmy just as well.

5 Senator Monford, you cover the whole
6 county, but Senator Gates I know I can call you
7 just as well. Those relationships are as
8 important into a community as the district
9 boundaries, but we do understand those district
10 boundaries play a key role and that is part of
11 what you are dealing with today.

12 But Jackson County currently benefits from
13 having two Representatives with a strong
14 understanding of rural needs. If we were to be
15 sent back to just one Representative for one
16 county it would further weakened the political
17 influence of rural areas like Jackson County
18 and shift more power to larger markets.

19 Without strong voices from rural
20 Representatives it is very easy for rural
21 concerns to be overrun by large market needs
22 and political power.

23 We need to maintain coverage by two
24 Representatives with a mutual focus on rural
25 needs.

1 Third, and last, two-mile wide, 200 long
2 winding districts with multiple environments,
3 rural, big city and beach, make it very
4 difficult for a Representative or a Senator to
5 stay closely connected to their constituents
6 and deliver a focused message.

7 Creating more compact geographical
8 districts is beneficial from a travel logistics
9 and access perspective so long as those
10 boundaries take into account the previous two
11 concerns.

12 Concentrations of communities of interest
13 and keeping our multiple representation in
14 Jackson County.

15 If the Redistricting Committee and the
16 Legislature adhere to these three principles,
17 the specifics of where the actual lines are
18 drawn will less likely be a cause for concern
19 and more likely be a cause for some
20 celebration.

21 On behalf of the Jackson County Chamber of
22 Commerce and myself, I respectfully request
23 that the spirit of these three principles be
24 incorporated into the strategic framework for
25 developing this plan for redistricting.

1 Thank you for your time and consideration.

2 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you, Art, it is
3 good to see you and excellent points.
4 Appreciate it.

5 MR. KIMBROUGH: Who would I give these to?

6 CHAIRMAN GATES: If you will give them to
7 me I will make sure that all members of the
8 Committee get them and we will post them on the
9 website so that -- okay, John will make sure
10 that we all get them. We will put them on the
11 website and that way everybody can see them.
12 Thanks a million, Art.

13 Our next two speakers are Kylel Hall and
14 Jerry Gerde. Kylel Hall?

15 MS. HALL: Actually, it is Kyle.

16 CHAIRMAN GATES: Kyle, you and I both need
17 to go back to penmanship school, I think.

18 MS. HALL: Yes, I am working on it.

19 CHAIRMAN GATES: Kyle, it is good to see
20 you notwithstanding that. And you are
21 recognized for your remarks to the Committee.

22 MR. HALL: Thank you. I was just looking
23 around the room and I noticed that there is not
24 very many college students that took advantage
25 of this great opportunity. Shame on them,

1 first of all.

2 But as a recent graduate from Gulf Coast,
3 then Community College, now State College, I
4 just wanted to kind of focalize my experience
5 that I heard from different students in some of
6 my classes, specifically in my state and local
7 government where we looked into great detail
8 the districting of Florida.

9 And the biggest comments that everyone
10 made, it is something very somewhat simple and
11 I know that there is reasons perhaps behind it,
12 but the biggest concern that the students had
13 was the complexity of the redistricting.

14 As many have mentioned, the snaking and
15 the -- it is very complex and I just wanted to
16 mention to you that as kind of representing the
17 Student Body, that was somewhat of a big
18 concern of theirs.

19 And then also just as a little side note I
20 would just like to say, because I don't know if
21 you hear it that much, that thank you for the
22 2011 legislative session and I was very proud
23 of all of you.

24 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you, and Kyle, we
25 just might mention that if you go on to either

1 the House or Senate websites you will see that
2 a group of students from Columbia University
3 took on as a project redistricting in Florida,
4 and they have already developed using our
5 websites, they have already developed
6 redistricting plans for our consideration.

7 We would welcome students that you know
8 doing the same thing either individually or as
9 a group, and if you would be interested in
10 doing that we would be very interested in that
11 input.

12 MR. HALL: It looks like I am going to
13 have to call them because they are not here.

14 CHAIRMAN GATES: Good, good, Jerry Gerde
15 is next, and following Mr. Gerde is Cecile, I
16 think it is Scoon. I apologize if I messed
17 that name up.

18 Mr. Gerde, thank you for being here, and
19 you are recognized.

20 MR. GERDE: Thank you, Senator, thank you,
21 visitors. I think it is important to recognize
22 that some traditions, such as judicial circuits
23 go back for, in some cases, generations, and as
24 all of you know, the 14th Judicial Circuit is
25 part of the web that binds Holmes and Gulf and

1 Bay, Jackson and Calhoun and Washington
2 together.

3 Those are established and functioning
4 entities. The judicial circuits have their own
5 budgets, they have their own, of course,
6 judicial staff, so that Judges who are -- who
7 reside in Panama City have duties in Poplar
8 Springs and Bethlehem, in Jacob and in the most
9 rural of areas of our circuit.

10 So that I encourage -- and there tends to
11 be a, we over use the word perhaps, community,
12 but there tends to be a sense of community.

13 For example, as all of you undoubtedly
14 know, the Circuit Judges every two years change
15 divisions and rotate through the divisions so
16 that the less desirable kind of work is only
17 borne for two years and the more desirable kind
18 of judicial work is enjoyed for two years.

19 So I encourage, I encourage you to think
20 of judicial districts, because it does bind us
21 together already and for the -- for the
22 Legislature in 2000, to have fragmented the,
23 particularly the Fourteenth and the Third
24 Circuits was harmful and tended to dampen the
25 sense of community.

1 I know Al Lawson had the eastern one
2 quarter by geography of Bay County. I think it
3 was really an eighth by population, but where
4 on Tram Road did that begin and end? I don't,
5 I expect Mr. Lawson and his staff knew, but
6 most of us didn't know.

7 So that I encourage you to look to the
8 Judicial Circuits as part of the fabric, in
9 which we function in our Sheriffs in our six
10 counties in our circuits tend to be, cooperate
11 and work together. The other judicial
12 officials do, also, so that is really one sense
13 of community that I encourage each of you to
14 give weight and respect.

15 And talk about compact, the Fourteenth
16 Circuit happens to compact. The first happens
17 to be about as compact as you can make those
18 western most counties as you know, and so there
19 was some sense given to the use of those
20 district boundaries in order to -- so that a
21 Circuit Judge from Marianna could cover a
22 matter in St. Joe or could cover a matter in
23 Panama City and so on.

24 So there is already some logic to the way
25 those Judicial Circuits were drawn and I

1 encourage you to consider that as you move
2 through this time consuming process. Thank
3 you.

4 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you, Mr. Gerde. We
5 appreciate you being here and your testimony.
6 Cecil, is it Scoon?

7 MS. SCOON: Scoon.

8 CHAIRMAN GATES: Scoon, I am sorry,
9 Ms. Scoon. Thank you for being here. We are
10 delighted to have your testimony and look
11 forward to it, and following Ms. Scoon would be
12 Jennifer Jones.

13 MS. SCOON: Good morning. I have to say
14 it is very exciting to see all of you here
15 today. It is a great opportunity for us in Bay
16 County to be in the presence of so much
17 leadership of our state. So I welcome you and
18 I am very appreciative.

19 I am a little concerned though that we
20 were not presented with even just a basic map
21 or of an idea for us to kind of discuss. I
22 think that would have been more substantive and
23 a better use of the time, and when I sit down
24 at some point I would like to hear exactly how
25 the public is going to have input after the

1 preliminary maps are drawn.

2 Because it was mentioned, but, I mean, it
3 with have been great to have the maps and have
4 that discussion, you know, at this time while
5 you are here, and I don't know if there is the
6 expense is going to be borne for you to come
7 back again for us to be before you, which is a
8 wonderful opportunity after the maps. So that
9 is really weighing on my mind very heavily.

10 A comment that I would like to make, I
11 think that any county that has three
12 Representatives, I think that is too much. It
13 is very, very difficult for citizens, local
14 citizens to get together efficiently and
15 effectively to talk and have the common
16 interests when you are split in three. It is
17 just kind of crazy.

18 I mean, you talk to people and you are
19 like, well, he is not -- she or he is not my
20 Representative. Boom. There -- that
21 connection, that ability to build and share
22 information is kind of blown away.

23 I respect what the gentleman said a few
24 speakers before. He gave the perspective of
25 what it is like for a rural county, and for

1 them, I mean, I guess that is something you
2 will have to weight, but I don't think we need
3 that in Bay County. I think we need basic -- I
4 would like to see Bay County be whole.

5 That would be my personal wish, and I
6 think you need to respect what people from the
7 rural counties, if it is better for them to
8 have two Representatives, then you need to take
9 that into consideration for them.

10 I am also would like someone to speak to
11 what is going on with the litigation that is
12 being, I guess involving the Amendment that was
13 passed by almost two-thirds of the voters, why
14 is there litigation?

15 It seemed that the Amendment was very
16 straightforward, it said compact, contiguous,
17 you know, basic and follow the Voters Rights
18 Act. I mean, basically that is my
19 understanding of what the Amendment stood for
20 and I am wondering what is the purpose of the
21 litigation, where is that going?

22 I mean, it seems like we are headed for a
23 really serious train wreck in terms of the maps
24 not being presented early for all of us people.
25 I am off my job. I work in a place where if I

1 am not in the office I lose money.

2 I mean, and I -- but this is that
3 important for me to be here and to be in your
4 presence and I really appreciate your being
5 here for me to take the time to do that.

6 My background is, I don't have seven
7 generations of Bay County. I was given a
8 little slip of paper by Catherine Wineberger.

9 I was active duty at Tyndall Air Force
10 Base and I was a Judge Advocate General. My
11 husband and I, when we looked at this
12 environment we got here 26 years ago, it was
13 very different from the home where we come
14 from, the D. C. area, but it was, people were
15 so friendly and so open and there was so much
16 that seemed to -- work to be done and things to
17 be done in the community we decided to stay and
18 raise our families.

19 So that is the perspective that I have and
20 we love this community and I think Bay County
21 being one voting block basically I think it
22 would be better for us, thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you so much, ma'am,
24 and you did raise a couple of questions that
25 the Speaker Designate I think will intend to

1 address at the end of the hearing, because I
2 think there may have been a little
3 misinformation planted.

4 Jennifer Jones is next. And Ms. Jones, if
5 you would just wait one second, Ms. Jones is
6 our last speaker who has turned in a card.

7 So now if there are people who, having
8 heard what you have heard, would like to speak
9 and you were a little shy maybe before and
10 weren't sure, we still would like to hear from
11 you. We will have time.

12 So if you would like to speak and haven't
13 had a chance yet, please raise your hand and
14 that gentleman right over there, let's give him
15 a speaker card, anybody else need a speaker
16 card?

17 The gentleman right over here in the red
18 tee-shirt, the AARP tee-shirt. Anybody else
19 would like to have an opportunity to speak?
20 Okay.

21 Thank you, Ms. Jones, for your
22 forbearance. I am sorry, there is a gentleman
23 over here, late breaking news, he would like to
24 speak.

25 Ms. Jones, thank you very much, and she

1 represents the Bay Arts Alliance. It is good
2 to see you and you are recognized.

3 MS. JONES: Thank you, I have several
4 Board members and former Board members here and
5 I think, unless I have just been
6 misunderstanding, I am going to say something
7 that hasn't been said.

8 So it is going to be maybe unpopular based
9 on the comments, so no tomatoes, if the State
10 Trooper will come stand right here.

11 CHAIRMAN GATES: You are well protected.

12 MS. JONES: Thank you. I -- my job
13 requires that I advocate for the arts in
14 Florida and in Bay County. I like having
15 several Representatives in the House and
16 Senate, because the odds of my Representative
17 being on a committee that has an impact on an
18 issue that influences me are greater.

19 I have a Representative on an education
20 committee, I have a Representative on a
21 transportation and economic and tourism
22 committee. I like knowing that I have got
23 several people I can call, because if I got one
24 and they are on a committee that has no
25 influence on the issues that concern my

1 industry, then you have no -- I feel like I
2 have no influence.

3 And this is politics, I mean, that is what
4 this is, right? So if you can operate
5 politically to further your cause I think that
6 is important, not just as a geographic
7 district, but as an industrial interest.

8 And I also believe that we should not
9 discount the value diversity in the districts.
10 It keeps our Representatives accountable to
11 several groups of people.

12 If they only have one interest, one
13 industry at heart, then you have winners and
14 losers when the session is over, and they may
15 be better able to weight the interest of
16 multiple groups within their district and be a
17 Solomon when it comes to making decisions, and
18 I recognize Senator Margolis.

19 Her name is very popular in my statewide
20 conference calls. She is -- she is a good
21 friend to the arts and I appreciate what our
22 Representatives have done this year for the
23 arts and education and I just, I want to say
24 thank you and I like having lots of people I
25 can contact, and maybe if it doesn't work out

1 that way, if we have, you know, common, the
2 little bubbles, the geographic lines that maybe
3 we should consider the region as our
4 Representatives in all of the districts also
5 come together and communicate as a region
6 because we are terribly diverse when you go
7 from north to south and east to west.

8 It is not just where the great population
9 exists that we need to have influence. Thank
10 you.

11 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much for
12 your testimony. We are glad to have you here.
13 Now we have some additional individuals who
14 wanted to testify, and I think, I think Larry
15 has resurfaced, and Larry, I apologize. I
16 can't, I can't do justice to your last name.
17 So if you will share it with us, that would be
18 helpful, but we are delighted to have you here.
19 What is your last name, sir?

20 MR. SUGGS: Suggs.

21 CHAIRMAN GATES: Suggs.

22 MR. SUGGS: S-u-g-g-s.

23 MR. SUGGS: I ain't got much education.

24 CHAIRMAN GATES: Are you a physician?

25 MR. SUGGS: No, I am a welder.

1 CHAIRMAN GATES: All right.

2 MR. SUGGS: I am a welding company owner.

3 CHAIRMAN GATES: Well, it is good to have
4 you here.

5 MR. SUGGS: Or must I say, used to be.

6 CHAIRMAN GATES: Used to be, well, it is
7 good to have you here and you are recognized.

8 MR. SUGGS: I still got -- I still got the
9 welding company and I named it Ark On Welding
10 and Crane Service, not Ark Off. So it spirally
11 went downhill since 2007, when I had 60
12 employees, and I also was taking in \$4 a year.

13 So we have got great Representatives
14 representing our area as far as I am concerned,
15 Mr. -- Ms. Marti Coley. I have spoken with her
16 on the phone several times when I actually got
17 kicked off of my county property I had my
18 welding company on.

19 And so now I am down to two employees and
20 that is my wife and myself. So I think you
21 guys need to speak to the bald headed guy in
22 Tallahassee and get us some work going like he
23 said we were voting him in for doing.

24 Instead of worrying about the regulations
25 of the land and all of this kind of stuff is

1 at, we need work in Bay County as well as
2 Florida and the guy in the office up there
3 ain't doing --

4 CHAIRMAN GATES: You mean Senator Monford,
5 right?

6 MR. SUGGS: No, I mean --

7 CHAIRMAN GATES: Just checking, just
8 checking.

9 MR. SUGGS: Scott, the Governor, so if
10 ya'll could put all of ya'll selves together
11 and go before him and get some work for this
12 area, I got an 11-year-old son I got to raise
13 and I am not taking in enough to even feed my
14 family.

15 So we need to look at these issues,
16 because I can't be the only one in Bay County
17 in this situation, and Bay County is down and
18 out. So I would appreciate any thought you
19 guys could give to that.

20 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much. We
21 appreciate you being here. And you are not the
22 only one. Patrick McGann is our next speaker,
23 Mr. McGann followed by Scott Kilpatrick.

24 Thank you for being here, Mr. McGann, you
25 are recognized.

1 MR. MCGANN: Thank you for offering me
2 this opportunity. I hadn't intended to speak
3 but there is something that hasn't been
4 stressed enough that I think needs to be
5 stressed at these hearings.

6 And that is that the people of Florida
7 like people all over this country are looking
8 for a level playing field. When they voted on
9 this, on these Amendments it was because they
10 wanted a level playing field and they wanted
11 everybody to work together.

12 I know and I think everybody in this room
13 knows that the -- all of you politicians who
14 are going to make these decisions in the first
15 instance are going to have to almost have a
16 stem cell injection, because you have to
17 overcome 175 years of history.

18 Gerrymandering has been business as usual
19 all over this country, as well, certainly in
20 the state of Florida throughout its history,
21 whether the Democrats were in power or the
22 Republicans were in power, the same thing
23 happens.

24 They draw the lines to advantage
25 themselves, and the inertia is huge to do the

1 same thing this year.

2 What the people of Florida, two-thirds of
3 the people of Florida, and I think it would
4 have been 100 percent if people knew what they
5 were voting for, really want, is a government
6 that works for them, not for interest groups.

7 We want the games to end. We want
8 fairness and we don't see fairness, frankly, we
9 are suspect. I certainly am suspect that there
10 will be fairness in this enterprise, because of
11 the inertia of 175 years of history.

12 This is something that I ask you to bear
13 in mind. I ask all of our audience to bear in
14 mind and I ask all of the people of Florida to
15 bear in mind, because we have to watch you
16 closely because we don't have any reason to
17 expect that you will be fair, because of your
18 history, and I hope you can appreciate that.

19 And that is why it is imperative that you
20 come out with maps as soon as possible so that
21 the people of Florida can react to those maps
22 and there can be a full and frank discussion of
23 what is taking place. That is all I have to
24 say, thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much.

1 Before you leave the podium, sir, would you
2 mind -- would you mind writing down your
3 residence here just so we can keep a record of
4 your appearance?

5 MR. SUGGS: I have another form that I
6 filled out.

7 CHAIRMAN GATES: Okay, just so we have got
8 your full contact information.

9 MR. SUGGS: I have E-mail and everything.

10 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you, sir, Scott
11 Kilpatrick is next, followed by Pam Dorwarth.
12 Scott, it is good to see you again and thanks
13 very much for being here.

14 MR. KILPATRICK: Thank you, thank you for
15 coming here today. I wasn't prepared to speak,
16 but after listening to some of the things that
17 were said, some of them I just want to repeat
18 in a way.

19 I am from Jackson County. There has been
20 a lot of changes affecting Jackson County and I
21 would like to ask that when you redraw these
22 districts, do what is right, not along
23 political and party lines, that is very
24 important.

25 The history is, you know, like it has been

1 said before, you know, we don't want -- we
2 don't want to repeat history on this, because
3 we want to do it the right way. We want to
4 follow the Constitution, and earlier you
5 mentioned this Committee was here and you
6 mentioned some of the rules you were following
7 from the Constitution.

8 I would like to ask that you follow those
9 throughout the process, and also follow the
10 Fair Districts. I believe that is very
11 important, because we are going to have to live
12 with these changes for ten years. It is not
13 something that goes away right away. It is ten
14 years from now that we will still be living
15 with it. On the maps, do you have a date that
16 the maps will be available?

17 CHAIRMAN GATES: The Speaker Designate can
18 remark again to the schedule. You might not
19 have been at the very beginning where he kind
20 of laid out what the schedule was, but we will
21 be happy to articulate it again before the end
22 of the meeting after everybody else had a
23 chance to speak.

24 MR. KILPATRICK: And also if maybe those
25 maps could be e-mailed to the people that left

1 their e-mail address, that way everyone would
2 know what is going on.

3 I wasn't aware of this meeting, except for
4 through some people that I knew told me about
5 it, but as far as, you know, in the paper or
6 the news or anything, I wasn't aware of this
7 meeting today. Just some other people told me
8 about it, so I came down.

9 I had a very interesting time a little
10 while back. I was in the Senate Chambers for
11 the last day of the legislative session and
12 there were a lot of changes there, and there
13 may be a lot of back lash from those changes.

14 I really think -- I don't think Floridians
15 wanted as much change as they are getting.
16 There are a lot of changes in that legislative
17 session.

18 We do need jobs, we don't need pink slips,
19 and in Jackson County where I live there are
20 some -- there is quite a few issues there. We
21 have got Sunland that has been in the news up
22 there.

23 The Dozier School I understand is closed,
24 and I know that some of you have worked on that
25 trying to help out the situation there. There

1 is a lot of prisons. So when you put those
2 three things together, Jackson County is going
3 to take a serious hit.

4 So we need some help up there with that,
5 and I am a Union member, I have been since
6 1977, and I think Legislators should work more
7 closely with Union members, make sure you do
8 talk to them when they come down there in a
9 legislative session or at any time.

10 Unions do provide a lot of good things.
11 We work hard to provide pensions and healthcare
12 for people and those are some of the same
13 issues that you are fighting right now is
14 pensions and healthcare. And there might be a
15 common ground there where everyone could work
16 together and make that work, and that is all I
17 got to say.

18 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you. Thanks very
19 much for taking the time to speak. And next,
20 Pam Dorwarth, and following Pam Dorwarth, John
21 Salak.

22 MS. DORWARTH: It is already on, thank
23 you.

24 CHAIRMAN GATES: Yes, ma'am, you are
25 recognized. Thank you for being with us today.

1 MS. DORWARTH: And I thank you for
2 accommodating me as ADA requires for my hearing
3 impairment and my other disabilities.

4 I have represented people with
5 disabilities for over 20 some years. I have
6 held five State positions and I was appointed
7 by the President, former President Bush to the
8 U.S. Access Board. I have been very involved
9 with my community.

10 Disabilities doesn't care if you are a
11 Union member, if you are a Democrat,
12 Republican, if you are a black, if you are
13 white, it hits everybody.

14 I represent a large body of people that
15 don't understand, they vote, but they don't
16 understand what you are doing today and the
17 importance of it. So I think it is critical
18 that you make it more understandable for
19 everybody on the process.

20 I was aware that there was Amendments
21 passed. Are you following those Amendments
22 that were passed in this process? I didn't
23 hear when I first came in, you are going to
24 address that, correct?

25 CHAIRMAN GATES: I think the Speaker

1 Designate indicated in the beginning that we
2 intend to follow every aspect of the
3 Constitution and he will reiterate that at the
4 end.

5 MS. DORWARTH: And the Voters Rights. I
6 just wanted to thank you all for being here and
7 recognize that you have a large body of
8 population. You have Floridians like myself
9 that don't understand this process and would
10 like to participate, but they don't understand
11 exactly what is going on and how they can voice
12 their opinions.

13 So if you could make that a little more
14 out there and not through the Internet. A lot
15 of people cannot afford an Internet, you know,
16 the computers and all of that. So your
17 newspapers are critical and any other way you
18 want to put it up in the grocery store or
19 whatever, a notice, I don't care how you do it,
20 but get it out to the people that also need to
21 speak and give you some advice.

22 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you.

23 MS. DORWARTH: Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN GATES: Yes, ma'am, thank you for
25 your contribution to this discussion. John

1 Salak, Mr. Salak?

2 Sir, thank you for being here. We look
3 forward to your testimony and you are
4 recognized.

5 MR. SALAK: Thank you, Senator Gates and
6 Representative Weatherford. I really
7 appreciate you all taking the time to do this
8 and to hear the voices of the people of the
9 state of Florida and what they have to say
10 about redistricting.

11 This is important and I did want to talk a
12 little bit about Amendment V and VI and the
13 impact that I view that it has on this.

14 I did not support V or VI. I liked some
15 of the ideas in it, but from a practical
16 standpoint, some ideas are good, but when it
17 comes down to actually executing it, it leaves
18 a lot of stuff that is well, well undefined.

19 Things like drawing district lines compact
20 along natural lines, I certainly agree with
21 that -- that concept, but from a legal
22 standpoint it is ill-defined, what is it?

23 It is whatever you happen to like on that
24 particular day, and unfortunately, these
25 situations, you know, we elect you to go out

1 there and draw these lines, not the courts to
2 sit here and decide whether this stuff is
3 right.

4 And all that this is really aimed at I
5 think in a lot of cases is getting us into
6 court and letting Judges make the decision
7 rather than the people and the elected
8 Representatives that the people have.

9 So in that respect I didn't support V and
10 VI, but I did like the idea of citizen
11 involvement and this is a great avenue for
12 getting the citizens' input.

13 As I mentioned, I would like to see our
14 districts redrawn along compact lines and to
15 follow natural boundaries. If you look at the
16 current -- the current situation you will see a
17 lot of the little carve outs, particularly
18 things like Congressional District II is a good
19 example where some of it extends into Walton
20 County and Okaloosa County, a very small part
21 of it, and, you know, that district is very
22 wide, about 200 miles wide.

23 And why we carved out that little bit and
24 don't go north, I am not sure why. So when we
25 redraw these lines I would like to see the

1 lines drawn to where it is a little more, you
2 essentially take a ruler, start at the west
3 side of Florida, draw a line from the north,
4 north border of Florida down to the coast and
5 say here is this district and keep moving, you
6 know, west and then down south and kind of take
7 that approach to it.

8 The main idea that I would really like to
9 see that is our districts not become
10 vulcanized. I think that is a very dangerous
11 political situation when we draw districts and
12 we say, all right, this is going to be a safe
13 Democrat district, this is going to be a safe
14 Republican district.

15 We have got this group we want in this
16 district and that group we want in that
17 district, and I think that is what some of the
18 language in V and VI was intended to do, and
19 that is what I really think from a political
20 standpoint, that is a very dangerous situation
21 for a democratic society to get into.

22 So I would like to see the lines drawn to
23 where we have a broad range of people involved
24 in these, you know, in particularly in western
25 Florida here in the panhandle, you know, we

1 have a lot of agriculture in the northern part
2 of the panhandle, and then along the coast it
3 is all tourism, or mainly tourism and then some
4 military mixed in with that.

5 So I would like to see the districts have
6 a good mix of representation so that you as
7 Representatives represent a cross section of
8 people, not just one particular group, and that
9 way when you go into the Legislature and make
10 decisions in the Legislature, you are having to
11 consider the farmers as well as the people that
12 own condos on the beach when you make a
13 decision.

14 I think that is a far better balance as
15 far as representation goes than having a
16 district and say, all right, this is all beach
17 people here and I am only going to interest the
18 interest of restaurants and the tourism
19 industry and, you know, the agriculture people
20 can take care of themselves. I think that is a
21 good example.

22 I would like to see the elimination of
23 these strange lines, you know. Panama City is
24 a good example, the Panama City annexation, if
25 you are not familiar, runs along the railroad

1 tracks for a number of miles to get to another
2 part of Panama City.

3 And it is a strange, it as very strange
4 looking map and a strange way to annex a city,
5 and I really don't want to see that happen with
6 these districts.

7 So hopefully, the other piece I would like
8 to mention is, I think the nature, particularly
9 in the panhandle here of a Democrat only or a
10 Republican only district is kind of a fallacy.

11 Most of the north Florida is majority
12 Democrat registration, yet just about all of
13 our Representatives are Republican and we vote
14 Republican in presidential elections, we vote
15 Republican in gubernatorial elections.

16 So I think, you know, when you look purely
17 at party, if you just look purely at party
18 affiliations, that is not really a good
19 indication of how the people are voting. So
20 that is, again, going back to V and VI, that is
21 not a good -- a good quality of those things.

22 Anyways, I hope you all do nice compact
23 districts and get a broad, a broad cross
24 section of people in them. So thank you very
25 much.

1 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you, John, very
2 good testimony. We appreciate it. Is there
3 anyone else who had not filled out a card who
4 would like to testify in today's hearing?

5 Well, if you are shy or if you wake up in
6 the middle of the night and say, gee, there is
7 something I really wanted to share, we still
8 would be happy to get your input all the way
9 through this process.

10 This isn't the end of public input. This
11 is the beginning of public input. If you
12 didn't speak, but would like to add your
13 opinion at any time in the future, you can
14 either e-mail to us, you can Snail Mail to us
15 at the address listed on your brochure and we
16 will place your comments on-line.

17 Yes, sir, did you wish to address the
18 session?

19 MR. HABER: Don, I just want to ask a
20 question.

21 CHAIRMAN GATES: Please come forward and
22 give us your name and we are happy to take your
23 question as testimony and see if we can answer
24 it if no one else wishes to testify.

25 MR. HABER: I filled out a card in the

1 front, but I didn't put down I wanted to speak.

2 CHAIRMAN GATES: Well, we are delighted to
3 have you anyway.

4 MR. HABER: My name is Wallace Haber.

5 CHAIRMAN GATES: Yes, sir.

6 MR. HABER: A 22-year resident of
7 Marianna, Florida. We have a terrific
8 Representative in Marti Coley and also in
9 Senator Monford.

10 I am sorry, I have got a Bachelor's degree
11 from the University of Miami, but I don't
12 understand why we are using State taxpayer
13 money to put aside the Amendments V and VI
14 which were voted on by the majority of the
15 registered voters.

16 It don't make sense to me anymore than us
17 suing the Federal government because Washington
18 put in a law about Medicare.

19 I mean, I don't understand this. How can
20 we take taxpayer money and sue the taxpayers,
21 and that is what we are doing. I am an
22 ignorant man. I have got a college education.

23 I just don't understand, who's side are we
24 on? Who's side are we on? Does anybody know
25 what is going on in Florida?

1 It is bad enough we are sending \$12
2 billion a month over to Afghanistan and we
3 don't know where that money is going on.

4 CHAIRMAN GATES: Well, we may be getting a
5 little far afield. Afghanistan is a little far
6 away from our redistricting.

7 MR. HABER: Let's stick to Florida. Why
8 are we suing to do away with Amendment V and
9 VI?

10 CHAIRMAN GATES: That question has been
11 asked and thank you for asking it again. I
12 think the Speaker Designate will take that
13 question.

14 MR. HABER: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN GATES: And make sure that we
16 provide you with whatever information we have,
17 as well as the other questions that have been
18 raised.

19 But before we go to comments by members of
20 the House or Senate Committees, is there anyone
21 else who wishes to comment? If not, let me
22 make the offer again to you that if you have
23 comments or if you want to follow the comments
24 that others are making, you can go on-line if
25 you use on-line services, and the on-line

1 addresses are in the Redistricting 2012
2 brochure you were handed when you came in the
3 door.

4 You can Snail Mail to us at the Snail Mail
5 address that is listed on those brochures and
6 your comments will be included in the public
7 record and made public for all of the people of
8 Florida, including all members of the
9 Legislature who will have those comments at
10 hand.

11 All of the legal records from today's
12 meeting, the video, the pod cast, the
13 transcripts will be available in the coming
14 days via the Senate and Houses respective
15 redistricting websites and those cites are
16 listed on the brochure that you got when you
17 came in.

18 Now I would like to, before I go to the
19 Speaker Designate and ask him if any of his
20 colleagues from the House have any comments or
21 questions. Let me go to members of the Senate
22 who are here from the Senate Reapportionment
23 Committee to ask if they have any comments or
24 questions before we go forward.

25 And I apologize, I may not be able to see

1 all of our Senators.

2 Senator Thrasher, you are recognized.

3 SENATOR THRASHER: Thank you,
4 Mr. Chairman, and -- first of all, this is our
5 fourth visit, I guess, in the last two
6 and-a-half days, and again I said last night in
7 Ft. Walton, I thought the input tonight and
8 this morning was incredible and we appreciate
9 it.

10 We are here to listen to you for ideas,
11 and I think you gave us all a bunch of ideas on
12 how to get started in the process, and that is
13 what we intend to do.

14 I can tell you as one Senator and I think
15 I speak for everybody here, we are going to
16 follow the Constitution, but we are going to do
17 it in the right way. We are going to do it in
18 an effective way that meets the needs of the
19 people of the state of Florida.

20 When the day is over, I guarantee you, we
21 will have a good map, good maps. Remember, by
22 the way, we are drawing 40 Senate seats, 120
23 House seats, 27 Congressional seats for over
24 18 million people in the state of Florida.

25 Twenty-seven -- I said -- it is 27, okay.

1 But in any event, we got to take into
2 consideration 18 million people. A couple
3 hundred people were here today, a couple
4 hundred were there last night. We are going to
5 have 24 or 25 more of these hearings throughout
6 the state of Florida.

7 We are going to listen to the input of the
8 people of the state of Florida and at the end
9 of the day I promise you we are going to do the
10 best job we can under the constitutional
11 constraints that have been placed upon us by
12 the people of the state of Florida.

13 I remember somebody referenced earlier on,
14 Dempsey Barron. I knew Dempsey Barron. I have
15 been in and out of this process for a number of
16 years. I can tell you, 20 or 30 years ago, in
17 all due respect to the great Senator from this
18 area, when maps were drawn they were usually
19 done at the late night. They were usually done
20 at late session, very little input from the
21 people of the state of Florida.

22 This will be the most transparent process
23 in my opinion of redistricting that we have
24 ever had in the state of Florida, and it is due
25 because of your input and your concern and you

1 as citizens of the state of Florida who have
2 come out to give us your guidance and it is
3 very appreciated. Thank you very much.

4 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you, Senator
5 Thrasher. Other members of the Senate wish to
6 speak? Senator Monford, you are recognized,
7 Senator Monford.

8 SENATOR MONFORD: Thank you, Senator
9 Gates, and just to make it real brief, thank
10 you for your participation. I can assure you
11 that your voice has been heard today. We are
12 taking good notes. We will go back and we will
13 review those and we will take everything that
14 you have said into consideration, but you also
15 realize that some of you are conflicting here
16 today. Some of you want one thing and one
17 another. You can imagine what is going to
18 happen when we go from here to Miami.

19 There will be differences of opinion all
20 over this state, but I promise you, we will do
21 our dead level best.

22 Someone asked me, as a Democrat will you
23 have any chance, and I said I have total
24 confidence in my colleagues in the Republican
25 Party, and I believe and sincerely believe that

1 all of us are going to do what is best for the
2 people of Florida.

3 Thank you for being here and we look
4 forward to seeing you on down the road.

5 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much,
6 Senator Monford. Any other members of the
7 Senate? If not, let me turn to the Speaker
8 Designate.

9 Did somebody else in the back? See, this
10 is why we let you talk first, because in the
11 Senate there is no time limit. In the House
12 they put a time limit on them.

13 Senator Evers, you are recognized.

14 SENATOR EVERS: I just wanted to be sure
15 everyone understood that we did not have a gag
16 order, absolutely, because in other places we
17 have been asked that if we were scripted or if
18 we had a gag order and I just wanted to be
19 perfectly clear that there was no gag order.

20 And also, as a member of the delegation
21 that represents Bay County, in fact, thanks to
22 Jimmy Patronis, I am the Chair of the Bay
23 County delegation, make that perfectly clear,
24 and if you have a concern and you are a
25 resident of Bay County, or if you are a

1 resident of Jackson County, even though I do
2 not represent Jackson County, but if you need a
3 voice in Tallahassee, trust me, I am there.

4 But I would ask my Aide, Molly, to please
5 stand up, and if you need to have an
6 appointment with any of the delegation and you
7 feel like that, you know, you haven't been
8 represented and you need a voice, see Molly and
9 we will -- we will work through that process to
10 see that you have a voice in Tallahassee or in
11 this, in this redistricting.

12 We will see that you do have a voice. You
13 know, we are very fortunate here in the
14 panhandle that the delegations, whether it is
15 in Escambia County, whether it is Okaloosa,
16 whether it is Bay County, whether it is even
17 Washington and Holmes county and Jackson
18 County, that the delegations work hand in hand
19 here in the panhandle.

20 So, you know, it doesn't matter to us
21 where the district lines are. That has never
22 affected any of our decisions. We work as a
23 unit for you and we are proud to have the
24 opportunity to work together, to represent you
25 and take your plight to Tallahassee, and with

1 that, Senator Gates, thank you for the
2 opportunity to speak, and thank you all for
3 coming. You could have been on the beach or
4 fishing. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you very much,
6 Senator Evers, and now I would yield to the
7 Speaker Designate of the House and ask him if
8 he would -- he has taken some notes during the
9 meeting, so that we can provide some answers to
10 some of the factual questions that were raised,
11 as well as maybe spike a couple of rumors that
12 may have crept into the process.

13 Mr. Speaker, thank you.

14 SPEAKER WEATHERFORD: My name is Will
15 Weatherford. Thank you. Thank you very much,
16 Mr. Chairman. Before I go into answering some
17 questions we had some tremendous questions and
18 frankly input today, but there was an
19 announcement that Representative Patronis
20 forgot to make early on this afternoon.

21 He and I were chatting earlier today and
22 he told me that anyone who actually sat through
23 this entire hearing got a free meal at Captain
24 Anderson's this evening, so congratulations.
25 What a guy.

1 Just -- just do me a favor and save me one
2 of those Scamp Imperials, would you,
3 Representative Patronis. You have not lived
4 until you have had a Scamp Imperial from that
5 wonderful restaurant.

6 But in all seriousness, it really has been
7 a pleasure today and what a pleasant group of
8 folks who have taken the time to be here and we
9 are just very grateful for that.

10 I am going to touch on a couple of things,
11 I am going to try not to talk too long, but I
12 certainly want to make sure everyone has
13 clarity on what we are doing and why the
14 decisions that have been made thus far about
15 this process are being made.

16 The first is there were several people who
17 mentioned money that was being spent, like a
18 \$30 million pot of money that is being spent.

19 There is no \$30 million pot of money.
20 That doesn't exist. Apparently some newspaper
21 wrote that somewhere some time ago and it has
22 continued to trickle into the process in the
23 conversation. There is no \$30 million and it
24 is not being spent. Your tax dollars are not
25 being spent on anything like that.

1 Certainly we have to have attorneys, this
2 process is legal in nature, we have to have
3 staff, so resources are being addressed, but
4 there is no large pot of money that is out
5 there that is fighting anything.

6 But also I want to talk a little bit about
7 the timeline. The timeline seems to be
8 something that everywhere we go we hear a lot
9 about in regards to why we are doing things in
10 the order that we are doing them.

11 First of all, the state of Florida is one
12 of the last states to have received its census
13 data. So you cannot even begin to draw maps or
14 do anything of that nature until you actually
15 have data from the Census Bureau.

16 We did not get that data until just about
17 60 days ago or so, and so we have been -- we
18 have just now finished putting together our
19 what we have in the House is My District
20 Builder, the Senate has a very similar format
21 that allows us to draw districts.

22 We are just now bringing those on-line as
23 of late, so we can start this process. So I
24 want you to know, it is not like we have been
25 sitting on data for a year and have chose to

1 ignore it. We have just recently been in
2 receipt of it.

3 Also in regards to the timeline, the
4 Constitution, and I said this earlier, but the
5 Constitution tells us that we cannot take
6 action on any maps until 2012, and what we have
7 already done is moved up our legislative
8 session by two months so that we can pass those
9 maps out as quickly as we possibly can to give
10 our Supervisors of Elections, to give our
11 constituents to have certainty in knowing who
12 they are voting for and what the districts are
13 going to look like.

14 That is very very important. So what we
15 are doing really in regards to a timeline, is
16 we are starting now, and we started this week
17 and we are going to spend three months on a
18 listening tour, and we are going to listen to
19 the desires, to the input, and to the counsel
20 of citizens across the state of Florida to tell
21 us what they think districts should look like.

22 We are going to let you start the
23 conversation and I don't know about you, but
24 historically when I have been around
25 politicians and politics, we seem to do all of

1 the talking and we are always asking everybody
2 else to do the listening.

3 This is one of the few instances I have
4 been around where we are letting you start the
5 conversation and we are doing the listening,
6 and I think that is what the citizens of
7 Florida want from their elected officials.

8 Also, in regards to the maps, we heard
9 several people say today, where are the maps.
10 We want to see the maps. It would have been
11 more productive if you would have put maps in
12 front of us.

13 Well, we do have maps here. They are the
14 current existing maps. They are not the new
15 maps, but the reason for that is, if we were to
16 show up with maps today and tell you, here is
17 what our maps are going to look like, everybody
18 would be upset and say, what do you want us to
19 do, rubber stamp with the decision that you
20 already made?

21 We have made the decision that we are
22 going to let you start this conversation and I
23 want to really, really put an emphasis on this.
24 The input that you will have on this process
25 does not end today.

1 As Senator Gates mentioned just a moment
2 ago, we are going to be gathering public input
3 in forums in Tallahassee, via e-mail, via Snail
4 Mail, everything, throughout this entire
5 process, so this is not the end.

6 This is only the beginning, and I want to
7 point out one other thing in regards to
8 Amendments V and VI, and that is this. The
9 drafters of Amendments V and VI, a lady by the
10 name of Ellen Freidin, who was the leader of
11 Fair Districts and a former Speaker of the
12 House, Speaker Mills, testified before a Joint
13 Hearing of our colleagues here, and
14 specifically stated when they were asked if
15 they could give us some examples.

16 We specifically asked them, could you give
17 us some examples of what you think a fair
18 district looks like.

19 Their comments under oath, I will tell
20 you, both of them, said, we would not even
21 begin that process until we had had public
22 hearings around the state of Florida. And so
23 now we are hearing after we are doing exactly
24 what they asked us to do, is to have public
25 hearings, now they are saying they want us to

1 produce the maps first, and frankly we just
2 think that that is putting the question ahead,
3 -- the answer ahead of the question.

4 In regards to litigation, there were
5 several questions about why are taxpayers
6 fighting Amendments V and VI that have passed.

7 Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart, who is a
8 Republican from Miami, Dade County, along with
9 a Democratic Congresswoman, Karen Brown, from
10 Jacksonville, actually are the ones who filed a
11 lawsuit only in regards to Amendment VI, and it
12 deals with a Federal constitutional issue.

13 It only deals with the Congressional maps,
14 and it is whether or not the U. S. Constitution
15 had been impeded -- has been impeded by that
16 constitutional amendment that passed in
17 Florida, and I won't get you into the details,
18 but we will give you all of the information on
19 that case if you want it.

20 But just so it is clear, the two
21 Congressmen, a Republican and a Democrat were
22 the ones who originally filed that lawsuit, and
23 I think that is very important. I think there
24 has been some misinformation out there about
25 that as well.

1 Long story short, to kind of put a bow on
2 everything, I want to go back to something that
3 Reverend Wood said.

4 Reverend Wood, thank you for being here
5 today and you made a comment, sir, early on in
6 your comment, in your thoughts that you wanted
7 to make sure that our minds were open and that
8 they were not closed and that decisions had not
9 been made.

10 And, sir, that is exactly what this is
11 about. This is the reason we are doing this,
12 the reason we are traveling the state,
13 Reverend, is because our minds are open, and we
14 are here to listen and we are here to make
15 decisions after, after we have heard from
16 everyone around the state of Florida.

17 I want to thank you for those words and we
18 will take those to heart as we go through this
19 process. You have my word. You have the word
20 of the Senator and the rest of this body that
21 we will abide by Amendments V and VI.

22 They are the law. We raise our right hand
23 every two years and promise to uphold and
24 protect the Constitution of the State of
25 Florida, and we will do so, and we will make

1 this process, as it has already been, the most
2 transparent, the most accountable and what I
3 believe to be the most open process it has ever
4 been and we will follow the law.

5 So thank you very much, Mr. Chairman,
6 again, for that indulgence. I hope that
7 cleared up some issues. If you still have
8 concerns, stick around afterwards, we will have
9 staff and many other people to talk with you
10 directly. Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN GATES: Thank you. Before we end
12 today, as we begin our hearing we thank Gulf
13 Coast State College for their generosity and
14 their hospitality in allowing us to use these
15 facilities.

16 We are delighted to be joined now by the
17 President of Gulf Coast State College, Dr. Jim
18 Curley, Dr. Curley, thank you so much for being
19 here.

20 ////////////////

21 ////////////////

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1 There being no more business to come
2 before this hearing, President Margolis moves
3 we rise.

4 (Whereupon, the recorded proceedings were
5 adjourned.)

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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 124 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 2nd day of August, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

MONDAY, JULY 11, 2011

2:00 P.M. and 6:00 P.M.

FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE JACKSONVILLE DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

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: If we could
3 get everyone to grab their seats, we would like
4 to start here momentarily. Members, please
5 find your chair. Okay, if we could get
6 everyone to please grab their seats.

7 Thank you very much. Please call the
8 roll. Okay, we are not doing a roll yet, I'm
9 sorry.

10 Ladies and gentlemen, the Joint
11 Senate/House Redistricting Committee is called
12 to order. We are pleased to be joined today by
13 several members of both the House and the
14 Senate, and what we would like to do is to take
15 just a brief moment to allow each one to
16 introduce themselves to you.

17 They have come from near and far, many
18 from right here in Duval County, you've got a
19 great delegation here, but also we have
20 Legislators from all over the state of Florida.

21 We would like to just take a few moments
22 to allow them to introduce themselves, let you
23 know who they are and where they are from, and
24 I think we will start down at the end.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Good afternoon,

1 my name is Alan Williams, State Representative
2 from Tallahassee, Florida, and it is great to
3 see so many of you out here concerned about the
4 process.

5 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Thank you.
6 Representative Matt Caldwell, Ft. Myers, Lee
7 County, down in the southwest corner of the
8 state.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Good afternoon, Jim
10 Boyd, Representative from Manatee County, which
11 is Bradenton, down below Tampa on the west
12 coast.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Kathleen
14 Passidomo, District 76, which is Naples,
15 Everglades City, Marco Island.

16 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Representative
17 Chuck Chestnut, District 23, a portion of
18 Gainesville and a portion of Ocala.

19 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Representative
20 Dwayne Taylor representing House District 27,
21 the world center of racing and the world's most
22 famous beach, Daytona Beach.

23 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Representative Peter
24 Nehr from District 48, Pinellas County, home of
25 another famous beach, Clearwater Beach.

1 SENATOR THRASHER: I am Senator John
2 Thrasher. I represent parts of Nassau, Nassau
3 here, Duval County, St. Johns County, Volusia
4 County and Flagler County, and we have some of
5 the greatest beaches in the world right here in
6 north Florida.

7 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: Hi, everybody. I
8 am Ed Hooper from District 50, which is
9 Pinellas County, predominantly Clearwater.

10 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: I am
11 Representative Jim Frishe. I represent the
12 beaches of Pinellas County, and we don't get to
13 compete for the world's best beaches anymore,
14 because we've been retired.

15 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Hi, I am Janet
16 Adkins. I represent House District 12, which
17 is Nassau, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Union and a
18 bit of Duval, and it is wonderful to see so
19 many people here from the outlying rural
20 counties. Thank you for coming.

21 SENATOR MONTFORD: Thank you. I am Bill
22 Montford, Senator from District 6, which is 11
23 counties, Tallahassee is the center of it.

24 Obviously we have state government, but we
25 also have some of the world's most beautiful

1 beaches on the Gulf of Mexico, I believe, for
2 clarification.

3 REPRESENTATIVE LOGAN: Thank you. I am
4 Representative Ana Rivas Logan from Miami-Dade
5 County from the best beach in the world, South
6 Beach.

7 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: Clay Ford, I
8 represent District 3 in Pensacola, the other
9 north Florida anchor, other end of the state.

10 SENATOR DEAN: My name is Charlie Dean, I
11 am Senator, District 3. I represent all or
12 part of 13 counties. I represent interior
13 rural Florida.

14 We don't have any beaches. I go from
15 Baker County to the steps of the Capitol, down
16 to 98 and 19 just to the south end of Citrus
17 County. I am from Inverness, Florida.

18 SENATOR LYNN: I am Senator Evelyn Lynn.
19 I represent Clay, Marion, Putnam and Volusia
20 Counties, and we are so diverse from party to
21 nature, from beaches to jungle, you can't beat
22 it.

23 REPRESENTATIVE SCHENCK: Rob Schenck, I
24 represent the metropolitan areas of Hernando
25 County.

1 SENATOR BRAYNON: Oscar Braynon, Senator,
2 District 33, representing Miami-Dade County.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEINSTEIN: Mike Weinstein
4 representing part of Duval, Clay and St. Johns
5 County, and thanks for coming.

6 SENATOR HAYS: Thank you all for being
7 here this afternoon. I am Alan Hays, State
8 Senator from District 20, which I live in
9 Umatilla, and it is 85 miles east and west and
10 55 miles north and south.

11 REPRESENTATIVE KIAR: Hello, everybody, my
12 name is Martin Kiar. I represent District 97
13 in the Florida House of Representatives, which
14 is all within Broward County, Florida. Thanks
15 for having us.

16 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good afternoon,
17 everyone. My name is John Patrick Julien
18 representing District 104, and Representative
19 Ana Rivas Logan told me that the entire
20 Miami-Dade County delegation represents the
21 best beach in the world, that being South
22 Beach.

23 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Hi, everyone, I am
24 Dorothy Hukill. I am the State Representative
25 from District 28, which is southeast and

1 southwest Volusia, and I actually represent the
2 most number of miles of beaches in Volusia
3 County.

4 REPRESENTATIVE McBURNEY: I am Charles
5 McBurney. I represent District 16, which is
6 the greatest city in the state of Florida, the
7 City of Jacksonville, Florida.

8 REPRESENTATIVE THURSTON: Good afternoon,
9 I am State Representative Perry Thurston from
10 Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, District 93. We refer
11 to it as God's country.

12 REPRESENTATIVE RAY: Good afternoon, I am
13 Lake Ray. I represent District 17, kind of the
14 northeast quarter of the county here. It is a
15 pleasure to see everybody. And to my
16 colleagues, welcome to Jacksonville.

17 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: State
18 Representative Mack Bernard from West Palm
19 Beach, Florida.

20 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: State
21 Representative Hazelle Rogers from Broward
22 County, 1.79 million residents in Broward
23 County. It is good to be here.

24 REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: Hello, and thank
25 you all for being here. I am State

1 Representative Dana Young, and I represent the
2 City of Tampa and surrounding areas, and we
3 just have little beaches, but we are close to a
4 lot of really good ones. Thank you for coming.

5 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good afternoon, I am
6 State Representative Gwyndolen Clarke-Reed, and
7 I represent Broward County, northeast quadrant
8 of Broward County, where we have the best
9 beach, Deerfield Beach.

10 SENATOR EVERS: I am State Senator Greg
11 Evers, and I represent Senate District 2, which
12 encompasses north Escambia, Santa Rosa,
13 Okaloosa, Walton, Washington, Holmes Counties,
14 which is also referred to as God's country, but
15 yet also the great northwest, as far north and
16 far west you can go in Florida without being in
17 Alabama.

18 Okay. I am here representing the folks
19 that grow the best cotton and peanuts in the
20 state of Florida. Thank you all.

21 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: I don't think I
22 can pass that. My name is Representative Tom
23 Goodson. I represent District 29, which at one
24 time was the gateway to space, but after our
25 last shuttle, it is no longer that. But I go

1 from North Mims all the way down to the St.
2 Lucie County line, wonderful people and 300,000
3 cows. Thank you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE DRAKE: My name is Brad
5 Drake. I represent House District 5, which is
6 in northwest Florida: Okaloosa, Walton,
7 Holmes, Washington, Jackson. My district is
8 the only House District that borders two
9 states.

10 REPRESENTATIVE TRUJILLO: Good afternoon
11 and thank you for being here. My name is
12 Carlos Trujillo. I represent southwest
13 Miami-Dade County. It is a pleasure to be here
14 in Jacksonville.

15 REPRESENTATIVE JONES: Good afternoon,
16 State Representative Mia Jones, just thanking
17 you so much for being here in great numbers.
18 We are excited for the delegation members
19 across the state to hear from you, and so it is
20 a pleasure for me to be able to be here, and I
21 represent District 14, north and west of
22 Jacksonville.

23 REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Good afternoon, my
24 name is Daniel Davis. I am the Representative
25 from District 13. I am proud to represent the

1 west portion of Jacksonville and Clay Counties,
2 and it is an honor to see all of my friends
3 here today. Thank you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE FULLWOOD: Good afternoon,
5 Representative Reggie Fullwood, District 15,
6 and we are happy to have you here in
7 Jacksonville where Florida officially begins,
8 right here.

9 REPRESENTATIVE CORCORAN: Representative
10 Richard Corcoran from Pasco and Pinellas
11 Counties. Thank you.

12 SENATOR ALTMAN: Thad Altman, State
13 Senator from east central Florida where we have
14 the Space Coast, but I have to put a big kudo
15 here for Jacksonville, because our first
16 commercially rated space center is right here
17 at Cecil Field, so we have a lot in common.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right.
19 We were trying to set the record for the
20 Guinness Book of Records of squeezing the most
21 politicians into one room. We are close. We
22 are going to get an official count before the
23 end of the day.

24 But, no, seriously, members, thank you for
25 being here, and Senators, for taking the time

1 to hear from the constituents here in northeast
2 Florida. We are honored to be here.

3 And I want to make a special thanks to
4 Florida State College for allowing us to use
5 this beautiful facility. Thank you all for
6 taking the time to be here, because this is
7 important.

8 It is important, and the sole purpose of
9 what we are here for is to hear from you and to
10 give your input and to hear what you think the
11 legal standards that are set before the
12 Legislature and how those can be applied to
13 districts that represent you here in northeast
14 Florida.

15 My name is Will Weatherford, and along
16 with my colleague, Senator Don Gaetz, I will be
17 chairing today's hearing, which is being
18 webcast statewide by the Florida Channel over
19 the Internet.

20 I also want to make sure that everyone can
21 hear us okay. If you are in the back of the
22 room, can you hear us okay on the microphone?
23 Wonderful. Thank you.

24 Our procedures here today, ladies and
25 gentlemen, are very simple, but they are very,

1 very important. It is important that you sign
2 in so we can create an accurate public record
3 of all the attendees and speakers. Also, you
4 may opt to join our e-mail list so that we can
5 keep you informed about how the redistricting
6 process is working over the next several
7 months. If you have not signed in, please
8 raise your hand, and a staff member will give
9 you an attendance card for you to fill out. If
10 you wish to speak today, and you have not
11 filled out an attendance card, please also
12 raise your hand, and we will make sure we get
13 you a card so that we cannot miss your
14 testimony. It is the same attendance card
15 whether you speak or if you plan to sit, but
16 please raise your hand either way.

17 I also want to point out that the
18 microphone is kind of in the middle of the
19 room, it is a little different than the way we
20 have done it historically, but I think that is
21 the best-placed position. So as you are coming
22 up to speak and we read out your name, you will
23 go to this microphone.

24 But before we go to public testimony, I
25 would like to turn the microphone over to my

1 co-Chair, Senator Don Gaetz, who will explain
2 how today's hearing fits into the redistricting
3 process.

4 Senator Gaetz, you are recognized.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
6 Mr. Chairman. I am Don Gaetz. I represent the
7 coastal counties of northwest Florida.
8 Jacksonville is, as my wife, Vicky, says, our
9 second home. It is where we met, it is where
10 we feel in love, and we love Jacksonville.

11 Let me just say that there is one person
12 here who -- let me depart, if I can,
13 Mr. Chairman, from the script to say there is
14 one person here who has not been introduced who
15 has served this community and served the State
16 of Florida effectively and well. He's now
17 moved on to another important assignment within
18 the City of Jacksonville. We are going to miss
19 him, and I want to recognize him, and that is
20 Senator Tony Hill. Senator Hill.

21 Mr. Chairman, and members, and members of
22 the public who are here, every ten years the
23 Legislature is required by our Constitution to
24 redistrict the state based on increases or
25 decreases or movements of population within the

1 state, and because Florida has grown more than
2 other states in the last ten years, we will
3 move up from 25 to 27 members of the U.S. House
4 of Representatives, and up to 29 electoral
5 votes in the presidential election.

6 Now, because some parts of our state have
7 increased or decreased disproportionately to
8 the rest of the state, many Senate and House
9 Districts will change, either adding or losing
10 population. You can see a chart over there on
11 the wall. A number of you have had a chance to
12 review it before we started. Please take a
13 look at it during the meeting, after the
14 meeting, and you will see the districts and
15 which districts have to gain or lose population
16 in order to be equal in size, which is one of
17 the requirements of law.

18 We also have displays at the front of the
19 room showing the current boundaries of
20 districts in this area of the state. Those are
21 the maps, the maps of our current districts, so
22 that is a good point of departure for those who
23 have testimony today to indicate if you believe
24 that there are changes that need to be made.

25 Those are the maps that we have right now, and

1 those are the same maps that we will be looking
2 at as your Legislators as we consider the
3 public testimony that has been provided around
4 the state. We are doing 26 public hearings.

5 When redistricting is completed,
6 congressional districts must be equal in
7 population, and each congressional district
8 must contain 696,345 people. Now, past law and
9 court cases have indicated that congressional
10 districts that are even 11 individuals
11 different, one from the other, are not equally
12 divided. So with congressional districts, it
13 is pretty important that each one be just about
14 on the money at 696,345 people.

15 The 40 Senate districts must also be
16 nearly equal at about 470,000 people each, and
17 our 120 House districts must be nearly equal at
18 about 156,700 people.

19 Equality of representation, though, is not
20 the only legal requirement that redistricting
21 plans have to meet. The laws and important
22 court cases governing redistricting are
23 explained in detail on the House and the Senate
24 websites. Those websites are listed in the
25 redistricting 2012 brochure that was available

1 to you when you came in, will be available to
2 you as you leave. Our redistricting 2012
3 brochure summarizes federal and state laws, and
4 outlines topics we hope that you will discuss
5 here today at our hearing. If you didn't get a
6 copy when you came in, our staff will be happy
7 to give you one. The brochure also lists the
8 House and Senate websites, and the websites are
9 packed with information about redistricting in
10 Florida. You will see that it is some what
11 complex and somewhat simple, but we urge you to
12 look at the websites and look at the laws that
13 governing redistricting. The two websites, the
14 House and Senate, are complementary and are
15 updated very frequently. Visit both, check
16 back often. It is a great way to stay current
17 about how your new congressional Senate and
18 House districts are taking shape.

19 The websites deliver to your fingertips
20 also all of the demographic information that
21 comes from the U.S. Bureau of the Census that
22 will be used in drawing districts, and the same
23 computer programs and the same computer
24 software that courts would be using or that
25 policy makers would be using are overlaid on

1 all the demographic information. This means
2 that any member of the public or any interest
3 group can participate by building plans or
4 seeing maps submitted by other interest groups,
5 other citizens or by Legislators themselves.
6 There have already been maps submitted.
7 Before, during and after this hearing, Senate
8 and House professional staff are available to
9 show anyone the simple steps to getting
10 on-line, building districts and submitting a
11 plan now or in the weeks to come, and you can
12 submit a plan for northeast Florida, for your
13 county, for your neighborhood or for the whole
14 state. If you would like to have direct input,
15 the most important thing you could do is to
16 say, "Here's how we think the lines ought to be
17 drawn to take care of problems or to make sure
18 there is equal representation in our area, in
19 our community." The submission of proposed
20 maps that makes sense for your community is the
21 single most effective form of public
22 participation in the redistricting process.

23 Now, the redistricting schedule that we
24 are operating under is imposed by the state
25 Constitution. We can't change it. Nobody who

1 testifies today can change it. The
2 Constitution does not permit the Legislature to
3 act on state legislative maps before the second
4 year after the census; in other words, before
5 2012. We have accelerated the process as much
6 as possible by moving up the 2012 legislative
7 session from March, when it usually starts, to
8 January, and by beginning our statewide
9 hearings five months in advance of the 2012
10 session.

11 Now, it's been suggested that the
12 Legislature ought to draw the maps first and
13 then ask the public to comment. We believe
14 that puts the answer ahead of the question.
15 There ought to be no preconceptions or
16 preconceived notions or pre-drawn maps created
17 entirely by politicians, but rather public
18 testimony should be free and unrestricted. In
19 fact, that is the position taken by the head of
20 the Fair Districts movement statewide who
21 testified before the House and Senate
22 committees, and she is on record as saying that
23 new maps should not be drawn until after the
24 public has had an opportunity to comment in
25 public hearings. And we agree with Ms. Freidin

1 in her public testimony that that is exactly
2 what should be done, and that is what we are
3 doing.

4 Our intent is to use the recommendations
5 made at the 26 public hearings and through the
6 input we receive on our Internet sites and
7 information that you might send us through
8 snail mail or input to your legislator as the
9 basis for developing one or more options for
10 district maps.

11 Now, here is the procedure: Once we have
12 public testimony and public input, we have
13 already gotten an enormous amount in the first
14 four hearings that we have held, we will hold
15 22 more hearings including today, then we will
16 develop options, and those options will be
17 available to the public, and before one single
18 vote is taken on any of those options, the
19 public will see them all. We will discuss any
20 option, any plan, any proposal, in open public
21 meetings before any votes are taken, even in
22 committee. Throughout the process, we will
23 solicit additional public input so that any
24 proposed maps can mature with the public
25 involved, all before the Legislature approves

1 any maps. Whatever the Legislature approves is
2 then submitted for judicial review to insure
3 that the final plans meet every single
4 requirement of law.

5 Because our purpose today is to hear from
6 you, all the time when I am finished between
7 then and four o'clock today, and then between
8 six and eight o'clock today, will be used to
9 insure that every member of the public who is
10 here and wishes to speak will have time to
11 present testimony and be listened to
12 respectfully, without interruption and without
13 argument. And you can see that if we let
14 politicians take over and talk, you know, we
15 would hear about beaches all over Florida until
16 tomorrow morning.

17 If after every citizen who wants to speak
18 has had his or her say there is time remaining,
19 if there is time remaining then before our
20 scheduled adjournment, then, of course, any
21 member of the committee may make any statement,
22 offer any proposal or any suggestion.

23 There, of course, is no gag order. Any
24 member of the Legislature, any interest group,
25 any citizen, may today or at any time propose a

1 map or a plan, and we will instantly make it
2 available to the public for your comment and
3 review.

4 And, Mr. Chairman, I hope this description
5 of our schedule and our process and our time
6 table helps set the stage for a successful
7 hearing.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
9 very much, Senator, for that thorough
10 explanation of today's hearing.

11 I would like to take a brief moment. We
12 always like to save the best for last and the
13 most prestigious for last, and we also want to
14 make sure that there is a person who came a
15 very long way to be here and I think may even
16 have a vote to make this evening, and that is
17 our Congresswoman Corrine Brown.

18 Congresswoman, thank you very much for being
19 here this evening, we appreciate it. We are
20 going to have the opportunity to hear from the
21 Congresswoman soon, and so we appreciate your
22 participation here.

23 We are going to adjourn promptly at 4:00
24 p.m., but as the Senator stated, we will be
25 back at 6:00 p.m. Currently we have 51 people

1 who have signed up to speak. Ladies and
2 gentlemen, we would like to try to limit each
3 speaker to three minutes, if you possibly
4 could. We are not going to be overly strict
5 about it, but the further and further we get
6 down, we just want to make sure that every
7 person who has made the effort to be here has
8 the opportunity to speak for at least three
9 minutes, so please be cognizant of that.

10 Our first speaker today is going to be a
11 Mr. Michael Yost, and following Mr. Yost -- and
12 this is all in the order that people signed
13 up -- there will be Ms. Tammy Hardin.

14 Mr. Yost, the floor is yours and you are
15 recognized for three minutes. And just so
16 everyone knows, what we are going to do, as I
17 call out the name of the next speaker, I will
18 call out a name after that so you can kind of
19 get on deck and be prepared.

20 Mr. Yost, the floor is yours. Thank you
21 for being here.

22 MR. YOST: They said give me about five
23 seconds. Now it is working.

24 Mr. Chairman and Mr. Chairman, and members
25 of the House and Senate committee, I want to

1 thank you for giving me this opportunity to
2 address this meeting here today.

3 Ladies and gentlemen, sadly, there is an
4 issue in the state of Florida, and I think
5 nationwide, but sometimes we as legislatures
6 and also people who are in the public sometimes
7 wish to put blinders on and not think about,
8 and that is the issue of race in politics.

9 Unfortunately, it seems to have been a
10 division that has been created, for whatever
11 reason, in this nation, and I think we first
12 need to recognize that we are Americans first,
13 and that if we will keep these things in mind,
14 I think that redistricting will be something
15 that this committee and committees can do and
16 do in a way in which all people in the state of
17 Florida are properly represented.

18 Unfortunately, there have been some
19 Supreme Court cases that have come down the
20 pipe that are going to restrict you, and I am
21 going to try to address these very briefly.
22 The first one is Thornburg versus Gingles, and
23 I am sure you gentlemen are very familiar with
24 that, in which it sets three basic tenets that
25 must happen on a Section 2 Voting Rights Act

1 claim, 1965 Voting Rights Act, also as amended
2 throughout the years.

3 First of all, there must be a
4 demonstration that a majority group is large
5 enough and compact enough to constitute a
6 majority if they were placed in a single member
7 district. Secondly, they must demonstrate that
8 the minority group is politically cohesive.
9 And third, they must demonstrate that while a
10 white majority votes together in enough numbers
11 to defeat the minority's preferred candidates.
12 If those requirements are met, the court will
13 then examine the totality of the circumstances
14 to determine if a violation is -- it was --
15 occurred.

16 Voinovich versus Quilter also influenced
17 another Section 2 violation, I am sure you are
18 aware of that one.

19 Johnson v. DeGrandy was another Section 2
20 violation that was settled by the Supreme
21 Court.

22 The Lulac decision, this was a Section 5
23 that was also -- Section 5 and Section 2 was
24 addressed in both of that, which takes us then
25 to one other decision fairly recently was the

1 Georgia v. Ashcroft. I want to discuss that
2 for just a moment.

3 In that particular ruling, it was the
4 desire of the State of Georgia to unpack these
5 minority and majority districts in order that
6 minorities could better represent and have
7 better effectiveness throughout the State of
8 Georgia.

9 One thing that they discovered in the
10 State of Georgia by doing this, the minorities
11 became better represented, not worse. They had
12 a better influence throughout the political
13 spectrum.

14 Let's face some realities, and I want to
15 read the very last sentence in this analysis,
16 because I think it comes into play, and that
17 analysis came from none other than Chief
18 Justice John Roberts, and he said, "The most
19 effective way to prevent discrimination on the
20 basis of race is to stop propagating laws that
21 discriminate on the basis of race."

22 We need to be Americans, folks, first and
23 foremost, in which we have communities that are
24 represented by the district boundaries that are
25 drawn by these committees, and that we have an

1 effective representative voice in which whoever
2 is elected by the majority of the voters
3 represents all the people of these districts,
4 not just the ones who can cast a ballot for
5 you. And this is why the Barnett v. Strickland
6 ruling was so important. I am going to leave a
7 copy of the entire ruling with the committee
8 before I leave today, I think that it is
9 applicable in this case, in which that it
10 allows this Legislature to draw the types of
11 compact districts that these Fair Districts
12 amendments have put you under the onus of
13 having to follow. And I think that these
14 district boundaries can be drawn, and can be
15 drawn fairly.

16 I do not envy your job, particularly in
17 congressional districts in which you have to
18 put 697,345 people in one congressional
19 district, and you have to do that 27 times. So
20 I don't envy your job one bit.

21 I commend you. I believe that this
22 committee is doing the right thing by taking
23 public input, and I believe that if they will
24 take what the people are saying and apply those
25 beliefs and those feelings that we have, not

1 only as communities, but as Americans, I think
2 you will find that we will have better
3 congressional districts, we will have better
4 state House districts and we will have better
5 Senate districts. And we will have districts
6 in which the public debate becomes something
7 that, instead of dividing us, brings us
8 together and allows us to vote and elect
9 representatives of our choice which best
10 represents the views that we have and beliefs
11 that we have as Americans, and we can end once
12 and for all these racial divisions that have
13 continually seemed to infect our population.
14 Let's face it, we all love America.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Yost, I
16 am going to ask you to try to wrap it up there.

17 MR. YOST: Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
19 very much, sir. Appreciate your comments.

20 MR. YOST: Thank you very much.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
22 Mr. Yost. Next up we have Tammy Hardin.
23 Following Tammy Hardin, we have Barbara
24 Wisnosky.

25 MS. HARDIN: How lucky am I to draw the

1 second one, right?

2 First, thanks for allowing the voters the
3 opportunity to voice our opinions and concerns
4 about redistricting. I am a St. Johns County
5 resident, and I would like to remark on
6 District 19, if I may.

7 According to the last census, District 19
8 needs to shed about 19,000 voters, while
9 District 16 needs to add a little bit over
10 16,000. In my opinion, the best and most
11 practical solution seems to be making the
12 geographical boundary to the north end of
13 District 19 at I-295. The trade-off almost
14 balances.

15 Here is my fear: That the Township of
16 South Mandarin, Fleming Island and Julington
17 Creek, and even parts of IGP, which is
18 International Golf Parkway, becomes disrupted
19 if any other option comes to the table. Having
20 a son who participates in Creeks Lacrosse and
21 Mandarin sports, and a husband who coached, I
22 know there is a sharing of resources in that
23 area, in District 19, like sports fields and
24 sponsorships for athletic programs.

25 A disruption could have also an economic

1 impact on the district. I will stick to sports
2 as an example. Just about a month ago, Fleming
3 Island held the lacrosse tournament, which had
4 an estimated impact on District 19 of over two
5 million dollars. District 19 cannot afford to
6 lose those businesses that support us, and, in
7 turn, we support them. The kids not only play
8 sports together, they attend schools, both
9 public and private. We shouldn't separate this
10 township and community that has been built
11 around not just sports, but businesses. The
12 redistricting board should do whatever it can
13 to preserve this working, thriving township
14 that has developed over the past years.
15 Families play sports together, shop and eat all
16 within their district, and it should stay that
17 way.

18 I know what happens personally when you
19 break up townships. Just within our school
20 district, there was a battle not too long ago
21 where we were separated by a road, and I know
22 the upheaval it caused, and I would like to
23 preserve District 19.

24 In short, since all these areas share in
25 so much, the district boundaries which affect

1 representation should mirror the community.

2 Thanks for your consideration.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
4 very much, Ms. Hardin.

5 Next up we have Barbara Wisnosky, followed
6 by Ms. Helen Ludwig with the League of Women
7 Voters.

8 MS. WISNOSKY: Good afternoon. Tammy
9 Hardin and I are actual neighbors in our St.
10 Johns community, and we both feel very strongly
11 about how we live in a big town/small town.
12 Our community of St. Johns County, District 19,
13 consists of South Mandarin, Julington Creek,
14 County Road 210, and we have the International
15 Golf Parkway. And I can say I am a PTO mom and
16 I have been business liaison for our school for
17 the last almost four years, and when I go
18 looking at fundraisers and donations from local
19 businesses, I go to every single one of those
20 areas within our county, and they view the
21 schools in the area as one big community. We
22 are one tight community. We go back and we
23 thank all our businesses and we think of them
24 as our sponsors for this one tight area that we
25 participate in. Our children do go to the same

1 athletic activities, we shop in the same area
2 and it is all familiar faces.

3 It would be very disruptive to our
4 neighborhoods if we were divided, and as Tammy
5 stated, our proposal is that we cut off the
6 northern part of the county, 295 corridor, and
7 that would probably alleviate roughly 19,000
8 residents, and which District 16 needs probably
9 in that area, 16,000 plus residents. So that
10 would be a solution to both our districts.
11 And, again, that would be the least disruptive.
12 It would allow students in our community to
13 participate in the athletic activities that we
14 have, especially in Julington Creek. And
15 basically we would very much appreciate you
16 taking our comments seriously. And, again,
17 talking from a -- just a parent, a PTO mom who
18 really values our beautiful area, thank you,
19 and thank you for hearing our comments and our
20 recommendations. We appreciate it.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
22 very much, Ms. Wisnosky.

23 Next up we have Ms. Helen Ludwig with the
24 League of Women Voters. Following Ms. Ludwig
25 will be our Congresswoman here, Corrine Brown.

1 While we are waiting for Ms. Ludwig to get up
2 there, I just want to mention earlier Mr. Yost
3 talked specifically about some court cases, and
4 there is a website you can go to,
5 Floridareistricting.org, that will provide a
6 the lot of that background and information. So
7 for those of you who heard about those court
8 cases, or any other information you hear about
9 today, most of it can be found on-line at
10 Floridareistricting.org. I just want to point
11 that out.

12 Mrs. Ludwig, you are recognized. Thank
13 you for being here.

14 MS. LUDWIG: Thank you, and I didn't take
15 as long as you thought I would.

16 Am I missing something? Is there some
17 reason why we are behind Arkansas, Colorado,
18 Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota,
19 Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada and Oklahoma in
20 completing or almost completing the maps for
21 redistricting? Is there some reason why you
22 doubt the intelligence of we, the citizens,
23 when we overwhelmingly passed Constitutional
24 Amendments 5 and 6? Does it seem right to you
25 to use our tax money to fight against complying

1 with 5 and 6? Does it seem right that you may
2 not have drawn the new districts in time for
3 the candidates to know which district they
4 should file for and campaign for the 2012
5 election?

6 I guess that after you have studied the
7 answers to these and other questions, we may
8 know just what thinking process you were using
9 to justify all this. Thank you very much.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
11 very much, Ms. Ludwig.

12 Next up we have Congresswoman Corrine
13 Brown. Congresswoman, thank you very much for
14 being here. We are grateful for your presence
15 and look forward to hearing from you. You are
16 recognized.

17 CONGRESSWOMAN BROWN: Thank you very much,
18 and thank you all for having this listening
19 tour prior to making a decision of how you are
20 going to draw the districts.

21 I represent the Third Congressional
22 District of Florida, and I got to say it is
23 probably the most popular district, not just in
24 Florida, but the entire country, and so, you
25 know, I wonder why, because I look at some of

1 the other districts, it is not the -- I don't
2 have more counties than anybody else, you know,
3 I have nine. There are several districts that
4 have more than nine. The numbers are the same.

5 But the most important thing I want to
6 point out is that -- the law of the land, you
7 know. When you listen and -- to people talk,
8 you would think that I drew the district. The
9 district was drawn based on the 1965 Voting
10 Rights Act. And so I want to submit to the
11 record the votes of the members that
12 participate in the '65 Voting Right Act, and
13 that is the basis of, you know, how people
14 voted. And Florida has always been kind of
15 progressive, because during that time, we had
16 13 members. Seven of them voted against it and
17 six voted for it. And so -- but I can report
18 that all of the members voted to re-enact the
19 Voting Rights Act, all of the members of the
20 congressional delegation, which I think is very
21 important.

22 Let me tell you something. You all were
23 talking about the beaches. I don't represent
24 the beaches. When America have a cold, the
25 African-American community have pneumonia. We

1 have a high unemployment rate. And it is very
2 important that we remain in the room. I feel
3 very strongly about that. Basically I want to
4 put in the record -- where is -- where is -- I
5 have something that I want to give you. Ken,
6 where is it? Okay. Where is the book? I want
7 to give you a copy of the book. This book is
8 America -- *Black America in Congress from 1870*
9 *to 2007*, and there was a period of 28 years
10 when the United States Congress went dark,
11 meaning it was no African-Americans in
12 Congress. For Florida, it was 129 years when I
13 got elected.

14 I am committed that we will never go dark
15 again in the United States Congress, never.
16 And it is not just about the congressional
17 seat, because when you draw the congressional,
18 you draw the House, you draw the Senate, you
19 draw the school boards, you draw city council.
20 So everything is based on how you draw those
21 districts based on communities of interest.

22 And so I feel very strongly that the
23 paramount reason that when you start drawing,
24 that you consider communities of interest. I
25 am putting in the record the fact is how those

1 members -- you talked about Georgia, Florida,
2 the different states, how they voted in '65 and
3 how they voted to date, the last time we voted,
4 and I want to tell you, the reason -- one of
5 the reasons why they passed the 1965 Voting
6 Rights Act is because there was not one single
7 African-American in the southern states, all 11
8 of them. Now ten of them have had at least one
9 representation, one, but the rest of them had
10 absolutely none. To date, Arkansas still have
11 never elected an African-American. It was 129
12 years since we elected one, and that one was
13 from Gainesville. We will never go back.

14 It is very important when you draw
15 districts -- and let me clear something up for
16 my friends in the room. I want to elect
17 Democrats; in fact, I wouldn't care if all 27
18 of them was Democrats. Not quite true, I want
19 a few Republicans, but we got too many in
20 Washington right now. But the point is, that
21 is not what we are talking about. What we are
22 talking about is including the principles of
23 the 1965 Voting Rights Act when you draw those
24 districts. Yes, we have come a long way. I
25 know we all are excited that the fact that we

1 have an African-American as President. Well,
2 he didn't carry none of those southern states.
3 So keep in mind -- well, Florida don't think
4 they are a southern state, and I don't either,
5 but the point is -- but the point is that we've
6 got to make sure that when we draw districts,
7 that we consider the law. And nothing has
8 changed as far as the voting rights is
9 concerned, we just re-enacted it, and we did it
10 for 25 years after having hearings all over the
11 country because there was a need.

12 And so with that, that is my position
13 on -- as you draw districts, and we will be
14 monitoring it, and certainly, you know, a lot
15 of people wanted to imply that I have something
16 to do with drawing the districts. I haven't
17 been in Tallahassee in almost 20 years, so
18 clearly I have not had anything to do with
19 drawing of the districts.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
21 Congresswoman.

22 CONGRESSWOMAN BROWN: The districts have
23 been -- you drew the districts based on the
24 law. Thank you.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you

1 very much. Thank you very much for your
2 comments.

3 I apologize, I didn't read the name after
4 Congresswoman, but it is Mr. Jim Last. Jim,
5 you are up, and after Mr. Last, I apologize, I
6 cannot read the last name here, but the first
7 name, I believe, is Marcie. If that is right,
8 if there is a Marcie here, you are next, and
9 you are from Fernandina Beach, and we will try
10 to get to you next, but until then, Mr. Last,
11 you are recognized. Thank you for being here,
12 sir.

13 MR. LAST: Thanks. I just want to say
14 that John Thrasher is my Senator, and very
15 happy to have him, but the main thought I want
16 to get across here is that I would like to see
17 Nassau County be whole. When you redistrict, I
18 would like to see Nassau County be in one
19 district, not separated beach from the west
20 side.

21 I also wanted to say that I really -- and
22 this is so wonderful to get to follow Corrine
23 Brown for this -- I really think that
24 gerrymandering is bad for all reasons, and I do
25 not want you to do it. One of the things that

1 Mike Yost said about the Supreme Court ruling,
2 or one of the rulings, on the reason for
3 gerrymandering districts was that, you know,
4 you couldn't feel like white people would vote
5 for a minority. I think we can safely throw
6 that out the window now as a reason to
7 gerrymander.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
9 very much, sir.

10 Next up, Ms. Marcie, it could be Mary, I
11 apologize. Is it Mary? Okay. No problem, no
12 problem. You are recognized. Thank you very
13 much for being here.

14 After Ms. Mary, we've got Sherry Behning.
15 Sherry, you will be next.

16 You are recognized.

17 MS. DOWNEY: Thank you very much, and
18 thank you very distinguished representatives,
19 my wonderful Senator Thrasher, my State
20 Representative, Janet Adkins.

21 We are here -- I wish to echo Jim Last's
22 comments and to say that we are all Americans
23 and we come from Nassau County, and our mission
24 is to keep it whole. So thank you again for
25 all of your time in giving up your summer for

1 us. Thank you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
3 very much.

4 Next up we have Ms. Sherry Behning,
5 followed by Katie Ross. Ms. Sherry, thank you
6 for being here. You are recognized.

7 MS. BEHNING: I appreciate you holding
8 these hearings ahead of time. It is very
9 important to me that you hear our voices, and I
10 believe you are.

11 I have lived in beautiful Clay County for
12 37 years. When I first came here, we were the
13 bedroom of Jacksonville, and over the time, I
14 have seen Clay County develop into its own
15 unique county, style, culture. We are a
16 community. No matter where we think Clay
17 County, we are of like mind, we want the same
18 things. We want certain things taken care of
19 within our community.

20 I believe that Clay County should be held
21 as a county, as one spot, keeping really
22 distinct boundaries, not dividing gated
23 communities and neighborhoods, because we are
24 so much on the same like mind.

25 I work in one of the biggest retail

1 salers -- stores in our community, and I can't
2 tell you how many times I have heard people
3 talk about we really need to have one voice,
4 one person, that we can feel like represents
5 us, Clay County. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
7 very much.

8 Next up we have Ms. Katie Ross, followed
9 by Linda Storey.

10 MS. ROSS: Thank you, ladies and
11 gentlemen, for allowing us to speak today, and
12 I want to thank also everyone in the audience
13 for caring so much about this issue.

14 My name is Katie Ross, and I am the
15 President of the League of Women Voters,
16 Jacksonville First Coast. The League of Women
17 Voters seeks to improve our systems of
18 government and impact public policy through
19 education and advocacy.

20 For the past 70 years, the League of Women
21 Voters has been working on the issue of
22 redistricting here in Florida. It is one of
23 the first issues we brought to the Florida
24 Legislature. There have been four petition
25 drives over the past years, and last November,

1 Amendments 5 and 6 were on the ballot, and they
2 passed by 63 percent.

3 The League worked with the coalition of
4 organizations, including the NAACP and
5 democracy to advocate on behalf of the
6 amendments.

7 Up until this past November, there have
8 been no rules in terms of redistricting. Now
9 there are guidelines, simple, simple
10 straight-forward rules as to how districts
11 should be drawn.

12 That being said, I urge you and your staff
13 to draw these districts as soon as you can.
14 The proposed timeline has the Legislature
15 reviewing the maps and voting the second week
16 of March. This does not leave enough time for
17 candidates to file for office, mount their
18 campaigns, accommodate a constructive review
19 process and any litigation that might occur.
20 We urge you to draw these maps soon and review
21 them in committee in the fall. That way, the
22 Legislature can vote on them the first week of
23 session, giving candidates plenty of time to
24 file and mount their campaigns. In the words
25 of one of your own attorneys, the current

1 timeline will cause chaos and voter confusion.

2 The Legislature says they want to honor
3 the voice of the people, and we appreciate
4 that, but I do ask you to stop using taxpayers'
5 money to fight redistricting in court. These
6 amendments were passed by 63 percent of Florida
7 voters. Stop these lawsuits.

8 Finally, these hearings need to be
9 productive. Citizens are expressing their
10 opinions, and we want to know what is on your
11 mind, too. Again, I encourage you to draw
12 these maps in a timely manner, and I appreciate
13 you visiting our fair city, Jacksonville,
14 today. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
16 very much, Ms. Ross.

17 Ms. Linda Storey, you are next, also with
18 the League of Women Voters, followed by Ben
19 Chavis. Ms. Storey.

20 MS. STOREY: Hi. Thank you again for
21 being here.

22 The most important thing I feel is that
23 the districts be contiguous. The communication
24 with your elected people is the most important
25 thing. Some districts have so much spaces in

1 terms of miles, that it is very hard to keep in
2 touch. I know you have -- it must be fair, not
3 only for the number of people, but also for the
4 amount of miles that each representative has to
5 represent. Sixty-three percent of the voters
6 voted for this, so I appreciate your efforts in
7 making it fair for the people and doing it in a
8 timely manner for the candidates that are
9 trying to run for the next election. Thank
10 you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
12 very much.

13 Mr. Chavis, you are recognized, sir,
14 followed by Mr. Spencer Meeks. Thank you for
15 being here.

16 MR. CHAVIS: Thank you. I am a resident
17 of Broward County. I have been involved in the
18 civil rights movement in the United States for
19 over 50 years. The Voting Rights Act was not
20 just enacted by the Congress of the United
21 States, but it came as a consequence of a lot
22 of sacrifice, a lot of struggle.

23 When each of you introduced yourselves at
24 the beginning of the hearing, I said to myself,
25 Florida is a very diverse state. I want to

1 thank you for having us here.

2 At the end of the day, it will be the map,
3 the map that we started with and the map that
4 you end with. The outcome of the new map
5 should reflect the growing diversity of the
6 state of Florida. It should not reflect less
7 diversity. It should reflect more diversity.

8 I am hoping, and I appeal to each of you
9 who are decision-makers in the state
10 Legislature that the redistricting not only
11 ought to be fair, but it ought to be
12 representative of the increased diversity of
13 the state of Florida.

14 Earlier a speaker mentioned race and
15 politics. I noticed some people kind of shook
16 their heads, but I don't think we should fear
17 what happened in the past, and I don't think we
18 should fear the future. Racial diversity is
19 not -- or should not be a huge hurdle. It
20 should be seen as a blessing. Some of you
21 introduced yourself saying, "I represent God's
22 district." This ought to be God's state, and
23 in God's state, all of God's children ought to
24 be treated fairly, without discrimination of
25 race, without discrimination of any other

1 barrier.

2 What we are hoping is that at the end of
3 the day, the new redistricting in the State of
4 Florida would not have any regression, would
5 not have less minorities being in the House or
6 being in the Congress of the United States. We
7 should start there. The congressional
8 districts should not be less minority
9 representation. They should be more.

10 We celebrate the journey that Florida has
11 just arrived. Let's move forward and not move
12 backwards.

13 The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is still the
14 law of the land as amended. The reason why
15 there are a lot of court cases, somebody made
16 reference, is because there are continuing
17 attempts to dismantle the Voting Rights Act,
18 and that is why the federal courts are
19 available to protect citizens' rights.

20 I commend this committee, and I hope and
21 pray that the state Legislature will do what is
22 right, and that is to pass and put a new map up
23 that will be more reflective of the diversity
24 and of the journey of the State of Florida to
25 insure equal voting rights for all of its

1 citizens.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
3 very much, Mr. Chavis.

4 Next we have Mr. Spencer Meeks, Jr.,
5 followed by Andrew Curtin with the Nassau
6 Patriots Tea Party. You are recognized, sir.

7 MR. MEEKS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
8 First of all, I don't have a lot of statistics
9 to give you, but I want to just say two things.

10 One thing, I want to acknowledge our
11 Congresswoman, Corrine Brown, because I know
12 how dedicated she has been for equality in the
13 state of Florida. I know how hard she has
14 worked so many years to see that every
15 individual had a chance to be what they wanted
16 to be in the state of Florida.

17 Secondly, I would like to ask this board,
18 this committee here, to think about our future
19 and the future we are coming, that we have to
20 face that we do not leave an example of going
21 backwards. Whatever we do, let it be a
22 progress made forward, so that instead of
23 losing delegation, instead of losing
24 minorities, that we do all we can to build a
25 bridge to make and create more position for

1 minorities. Thank you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
3 Mr. Meeks.

4 Next up we have Andrew Curtin. After
5 Mr. Curtin will be Barbara Engle. Mr. Curtin
6 is with the Nassau Tea Party Patriots. Thank
7 you for being here, sir.

8 MR. CURTIN: Good afternoon. Thank you
9 very much for holding this meeting.

10 I am speaking as a long-time resident of
11 Nassau County. I would like to reemphasize
12 what Mr. Last and Ms. Downey said about the
13 integrity of Nassau County and the
14 redistricting process. We are located at the
15 far end of the state, and any events where we
16 get fragmented into multiple districts, I feel
17 that we lose the effectiveness of our
18 representation both at the state level and the
19 congressional level. So I would urge you,
20 whatever the redistricting process requires,
21 that the county be held -- because of the way
22 it is structured and the population -- be held
23 intact throughout the redistricting process.
24 Thank you.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,

1 sir.

2 Ms. Barbara Engle is next, followed by
3 Raymond Chute.

4 MS. ENGLE: Good afternoon. Thank you for
5 this opportunity. I am here as a concerned
6 citizen and as an active member of the
7 Northeast Florida Chapter of the American Civil
8 Liberties Union.

9 The process and the hearings have been
10 troubling to me, and I am trying to understand
11 the process as best I can. I don't understand
12 why it takes so long to develop the maps. You
13 have had information from the census for
14 months. And I heard your comments earlier
15 prior to this portion of the meeting, but I
16 really don't feel that this is a conversation.
17 I would like to be able to meet and talk to
18 some of the people who will be running to
19 represent me, but you have to draw the maps and
20 draw the districts to let me know who they are.
21 I am looking forward to you making those maps,
22 to present it to the public to start a
23 conversation; otherwise, I am afraid we are
24 just wasting everyone's time.

25 The new rules overwhelmingly approved by

1 the voters last November mean that you can't
2 make a district to favor any political party.
3 I am troubled that so many of you opposed,
4 fought and continue to fight these
5 voter-approved fair district rules. Please
6 don't confuse fair districts with minority
7 districts. Remember, the Florida House's own
8 special council on redistricting told this
9 committee on April 28th that the intent of the
10 Fair District amendments is to enhance minority
11 protections beyond what is provided in the
12 Voting Rights Act. In fact, if followed
13 correctly, the Fair District amendments should
14 lead to more diversity and more districts being
15 represented by minorities, not fewer, by
16 placing significant numbers of minority voters
17 in more districts throughout the state rather
18 than the existing super-majorities that exist
19 in just a few districts.

20 Keep in mind that not only were the Fair
21 District amendments approved by 63 percent of
22 Florida's voters, they were also supported by
23 the state's leading civil and voting rights
24 groups: The NAACP, ACLU and League of Women
25 Voters as examples.

1 Why are you spending my money and that of
2 other Florida taxpayers to undermine my vote
3 and the vote of the overwhelming majority of
4 Floridians for a fair reapportionment process
5 and fairer districts? Maybe it would be better
6 to stop spending money on lawyers and just draw
7 fair maps. Thank you very much for hearing me
8 out.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
10 Ms. Engle.

11 Next up we have Mr. Raymond Chute. After
12 Mr. Chute, we have Thomas Watson. You are
13 recognized, sir.

14 MR. CHUTE: Thank you, sir, and I would
15 like to thank the committee for holding these
16 hearings so that everyone can have a chance to
17 voice their opinions.

18 I would like to refer back to this lady
19 over here that lived on Fleming Island and
20 spoke about living there 35 years. Well, I
21 have been living -- she said 37. I have been
22 living there 35 years. And, unfortunately, I
23 live on the east side of Pine Avenue, which
24 runs down Fleming Island, and I am not in the
25 same congressional district as everyone else

1 who lives on Fleming Island. My daughter lives
2 on the other side of Pine Avenue, about a
3 quarter of a mile from me, and she has a
4 different Congressperson than I do.

5 Now, I can tell by looking at that and
6 after having read about it for so many years
7 that many of these districts are gerrymandered
8 to force a particular result whenever people
9 are voting. I don't think that gerrymandering
10 is a fair way of doing things. I think there
11 -- I agree with the lady about fair districts,
12 but I don't know that we are all -- when we say
13 "fair," I didn't know that we all have the same
14 definition.

15 I would like to see the redistricting maps
16 drawn so that they use -- make use of natural
17 boundaries, county line boundaries, city
18 boundaries, river boundaries, that sort of
19 thing, in so far as possible. I recognize it
20 can't happen totally in all cases, but it
21 should be something that is reasonable and
22 sensible, not this meandering district running
23 through Fleming Island.

24 Thank you for your attention.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,

1 sir. We appreciate your comments.

2 Next up we have Thomas Watson, followed by
3 Sandra Jones. Mr. Watson.

4 MR. WATSON: Thank you very much. I am
5 another member of Fleming Island, and I live on
6 that little tiny strip that runs from Duval
7 County all the way down to Putnam County is in
8 my case, where I live, about 2,000 feet wide,
9 and I am completely divorced from all the
10 things that I do in Clay County. I beg you to
11 please get rid of that little strip of shame
12 and give me some representation back. Thank
13 you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
15 Mr. Watson, and we always give bonus points to
16 brevity, sir, so thank you very much.

17 Next up we have Sandra Jones, followed by
18 Chris Chambless. Ms. Jones?

19 Okay. We like that even better than
20 brevity, so thank you very much. We appreciate
21 that, Ms. Jones.

22 We have Mr. Chris Chambless. After
23 Mr. Chambless, we are going to have James
24 Minion.

25 You are recognized, sir. Mr. Chambless is

1 with the Clay County Elections Office.

2 MR. CHAMBLESS: Good afternoon,
3 distinguished members of the committee. I
4 certainly want to speak to you as the
5 Supervisor of Elections of Clay County, as well
6 as the Florida State Association of Supervisors
7 of Elections, District 5, Board of Directors.
8 District 5 represents eight counties in
9 northeast Florida and nearly one million
10 registered voters.

11 To that point, over 20,000 of those
12 registered voters are overseas civilian and
13 military absentee voters who continue to foot
14 the bill of freedom of this great country.

15 This afternoon I wish to take a -- take
16 the discussion to a different area of concern
17 than has been discussed thus far, a discussion
18 which focuses more on the process, specifically
19 the time lines, then the districting lines
20 themselves. I am asking that greater
21 consideration is given to the time lines of
22 redistricting, and where possible, that the
23 process be expedited to allow more time to
24 adjust precinct lines to the new district
25 lines.

1 To conduct elections efficiently and
2 accurately, election officials need time to
3 adjust precinct lines to the new districts,
4 gain approval of those districts and precincts
5 by the Board of County Commissioners, secure
6 additional polling locations, notify all voters
7 well in advance of election day.

8 If the Legislature, the Attorney General,
9 Supreme Court and Justice Department all
10 complete their work on schedule, elections
11 administrators will have less than two weeks to
12 adjust the records of Florida's 11 million
13 voters before the first absentee ballot must be
14 mailed. The calendar provided by legislative
15 staff indicates that final Justice Department
16 review of the new districts will likely be
17 completed after candidate qualifying. That has
18 the potential of confusing candidates and
19 delaying ballot printing.

20 In addition to that, I wish to discuss the
21 district lines themselves. Please respect
22 communities when drawing your district lines.
23 For the first time, in my opinion, legislative
24 staff worked with elections office and census
25 officials to establish the Voting Tabulation

1 Districts, or VTDs, which take into
2 consideration intact communities, traffic
3 patterns, physical boundaries. Please adhere
4 to these lines wherever possible.

5 Currently in Clay County, there are 291
6 different representation splits, which each
7 require a different ballot style in a primary
8 election, 97 in a general election. The best
9 place to draw a district line is along the
10 county line. Please divide districts along the
11 county lines whenever possible.

12 While there is much attention to Florida's
13 meandering districts, there are many more
14 examples of small cities that are being
15 separated into three or four districts, or
16 gated communities with district lines running
17 right through them. The best way to avoid this
18 is by following those established VTD lines.

19 I certainly appreciate your commitment and
20 your long-standing interest in this process, as
21 it is very important. Thank you so very much.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
23 Mr. Chambless. We appreciate the input from
24 the elections office.

25 Next up we have Mr. James Minion from

1 Florida Prospers. After Mr. Minion, we have
2 Frank Farrell.

3 You are recognized, sir.

4 MR. MINION: Thank you very much, and I
5 would like to thank the entire committee for
6 appearing and touring the state in this way,
7 allow us all our input. But I will just simply
8 reiterate what many of the previous speakers
9 have said in that it was a super-majority of
10 Florida voters who did approve the Fair
11 District amendments for Congress and for state
12 Legislators. I would say that is a high
13 margin, it is a high standard, and I would say
14 it is tough to get elected with 63 percent,
15 don't you think?

16 So I think when I hear and I read things
17 about how the state at a time where Tallahassee
18 is telling us we cannot fund our schools, that
19 we are squirreling away millions and millions
20 of dollars to -- to attack these districts with
21 lawsuits or defend the maps that are drawn, it
22 just makes it seem like the process has gotten
23 off on the wrong foot, that you are kind of
24 preparing for the worst when you should be
25 engaged in doing the best.

1 And I would certainly concur with the
2 previous speaker that -- and some other
3 speakers that we do need -- as voters, we do
4 need a significant timeline. We have a
5 presidential election in the year coming up,
6 and the folks below that on the ticket have
7 enough trouble getting in front of their
8 constituents and their voters than to continue
9 to -- then to delay that timeline right up to
10 the -- right up to the horn, right up to the
11 gun, and it just doesn't allow us to even find
12 out who can run for the seats. We won't even
13 know who can run for the seats until you guys
14 are done. So we would appreciate the most
15 accelerated timeline you can provide.

16 And I would just also like to mention
17 something that is interesting, this for the
18 first time ever in the redistricting process,
19 we talk about a state that is slightly majority
20 Democrat, majority Republican in the House and
21 Senate, but what we have is a plurality now of
22 the fastest-growing party affiliation, which is
23 no party affiliation. We now have a couple of
24 million voters, about 22 percent of our
25 registered voters in the state are no party

1 affiliation. So I think that is something
2 important to keep in mind, I think, when you
3 are -- when you are putting the demographics
4 together in the districts. And, again, please
5 accelerate that timeline as fast as you can and
6 let's try to stay out of court. Thank you very
7 much.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
9 very much, Mr. Minion.

10 Next we have Frank Farrell, who is
11 followed by -- I believe it's Arie Rodriguez,
12 could be Annie Rodriguez, I apologize if I
13 misstated that.

14 But, Frank, you are up. Thank you, sir.

15 MR. FARRELL: Good afternoon. My name is
16 Frank Farrell, and I live in Orange Park,
17 Florida. I have the privilege of serving as
18 the current Chairman of the Clay County School
19 Board, as Vice-Chairman of the Northeast
20 Coalition of School Boards, and on the Board of
21 Directors of the Clay County Educational
22 Foundation. In addition to that, I serve on a
23 number of other community-based boards and
24 committees. Thank you for the opportunity to
25 address the redistricting of the Florida

1 legislation.

2 As you know, Clay County is currently
3 represented in the House by five
4 representatives, Ms. Adkins and Messrs.
5 Weinstein, Daniels, Van Zant and Proctor, and
6 in the Senate by Mr. Wise and Ms. Lynn.

7 Clay County has its own unique
8 personality, if you will. We are urban and
9 very rural, spread over 661 square miles. Our
10 perspective, values, outlook and character are
11 old Florida, influenced, of course, by new
12 arrivals, and largely influenced by the number
13 of military, both active duty and retired. We
14 are fiercely patriotic and very supportive of
15 our military. Clay County folks are
16 conservative, church-going and family-oriented.
17 You will see these values celebrated at the
18 Clay County Fair, recently at our Fourth of
19 July celebrations throughout the county, and
20 literally in every observance of every holiday
21 throughout the year.

22 Now, we enjoy our proximity to
23 Jacksonville and Duval County and everything
24 that that has to offer by way of recreation,
25 sports, theater, restaurants, shopping, and, of

1 course, the beaches. We do not have a beach.
2 The pace is vibrant, sometimes too much so, but
3 always exciting.

4 As communities, we share many of the same
5 problems and many of the same challenges.
6 Others are unique to our own community.

7 There is a risk, and that risk is that
8 Clay County's issues and concerns and needs
9 could -- could become sublimated to those of
10 Duval County.

11 I would hope that Clay County citizens are
12 an important part and percentage of each and
13 every newly redrawn district, preserving our
14 perspective, our values, our outlook. The
15 voice of Clay County with responsive
16 representation in Tallahassee is my message and
17 my request to the Legislature. Thank you very
18 much.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
20 Mr. Farrell.

21 Next up we have Annie Rodriguez, followed
22 by Lynn Watson.

23 I would like to take just a brief moment
24 to let everybody know where we are. We are
25 looking at 3:05. This is our 21st speaker. We

1 have just about 55 or 56 speakers, so were are
2 on a very tight time frame. I would ask you to
3 please try to keep your comments within three
4 minutes, and just so everyone knows, we will be
5 back at 6:00, 6:00 to 8:00, so if we do not get
6 to everyone, it will carry forward to the next
7 hearing.

8 But with that, Ms. Annie, you are
9 recognized. Thank you.

10 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Thank you for
11 this opportunity. I moved to Jacksonville
12 about three and a half years ago, so I am
13 fairly new to the area.

14 When I hear us talk about the minority
15 community, that word really makes me tense. I
16 want to say if -- when we refer to the minority
17 community, I am assuming we are talking about
18 the people of color. If we were all to come
19 together, all those people that we keep calling
20 minority, will we truly be the minority? I
21 want to put that out there.

22 What I want to say is in the
23 redistricting, a lot of us are talking about
24 diversity, and I want to -- for you all to
25 consider the Latino/Hispanic community when you

1 are looking at the redistricting, especially
2 with the statistics showing that so many of us
3 are moving down south.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
5 very much.

6 Okay. We have Lynn Watson. Ms. Watson is
7 followed by Carolyn Woods from the Atlantic --
8 who is an Atlantic Beach commissioner.

9 You are recognized, Ms. Watson.

10 MS. WATSON: I -- in the sake of brevity,
11 I will say just very few things.

12 One, I am a resident of Fleming Island,
13 the east side. Across the street is a totally
14 different district.

15 Fleming Island, a sliver of Orange Park,
16 the sliver of Fleming Island and the portion of
17 Green Cove Springs, all in Clay County, to
18 use -- to speak of Ms. Congresswoman Brown's
19 commonality of interest, it does not exist in
20 that sliver. We would like to be in Clay
21 County as one district. Thank you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
23 Carolyn Woods, who is -- I should say
24 Commissioner Woods is next up, and after
25 Commissioner Woods, we will have Tamara

1 Pendleton.

2 Commissioner, you are recognized. Thank
3 you for being here.

4 COMMISSIONER WOODS: Thank you very much.
5 I want to thank all of you for coming out,
6 participating in this and allowing all of the
7 citizens to come and speak.

8 I agree with a lot of what has been said
9 today, and I just want to add one brief comment
10 to the subject of Amendments 5 and 6, and that
11 is basically that I feel it is one thing for
12 the people to sue the government, but it is
13 quite another for the government to sue its
14 people, and I am hoping that all of these
15 workshops and public gatherings are your good
16 faith effort to move forward with Amendments 5
17 and 6. Thank you very much.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

19 Ms. Tamara Pendleton, and after
20 Ms. Pendleton, we have Benetta Standly with the
21 ACLU of Northeast Florida.

22 You are recognized.

23 MS. PENDLETON: Hi, Tammy Pendleton with
24 the Nassau County Supervisor of Elections
25 Office. Thank you for the opportunity to speak

1 today.

2 On behalf of the Florida State Association
3 of Supervisors of Elections and the Nassau
4 County Supervisor of Elections Office, Vicki P.
5 Cannon, Supervisor of Elections, we would like
6 to submit the following input for inclusion in
7 the record: We echo the two important areas
8 and consideration regarding the redistricting
9 process, the first one being time. In order to
10 conduct successful elections in 2012, election
11 officials do need time to complete the required
12 tasks. To conduct elections efficiently and
13 accurately, election officials need time to
14 adjust the precinct lines to new districts,
15 gain approval of those precincts by the Board
16 of County Commissioners and notify voters well
17 in advance of election day. If the
18 Legislature, Attorney General, Supreme Court
19 and Justice Department all complete their work
20 on schedule, administrators will have less than
21 two weeks to adjust the records of Florida's
22 11 million voters before the first absentee
23 ballots must be mailed. The calendar provided
24 by legislative staff indicates that final
25 Justice Department review of new districts will

1 likely be completed after candidate qualifying.
2 This has the potential, of which you have
3 heard, that it could be confusing to candidates
4 and delay ballot printing.

5 As you are aware, there are many
6 activities that go into preparing for elections
7 after the redistricting process: Notifying
8 voters, securing polling locations, voting
9 equipment programming, typesetting ballots,
10 preparation and mailing of absentee ballots,
11 the law requires mailing 45 days prior to the
12 election to uniform service voters and overseas
13 voters who have requested absentee ballots, and
14 training poll workers are just a few. It is
15 our mission to ensure that the voters are
16 well-informed and prepared for the voting
17 process, and that the integrity of the voting
18 process is protected.

19 The second most important area, district
20 lines. Please respect communities when you do
21 draw the district lines. We greatly appreciate
22 that for this redistricting process,
23 legislative staff worked with election and
24 census officials to establish Voting Tabulation
25 Districts which take into consideration intact

1 communities, traffic patterns and physical
2 barriers. We respectfully request that you
3 adhere to these lines whenever possible.
4 Traffic -- I'm sorry. Much time and thought
5 was invested so that the best possible product
6 could be produced to assist in the
7 redistricting and election processes.

8 While there is much attention to Florida's
9 meandering districts, there are many more
10 examples of small cities being separated into
11 three or four districts, or gated communities
12 with district lines running right through them.
13 The best to avoid this is by following the
14 Voting Tabulation District lines. The best
15 place to draw the line, a district line, is
16 along county line. Please divide districts
17 along county lines whenever possible.

18 Again, thank you for the opportunity to
19 speak with you today and to provide our input
20 into the process.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

22 Ms. Standly, thank you very much for being
23 here with the ACLU of the northeast region.

24 Followed by Ms. Standly, we will have
25 Vincent Schuppert.

1 MS. STANDLY: Good afternoon. So my name
2 is Benetta Standly. I am with the ACLU of
3 Florida. I want to welcome those of you in the
4 Legislature who are not from Duval County here
5 to Jacksonville. Glad to have you. So I will
6 make my remarks very brief. I am going to
7 touch five quick points.

8 One, we need to protect minority
9 districts; two, you need to follow the will of
10 the voters; three, I need to know that this
11 process is deeply flawed; and also you need to
12 stop being wasteful of taxpayers' monies, and
13 you need to show me a map, quite frankly.

14 So as you know, Amendments 5 and 6
15 actually added minority voting rights
16 protections into the Florida Constitution. It
17 had never been there before. So it actually
18 adds two provisions of the Florida -- the
19 Federal Voting Rights Act.

20 However, we need information from you as
21 our elected officials on how many
22 majority/minority districts exist in Florida.
23 Where are they located and how will your map
24 address those? You all have a legal obligation
25 to make sure that minority voters have the

1 opportunity to elect the persons that they
2 choose.

3 Secondly, the new rules for drawing
4 legislative boundaries have been overwhelmingly
5 approved by the Florida voters. As you know,
6 nearly 63 percent of Floridians, including
7 myself, agreed to amend our Florida
8 Constitution so that no political party would
9 be favored. We need you, the Florida
10 Legislature, to follow these rules. We elected
11 you. You have to follow the rules we set
12 forward.

13 Quite frankly, I am disappointed that many
14 in our state Legislature are not trying to
15 follow the rules. You are simply opposing them
16 and you are fighting them.

17 Three, the political party in charge,
18 quite frankly, who will be drawing the maps, is
19 probably likely to draw lines that favor
20 themselves. That is absolutely not okay. The
21 entire purpose of Amendments 5 and 6 was that
22 voters choose the politicians, not the other
23 way around. This is not -- this is supposed to
24 be a fair and nonpartisan process. We do not
25 want fake public hearings. We do not want

1 shady back-room deals. We want a fair process.

2 Four, please stop wasting my taxpayer
3 dollars. Stop wasting our dollars and stop
4 undermining our vote and our voice, and just
5 draw the maps. It is just that simple, draw
6 good maps, draw fair maps, and perhaps the
7 lawsuits will cease.

8 Finally, my last point is, with all due
9 respect, where are the maps? This is not a
10 real conversation. You bring us here, you
11 invite public comment and you give us nothing
12 to comment on. You have had this data from the
13 census for many months. You need to bring
14 something forward and stop wasting time. There
15 are people who are going to run for office.
16 They don't even know what district they are in.
17 They can't even campaign. We need to speed
18 this process up.

19 So, again, this isn't a conversation, and
20 quite frankly, I see it as this traveling tour
21 around the state on my taxpayer dime.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
23 Ms. Standly, for your comments, and a lot of
24 the questions that were brought forth I believe
25 Senator Gaetz is going to address at the end of

1 the hearing if they are not addressed before
2 that. So thank you very much for your
3 comments, and next up we have Mr. Schuppert,
4 retired from the United States Navy. Sir,
5 thank you for your service and thank you for
6 being here today.

7 MR. SCHUPPERT: Proud to be here. I am an
8 Orange Park resident of 29 years. I live along
9 the river with a one block neck of Congress,
10 U.S. Congress District 3, which was
11 gerrymandered to connect Jacksonville all the
12 way to Gainesville and Ocala. Unfortunately, I
13 now feel unrepresented. And if you reflect
14 just a little bit, my Congresswoman addressed
15 all of us a little bit earlier, very proud of
16 speaking about her representation of the
17 minority. Unfortunately, she never talked
18 about representing me. And so, therefore, I
19 feel, quite frankly, unrepresented, and that is
20 too bad.

21 The gerrymandered district has absolutely
22 no logical boundaries, and I am talking
23 Congressional District 3. We are symmetry in
24 its creation.

25 I have this suggestion for you in creating

1 the map, and that is we've got some fine
2 Florida universities, hand the project to them
3 and let them design and lay out the map. Thank
4 you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
6 Mr. Schuppert. We appreciate your comments and
7 your ideas.

8 Next up we have Dee Lansford, I believe.
9 Ms. Dee, thank you very much, and followed by
10 Ms. Lansford will be Marge Hutton.

11 MS. LANSFORD: Thank you so very much for
12 coming and seeing us, giving us your ideas and
13 allowing us to give you ours.

14 I am from Orange Park, I live there and
15 have since 1964. We are a unique, and I am
16 sure all of us for every county, our counties
17 are unique. They belong to us, and that is the
18 way we look at them.

19 We have been growing and we are looking
20 forward to where we don't have to borrow
21 representation from one of our neighboring
22 counties. But the last -- we gave you -- you
23 are borrowing our Lieutenant Governor, Jennifer
24 Carroll, and I've got a wonderful replacement
25 for him, so I can't really fuss at you about

1 that, but, anyway, it is just, you know, we
2 want to be our own people, we want to be our
3 own selves. I think we are strong enough to do
4 that, and I think our neighbors will help us as
5 we help them. And a lot of times people will
6 say, "Hey, I was elected because of Clay
7 County," so -- and a lot of you, I recognize
8 your face right now.

9 Remember us when you put your maps
10 together. Let us know, and let us know more
11 what we can do for you as well. We put you
12 there, but we need to keep giving you our input
13 so you will know what we want you to do. Thank
14 you very much.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
16 Ms. Dee.

17 Next up we have Ms. Marge Hutton. After
18 Ms. Hutton, we have John Libby. Thank you for
19 being here.

20 MS. HUTTON: Hello, my name is Marge
21 Hutton, and I am a resident of Clay County and
22 Orange Park since 1975. My husband served 26
23 years with the United States Navy. I currently
24 sit as Town Councilwoman for the Town of Orange
25 Park, and I am also Chairman of the Clay County

1 Chamber of Commerce. So I bring a lot of
2 diverse reflections from Clay County.

3 I come today before you to say that we
4 have -- we request in your consideration to
5 consider Clay County with one voice, one
6 representation. We are a strong community. We
7 would ask that we have that reflection.

8 The next thing I would ask is please
9 didn't divide our community. We already heard
10 several people tell you how it has been divided
11 and has been for many years.

12 And then again, to echo the sooner rather
13 than later, not only for the consideration of
14 the people that are trying to run, but so that
15 the ballots get out in a timely manner, and
16 most importantly, so they get over to our
17 military that are asking for absentee ballots
18 so those votes can be counted, which are most
19 important.

20 And I thank you very much. I hope God
21 inspires you for the best opportunities and
22 decisions for the State of Florida. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
24 Thank you, thank you.

25 Next up we have Mr. Libby. Followed by

1 John Libby, we have Darryl Register.

2 MR. LIBBY: This is a plan that I
3 submitted on Friday to the Florida House. It
4 is 27 congressional districts. The deviation
5 in population from the largest district to the
6 smallest district is three people. There are
7 11 districts that are ideal population. None
8 of the districts are under the ideal
9 population. Using the Fair Districts
10 principles that the voters of the State of
11 Florida approved last year, this is one
12 configuration of how our congressional
13 districts could look after redistricting.

14 Starting first at the county level, then
15 moving to the Voting Tabulation District level,
16 and only where necessary to the block level, I
17 redistricted, keeping counties intact, not
18 splitting consolidated communities, and
19 generally trying to find the little bits and
20 pieces of population that we -- were needed in
21 rural areas where you can go for miles and only
22 pick up one or two individuals.

23 So, as I said, these districts are exactly
24 equal in population, and I would like to focus
25 the attention on the two northeast Florida

1 districts. If you take Nassau County, Clay
2 County, St. Johns County, Putnam County and
3 Duval County, you have almost ideal population
4 for two districts. You need to remove about 20
5 people from someplace along the lines to come
6 up with different districts, or with two ideal
7 districts. In any case, the two districts on
8 this map are Districts 4 and 5 for northeast
9 Florida.

10 Now, I will say this about the plan. It
11 is regressive. District -- what is currently
12 District 3 under this configuration, which only
13 encompasses three counties, two of which are
14 intact completely, is roughly 31 percent
15 African-American voting age population. But as
16 we have heard from the various speakers today,
17 this is really where we face the metal meets
18 the road here in Florida, where under the '65
19 Voting Rights Act we need to have minority
20 access, and that needs to be defined by this
21 committee and both houses in Tallahassee.

22 Secondly, the Department of Justice has
23 pre-cleared our two constitutional amendments,
24 but there is still -- Florida still has to have
25 a review when our congressional plans were put

1 in, but I felt that at least people should have
2 an opportunity here in north Florida today to
3 see what a potential Fair Districts type of
4 plan would look like in regards to the
5 congressional districts. And like I said, the
6 deviation among the 27 districts is only three
7 people, so I think it meets all constitutional
8 criteria currently in effect under the Florida
9 Constitution, but it does run into the issue of
10 the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and whether
11 minority representation requires a
12 majority/minority population within a district.
13 Thank you very much.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
15 Mr. Libby. Mr. Libby, I would just like to
16 point out -- I want to thank you again for
17 taking the time, not only to be here today, but
18 for the effort you put into producing these
19 maps. It is a perfect example of redistricting
20 in the 21st century. Before we were not able
21 to get input from the public like this, because
22 the technology did not exist, but today we can.
23 And, Mr. Libby, that is a gold standard in
24 regards to working with us and giving us input
25 and giving us options and giving us your

1 opinion, not only in the form of the spoken
2 word, but on paper as a map, and I just want to
3 thank you again for taking the time to do that.
4 I know that took a lot of effort.

5 Next up we have got Mr. Darryl Register.
6 Following Mr. Register is Eric Haeseler. I
7 hope I didn't say that wrong, but that is the
8 way I read it, Eric Haeseler.

9 So, Mr. Register, you are up, sir. Thank
10 you.

11 MR. REGISTER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
12 am a third-generation dairy farmer from Baker
13 County. I am also the Executive Director of
14 the Baker County Chamber of Commerce and the
15 Economic Development Commission.

16 I come before you today thanking you for
17 taking the time to come here to northeast
18 Florida, and I ask, as you draw the district
19 lines for the three distinguished governing
20 bodies that you are responsible for, that you
21 keep Baker County whole. We ask that we remain
22 as a single member of representation in the
23 three districts, and we ask, when possible, to
24 be grouped with counties of like demographics
25 with the small rural Baker County. Thank you

1 for your time.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

3 Great, thank you, Mr. -- Mr. Haeseler, did
4 I say that right? Okay, Mr. Haeseler, thank
5 you, you get bonus points today as well.

6 After Mr. Haeseler, we have Mike Griffis.
7 Mr. Griffis? Somebody told me Mike left. Oh,
8 he is here, he is here. Come on down, you are
9 the next contestant on the Price is Right.

10 MR. GRIFFIS: That is what I have been
11 waiting for.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: And after Mr.
13 Griffis, we have Jimmy Anderson.

14 So, Mr. Griffis, thank you for being here,
15 sir, you are recognized.

16 MR. GRIFFIS: Thank you very much. And
17 first I want to thank you guys, thank you,
18 Florida Legislature, for coming out and taking
19 this tour across the state of Florida,
20 listening to the people that you represent.
21 Thank you very much.

22 And really, I am Mike Griffis again, a
23 resident of Baker County, and right now Baker
24 County is represented by Congressman Ander
25 Crenshaw, Representative Janet Adkins and

1 Senator Charlie Dean. And if we had our way,
2 we would like to leave things just like they
3 are, but if Baker County has to be
4 redistricted, as Darryl Register has already
5 said, we want to be a whole county, we want to
6 be represented by one representative from each
7 branch.

8 With a county like Baker County, which has
9 limited resources, when an issue, whether it is
10 a federal issue or a state issue, comes up, it
11 is certainly easier for us to talk to one
12 person than it is to try to talk multiple
13 people. So we would ask for that, along with
14 being grouped, as Darryl said, with counties of
15 like interest. I think someone said earlier
16 that Clay County is like a rural county. Well,
17 Baker County folks go to Clay County for
18 entertainment. So just keep us with counties
19 like us. Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
21 Mr. Griffis.

22 We've got next up Jimmy Anderson.
23 Mr. Anderson, sir, thank you for being here.

24 Following Mr. Anderson is Wilbert River
25 Torres. You are recognized, sir.

1 MR. ANDERSON: I want to thank you for the
2 opportunity to speak here. I am Jimmy
3 Anderson. I am the Commissioner of Baker
4 County. And I just want to thank you for the
5 opportunity, and I echo basically what the
6 people before me said about Baker County. I do
7 think that we are God's country, but actually,
8 I think that the United States is God's
9 country, and I think -- I also wanted to say
10 that I like the single representation on all
11 three districts. I mean, it is just -- it's
12 the way to go. And I think that if we are
13 going to draw our lines, boundary lines, they
14 need to stay along your county lines as much as
15 possible.

16 Also, I need -- we need to get this
17 process done as quick as we can so, you know,
18 that the members can get out there and they can
19 try to drum up some support. And also I would
20 like for it to hurry up because I don't know if
21 y'all know, which I am sure you do, that when
22 y'all draw these lines, it is going to affect
23 each polling location. If Baker County gets
24 split, that means that Baker County
25 Commissioners are going to have to come up with

1 some more money to give to the Supervisor of
2 Elections to send out all the paperwork and
3 everything showing that their districts has
4 changed, and I would think and hope that y'all
5 would take that into consideration when you
6 split these small counties, that that is going
7 to be a cost that the small counties are going
8 to have to absorb if you split them. So that
9 is one thing.

10 And another thing, I want to say on a
11 personal note that it is sad for me to say that
12 we are here in 2011 and we still are talking
13 and speaking about the race card. My lord and
14 savior don't see color, and I don't think we
15 should neither.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
17 Mr. Anderson.

18 Next up, Wilbert River Torres, followed by
19 Nita Crawford.

20 Mr. Torres, you are recognized, sir.

21 MR. TORRES: I am speaking on behalf of
22 the Hispanic community. A lot of people tend
23 to -- tend to disregard it, especially in
24 northeast Florida. Too many times like people
25 aren't realizing that the population is

1 increasing up here. There's a lack of
2 Spanish-speaking voters. So if you could
3 please speed up the process so that way we can
4 get adequate translators at these locations.
5 Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
7 sir.

8 Ms. Nita Crawford is next, and following
9 Ms. Nita is C. J. Thompson.

10 MS. CRAWFORD: Good afternoon. I
11 represent Baker County as Supervisor of
12 Elections, and I would like to concur, first of
13 all, on what Chris, Supervisor of Elections of
14 Clay County, and Tammy, Assistant Supervisor of
15 Nassau County, had to say about the election
16 laws and how -- I know you've got a big job
17 ahead of you, but if there is anyway that you
18 can get your job completed in time to give us,
19 all of the Supervisors of Elections in Florida,
20 significant time to do our job, we would
21 appreciate it.

22 And also, I also concur with the other
23 members here representing Baker County that if
24 we could be left one district, then that way I
25 would not have to go back to Jim Anderson, our

1 county commissioner, and ask for more funds. I
2 would appreciate that.

3 And I would like to thank you again for
4 coming out and letting everyone give their say,
5 and you being patient and listening to
6 everyone. Thank you so much.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
8 Ms. Crawford, and thank you for your public
9 service to Baker County and the State of
10 Florida.

11 We have C. J. Thompson up next, and
12 following C. J., we have Mr. Larry Dixon.

13 Mr. Thompson, thank you for being here
14 today.

15 MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
16 will keep it brief.

17 Like my fellow Baker County citizens, we
18 would -- obviously first we would like to keep
19 our current representation, if at all possible;
20 however, if changes are necessary, we ask that
21 we maintain our single representation and be
22 grouped with similar small, rural counties.
23 Thank you again for your time.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
25 very much.

1 Mr. Larry Dixon is next, and then after
2 Mr. Dixon -- I am probably going to butcher
3 this name, but it is Doug Conkey, I believe. I
4 hope I have said that right. I got a thumbs
5 up, I said it right.

6 Mr. Dixon, you are first. Thank you for
7 being here, sir. You are recognized.

8 MR. DIXON: Thank you. I just want to say
9 that obvious in this process and all of the
10 difference of opinions, we are going to end up
11 with a bride and a bridesmaid, but hopefully,
12 you know, we can find some common ground in
13 this entire process. I think -- I am going to
14 be very brief. I have just three things I
15 think should be taken into consideration.

16 First, I want to thank you for the
17 transparency of this process. I think it is
18 important for everybody to be able to come
19 together and give their opinions in terms of
20 how the redistricting should take place.

21 I also think that it is important that you
22 do take time to get it as right as possible.
23 Obviously, it is a thing that everybody have an
24 opinion, different opinions, but I think it is
25 important that enough time is given to the

1 process that you can do it in the most
2 expedited time, but yet in fairness also to the
3 process.

4 And then lastly, I think one of the common
5 threads we hear individuals speaking of is
6 community. People want to stay connected in
7 terms of how you go about the redistricting
8 process. I think most people will find that
9 when you look east to west to your neighbors,
10 you develop a greater bond than sometimes going
11 too further north to south.

12 I think that you are doing an excellent
13 job of taking time to listen to the people
14 before you start drawing. I think that it is
15 going to impact the way you draw because you
16 took the time to listen to the people. So I
17 just want to thank you again for allowing me to
18 share my thoughts and continue to make the
19 process transparent in whatever way necessary.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
21 sir.

22 Next speaker is Mr. Doug Conkey, and then
23 following Mr. Conkey we have Jay McGovern.

24 COMMISSIONER CONKEY: Thank you for
25 allowing me to be here, and to the gentleman

1 who offered the universities to help, I will
2 offer up the naval academy to help in that
3 service.

4 I want to thank you for your service and
5 for taking the time to reach out to the public
6 and provide opportunities for verbal feedback
7 and electronic feedback, as we have seen. Your
8 task is daunting, to say the least, given your
9 mandate to follow federal law, state law, and
10 traditional principles.

11 In northeast Florida, as with our state,
12 there has been much growth over the last
13 decade, especially in the outlying counties
14 surrounding Duval, such as Clay County. Such
15 exercises, like the First Coast Reality Check,
16 reveal the desire to have multiple growth
17 centers or job centers, so to speak. In this
18 growth, you have transitions of urban to
19 suburban to rural. With budding economic
20 engines such as Jax Port and the Cecil Airport
21 and their connections to other growth centers,
22 are they better represented by one or two
23 champions or several that may have to learn
24 multiple interests due to population and other
25 directives impacting their district size?

1 You can build areas of expertise such as
2 rural experts, suburban experts and urban
3 experts, along with economic engine experts.
4 This will help compact some areas, while other
5 areas may grow, such as a rural area. That
6 person becomes the rural area champion.

7 This has worked well in Clay County, for
8 the most part. In Clay, we are represented by
9 seven representatives -- seven Legislators, two
10 Senators and five Representatives, and they are
11 all wonderful. Would we be better served with
12 just two or three to become our experts or
13 champions while trying to operate within the
14 checklist constraints of the federal law,
15 Florida Tier I and II law, and traditional
16 principles? Not sure, but it would be worth a
17 look from the input that we are getting today,
18 and also from the taking into account the
19 possible inter-jurisdictional impacts you have
20 in other counties or possible growth centers.

21 I will say our current legislators have
22 been wonderful and professional, and I truly am
23 thankful for their service and dedication to
24 the citizens of Clay County and the State of
25 Florida. I want to thank you again for your

1 service and this opportunity to speak, and,
2 again, I want to thank all veterans and those
3 who currently serve who protect our freedoms to
4 allow us and do and exercise these rights, so
5 thank you again.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
7 Commissioner. Thank you, and thank you for
8 your public service to the State of Florida.

9 Mr. Jay McGovern is next, and after
10 Mr. McGovern, we've got Clifford Johnson.

11 You are recognized, sir.

12 MR. McGOVERN: Thank you very much.
13 Thanks for coming.

14 I would like to point out that this
15 listening tour is the minimum required by law,
16 and of our leaders, of which most of us count
17 you, we expect more. We expect you to do more
18 than the minimum. As Doug was talking about,
19 we have men and women serving all over the
20 world who today are not doing the minimum that
21 was asked of them, they are doing so much more
22 than that, and we expect you to do the same
23 thing.

24 My second point is to stop fighting us
25 with our own money. We overwhelmingly approved

1 Amendments 5 and 6. We want you to follow
2 them.

3 Third point is you have talked about there
4 is no gag order, but your prompt end to this
5 hearing is in effect a gag order. Your not
6 showing us map is effectively a gag order. So
7 we really need you to do your jobs. We are
8 paying you for that.

9 And my fourth and last point is the
10 committee, by not speaking, is suggesting that
11 this whole issue is about black versus white,
12 and it is not. We don't see it that way. What
13 we see, the 800-pound gorilla in the room is
14 that it is about power and it is about
15 incumbents clinging to theirs.

16 The districts can be drawn, the districts
17 can be drawn responsibly, taking into account
18 the Voters Rights Act, but they just may not be
19 drawn so overwhelmingly for re-electing the
20 incumbents. So we really need you to get on
21 with drawing fair districts in accordance with
22 our Constitution, as amended. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
24 Mr. Johnson.

25 Next up we have Robert Henning with the

1 National Association of Letter Carriers,
2 followed by Joan Carver with the League of
3 Women Voters.

4 Mr. Henning, you are recognized, sir.

5 MR. HENNING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 A couple things that -- the Legislature
7 plans to pass district maps at the end of 2012
8 session. According to this timeline, new
9 district maps will not be finalized and
10 approved before qualifying for the 2012
11 elections closes, which closes on June 8th, and
12 they may not be finalized until August. This
13 means that the voters will be voting for
14 candidates they have little opportunity to get
15 to know.

16 One of the -- I represent 1,100 letter
17 carriers in northeast Florida. Every one of
18 those congressional districts over there, I
19 have letter carriers in that we have to visit
20 on issues. I can't speak on the redistricting
21 or maps without the maps. That is what the
22 voters asked for. We want to see the maps
23 before we can informatively talk on it. Thank
24 you.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,

1 sir.

2 Next up we have Ms. Joan Carver with the
3 League of Women Voters, and then after
4 Ms. Carver is Alberta Espie.

5 You are recognized.

6 MS. CARVER: Mr. Chairman and members of
7 the committee, I am here to urge you to draw
8 the new Florida House and Senate districts and
9 the congressional districts without
10 consideration of protection of incumbents and
11 for partisan advantage. I might note that most
12 of our peer democracies that use single member
13 districts select their legislators through a
14 neutral commissioner.

15 Gerrymandered districts have long been one
16 of the things Americans like least about their
17 government. They have good reason for this
18 dislike. For elections and the resulting
19 governing bodies to have legitimacy, elections
20 should be fair. If elections are to have
21 legitimacy, they should reflect the divisions
22 within the state.

23 A review of recent election results in
24 Florida indicates that this is not the case
25 currently. In recent statewide elections, the

1 parties' candidates have divided fairly evenly.
2 In the last three presidential elections, for
3 example, Gore and Bush had virtually the same
4 number of votes, Kerry and Bush were just five
5 percentage points apart, while Obama received
6 50.9 percent of the vote. In the recent
7 gubernatorial election, the difference between
8 Alex Sink and Governor Scott was one percent of
9 the vote, 48.7 percent to 47.7 percent. Yet
10 the Florida House and Senate have veto-proof
11 Republican majorities, 28 of the Senate seats
12 -- of the 40 Senate seats, and 81 of the 120
13 House seats. We find a similar situation in
14 the congressional delegation with 19 of 25
15 seats being held by Republicans. The
16 difference between statewide votes and those by
17 districts suggest Florida is among the least
18 fairly apportioned states currently.

19 Elections have consequences, and
20 gerrymandered districts, beyond casting doubt
21 on the fairness of the process, can lead to
22 several electoral and policy results. Such
23 districts squelch the development of a healthy
24 opposition, important to real democracy. Who
25 wants to run in an election in which you know

1 you have little chance of winning?

2 It also can lead to Legislators who do not
3 engage in that key component of politics:
4 Negotiation and compromise. If you do not have
5 to take account of the opposition in the
6 district election, you don't have to take
7 account of them in policy terms. In fact, it
8 may be a disadvantage to do so, because this
9 could anger your key supporters. Result: The
10 kind of stalemate found today in Minnesota.
11 If, however, you have a veto-proof majority, as
12 is the case in Florida today, policies may be
13 enacted that are more extreme than most of the
14 state desires.

15 Thus, for fundamental fairness and to
16 follow the mandate of the electorate in
17 Amendments 5 and 6, I urge you to make Florida
18 a model of fair reapportionment by drawing the
19 lines for state and legislative and
20 congressional districts without favoring
21 incumbents or political parties. Thank you
22 very much.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much.

25 Alberta Espie is next with the League of

1 Women Voters, and following Ms. Espie is Hanson
2 Gabriel.

3 You are recognized.

4 MS. ESPIE: I want to say thank you to the
5 Senate that made District Builder available. I
6 signed up and I already got an answer that I
7 can play with maps, too. That will be fun.

8 I am a minority. I might -- no, I am not
9 a minority, I am the majority. However, the
10 voter registration in the state of Florida is
11 46 percent Democrat, twenty -- 39 something
12 Republican, and growing, growing, the non-party
13 participation is 21 something percent. But our
14 state Legislature is -- got majorities for the
15 Republican party that are veto-proof. They can
16 do anything they want. And so I am a minority
17 because I am a Democrat and I have no -- the
18 Democrats that represent me have no chance to
19 do anything with the Governor. Nothing the
20 Governor wants -- anything the Governor wants
21 is passed, and I have very little voice. So we
22 do need fair districts.

23 One other point: We talked about --
24 several people mentioned all the states that
25 have already done it. Florida is hamstrung by

1 the fact that Florida's Constitution says that
2 you can't do it until the second year after,
3 you can't do it until next year. However, as
4 the President of the League of Women Voters
5 pointed out, you can do it in 2011 and act at
6 the very beginning of 2011, and that I beg of
7 you to do because -- well, so many people have
8 said it is so unfair, unfair to the military
9 and others who live abroad, just unfair to any
10 candidate. My party has not run in elections
11 because they -- in many districts because they
12 know that it is a Republican district, period.
13 I don't want it all to be Democrat, but I want
14 it all it be fair. Thanks.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

16 Next up we have Mr. Hanson Gabriel with
17 the Sierra Club of Northeast Florida, followed
18 by Rod Morrill with the Concerned Taxpayers of
19 Duval County.

20 You are recognized, sir.

21 MR. GABRIEL: Thank you very much. I have
22 been most active with the Sierra Club on the
23 Legislative Advisory Committee, which is the
24 statewide group that works with our lobbyist,
25 Dave Cullen, at the Florida Legislature. We

1 worked hard last year, along with several other
2 groups that we cooperated with, including the
3 League of Women Voters, to see that the issues
4 of our concern were paid attention to in the
5 Legislature, and I must say the outcomes were
6 terribly, terribly disappointing and a major
7 setback.

8 Now, I am -- all my life have been more of
9 a good government person than an
10 environmentalist, although I have been an
11 environmentalist all my life as well. I am
12 convinced through experience that you cannot
13 separate good government from good development
14 policy and good environmental policy, and that
15 is why I favor and worked for Amendments 5 and
16 6, and I am hoping that you will step up to
17 your responsibility and follow both the letter
18 and the spirit of the state law and these
19 amendments in the process of redistricting.
20 Thank you very much.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
22 sir.

23 Next up we have Rod Morrill with the
24 Concerned Taxpayers of Duval County. After
25 Mr. Morrill, we have Deborah Courtney.

1 Thank you for being here, sir.

2 MR. MORRILL: Good afternoon, and I
3 prepared for this, and like so often when I go
4 before government bodies, I wind up rewriting
5 everything I am going to say by the people that
6 precede me, and this certainly is one of those
7 cases. So many times I have heard today, "This
8 beach is God's country." No, this country is
9 God's country, and I am going to tell you
10 something else, this country is my country, the
11 taxpayers' country, and that is who owns this
12 country. And the -- soon as the politicians
13 find out that they are the employee and not the
14 employer, we will get along a lot better.

15 The next thing, we talked about diversity
16 and the voting rights and so forth. I would
17 like to welcome you to someone that maybe you
18 can use as an example. Jacksonville and Duval
19 County is an extremely diverse location. We
20 have urban, rural, suburban, and racial
21 diversity like you won't find in too many other
22 places, and yet look at our elected officials,
23 look at the people that are in the community
24 and see how exactly diversely we are
25 represented here in Duval County. And you know

1 what, we didn't have to zig and zag and change
2 any boundaries to accomplish that. We just had
3 to involve the voters and get out in front of
4 the voters and win their respect. Then
5 equality works.

6 The other thing I would like to remind
7 you, that the Superintendent of Elections have
8 been repeatedly here, and they know how to set
9 up the districts. That is what they do.
10 Listen to them, listen to the boundaries, the
11 geographic boundaries, the voting boundaries.
12 They have been doing this, they have been
13 shuffling this for years. They know how. How
14 many months have you spent doing that? Listen
15 to them, follow those boundaries. They take
16 into consideration the groups, the people, the
17 geography, the importance of how you are
18 drawing the lines. When you decide that you
19 know better how to do something than the people
20 that do it, you've got your shoes on backwards.

21 Again -- again, this is my country. We
22 are the people. We develop and govern the
23 government, and for the government to sue the
24 citizens is one step away from democracy and a
25 Republican.

1 You had John Libby here that took the time
2 to develop the districts. You had someone say,
3 what about the universities, why aren't you
4 putting task force out to start volunteering
5 these maps and publicizing the maps that you
6 receive? You have the websites, I have been on
7 those, the district programs. You needed to do
8 a little better PR on those availabilities, and
9 you need to have meetings like this more often
10 than every ten years. Maybe you should come
11 and listen to us just a little more often than
12 once every ten years. That would help you do
13 your job. Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much, sir.

16 Next up we have Deborah Courtney and Kevin
17 Hanley, I believe. I may be saying that
18 incorrectly, but Ms. Courtney, nonetheless,
19 thank you so much for being here. You are
20 recognized to speak.

21 MS. COURTNEY: Thank you, and good
22 afternoon, and I am a resident of Jacksonville
23 Beach. And ten years ago I stood before a
24 panel of Legislators at the last public hearing
25 on redistricting, and at that time, I asked the

1 leader of that panel, Stan Jordan, to make sure
2 that the Legislature ends gerrymandering and
3 draws the districts fairly, and he assured me
4 that the Legislature would do just that.

5 Well, this is an example of what I got for
6 my efforts. This is my Congressional District
7 4, which essentially stretches from
8 Jacksonville to Tallahassee. It spans
9 180 miles. And I would like to know what
10 Jacksonville and Tallahassee have in common.
11 So it makes a lot more sense to me to keep the
12 districts community based, and I really hope
13 that this time that this Legislature will do a
14 better job than they did last time.

15 And so here I am again asking the same
16 question, asking for you to please end the
17 gerrymandering and to draw the districts
18 fairly. But I do have to admit that I am a
19 little confused, because on the one hand, you
20 are doing such wonderful things, like you are
21 having these public hearings and you have the
22 software that I saw out in the hallway and you
23 are allowing citizens to submit their own
24 drawings, and that is all wonderful. And then
25 on the other hand, this same Legislature is a

1 party to the lawsuit against Amendments 5 and
2 6, which require the fair districting. So it
3 really makes me wonder about your commitment to
4 actually drawing the districts fairly. And I
5 would urge you to drop this lawsuit and listen
6 to the will of the voters and draw the
7 districts fairly like 63 percent of the people
8 of Florida do -- I mean want you to do.

9 So thank you so much for your time, and
10 just please know that the citizens of Florida
11 will be watching you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

13 I apologize on this last name, but I
14 believe it is Kevin Hanley. Kevin, St.
15 Martin's Drive. I think we found him. After
16 Kevin, we've got Jacqui Lowe, okay. Jacqui,
17 you are recognized, and we will try to find
18 Kevin.

19 After Jacqui, we have Jeff Burgess, who is
20 a concerned citizen.

21 Jacqui, you are recognized. Thank you
22 very much.

23 MS. LOWE: Thank you. My name is Jacqui
24 Lowe, and I am a resident of Duval County. I
25 have been a resident for about 14 years. Thank

1 you so much for giving us the opportunity to
2 have our voices heard today. We appreciate all
3 of the open and honesty that you have allowed
4 us into giving us a little bit of insight into
5 what goes into drawing these maps. I
6 understand and appreciate the arduous task that
7 you have in front of you.

8 That being said, it feels like we are
9 putting the cart before the horse without
10 having an opportunity to see anything. I ask
11 that since Amendments 5 and 6 passed with over
12 63 percent of the vote, and is now law and
13 embedded into our Constitution, that we move
14 forward in a continued open and transparent
15 fashion, and that the maps are drawn in a
16 timely manner so that constituents and the
17 people that we are going to elect know who they
18 are running for and what they are supporting.
19 Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
21 Ladies and gentlemen, we have got about six or
22 seven minutes left. We are going to go right
23 up until four o'clock, and instead of allowing
24 members of the committee and Senator Gaetz and
25 others to address some of the issues, what we

1 are going to do is try to get through as much
2 public testimony as we can. There will
3 probably be 10 or 15 cards that we will not get
4 to that we will come back to at six o'clock, we
5 will hear from them and then we will also have
6 time, hopefully, for members of the committee
7 and my co-Chairman, Senator Gaetz.

8 So with that, Mr. Burgess, you are up
9 next. Following Mr. Burgess is Leslie Giller.
10 Jeff Burgess.

11 No, ma'am, not right now. We have six
12 minutes left, and we are going to try to hear
13 -- I -- ma'am, yes, we will try to do that, we
14 will try to do that, but first we are going to
15 hear from Mr. Burgess if he is here.

16 Mr. Burgess, are you here, sir? Okay,
17 Mr. Burgess is not here.

18 Leslie Giller. Ms. Giller, you are
19 recognized to speak. Thank you for being here.

20 MS. GILLER: Thank you. My name is Leslie
21 Giller, and I would like to address what was
22 said in the introduction, which made it sound
23 like to the public that you all weren't allowed
24 to have published the maps or the projected
25 maps until after the first of the year, and

1 that is incorrect. You could have had the maps
2 earlier, and these meetings, frankly, should
3 have been held earlier so that you could have
4 had public input, and we should be looking at
5 the maps now. And then you need to have
6 commentary about what we think about the maps.
7 So I object to how it was presented when we
8 started out where it was said that our
9 Constitution prevents you from being able to
10 have the maps at this point in time. That is
11 simply incorrect.

12 I wanted to also say that I am a white
13 woman who is in support of the Voting Rights
14 Act and is in support of the law, and that is
15 Amendments 5 and 6, which it stands now. And I
16 also do not appreciate that my government is
17 suing me for a law that has passed, and, you
18 know, when I don't like a law that is passed, I
19 obey it, but I might also try to work to do
20 something to have the law changed. That is
21 your all's business the next time you meet in
22 the Legislature. If you want to try to amend
23 the Constitution out of what we've passed as
24 citizenry, then that is your prerogative, but
25 you don't have the right to try to change the

1 law and use my money to sue me to get the law
2 changed.

3 The other thing in supporting diversity,
4 because diversity is a strength, and I don't
5 think you will ever find somebody that will say
6 that diversity is not a strength, and we have
7 diversity in our state, whether it is race,
8 whether it is sex, whether it is age, whatever
9 or not you want to say, whether it is religion,
10 we can name off all the projected classes, but
11 if the districts are drawn properly and the law
12 is followed, then the state Legislature will
13 reflect the diversity of our state. And in the
14 same percentage of existence, the same
15 percentage of diversity that is in Florida will
16 also be in the Legislature. Then you know you
17 have done the job right.

18 So please follow Amendment 5 and 6.
19 Please follow the Voting Rights Act. Thank
20 you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
22 very much.

23 Ladies and gentlemen, what we will do,
24 because we do understand there will be some
25 folks who cannot come back, we are not going to

1 get to all the cards. We are hoping if your
2 name has not been called, that you will come
3 back for the six o'clock hearing. We have run
4 out of time for this hearing; however,
5 Ms. Bruno actually made a good point, which was
6 to allow a member of the committee to address
7 some of the concerns that were brought up
8 today. I would like Senator Gaetz, who is
9 co-Chair of the committee, to take just a few
10 minutes to do that.

11 Senator Gaetz, you are recognized.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Mr. Chairman, and there will be an opportunity
14 after we hear from everyone who wishes to speak
15 at the second part of our hearing for any
16 member to comment, to offer any proposals, and,
17 of course, any member, any legislator, any
18 special interest group, any citizen, and we saw
19 that with Mr. Dixon, can offer any map, any
20 proposal, at any time.

21 The first question that I would like to
22 respond to -- and I am not going to be -- try
23 to debate those who provided information,
24 because the information today was so hopeful
25 and relevant, but just in terms of providing

1 some information that would assist in a little
2 bit of perhaps fact-checking. First of all,
3 the question was asked, will the Legislature
4 follow the Fair Districts amendments to the
5 Constitution. The answer is, they are in the
6 Constitution, we have sworn an oath upon taking
7 office to preserve, protect and defend the
8 Constitution of the United States and of the
9 State of Florida, and so we will. But as you
10 have seen today, there are differences
11 expressed in how those legal standards, which
12 seem so simple when they roll off the tongue,
13 there are differences expressed in this
14 audience today about how those standards ought
15 to be applied to communities, to counties, to
16 geographic barriers, someone talked about
17 growth centers, so that is why we need to
18 listen to your views and not just presume that
19 we know.

20 Secondly, as to timing, and Mr. Chairman,
21 as was noted at the beginning of the meeting,
22 the timing for the drawing of maps and the
23 voting on maps is set out in our Constitution.
24 If our Fair District friends wanted to change
25 the timing so that we could vote on maps

1 earlier than 2012, they could have included
2 that in the Fair Districts amendment. They
3 didn't. So we are -- you know, there are many
4 of us who have ideas now as we have heard from
5 voters, maybe people on this committee want to
6 propose maps, like Mr. Dixon has, but we are
7 obliged to follow the Constitution.

8 Now, there's been some suggestion that no
9 voting can occur until March on maps. That is
10 simply not true. We can vote as soon as there
11 are maps presented. The League of Women
12 Voters, for example, ten years ago presented
13 maps. So far they have decided not to. We
14 hope they will. Any group can present a map,
15 and it can become the focus or locus of a bill
16 that then can be voted on. We don't have to
17 wait until March to vote. We can vote as soon
18 as there are maps that are available, and we're
19 already getting maps presented to us.

20 One gentleman said, and I think rightly
21 so, that we ought to look to our universities.
22 We have. Florida students attending Columbia
23 University have already proposed maps, and
24 those maps are on our website.

25 Another individual said, "Gee, if you are

1 getting maps that are proposed, they need to be
2 shown to the public." They are. If you go to
3 Flsenate.gov/redistricting, you will see all of
4 the maps that have been proposed, including
5 Mr. Dixon's that has been proposed today.

6 Community college students, state college
7 students, university students have already
8 indicated that they are working on or will
9 present maps, so our universities have been
10 invited, and we would like to invite today the
11 University of North Florida to present any maps
12 that they would like to present.

13 Mr. Chairman, there has been some
14 suggestion that there is a gag order. Those
15 who would like to stay to the end of the
16 hearing, we will want to hear from the public
17 first, not politicians first, but those who
18 want to stay until the end of the hearing,
19 Mr. Chairman, we are going to give an
20 opportunity for any member of the committee to
21 react to any of the testimony that we have
22 heard today.

23 Finally, Mr. Chairman, there's been a
24 suggestion from three Supervisors of Elections
25 that there will be -- could be problems with

1 ballot printing and distribution if the Supreme
2 Court of Florida, if the Federal Justice
3 Department, take all the time that they are
4 allowed under federal and state law. We hope
5 they don't. We hope they will take the advice
6 that you are giving us, and that is as soon as
7 proposals are received, to act in an
8 expeditious fashion, in a thoughtful fashion,
9 but in an expeditious fashion. Members of
10 these two committees work together to pass
11 legislation, making it possible for our
12 overseas citizens, whether they are in uniform
13 or not, to be able to use the overseas absentee
14 ballot to make sure that their votes get
15 counted. So every effort will be made to
16 ensure that overseas voters are included, and
17 the Supervisors of Elections' information and
18 their testimony today was well-taken,
19 well-spoken, but there is no reason why our
20 federal and state courts have to take
21 100 percent of the time that they are allowed
22 to take, and we certainly will -- will begin to
23 entertain proposals, in the Senate, and I am
24 sure, Mr. Chairman, you will in the House, as
25 soon as any member presents any plan or any

1 (Whereupon, the six o'clock session of the
2 redistricting committee convened.)

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: If we could
4 get everyone's attention, please, to grab a
5 seat, we would like to start. Please grab a
6 seat. Lake Ray, if we could get the meeting
7 started. You always have to embarrass one
8 person.

9 Okay. Ladies and gentlemen, if we could
10 get everyone's attention. I know that we still
11 have people filtering into the room. Feel free
12 to grab a seat. We appreciate everyone being
13 here.

14 The Joint Senate/House Redistricting
15 Hearing is now called back into order. We had
16 meetings from two to four o'clock and had a
17 packed house and got a lot of great public
18 testimony, and we are excited about hearing
19 from you as well, and I think we have some
20 familiar faces from the earlier meeting, and we
21 welcome you back.

22 We first want to say thank you to Florida
23 State College for opening up this wonderful
24 facility, we are grateful for them and their
25 hospitality, but we also want to say thank you

1 to those of you who have taken time to be here
2 this evening to share with us your thoughts and
3 your ideas about what the state of Florida
4 should look like and what the districts should
5 look like. So thank you very much for being
6 here.

7 My name is Will Weatherford, and I
8 represent House District 61 down in Wesley
9 Chapel, which is in Pasco County, and I,
10 alongside with my co-Chair, Senator Don Gaetz
11 from the Panhandle, I will be Chairing today.
12 This entire process will be webcast on the
13 Florida Channel and over the Internet.

14 Our sole purpose here today is to hear
15 from you. It is to hear from you and to give
16 you an opportunity to give us feedback, to give
17 us input, and to make sure that this process is
18 open and transparent when it comes to public
19 input.

20 It is also important that we keep an
21 accurate public record of all attendees and
22 speakers. So we would ask that you -- you may
23 also opt to join our e-mail list so that we can
24 keep you informed about how the redistricting
25 process is working over the next several

1 months.

2 If you have not signed in, please raise
3 your hand, and a staff member will give you an
4 attendance card. Also, if you wish to speak
5 today and you have not filled out an attendance
6 card, please raise your hand, and we will make
7 sure that we get you a card to fill out so that
8 you can speak.

9 With that, I would like to just take a few
10 moments -- I know we have some new faces in
11 here, and I would like to take a few moments to
12 allow the members of the committee to introduce
13 themselves and let you know who they are and
14 the district that they represent within the
15 state of Florida. So, Chairman Gaetz, if you
16 could maybe kick us off and pass the mike.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Sure. My name is Don
18 Gaetz. I am a state senator from the Panhandle
19 of Florida, the other side, northwest Florida,
20 coastal northwest Florida, and along with
21 speaker designate Weatherford, I Chair the
22 Senate Reapportionment Committee as he Chairs
23 the House Redistricting Committee.

24 Senator John Thrasher is here. He will be
25 back in a moment, he is doing an interview with

1 a Jacksonville TV station, but Senator Thrasher
2 represents northeast Florida and many of you
3 are very familiar with him.

4 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: Good evening,
5 everybody. I am Ed Hooper from Clearwater,
6 House District 50, and to speed the meeting
7 along, everyone here has great beaches and they
8 are all tied for number one.

9 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: I am
10 Representative Jim Frishe from Pinellas County,
11 and I do represent all the beaches in Pinellas
12 County, and I am the majority whip of the
13 Florida House.

14 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Hi, my name is
15 Janet Adkins, and I represent Florida House
16 District 12, which is Nassau, Baker, Bradford,
17 Clay, Union and Duval, and thank you all so
18 much for coming out tonight.

19 SENATOR MONTFORD: I am Bill Montford from
20 Senate District 6, 11 counties, Tallahassee is
21 the center, everything around Tallahassee.
22 Glad to be here.

23 REPRESENTATIVE McBURNEY: I am Charles
24 McBurney. I represent District 16, which is
25 the great City of Jacksonville, Florida.

1 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: Clay Ford,
2 Representative from District 3, Pensacola, the
3 other end of the state.

4 SENATOR DEAN: My name is Charlie Dean, I
5 am State Senator for District 3. Start over
6 here at the county line in Baker County, go to
7 the courthouse, the Capitol steps on Monroe
8 Street, south to 98 and 19, and south central
9 Florida, I represent all or part of 13
10 counties. But the most important thing I
11 forgot to tell you a while ago this morning, we
12 were here this afternoon, and that's the fact
13 that I was born in Jacksonville.

14 SENATOR LYNN: Senator Evelyn Lynn. I
15 represent District 7, Clay, Marion, Putnam and
16 Volusia Counties, and it is very impressive to
17 see the crowds that we have here, not only this
18 afternoon, but tonight especially.

19 REPRESENTATIVE KIAR: Hello, everybody, my
20 name is Martin Kiar. I represent District 97
21 in the Florida House of Representatives, which
22 is located solely within Broward County. Thank
23 you so much for coming out tonight.

24 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good evening,
25 everyone. My name is John Patrick Julien. I

1 represent House District 104, which is in
2 Miami-Dade County, and it is a pleasure to be
3 here and it is great to see you all, looking
4 forward to hear what you have to say.

5 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Hi, I am Dorothy
6 Hukill. I represent District 28, which is
7 parts of Volusia County, southeast and
8 southwest Volusia County, and I am so happy to
9 be here and grateful that all of you could come
10 out and talk to us tonight.

11 REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: Hi, I am Dana
12 Young. I represent House District 57, which is
13 the City of Tampa and parts of Hillsborough
14 County. Thank you all for being here. We look
15 forward to hearing from you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE SCHENCK: Rob Schenck.

17 REPRESENTATIVE DORWORTH: He is from
18 Spring Hill on the west coast.

19 I am Chris Dorworth. I am from Orlando,
20 Florida, Seminole County and Orange County.
21 Thank you very much.

22 SENATOR BRAYNON: I am Senator Oscar
23 Braynon. I represent the central area of
24 Miami-Dade County, District 33.

25 REPRESENTATIVE RAY: Good evening, I am

1 Representative Lake Ray from Jacksonville,
2 District 17. It is great to see everybody out,
3 and I, of course, welcome my colleagues to
4 Jacksonville this evening. Thanks for being
5 here.

6 SENATOR HAYS: I am Alan Hays from Senate
7 District 20, which is parts of five counties:
8 Volusia, Seminole, Lake, Sumter and Marion
9 Counties.

10 REPRESENTATIVE THURSTON: Good evening,
11 everybody. I am Perry Thurston, District 93,
12 and that is Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Looking
13 forward to hearing from you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEINSTEIN: I am Mike
15 Weinstein, House District 19, the privilege of
16 representing Duval, Clay and St. Johns
17 Counties.

18 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good evening,
19 State Representative Mack Bernard, District 84
20 in West Palm Beach, Florida.

21 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good evening, I am
22 Hazelle Rogers representing District 94 in
23 Broward County, I would say eight cities in
24 central Broward County, one of the most diverse
25 counties, a million point eight nine -- 1.89

1 million folks in my -- in Broward County.
2 Looking forward to hearing from you. Thank
3 you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good evening, I am
5 State Representative Gwyndolen Clarke-Reed,
6 representing House District 92 in Broward
7 County, which is the northeast part of Broward
8 County from Deerfield Beach down to Victoria
9 Park, Ft. Lauderdale. Good evening.

10 SENATOR EVERS: State Senator Greg Evers,
11 I represent District 2, which encompasses
12 Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton,
13 Washington and Holmes and a little bit north of
14 Bay County, so it is known as the great
15 northwest, as far north, far away as you go in
16 Florida without being in Alabama. Thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: Good evening, my
18 name is Tom Goodson, House seat District 29,
19 which is in Brevard County from Mims to St.
20 Lucie County. Thank you for coming.

21 REPRESENTATIVE DRAKE: Brad Drake, I
22 represent the Fifth House District, central
23 time zone, Okaloosa, Walton, Holmes,
24 Washington, Jackson.

25 REPRESENTATIVE TRUJILLO: Good evening, my

1 name is Carlos Trujillo, I represent southwest
2 Miami-Dade County.

3 REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Good afternoon,
4 Daniel Davis. I represent Duval County and
5 Clay County.

6 REPRESENTATIVE CORCORAN: Richard
7 Corcoran, I represent Pasco and Pinellas
8 Counties.

9 REPRESENTATIVE LOGAN: Ana Rivas Logan, I
10 represent southwest Miami-Dade.

11 REPRESENTATIVE JONES: Good evening, State
12 Representative Mia Jones representing District
13 14, north and west of the city, and thank you
14 all so much for being here and showing your
15 commitment to being a part of the process.

16 REPRESENTATIVE FULLWOOD: Good evening,
17 Reggie Fullwood, representing Jacksonville,
18 District 15. Again, thank you for being here
19 tonight. We really appreciate your input.

20 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Good evening,
21 Representative Matt Caldwell, District 73 down
22 in southwest Florida, Lee County.

23 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Hi, I am Jim Boyd,
24 State Rep from District 68, which is Manatee
25 County, just south of Tampa on the south side

1 of Tampa Bay. Thanks again for coming tonight.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Kathleen
3 Passidomo, House District 76, Collier County.
4 I represent the City of Naples, City of Marco
5 island, City of Everglades City and a gazillion
6 alligators.

7 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good afternoon,
8 Chuck Chestnut, House District 23, a portion of
9 Marion County and a portion of Alachua County.

10 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good evening,
11 everyone. My name is Dwayne Taylor. I
12 represent House District 27, which is in
13 Volusia County. I am from Daytona Beach where
14 we have the world center of racing and the
15 world's most famous beach.

16 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: My name is Peter
17 Nehr, and I represent Pinellas County and Pasco
18 County.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay. Thank
20 you very much, members.

21 Before we go into the public testimony, I
22 would like to ask Senator Gaetz and recognize
23 him to explain how today's hearing fits into
24 the redistricting process and maybe explain a
25 little bit about the process that we are here

1 to do today and how it will be done. Senator,
2 you are recognized.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
4 Mr. Chairman.

5 Every ten years, the Legislature is
6 required by the Constitution to redistrict the
7 state based on increases, decreases and
8 movements of population. Our Constitution
9 requires this to be done by the Legislature,
10 not by a commission, not by anybody else. That
11 is because we are elected by you, and you can
12 un-elect us. You can't un-elect somebody who
13 is not elected. So that is why our
14 Constitution sets it up that way.

15 Florida has grown in the last ten years
16 more than other states. So we have picked up
17 two additional members of the U.S. House of
18 Representatives. We will go from 25 to 27
19 members of the U.S. House of Representatives,
20 and also we pick up two additional electoral
21 votes in the presidential election.

22 Now, some parts of our state have
23 increased or decreased disproportionately in
24 population, and many Senate and House districts
25 will have to change, either adding or losing

1 population. There is a chart over there, some
2 of you were looking at it before we started.
3 You can look at it during or after our hearing.
4 And in that chart, you will see the districts,
5 the congressional and Senate and House
6 districts in this area, and by law, how many
7 additional people will have to be picked up in
8 those districts or be lost, be subtracted from
9 those districts. That is because when
10 redistricting is completed, congressional
11 districts must be equal in population and must
12 contain 696,345 people each. It doesn't matter
13 how many counties are covered, doesn't matter
14 how dense the population is, how widespread it
15 is, it must have 696,345 people by federal law.
16 The 40 Senate districts must also be nearly
17 equal at about 470,000 people, and our 120
18 House districts must be nearly equal at about
19 156,700 people.

20 Now, there are displays that are over on
21 my right side that you can see that have maps
22 showing the districts. So those are the
23 district maps. Those are the maps. They are
24 here. You can look at those maps and use them
25 as a take-off point for what is right, what is

1 wrong, what should be changed, where are there
2 aberrations, where are there areas or
3 neighborhoods or communities that are
4 appropriately within a House, Senate or
5 congressional district.

6 Equality of representation is not the only
7 redistricting requirement that we have to meet
8 legally. The laws and the important court
9 cases governing redistricting are explained on
10 the House and Senate websites. Those websites
11 are listed on the redistricting brochure -- the
12 redistricting 2012 brochure that you were
13 offered on the way in. If you didn't get one,
14 you can get one on the way out. That brochure
15 briefly summarizes federal and state laws, and
16 outlines topics on which we really need your
17 input. If you did not get a copy when you came
18 in, there will be plenty on the way out. Our
19 staff has them. The brochure lists the Senate
20 and House websites. These websites are packed
21 with information about redistricting in
22 Florida, including the explanation of all the
23 laws, federal and state, and the court cases
24 governing redistricting. The two websites, the
25 House and Senate, are complementary and will be

1 updated frequently. We hope you will visit
2 them often and leave your comments and your
3 suggestions as well. It is a good way to stay
4 current on how the redistricting process moves
5 forward.

6 The websites also deliver to your
7 fingertips all of the demographic information
8 about the people of Florida, the information
9 that the Bureau of Census gives to us.

10 Someone asked a very good question earlier
11 today, and that was, "Well, why is Florida not
12 finished with its redistricting? It appears
13 like we are just in the process when some other
14 states have already finished." Two answers.
15 One is, first the Bureau of the Census releases
16 census information in groups of states, and
17 Florida is in the very last group, so there are
18 some states that are finished because they got
19 their demographic information, who lives where,
20 months before Florida did.

21 A second reason is because Florida has a
22 much more interactive and open process where
23 you can attend public hearings, you can provide
24 input on the Senate and House websites, you can
25 propose maps of your own communities, your own

1 neighborhoods, your own counties, your own
2 parts of the state or the whole state, and
3 that's never been done before in the United
4 States through an interactive web process, and
5 it is not being done by most other states. So
6 that is -- those are two reasons why this
7 appears to be a more thoughtful process.

8 Before, during and after this hearing,
9 Senate and House professional staff are
10 available to show anybody the simple steps to
11 getting on-line, building districts and
12 submitting a plan now or in the weeks to come.
13 And I am pleased to say that we had a plan
14 submitted earlier today, and while we have been
15 in session today in this committee, three more
16 plans have been submitted by interested
17 citizens or groups around the state. So these
18 websites are working, people are submitting
19 their plans, Legislators are seeing your ideas.

20 Recommendations from citizens and groups
21 of citizens will all be made publicly
22 available. Any plan that is developed by any
23 legislator or any interest group or any citizen
24 will instantly be made available to the public
25 so everybody can see it, everybody can comment

1 on it, criticize it, offer amendments to it or
2 suggestions for how it can be made even better.
3 The submission of proposed plans for your
4 community is the single most effective form of
5 public participation in this redistricting
6 process. The redistricting schedule under
7 which we are operating also raises some good
8 questions that we heard today, and questions
9 which, you know, require factual answers.

10 The redistricting process, the timeline is
11 actually imposed by our state Constitution.
12 Our Constitution does not permit the
13 Legislature to act on legislative maps before
14 the second year after the census; in other
15 words, the Constitution says the Legislature
16 can't vote until 2012. Now, if the Fair
17 Districts folks who proposed a couple of
18 amendments that were passed thought that
19 schedule should be changed, they could have
20 included a change in the schedule, but they
21 didn't. So, factually, we are stuck with the
22 same schedule that we've had before. But that
23 doesn't mean we can't begin working now.

24 So we have accelerated the process as much
25 as possible by moving up the 2012 session of

1 the Legislature from March, when we usually
2 start, to January, and by beginning our
3 statewide hearings five months in advance of
4 the 2012 session.

5 We also can begin committee hearings as
6 soon as September, and we will, and we can
7 begin to hear, debate, discussion, see
8 proposals, anyone, any legislator, any member
9 of the public, any interest group, can propose
10 a map, and it can be discussed and debated as
11 early as September.

12 And there is absolutely nothing that
13 requires that we hold off voting in the
14 Legislature until March. Somehow that's gotten
15 out into the bloodstream, and while March would
16 be the last time we could vote, it is not the
17 first time we can vote.

18 A principle -- it's been suggested that
19 the Legislature ought to draw the maps first
20 and then ask the public to comment on those
21 maps. We believe, frankly, that that puts the
22 answer ahead of the question. We believe there
23 ought to be no preconceptions, no created maps
24 developed by politicians and then handed to you
25 as a *fait accompli*, but rather, public

1 testimony should be free and unrestricted and
2 ought to come first. And I am pleased to say
3 that the head of the Fair Districts group not
4 only agrees with us, but also testified before
5 the House and the Senate saying that no new
6 maps could be drawn or should be drawn until
7 after public hearings have been held. So we
8 are taking the Fair District founder's advice
9 and we are following that advise to the "T" in
10 that regard.

11 Our intent is to use the recommendations
12 made at the 26 public hearings and the input
13 that we are getting already through our
14 Internet sites as the basis for developing one
15 or more options for district maps.

16 We will then discuss those options in open
17 public meetings. You will see all of the
18 options. They will be available on the
19 Internet before the first vote is cast even in
20 committee. And throughout the process, we will
21 solicit additional public comment so that
22 proposed maps can mature with the public
23 involved all before the Legislature approves
24 final maps.

25 And then whatever the Legislature approves

1 is subject to judicial review. We can't simply
2 decide what we want to decide. First we have
3 to follow the Constitution and the laws and the
4 court cases, and then we have to submit
5 anything that comes through the legislative
6 process, Republicans and Democrats, House and
7 Senate working together, everyone with having
8 their own ideas, you having your ideas, all of
9 that when synthesized has to be given to the
10 courts for their approval.

11 Because our purpose today is to hear from
12 you, all of the time taken when I conclude my
13 brief remarks until eight o'clock tonight will
14 be consumed by hearing from the public. We
15 want to hear from you. Anybody who is here
16 from the public and wishes to speak ought to
17 have time to present their testimony.

18 Obviously we want to make sure that the last
19 person who signed up is given the same chance
20 as the first person to offer testimony and to
21 be listened to respectfully without
22 interruption and without argument.

23 Now, after every citizen who is here has
24 had her say or his say, if there is time
25 remaining before our scheduled adjournment, and

1 we hope there will be, then any member of the
2 committee can offer any comments, any
3 rejoinder, any discussion, any proposal, any
4 maps that they wish to offer, any Democrat, any
5 Republican, any House member, any Senate
6 member.

7 Mr. Chairman, I hope this description of
8 our schedule, our process and the method of
9 operation of this hearing will help us be
10 successful this evening.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
12 very much, Senator Gaetz. Moving forward,
13 before we start the public hearing process, I
14 would like to just mention that we have two
15 distinguished guests with us here. First we
16 have an old friend and -- State Representative
17 Audrey Gibson. Audrey, it is really good to
18 see you. Thank you for being here today. A
19 former colleague to the House.

20 And, of course, we also have -- we also
21 have a dear friend and a -- Congresswoman
22 Corrine Brown, who is here as well. She was
23 here earlier today. We appreciate you being
24 here today, and thank you for your service to
25 the State of Florida and our country.

1 Okay. First up I am going to read two
2 names at a time. The name -- the first name
3 will be the person coming to the microphone
4 right in front of me, and then we will read the
5 next name, who will be the person on deck to
6 speak. We are trying to limit each person to
7 three minutes so that everyone has an
8 opportunity to speak, so please be cognizant of
9 the folks behind you due to the fact that we do
10 have a limited amount of time.

11 First up we have Marsha Dean Phetts, and
12 after Marsha, we have James Howell.
13 Ms. Phetts, thank you for being here. I know
14 that you wanted to speak earlier today, and I
15 apologize that we did not get to you, but we
16 are happy that you are here tonight.

17 MS. PHETTS: I am a resident of Duval and
18 Nassau Counties, Representative Weatherford and
19 Senator Gaetz, as well as the members of the
20 redistricting committee, I am very happy to
21 have this opportunity to share with you the way
22 I feel about the job that you are doing for me.

23 Also, I want to say that many of my
24 neighbors are not here who were here earlier,
25 but because of previous commitments, they are

1 gone on to other things, and I must leave, too.

2 About redistricting, I have heard the
3 speakers, the more than 20 speakers before me,
4 and they talked about many things, specifically
5 race and being an American. And, of course, I,
6 too, am an American, and race has been an issue
7 in America for more than 500 years, and so I
8 cannot ignore it.

9 I want you as my Representatives to
10 represent me, because you are my voice. When
11 you call me on the telephone and when you send
12 mail to me and shake hands and lobby and
13 hobnob, you are telling me that you will
14 represent me, and that is exactly what I want.
15 I want my fair representation. I want my
16 cultural and historical heritage
17 representation.

18 Today I've never heard the word
19 "gerrymandering" sound so bad. It is like the
20 "L" word and a few other words that I won't
21 say. Call it what you want. As I listened to
22 you from all of your districts, you have
23 multiple counties, and we're trying to get,
24 what, 700,000 people for Congress, and so --
25 for a congressional district. And I want and I

1 hear that we have increased from 25 to 27
2 Representatives in Congress. Don't erase me
3 and don't erase my community. There are three
4 African-Americans, there are Hispanics, and I
5 would certainly not want to see less. I don't
6 want us to repeat history in Florida
7 especially, and I don't want Florida to be
8 tarnished politically again, and so I plead
9 with you to do what is right by me and my
10 constituents, and thank you very much.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
12 very much.

13 Next up we have Mr. James Howell. Is
14 Mr. Howell here? I didn't see him stand up
15 earlier. We will try to find Mr. Howell, but
16 we will keep moving.

17 Lee Harris. Is Lee not here as well? We
18 will save him as well and hope we can get back
19 to him.

20 We have, I believe -- I believe it is a
21 Mr. Bussard from the Duval County National
22 Executive Committee -- Democratic Executive
23 Committee. I cannot make out the first name.
24 Billee, is it Billee? Not here?

25 Okay. Arnett Girardeau, former Senator

1 Arnett Girardeau. I should have introduced you
2 earlier, sir. Welcome to the committee. Thank
3 you for being here, thank you for your service
4 to Florida, and you are recognized, sir. I
5 apologize for missing you earlier.

6 MR. GIRARDEAU: Mr. Chairman, I probably
7 was not here earlier, because I just walked in,
8 but I was here early this morning.

9 I am Arnett Girardeau, former State
10 Senator, and I came in --

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Senator,
12 could we just wait just a second while they
13 adjust your mike? We want to hear everything
14 you have to say.

15 Go ahead, sir.

16 MR. GIRARDEAU: Testing, one, two, three,
17 four, testing. All right. I will do the best
18 I can with what I have left.

19 I came in a little early and I noticed
20 that most people who spoke said that they
21 were -- their name and where they are from and
22 they have resided in Florida for so many years.
23 Well, some of the people said 35 years or 45
24 years, and I remember some of those years as
25 people who we welcomed into Florida, because

1 after World War II, Florida began to grow.
2 Florida was the seventh-largest state up until
3 that time, and now it is the fourth. The point
4 being I have been a Florida resident all of my
5 life, and that is only 82 years.

6 I have also participated in this process
7 of redistricting twice. That is why I came
8 this evening to tell you what I thought of your
9 job, first of all. I commend all of you for
10 taking the opportunity, responsibility and the
11 time to be here, because it is one of the most
12 daunting tasks you will ever have.

13 Now, why do I say that? Everybody talking
14 about fairness, fairness, fairness in the
15 election. And the fairness is in the eyes of
16 the beholder. What was fair 50 years ago is no
17 longer fair today. What do I mean by that?
18 When I was a boy, well, let's look, I haven't
19 changed colors, but at the same time, my people
20 could not vote in primary elections. It was
21 only toward the end that -- of the
22 desegregation plans of this country that we
23 were able to vote in primary elections. We
24 could vote in a federal -- federal election,
25 but not in primaries.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Maybe another
2 couple of minutes.

3 MR. GIRARDEAU: Notice what change that
4 has made. Forty to 50 years later, you now
5 have an African-American President. You may
6 not like that, some of you might, but the point
7 is this: Our lady this morning said, "Why
8 should I vote for somebody" -- no, "Why should
9 I run for office that I know I can't be
10 elected?" You think about that. That is very
11 serious. Most whites, Caucasians or otherwise
12 did not know enough about non-whites or blacks
13 in order to feel comfortable with voting for
14 them. We have turned that corner now, and as a
15 result, we have gone to the extreme in both
16 directions. You have people who are on the
17 extremist conservative side, and those who are
18 on the most liberal side. As I recall, we had
19 one in Congress that passed the voting right --
20 the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act
21 that they call liberal, and they voted them all
22 out of office. All of the liberals were out in
23 the early '70s.

24 Now, at that time, Florida's parties were
25 controlled by the Democrats, Florida's House

1 and Senate. Look what has happened in that
2 time. In that time, it has completely
3 back-flipped, just like the arbiter.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Senator, if I
5 could, I am really enjoying this, I've got to
6 tell you, but I just want to make sure, we've
7 got a lot of speakers, probably 30 or so to get
8 to, I don't want to rush you, but at the same
9 time, I want to make sure we get all your
10 comments in. So if you could --

11 MR. GIRARDEAU: You won't get them all in,
12 but I will give you a few. And the reason for
13 that is because, as I said, you have the most
14 daunting task before you ever.

15 The main thing is when you come down to
16 what is fair districting, you have to consider
17 the demography as far as Republican, Democrats,
18 Independents, et cetera, and what is right for
19 one is not always right for the other. But the
20 most important one, I think, the United States
21 government has these, and that has to do with
22 the racial equality.

23 Last point would be this: Although you
24 are -- you are about 15 million people now in
25 Florida, of which you have about 11 million

1 votes, but at the same time, you don't measure
2 -- you don't redistrict along lines based on
3 votes. You redistrict based on population.
4 That is why a lot of these pine trees that is
5 used to vote in the old elections are no longer
6 voting.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, sir.
8 Thank you, Senator, thank you for your service
9 to the State of Florida.

10 Next up we have Ms. Lisa Bruno, who was
11 here earlier. I do not see her now. We will
12 probably save her and try to get back to her if
13 she is here later.

14 We also have next Bishop McKinley Young.
15 Bishop? Not here?

16 We had also another Bishop, but I
17 apologize, I can't see the first name.
18 McKossick? McKissick? Not here.

19 We have Ms. Glorious Johnson, city council
20 member from Jacksonville, former city council
21 member. Thank you very much, Ms. Johnson, for
22 being here. You are recognized.

23 MS. JOHNSON: Good evening, everyone. Can
24 you hear me?

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes.

1 MS. JOHNSON: You know, as I used to be a
2 politician, we always have plenty to say, but
3 there comes a time when you are just -- just
4 hoping for the best. My thing is, and my
5 concern, and I think Mr. Girardeau,
6 Dr. Girardeau, my former dentist at that time,
7 and Congresswoman Brown, they had some points
8 from my research when it talks about the
9 gerrymandering.

10 I, too, am a long resident of
11 Jacksonville. This month, I will be 64 years
12 old, and I have been here 64 years. And the
13 gerrymandering at that time was supposed to be
14 set up where we would have the right
15 representation, or we would have an opportunity
16 to be represented by people who we chose to
17 represent us.

18 Yes, we have a President that is black.
19 He is an American. Yes, we have a mayor who is
20 black and from this city. But the point is,
21 there's still some things that must be done in
22 representation, and that is having an
23 opportunity for us to choose who we want to
24 represent us, and what we want, not saying that
25 as a race based, because I am one of the last

1 to pull the race card out if I have to, but the
2 point is there comes a time, and that is why it
3 was written in the two ballots that, first of
4 all, one thing that they want considered is
5 that districts shall not be drawn to deny
6 racial or language minorities the equal
7 opportunity to participate in the political
8 process and elect representatives of our
9 choice. If you do in the pocket-size, like the
10 compact, the contingency, like it says in here,
11 if you do work it that way, make sure under
12 whoever -- whomever the recommendation is for
13 fairness, who knows what fairness really is,
14 but within your heart do like Dr. Martin Luther
15 King stated, and he said, "Cowardice asks the
16 question, is it safe. Expediency asks the
17 question, is it politic. Vanity asks the
18 question, is it popular. But conscience asks
19 the question, is it right." And there comes a
20 time when one must make a position that is
21 neither safe nor politic nor popular, but
22 because conscience tells one it is right.

23 I hope that you do understand why we as
24 black Americans -- Americans, period -- feel
25 the way we feel and we want representation.

1 And if we decide we want to have an American
2 who happens to be black to represent us, let us
3 have that. If we decide we want a white,
4 Hispanic, Asian, whatever it is, let us be the
5 one, the voters, who make the decision. Thank
6 you very much.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
8 Ms. Johnson.

9 Our next speaker is Sollie Mitchell,
10 followed by Judith Youngblood.

11 Ms. Mitchell? Mr. Mitchell, I'm sorry.

12 MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
13 and all of the representatives from the
14 different districts.

15 I am here to bring your attention to the
16 Voting Rights Act. As the new district lines
17 are drawn, to uphold the hard fought work that
18 we have made, it is absolutely an essential to
19 incorp the essence of the state Voting Right
20 Act into the way in which the State of Florida
21 political boundaries are drawn.

22 I am Sollie Mitchell, I live at 4009
23 Gillislee Drive. I am 93 years old. I
24 registered to vote in 1939, and have -- the
25 only time I missed voting was when I was in the

1 service, and I just want to thank the way that
2 you are operating now. I am energized,
3 energized to see what you are doing now.
4 Please, please, please. Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
6 Mr. Mitchell. God bless you, sir, and thank
7 you for your service to our great country.

8 Next up we have Ms. Judith Youngblood,
9 followed by Bobby Burton.

10 MS. YOUNGBLOOD: My name is Judy
11 Youngblood. I am feeling younger by the minute
12 as I see Doc and Holly. Gosh, you know, I am
13 only 75, so I am feeling pretty good about
14 that. Been a registered voter in Jacksonville
15 since 1960. Would have been that sooner, but I
16 missed by just a few days' vote turning 21 for
17 the '56 election. I go back a long way in the
18 city.

19 One of the things that I have always been
20 concerned about is having representative
21 government. That is what we were given in this
22 country by our founding fathers, and
23 "representative" means that you -- we get
24 together and we meet people and we say, "You
25 would be good to represent me since I can't go

1 there, so you go and represent me, then I tell
2 you what I want, then you come back and tell me
3 what happened and I tell you what I want
4 again." This means that I need to know my
5 representatives. Many of you, I do know, I
6 have known -- I have known your folks, like I
7 went to high school with Lake's mom and -- Lake
8 -- Representative Ray's mom and others that I
9 have known for a long time.

10 One of the things about representation, if
11 you do a good job and people know you, you
12 don't have to worry about getting reelected.
13 You don't need incumbency. If necessary, back
14 in this -- and I went to the University of
15 Florida back in the early '50s with many of our
16 elected politicians, many of whom are now
17 retired. There is a solution for that. You
18 just move or buy another house, and then you
19 are in the district again. It is not a problem
20 with redistricting. It is a problem with you.

21 I have felt for quite a bit of time -- I
22 have been divorced for over 20 years, was
23 married for over 30, lived on the south side,
24 knew all of my representatives, didn't matter
25 if they were mine or not. If I had a problem,

1 I could go to any of them and they didn't say,
2 "Well, go to yours, I am not yours." They
3 said, "Sure." And that is the way things made
4 it good and you felt like you had
5 representative government.

6 Unfortunately, when I moved where I could
7 afford after divorce to the west side, I found
8 that I had a Congressperson who didn't
9 acknowledge me, and still doesn't, except when
10 I get a card when he is running again. I have
11 even gone down to his office in Orange Park and
12 taken information to try to get answers to
13 questions. Never got the answers. Got them
14 from the other Congressmen in the area who
15 didn't really represent me supposedly, but I do
16 my voicing at the ballot box.

17 So, once again, if you represent people
18 who know you, if you say, "Yes, I know you are
19 in my district," not saying, "Well, I don't
20 think I represent way up there," you -- you
21 will be treated fairly by the voters as you
22 treat them fairly. So please keep in mind when
23 you are redistricting.

24 There used to be an old joke about you
25 could take a Spirograph, remember those, and

1 you could draw your districts, because
2 populations do run somewhat in concentric
3 circles. Should be community based where we
4 can know each other, where people have the
5 opportunity to know who they are voting for,
6 where those people have an opportunity to
7 know -- get input from more --

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms.
9 Youngblood, we are running over a little bit.

10 MS. YOUNGBLOOD: Right. So that the
11 Legislators have the opportunity to get input
12 from more of the lobbyists to get them from the
13 electors. Thank you for your time.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much.

16 Next we have Mr. Bobby Burton, followed by
17 Beth Davey, and before Mr. Burton gets up,
18 although I don't see him, I just want to remind
19 everyone we've got about an hour and a half and
20 we've got over 25 speakers, please be cognizant
21 of the folks behind you, and if someone said
22 what you planned to say, use brevity. We give
23 bonus points for that. So just be mindful.
24 Thank you very much.

25 Mr. Burton, is Mr. Burton here? Okay, we

1 will try to find him.

2 Ms. Davey, Beth Davey? Beth, thank you
3 very much for being here. Following Beth is
4 going to be Thomas Wing.

5 You are recognized, Beth.

6 MS. DAVEY: I just wanted to thank you
7 guys for coming to Jacksonville and allowing us
8 an opportunity to have input into this process.
9 I am coming more and representing hopefully
10 District 19. And my evaluation of this is as a
11 plan -- a possible plan would be to follow the
12 boundary line of I-295 and cut off everything
13 north of that and place it into District 16.
14 Given the fact that District 19 needs to lose
15 over 18,000 people and District 16 needs to
16 gain over 16,000 people, it would seem like a
17 help in both districts. This would also not
18 cause a ripple effect on either district. And
19 in keeping in line with Amendments 5 and 6, it
20 would allow northwest St. Johns and Mandarin
21 Township to stay together, which kind of goes
22 along with the lady that just spoke, it is
23 about keeping community together, and that is
24 my opinion. Thank you.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you

1 very much.

2 Thomas Wing? You are recognized, sir.

3 After Thomas, we have Mr. Ray Alford.

4 MR. WING: Thank you very much for this
5 opportunity to speak to the panel and to the
6 citizens here of Jacksonville.

7 Justice is blind, except probably when it
8 comes down to the final decision as to where
9 the actual demarcations of the different
10 districts will be and that type of thing. Now,
11 I hope the gerrymandering, that type of thing,
12 which is so prevalent in some of the districts
13 will be stopped, but it will take political
14 courage to do that, of course. Most people, as
15 I have discovered in Tallahassee and that type
16 thing, don't have that.

17 I've heard the -- for both of these
18 sessions, I have heard the race card pulled so
19 many times. It is time to get over it. Mayor
20 Brown won the election, not by a whole bunch,
21 but, you know, we have to start accepting that
22 we have this situation in this city like we
23 have. We have 47 percent of these kids doing
24 horrible in schools. To me, that is more
25 important than playing the race card.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Alford, I
2 would like to keep your comments focused on the
3 redistricting, if you could.

4 MR. WING: It is, it is, it is.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Help me get
6 to it.

7 MR. WING: Okay. In politics, everything
8 is about power and control, and I would hope
9 that the panel, the decision-makers, the people
10 who do the final analysis and vote on where --
11 what is going to where and that type thing,
12 will do it based on that justice is blind.
13 Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
15 sir.

16 Next up we have Ray Alford, and after
17 Mr. Alford, we have Mike Kuhn. Do we have Ray
18 Alford here?

19 Okay. How about Mike Kuhn, is Mike here?
20 Mike, thank you for being here, sir. You are
21 recognized.

22 MR. KUHN: Thank you. Thank you so much.

23 Senator Gaetz, I want to compliment you on
24 laying out the rules of the road and some of
25 the -- you did some good preemptive strikes, I

1 would say, on taking care of the issues that so
2 many people had during our first session.

3 I am Mike Kuhn, I am from a little
4 community called Orangedale, that is somewhere
5 in 19, and when I look at community, I guess I
6 look at it a little bit differently in the fact
7 where do I go to church, what is happening to
8 our St. Johns River, where do I go eat dinner,
9 and Representative Gwyn, she and I had to fight
10 over a chicken wing, I think, for dinner. When
11 I want to go to a fish restaurant, I go up to
12 Bonefish, which is just south of 295. If I
13 want to grab some quick Italian, I go across
14 the river and grab up some Olive Garden. And
15 if I want to fix something at the house, I go
16 to Home Depot. And when I go to church, I go
17 south to around World Golf Village, and that
18 church never was ever there before. And when I
19 want to go to the library, I go to a little
20 place around Fruit Cove. And so that is my
21 community.

22 And it is interesting, everybody that I
23 end up running into seems to have the same
24 concerns as I do. Is our properties being
25 taken care of, is the river being taken care

1 of, what's the education like, what is the
2 funding from the State, from the Feds, what are
3 the issues around the county? And so when I
4 look at the dilemma that you might face in our
5 arena, I look at 19, and there's, what, Mike,
6 16,000 extra that you've got sitting there, so
7 we could take that and move it into, what is
8 it, 16, Beth, I think, that would take care of
9 that issue, and everything south and everything
10 to my community over in Orange Park as it is
11 today all the way down to Fleming Island where
12 my Home Depot is, makes sense and we are all
13 very dumb, fat and happy.

14 So -- and Gwyndolen, all of my favorite
15 dining places are right there. I don't have to
16 go over 295, and all the sizing is correct.

17 And one thing I want to just share with
18 you all, sir, 93 years, wonderful, and the
19 history that some of our folks have shared with
20 us tonight is wonderful, and the traditions
21 that as a community you've all had. I come
22 from Colorado, so, my gosh, the Civil War, I
23 had to scratch my head on that one. But the
24 thing is, in my community, all of us take the
25 same approach in making sure that we want a

1 Representative who stands for the rights of the
2 people, who represents that all of us have a
3 proper place in our society, that we should all
4 be treated respectfully, and finally, we should
5 honor the individuality of each and every one
6 of us. And in my community, that is what
7 happens, and it doesn't make any difference
8 whether you are black, white, Ukrainian or
9 Hispanic, my community will represent all of
10 us, and that is what we expect. Thank you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

12 Next up we have Mr. Richard Billings. I
13 apologize, Richard, I didn't give you a
14 heads-up. Thank you for being here. And after
15 Richard, we are going to have Jay McGovern.

16 Mr. Billings, you are recognized.

17 MR. BILLINGS: I am Richard Billings from
18 Fernandina, Nassau County, Representative
19 Adkins, and I want to score some points, so I
20 will be brief.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Good.

22 MR. BILLINGS: Basically -- can everybody
23 here me? I just want to make one point and ask
24 one question. I would love to see when you
25 guys are done at the end of the day to have the

1 districts resemble something that it is either
2 geometric or follows natural boundaries. You
3 know, before the meeting, I was looking at the
4 Florida congressional districts, and I got a
5 chuckle out of District 3, look at that. And I
6 don't want to go into politics, but I hope we
7 don't see that when you folks are finished with
8 your deliberations.

9 The second thing -- and I hope politics
10 and party politics don't enter into the
11 equation, too much anyway. And my question is,
12 at the end of this session, can we get a little
13 update on Amendment 5 and 6, how will that
14 impact your thinking? If you could write that
15 down, if we have time. Thank you very much.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
17 To give you two quick answers, the first one to
18 your question is you can actually sign up on
19 this card and you can get updates via e-mail as
20 to what we are doing and the timing and
21 process.

22 Also, in regards to Amendments 5 and 6,
23 Senator Gaetz will touch on this at the end,
24 but to say it very briefly, we are going to
25 follow it. It is the law, it is the

1 Constitution and we will absolutely follow it.

2 Mr. McGovern, thank you for being back
3 this afternoon. You are recognized, sir.

4 MR. McGOVERN: Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: After
6 Mr. McGovern, we have Jonathan Loesche. I hope
7 I am saying that right. Mr. Loesche, you will
8 be next from the Libertarian Party of Duval
9 County.

10 You are recognized, sir.

11 MR. McGOVERN: Thank you. There's been a
12 lot of talk about having individuals or civic
13 organizations submit plans, and I would
14 certainly suggest that people do that, as you
15 have. We want that public input. But it
16 doesn't preclude you from giving us a look at
17 what you guys have in mind as members of the
18 committee. I think that is really important.
19 I mentioned earlier about it is effectively a
20 gag order by you not communicating with me. It
21 is important that I communicate with you, but I
22 need you to communicate with me as well. I
23 don't think it is the job of civic
24 organizations to submit a plan for you guys.
25 It is your job. That is what we pay you for.

1 The other part of that is, as a citizen,
2 it suggests to me that I have to have a special
3 interest group to be represented, that I have
4 to have some civic group submit a plan that
5 fits my needs, or I won't be represented. So
6 that is why it is so important for me to see
7 your plan.

8 And then in the introductory remarks, you
9 talked about the timeline and you consistently
10 say that you have accelerated the timeline, but
11 I would please like to clarify that is only the
12 final enactment of the districts that has to
13 wait until 2012.

14 What we didn't see was enough early on,
15 you know. The Governor sort of slow-rolled the
16 census data, and we are off to a start now, but
17 it is a late start, and I think that should be
18 acknowledged. And there are things that you
19 can do to speed the process. We don't need to
20 depend on the courts to have a speedy process
21 after January.

22 So the last thing I would like to point
23 out is there's a couple of people who have
24 talked about fairness is in the eye of the
25 beholder. The purpose of Fair Districts

1 Florida was to define fairness, and that is
2 codified now in our Constitution, that fairness
3 is defined, as one guy was talking about,
4 compact, geometric, blah, blah, blah. So that
5 is codified. And the last point of that
6 fairness is these districts can be done meeting
7 the requirements of the Voters Rights Act. We
8 just have to pay less attention to Republican
9 versus Democrat constituencies. Thank you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
11 sir. Thanks for coming back.

12 Jonathan Loesche. After Mr. Loesche, I
13 hope I am saying that right, we have Craig
14 Shoup.

15 Jonathan, you are recognized, sir. Thank
16 you for being here today.

17 MR. LOESCHE: My name is Jonathan Loesche,
18 I am with the Libertarian Party of Florida, and
19 first off I just want to thank all of you for
20 making this process as seemingly open as
21 possible.

22 You know, like the other gentleman said,
23 it seems like the -- with the issue of
24 gerrymandering, this isn't an issue about race.
25 Somebody else said about District 3, the other

1 main thing about that district is that it is
2 almost primarily Democrat, and I would be
3 willing to wager that all -- I know at least
4 District 4 is Mr. Crenshaw, and I am not sure
5 about the others, but I am willing to bet
6 almost all of them are Republican, because
7 almost all the Democrats in this part of the
8 state are within District 3. As someone who is
9 a third party -- potential third-party
10 candidate, it is already tough enough for us to
11 try and get into the game and win a state like
12 Florida where it has one of the highest
13 incumbency rates in America, gerrymandering is
14 a real issue. So I just want to say that --
15 that is about it. So thank you very much.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much.

18 Next we have Craig Shoup, and after Craig,
19 we've got Justin Taylor.

20 While we are waiting for Mr. Shoup, I just
21 want to take a moment to let everyone know,
22 unfortunately, the live webcast for this
23 meeting has failed due to a technical issue,
24 but we should be able to have video replay
25 available on the pod cast and on the web in the

1 next day or so. So we apologize for that
2 technical difficulty.

3 Mr. Shoup, you are recognized, sir.

4 MR. SHOUP: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
5 wanted to just express my gratitude to the
6 committee and to all of our Representatives and
7 Senators for this open process. I think we
8 have heard people talking that we need to have
9 openness, and I think you guys have listened
10 before anyone ever said anything about
11 openness, and creating this openness with the
12 web, let anyone be able to submit a plan, you
13 couldn't ask for a more open process. I just
14 want to say thank you for that and thank you
15 for coming over here to Jacksonville.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much. Extra points for Mr. Shoup.

18 Justin Taylor is next. After Justin -- we
19 need you on the mike, because everything is on
20 the record. We want to make sure that you are
21 properly represented and your thoughts are
22 represented, sir, so go ahead.

23 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. My name is Justin
24 Taylor, I am the President of the Nassau County
25 Young Republicans, and I just wanted to say

1 thank you very much for representing us and
2 thank you for all you do and for having this
3 night to hear testimony from the public, so
4 thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
6 very much, Mr. Taylor.

7 We next have Mr. William Wright, and after
8 William Wright, Roger Thomas.

9 Mr. Wright, you are recognized, sir.

10 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you very much. I am
11 using this little form that Congressman Stern
12 sent out, so he said make sure you tell him who
13 you are and all that kind of stuff. So my name
14 is William Thomas Wright. Most people call me
15 Tom. I am here representing myself; however, I
16 am a proud member of the First Coast Tea Party.
17 Then it says tell them how long. All right, I
18 have been here since I was ten years old and I
19 have been in Jacksonville for 57 years,
20 graduated from a local high school, married an
21 Englewood girl. I have five grandchildren, one
22 great-grandchild. And I was one of those
23 people when I was working for a living, I was
24 too damn busy for politics, but since I
25 retired, I decided I would try to dabble in it

1 a little bit and I got involved with the First
2 Coast Tea Party and I started going to events
3 and I started meeting people and I started to
4 get a little enthused, but I had a real
5 awakening in our last mayoral election. I was
6 a poll watcher, and I was assigned to precinct
7 four. I learned so much about political
8 activism. These people know what they are
9 doing. They took us to the wood shed,
10 basically what happened.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Wright,
12 we would like you to focus on the -- comments
13 on redistricting, if you could.

14 MR. WRIGHT: I am getting to that. I am
15 getting to that.

16 Now, item one on this sheet says "compact
17 of districts." Then number three says,
18 "preserve existing districts." Boy, I don't
19 know how y'all are going to do that. I'll tell
20 you one thing, I wouldn't want to be in your
21 shoes. It is a heck of a job. And if you have
22 to stick to this 696,000, no wonder the thing
23 looks like a jigsaw puzzle.

24 So I ask you, please do your due diligence
25 as much as you can, especially with cutting

1 into two new districts, and I hope you have
2 divine guidance, because I believe you are
3 going to need it. Thank you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
5 very much, Mr. Wright. Appreciate your
6 prayers.

7 Next up we have Mr. -- Mr. Thomas.

8 MR. THOMAS: Good evening, ladies and
9 gentlemen. I --

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: And, excuse
11 me, Mr. Thomas, I'm sorry, after Mr. Thomas, we
12 have Donna Barrow, or Barrow.

13 You are recognized, sir.

14 MR. THOMAS: I am Mr. Roger Thomas, a
15 long-term resident of Jacksonville. I lived
16 down in Winter Park before that for many years.

17 I would say that the person that comes
18 closest to expressing my opinion tonight has
19 been Mr. McGovern, so that is just a second of
20 his position. I think the overall thing that I
21 have heard tonight is a request for fairness on
22 your part.

23 I can say that of the community here in
24 Jacksonville, that my experience as a campaign
25 worker was that some of my associates were run

1 out of some neighborhoods, and, therefore, to a
2 certain extent, representation fairly in
3 Jacksonville is still deficient. Whatever that
4 makes problems for you, Lake Ray or the other
5 people from Jacksonville, I'm sorry, but I do
6 know that it is not working as it exists now.
7 The Fairness in Representation Act needs to be
8 implemented in your absolute, most ethical and
9 scrupulous method that you can apply. Thank
10 you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

12 Next up we have Donna Barrow, and after
13 that, we have John Libby who visited with us
14 earlier. Donna. Donna left, okay.

15 John? We would love to have you back
16 again, sir.

17 Are we going to put his maps up on -- if
18 we could. Give us one second, John, I think we
19 will get your maps up again.

20 Mr. Libby, for those of you who do not
21 know, submitted a full congressional map to
22 this committee as a -- now is probably a good
23 time to mention, in fact, just today we have
24 received three submissions of congressional
25 maps just today on-line, and one state Senate

1 map. So we are certainly appreciative of the
2 feedback we are getting, and Mr. Libby, we are
3 very grateful for yours, so you are allowed to
4 proceed.

5 MR. LIBBY: I just wanted to come forward
6 one last time and commend the committee for
7 holding these public hearings, and to suggest
8 to everyone that is present that the
9 opportunity exists here in Florida to have your
10 input and put it on paper, send it
11 electronically to these ladies and gentlemen
12 over in Tallahassee. And having been through
13 the redistricting process here in Florida in
14 1980, 1990 and 2000, we've never had this type
15 of opportunity as private citizens before. So
16 I would suggest as Americans we all take this
17 opportunity and be -- continue to follow this
18 process through to its conclusion, and
19 hopefully we will come up with districts that
20 everybody can live with and are agreeable to.
21 Thank you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
23 very much, Mr. Libby, and thank you for
24 submitting those maps to us. We are very
25 grateful, and we hope many more people will

1 follow suit.

2 After that, I believe we've got a Dwayne
3 Clarkson. Is that right?

4 MR. CLARK: Clark, Senior.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Clark,
6 Senior. I'm sorry about that. Mr. Clark,
7 Senior, thank you very much for being here. We
8 welcome you, and after Mr. Clark, Senior, we've
9 got Brenda Simmons.

10 You are recognized, sir.

11 MR. CLARK: Again, my name is Dwayne
12 Clark, Sr. I am a resident of Jacksonville for
13 quite a few moons, and I would just like to
14 thank the Representatives and the Senators here
15 today for this transparent proceedings. And
16 also I would just like to mention, just to echo
17 what Dr. Girardeau said earlier, when you are
18 doing your redistricting, do it demographically
19 based upon the registered voters. That will
20 eliminate the gerrymandering, that will
21 eliminate the race issue, that will eliminate
22 everything and it would be -- everything would
23 be neutrally based upon that and your other
24 regulations that you are governed by, and I
25 think everything will be okay. God bless you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
2 sir.

3 Next up we have Ms. Simmons. Thank you
4 for being here. And Arlyn Dockery will be
5 after Mr. Simmons.

6 You are recognized, ma'am.

7 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you, Representative
8 Weatherford, Senator Gaetz and distinguished
9 ladies and gentlemen of the Legislature.

10 I rise this evening to speak in favor of
11 abiding by the letter and the tenets of the
12 Voting Rights Act, first enacted in 1965 and
13 expanded in 1975.

14 Indulge me for a moment as a articulate
15 from my perspective. I am an English
16 literature professor by trade, and today's
17 debate reminds me of a poem written by Dudley
18 Randall at the turn of the 20th century. The
19 poem was about two 20th-century icons, Booker
20 T. Washington and W. E. B. Dubois. In
21 Randall's widely anthologized poem, Booker T.
22 and W. B., Washington argues that
23 African-Americans should go about their work
24 quietly and save money to buy a house, among
25 other things, as part of a fictional

1 conversation with his contemporary. He said
2 something like this: "It seems to me, said
3 Booker T., that all you folks have missed the
4 boat who shout about the right to vote, and
5 spend vain days and sleepless nights in uproar
6 over civil rights. Just keep your mouth shut
7 and do not grouse, but work and save and buy a
8 house."

9 W. B. Dubois constantly disagrees with
10 Mr. Washington, citing education as the goal to
11 which African-Americans should aspire. W. B.
12 Dubois makes a very salient point relative to
13 today's topic when he says in his poem, "For
14 what can property avail if dignity and justice
15 fail? Unless you help to make the laws, they
16 will steal your house with a trumped-up
17 clause."

18 Amendments 5 and 6 in all its geometry are
19 the trumped-up clauses of today that will
20 summarily strip African-Americans and Hispanics
21 from the ability to appropriately be
22 represented in the Legislature. Enactment of
23 these amendments will destroy the communities
24 of interest that comprise the minority access
25 districts. I am firm in my belief, because for

1 the balance of my adult life I have lived in
2 districts that were represented by people who
3 look like me, some of whom are in this very
4 room this evening. These Legislators
5 understand, can interpret, and most
6 importantly, can do and fervently fight for the
7 issues important to me. There is an ease in
8 this relationship, because similar backgrounds,
9 interests and aspirations make for a
10 synergistic relationship between legislator and
11 constituents. After all, this is what
12 democracy is about, persons duly elected to
13 ensure that genuine interests of constituents
14 are not compromised.

15 I ask myself the question: If I began my
16 statement today citing a turn of the 20th
17 century debate covering a similar topic,
18 knowing full well that twice in that century,
19 in 1965 and 1975, the issue was confronted and
20 handled head-on, why is it that we are here
21 today in the second decade of the 21st century
22 still debating an issue that is so clearly one
23 that is regressive instead of progressive?
24 But, alas, we are here, and I register my
25 sentiment and strong opinion that blatant

1 violation of the Voting Rights Act through the
2 enactment of Amendments 5 and 6 and creating
3 districts that are not representative of
4 communities of interest is degenerative,
5 insulting and it erodes the progress made by so
6 many of America's foreparents.

7 In a word, let us continue to uphold the
8 Voting Rights Act and ensure that any
9 redistricting maintains minority access
10 districts. Thank you very much.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
12 very much.

13 Arlyn Dockery. After Ms. Dockery, we have
14 Beth Davey.

15 MS. DOCKERY: Thank you. My name is Arlyn
16 Dockery, I have lived in Jacksonville for over
17 45 years, and I thank you all for representing
18 us, and I hope and pray that when all is said
19 and done and all the redistricting has been
20 re-graphed, that all the people will be fairly
21 represented, equally and geographically from
22 Jacksonville to Orlando. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much.

25 Beth Davey? Is Beth here? She already

1 spoke. We had her in here twice, okay. I
2 apologize for that. I thought I had seen that
3 before.

4 Robert, I want to say Sponsor, but I don't
5 think that is right.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Lives on Forest Circle.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, on
8 Forest Circle. He left? Okay, he is not here.

9 Bruce Rockwell. Is Mr. Rockwell here?
10 Come on forward, Mr. Rockwell. You will be
11 followed up by the Vice-President of the city
12 council, Mr. Bishop. Mr. Bill Bishop, you are
13 next, sir.

14 You are recognized.

15 MR. ROCKWELL: Mr. Weinstein, you forgot
16 about us folks in Duval County when you
17 announced who you represented.

18 The young lady that just spoke before me
19 with the Voting Rights Act, we seem to forget
20 that we are all Floridians, we are supposed to
21 be representative of everyone. So my
22 suggestion to you gentlemen, which the State of
23 Florida residents voted for Amendment 5 and 6,
24 if you believe in democracy, then what is the
25 problem? What we need to do is have a computer

1 graphics giving us three or four choices,
2 leaves you gentlemen off the hook, and we do it
3 by population, not by black, white, green,
4 purple, Republican, Democrat or whatever you
5 happen to be. I am a registered Democrat, I
6 vote Republican, but I speak independently, so
7 I don't know --

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sounds like
9 you got all the bases covered there, sir.

10 MR. ROCKWELL: Well -- and one last thing
11 that is not on subject. The Georgia-Pacific
12 redistribution of their waste into the St.
13 Johns River, you know, they are polluting
14 Wright's Creek, now we are all going to get a
15 little bit. Thank you for listening.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
17 Mr. Rockwell, we appreciate your comments.

18 We've got the Vice-President of the city
19 council, Mr. Bill Bishop. Councilman, thank
20 you very much for being here, and following
21 Mr. Bishop, we have Ms. Audrey Gibson, former
22 Representative.

23 COUNCILMAN BISHOP: Thank you,
24 Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.
25 Thank you all for being here and conducting

1 this hearing. You truly do have a daunting
2 task, and I am glad I don't have yours. We
3 have our own little redistrict thing going on,
4 and it is nothing like this, so my hat is off
5 to you, but my comment will be very brief.

6 Speaking as a resident of several of the
7 districts that exhibit what one might call
8 creative geometric properties, my hope is that
9 compactness is a principle that ranks very high
10 in the decision matrix in which you conduct
11 your business going forward, and thank you very
12 much.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
14 very much, sir.

15 Yes? I think we have time for everybody.
16 We would love to here from you, Ms. Gibson. It
17 is good to see you again in your neck of the
18 woods. And after Ms. Gibson, we have got -- I
19 am going to ask Senator Gaetz to help me with
20 this one. I think it is Celia --

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Miller.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: -- Miller.
23 Celia Miller will be next.

24 Representative, thank you for being here,
25 and you have the floor.

1 MS. GIBSON: Thank you, and thank you all
2 for being here. I know it is very difficult to
3 leave family, particularly when session is over
4 and committees are over, so I appreciate all of
5 you all being here, and certainly all of you
6 all need to give yourselves a hand for being
7 here because you are interested in the process.
8 Go ahead and do that.

9 I just have a couple of comments. You
10 know I am a woman of many words, but I wrote
11 down today what I want to say, and I had some
12 dental work done, too, so that is going to cut
13 in really badly.

14 I think as you consider how the district
15 lines are going to be drawn, I hope that you
16 all will consider what is in the best interest
17 of all of the communities throughout this
18 state. Will the people who are drawn within
19 particular district lines have an opportunity
20 to elect someone who represents their
21 interests, the diversity of interests, where
22 the schools are going to be drawn, where the
23 libraries are going to be, and the trickle-down
24 effect of the lines that you draw on not only
25 congressional districts, but legislative

1 districts, school districts and city council
2 districts, and how that all plays into the
3 daily lives of the citizens of the state of
4 Florida.

5 I also would ask that you consider that
6 the census and redistricting is not only about
7 how many people there are in our state and
8 within district lines, but who those people
9 are. And, again, the overwhelming
10 consideration, I think, is whether or not they
11 have opportunity -- the opportunity to elect
12 people who represent their interests and their
13 needs, and then, again, remember the domino
14 effect. Thank you very much.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
16 Representative Gibson.

17 We have Ms. Celia Miller next, and after
18 Ms. Celia, we have Lisa King.

19 You are recognized, ma'am.

20 MS. MILLER: Good evening, Representative
21 Weatherford and distinguished other
22 Representatives and fellow citizens. I am
23 Celia Miller, practically a life-long resident,
24 native of Jacksonville, and I would like to
25 thank the Representatives and those people who

1 are responsible for making this process very
2 transparent and the many opportunities that we
3 will have to have input.

4 I think most of the speakers have made
5 very valid points, and I concur with most of
6 them, and I think all of us want fairness so
7 that we will all be represented.

8 This is a democratic democracy, but some
9 people have their own interpretation about with
10 democracy is. Some see it as being fair, and
11 some feel it and interpret it as not being fair
12 since it is a democracy, but we live in a
13 capitalistic society. So we are not always
14 certain that our best interests are
15 represented, but the voting process allows for
16 that to be accomplished if everyone is to use
17 their best judgment, their best knowledge and
18 their most earnest consciousness to accomplish
19 what all the people would want. Whether half
20 feel it is wrong or half feel it is right, we
21 want to be able to represent all the people,
22 and that is basically what I wanted to say
23 tonight, and hopefully from my community, which
24 is in the heart of Jacksonville, we will be
25 submitting suggestions, maps and ideas for the

1 committee to consider. And I like the idea of
2 having the final draft include three options at
3 least from which the people will have to
4 decide. Thank you and God bless all of you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
6 very much, Ms. Miller.

7 We have Lisa King next, and after Lisa,
8 John Thomas.

9 MS. KING: Good evening.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Good evening.

11 MS. KING: My name is Lisa King and I am a
12 native of Jacksonville, and I am here
13 representing little, tiny precinct 11-A, the
14 only precinct in Duval County that is in House
15 District 12, and -- all 315 of us. And we live
16 on Hecksher Drive, which is a 1920's toll road
17 that was built by a New York businessman. It
18 connects a string of islands. Out in my little
19 precinct, I have one gas station, the ferry, a
20 liquor store, a church, a surf shop and two
21 restaurants. However, we are -- yes, we do,
22 we've got the important bases covered. But
23 because of the way the district is drawn, our
24 Representative, who has, God bless her, more
25 counties than any one person should have -- and

1 I know some of you folks in the Panhandle know
2 what that is about -- we all work in
3 Jacksonville, we -- our children go to school
4 in Jacksonville. We really have no community
5 of interest with the rest of that district.
6 Our precinct has flip-flopped in between that
7 district and District 17. And I will never
8 forget meeting with Representative Davis one
9 time, God rest him, and arguing with him that I
10 was indeed in his district. He did not believe
11 me. I had to take out my voter card and show
12 him that I was indeed in House District 17. So
13 we would really like to be in House District
14 17. I am asking nicely.

15 Okay. That being said, trusting
16 government is at a record low. Florida is a
17 purple state, okay. We -- you know, we just
18 elected a Democrat president, a Democrat mayor
19 here in Jacksonville, barely, we have one U.S.
20 Senator who is Republican, one U.S. Senator who
21 is a Democrat. We have -- but yet the
22 Legislature, the makeup of the seats does not
23 reflect that kind of 50/50 atmosphere. That is
24 why we voted for fair districts. It was not an
25 accident. We knew what we were voting for. We

1 know that y'all can draw districts in a way
2 that reflects our voter performance, which kind
3 of goes back and forth, we are right there in
4 the middle, and also respects minority access
5 districts. We know it is possible and we
6 expect it from you.

7 We also expect that at this time where
8 money is so tight and we have such major
9 problems to deal with, we don't want to spend
10 our taxpayers' dollars watching you guys suing
11 yourselves. Enough, okay. So it is really
12 going to be really easy to judge the job y'all
13 are doing. So I just want you to know there's
14 a lot of folks watching you close. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

16 We have John Thomas up next, and following
17 John is Tom Larson. Is John here? Maybe not
18 here.

19 Is Tom Larson here? Mr. Larson, thank you
20 for being here, sir.

21 After Mr. Larson, we have John Wehrung.

22 MR. LARSON: Thank you very much for
23 coming here from your far-flung districts
24 around the state. My name is Tom Larson. I
25 live in Jacksonville Beach. I am a life-long

1 American, though I am only in the Jacksonville
2 area for the last 13 years. I am here after
3 being in eight other cities following my
4 career, and I am glad to be here. I got here
5 as soon as I could.

6 I find the district shapes that we live
7 with today to be extreme. My Congressional
8 Representative has a district that spans from
9 the east side of Tallahassee all the way to
10 Ponte Vedra Beach. My state senatorial
11 district ranges from the Georgia border to
12 Ormond Beach, and it takes so long to drive
13 from one end to the other of these districts
14 that there's no way to know my neighbors. I
15 really urge you to undertake compact district
16 designs that reflect the community that people
17 live in and their interests that surround their
18 jobs, their schools, their families, and I hope
19 that you find the word "fair" to be your
20 mantra. I know that is subject to
21 interpretation, but we really seek a state
22 where we are all proud of the layout, we are
23 all proud to be represented by you, and urge
24 you to do your best to do us good service.
25 Thank you very much.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
2 sir.

3 John Wehrung, and with the desire to earn
4 bonus points has decided not to speak, so John,
5 thank you very much for being here.

6 Raymond Pringle is next, and after Mr.
7 Pringle, we have Tanya Bison. I do want to
8 mention that Tanya Bison is our last speaker,
9 and so if there's anyone here who wishes to
10 speak, but has not filled out a card, please
11 raise your right hand now. We will get a card
12 to you and give you an opportunity to speak.
13 Sir, I see someone right here. Could have been
14 one of the ones that was absent earlier when I
15 called your name. We will come back and look
16 for you, sir.

17 But Raymond Pringle. All right. Good to
18 see you, sir. Thank you for being here. I
19 guess we are in Gator country tonight.

20 MR. PRINGLE: Yes, sir.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Go Gators.

22 MR. PRINGLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
23 distinguished panel. Welcome to the bold city
24 of the south, Jacksonville. I see some of you
25 ladies and gentlemen up there that I have known

1 for a long time, and we sure do appreciate you
2 coming.

3 Our town is a great military town, and
4 we -- we are so glad that we have such a
5 wonderful city that we live in, and one of the
6 things that I am really concerned about is our
7 community is changing, and I am just wondering
8 if we are cognizant of just what is going on in
9 our communities in trying to draw out some of
10 these maps.

11 Equality is one of the things that is very
12 important, I think, to each one of us as we sit
13 here and I have heard a lot of folks talking.
14 I live in the Dinsmore area, which is very
15 rural, and our community is changing really a
16 whole lot, and our community has been competing
17 with -- the way the districts are drawn, our --
18 competing with a lot of the downtown district,
19 and a lot of the amenities that go into that
20 district are winding up downtown and not in the
21 area that we live in, and a lot of -- if you
22 see on our map, Jacksonville has a tremendous
23 amount of rural territory, such a big city that
24 we live in, and our services are very sparse,
25 especially transportation. We get a bus down

1 through Dinsmore one time a day, salute. And
2 that is something that we really are concerned
3 about.

4 And another thing, as I look at the
5 drawing of these districts, it reminds me of a
6 drunk chicken, and I don't -- as he maybe drags
7 his tail along with ink on it and going through
8 the lines, it is very hard to get a grasp on
9 just where you are at. Unless you have your
10 voter's card and it will tell you what's going
11 on, you have to be a genius with a map to do
12 so.

13 And so -- but with that, we appreciate you
14 sitting here and listening to all of us and our
15 concerns and maybe a little bit of griping and
16 growling, which all Americans love to do, but
17 we appreciate your ear and thank you very much
18 for listening to us. God bless you one and
19 all.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
21 Mr. Pringle.

22 Okay, Tanya Bison. Ms. Bison, and then
23 following Tanya Bison, we have Kathy Davenport.

24 You are recognized.

25 MS. BYRON: Tanya Byron.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Byron, I'm
2 sorry.

3 MS. BYRON: Yes.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: My apologies.

5 MS. BYRON: I never wanted to attend one
6 of these things before, it is not what I wanted
7 to do, but when the decisions that you folks
8 are making in Tallahassee are affecting my
9 daily life, I start to pay attention.

10 I second this gentleman's thoughts that I
11 don't quite understand why we, the people, are
12 being asked to put all this effort into this
13 redistricting. We have the expectation that
14 you have the -- that you have the smarts and
15 the know-how and the tools to do this. I would
16 say keep it simple, do it concentrically and
17 keep it simple.

18 I am a property owner. I am busy trying
19 to make my mortgage. I don't have time to do
20 this. But, again, we want you to know that we
21 are watching, the citizens are aware, and I
22 think there is a level of distrust that has
23 made probably a lot of these people show up
24 that would rather be home with their families.

25 You guys have cut more than a billion

1 dollars from Florida schools while you are not
2 making big corporations pay their taxes. Key
3 growth management rules protecting our natural
4 resources have been dismantled lately.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ma'am, if you
6 could please focus your comments on the
7 redistricting and the map specifically, that
8 would be great.

9 MS. BYRON: Okay. Well, I think this talk
10 about gerrymandering is coming from that place
11 of distrust. That is really all I have to say
12 besides to keep it simple and try and be fair.
13 Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much.

16 We've got Kathy Davenport, and after that,
17 Mr. Solomon.

18 Ms. Kathy, you are recognized.

19 MS. DAVENPORT: Thank you. Thank you very
20 much, and thank you all for your services.

21 This will be short. I just would like to
22 request that as much as is absolutely possible,
23 to keep Clay County all in one area, and not
24 broken up. I think it would be all in our best
25 interest.

1 And, also -- and I really appreciate you
2 folks working as fast as possible to get all
3 this done so that the information can get to
4 our soldiers overseas so they will have plenty
5 of time to vote and get back to the United
6 States. So thank you very much.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
8 very much.

9 Mr. Solomon, I'm sorry if we missed you
10 earlier, sir, you are recognized, and thank you
11 for taking the time to be here tonight.

12 Mr. Solomon is our last speaker. If there
13 is anyone who would like to speak, we still
14 have time, please fill out a card and raise
15 your hand and we will get one to you. I see a
16 gentleman right here. I see two gentlemen. We
17 will get you a card. Thank you.

18 MR. SOLOMON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
19 definitely need to attend these kind of
20 affairs, because recently I find myself serving
21 on the North Florida Transportation and
22 Planning Organization, and one of the things we
23 do, we articulate concerns for the year 2050.

24 So we are talking about redistricting,
25 which is good, but one of the things that has

1 to be noted is that there is too much
2 astounding levels of apathy that exists, not in
3 this room, within the general community. And
4 at the same time, there is an imperialistic
5 attitude that exists in some of our
6 Legislatorsures. We need to have a commonality
7 of bond and realize the fact that we are all
8 here together.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
10 Mr. Solomon.

11 We've got folks filling out cards right
12 now, so we will give them a minute to do so.

13 Go ahead and come up, sir. I will get
14 your name as you are walking up. Keith? I
15 will let you pronounce your last name for me.

16 MR. SEADORF: Seadorf.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Seadorf.

18 MR. SEADORF: A little bit unique. I am
19 actually on the other end from most of the
20 people here. I have actually only been in the
21 Jacksonville area for a year now. I moved from
22 Atlanta.

23 My only thing is, I would just like to say
24 that I am an IT guy. I was a network engineer
25 for HP in my last job. I am now well on the

1 way to becoming a psychologist right now, so I
2 kind of switched careers, but the point I would
3 like to make from both sides of the House is
4 keep it simple, keep it very technical.

5 Concentric circles is what's been mentioned
6 before. I am sure something can come up with
7 it. That is it.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
9 sir.

10 The last person, Randy Covington.
11 Mr. Covington, sir, you are recognized.

12 MR. COVINGTON: My name is Randy
13 Covington. I am a citizen living in District
14 19 in northwest St. Johns County.

15 The first thing I want to do, Chairman
16 Weatherford, Chairman Gaetz and all the members
17 of the distinguished committee here tonight, is
18 take the opportunity to thank you for your
19 service this past session. This is a period of
20 dwindling resources, budgets are stretched to
21 the limit, and everything that you did
22 reflected the best of what we as citizens of
23 this state expect from State Representatives
24 and State Senators. Thank you very much.

25 Beyond that, I want to say this: Fairness

1 is a very difficult thing to really describe.
2 What I will say is this: At the end of the
3 day, what anybody who will be involved in this
4 process will have to make their judgment on is
5 the very open process and all the wonderful
6 tools and paths to participation you have
7 provided the citizens of this state. It is
8 only through open engagement that people can
9 come to understand how difficult the process
10 is, and all of you, we know, have good
11 intentions and will do your very best to serve
12 us in that regard. Thank you very much.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
14 sir.

15 The next speaker, the last name is
16 Pittman, I apologize, I can't make out the
17 first name, and after Pittman, we have James
18 Richardson.

19 Ms. Pittman? Thank you for being here,
20 ma'am.

21 MS. PITTMAN: Thank you so much. First of
22 all, I want to thank you all again for taking
23 time and including us in the process.

24 We hope that as you look at redistricting,
25 that you really be fair. We realize that over

1 the years what has worked in the community has
2 helped a lot of people and the residents in our
3 community. So we want you all to keep that in
4 mind, what has worked in our community, and we
5 want you to do this in a fair way that
6 represent and that is very inclusive of our
7 community. We want to thank you for your time
8 in being here, and thank you for giving us an
9 opportunity to speak and be a part of the
10 process.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
12 very much.

13 Mr. Richardson, James Richardson, you are
14 recognized, sir.

15 MR. RICHARDSON: Thank you. I was born in
16 Jacksonville. I've lived in many other places,
17 mostly in Florida, and then here continuously
18 over the last several years, but one of the
19 reasons why I voted for the Fair District
20 amendments was because it has just become too
21 political and we have a situation where the
22 vast majority of members of the Legislature are
23 of a party that is actually a small -- is
24 actually an under 50 percent minority of the
25 total number of voters. And the reason that

1 can happen is that the few voters of the party
2 that are disapproved -- or the voters that are
3 disapproved by the people in charge are crowded
4 into a few districts where a few of their
5 members, a few of their citizens, can win
6 re-election very easily because of -- because
7 of the public sentiment in that area, whereas
8 the remaining members of the actually minority
9 party of voters are spread out over enough
10 districts to make sure that that -- the
11 minority party will win in almost every
12 district. They give a few incumbents of the
13 majority party and the majority interest, which
14 is the average working person, a few of those
15 people the plums of being able to constantly be
16 re-elected, maybe because of their racial
17 makeup or maybe because of various other
18 self-identification factors. And that doesn't
19 really help the people that belong to those
20 communities, because they get a few -- they can
21 point to a few inspirational members of
22 Congress and the State Legislature that always
23 get outvoted by the others, which doesn't
24 really do them any good. And I think it is
25 fairer to everyone, especially when

1 demographics do change periodically, to have
2 the voting districts drawn up without regard to
3 any demographics other than geographical
4 proximity and community of interest, as it is
5 called.

6 And as much as I love the fact that I, a
7 Caucasian, am in the district that -- where I
8 can vote for an African-American Congresswoman,
9 I would like to see more Congress people, more
10 State Representatives and more -- and more
11 State Senators that represent my views, because
12 so many of the people who represent my views
13 are spread throughout the state rather than
14 having a few that -- a few that always get
15 outvoted. Thank you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
17 sir.

18 Okay. Thank you all so much for your
19 comment. Before we move forward and allow
20 Senator Gaetz to close us out, I would like to
21 give members of the committee an opportunity to
22 either ask questions and/or give input. So at
23 this moment, any members of the committee that
24 wish to speak, we would love to give you that
25 opportunity. Representative Julien? Any

1 members?

2 Representative Frishe, you are recognized,
3 sir.

4 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Thank you, Mr.
5 Chairman. Okay, now we are on.

6 Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much
7 for coming out. What we have heard today has
8 been very instructional. I don't come from the
9 Jacksonville area, and I am on the House
10 Subcommittee for Redistricting, and I have
11 learned a great deal about your interests here
12 locally. And I know I have a lot more to learn
13 about it, so please send your ideas in, send
14 your concerns in.

15 Freedom is a heavy lift, and as you
16 probably all know, we are part-timers up here,
17 we all have other full-time jobs that we try to
18 maintain. And as much as I love my job, my
19 wife likes me to earn a living, too.

20 So be involved, contribute to the process.
21 Freedom is a heavy lift, we need you to help.
22 But thank you very much for coming out tonight.
23 We appreciate it.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
25 Representative Frishe.

1 Members, any other comments or questions
2 tonight? Not seeing any.

3 Senator Gaetz, perhaps maybe -- there were
4 some questions that were raised during the
5 hearing. Perhaps maybe you could shed some
6 light on those for us and for the members of
7 the audience. You are recognized, sir.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
9 and thank you all for being here.

10 We just concluded a series of hearings in
11 Senator Montford's, Senator Evers' and my home
12 territory, the Panhandle, and now we are here.
13 And as I was listening to all the input we got
14 in the Panhandle, I was so glad that my
15 colleagues from the rest of the state were
16 there and listening, because how else could
17 they appreciate some of the nuances, some of
18 the idiosyncrasies, some of the little
19 irritations that we have dealt with over the
20 past ten years?

21 And I am so glad that I am here in
22 northeast Florida tonight with my colleagues
23 from elsewhere in the state, because while
24 there may be some who would say, "Why didn't
25 you just bring us the maps and we would have a

1 *fait accompli*, and then we could either say we
2 like them or don't like them," you know, there
3 is something to be gained by listening first
4 and then sitting down and drawing conclusions.
5 How else could we have heard about or learned
6 about the specifics of your neighborhoods, of
7 your communities? I have taken eight pages of
8 notes just about specific neighborhoods, about
9 where District 16 and District 17 ought to be
10 -- ought to be divided. We couldn't -- we
11 couldn't have possibly accomplished receiving
12 that sort of input if we would have just sat in
13 Tallahassee in an echo chamber and didn't have
14 the benefit of your involvement. So thank you
15 for taking the time.

16 Let me comment on a couple of things,
17 again, just so that we can do a little
18 fact-checking. There have been a couple of
19 comments made tonight and today about some sort
20 of a gag order, suggesting that you are
21 communicating with us, but we are not
22 communicating with you, and, therefore, there
23 is a gag order. You heard the Chairman offer
24 the mike to any member of this committee,
25 Democrat or Republican, House member or

1 Senator, to offer any proposal, and what I am
2 hearing is that most are like me, and that is
3 we want to hear from people in the 26 public
4 hearings before we commit ourselves to
5 something that might not work for your
6 neighborhood or your community. But, you know,
7 I learned a long time ago that when both sides
8 are talking at the same time, that is not
9 communication. First somebody has to speak and
10 somebody has to listen. And I think it is our
11 view in Senate and in the House that it is
12 better for you to speak and us to listen.
13 There will be plenty of time for us to
14 communicate back, as I indicated at the
15 beginning of this hearing. We will be back in
16 Tallahassee in September. We will be holding
17 open committee meetings. Members will use all
18 of the input we have received to make
19 proposals, to propose maps. Believe me, we
20 will be communicating back. You don't need to
21 worry about politicians not having enough
22 interest in talking and making their proposals.
23 It is remarkable we have been able to be this
24 still this long.

25 And a comment was made, "Well, you know,

1 gosh, why are there references to special
2 interest groups and why they haven't made
3 proposals, why does it take a special interest
4 group to make a proposal?" It doesn't. We've
5 already had multiple submissions of plans for
6 the Senate, for the House, for congressional
7 districts, for particular areas of the state,
8 made by individuals, including an individual
9 who was here earlier today and as well tonight.
10 We simply wanted to make it obvious and
11 welcoming that the special interest groups who
12 are following us from hearing to hearing with
13 the same preordained scripts are also welcome
14 to make proposals if they would like. They
15 don't have to. It is absolutely true, we're
16 paid that huge salary of \$28,000 a year to be
17 state Legislators, and you are darn right we
18 are going to propose maps and we are going to
19 offer up bills, but that doesn't mean that you
20 don't have good ideas that we shouldn't listen
21 to first. And we have heard -- as I said, I've
22 got eight pages of good ideas that's come out
23 of today.

24 Then someone made the comment that the
25 Governor slow-rolled the census data. Well,

1 let's do a little fact-checking on that. The
2 Governor doesn't provide census data. That is
3 the Bureau of the Census, that is a federal
4 agency, and they provided the census data in
5 groups of states. Florida was in the last
6 group that received census data. That was a
7 federal decision. They don't release all the
8 census data at once. And as soon as we
9 received the census data, within hours, we had
10 all of the demographic information on our
11 websites available to every Floridian. The
12 Governor didn't tell us to do it, didn't tell
13 us not to do it, had absolutely no role in it.

14 The Senate and the House, in response to
15 another question, did offer to the United
16 States Justice Department, Amendments 5 and 6
17 for pre-clearance. It took a little while to
18 make sure that we could put down the legal
19 arguments that we thought were germane as to
20 why 5 and 6 should be pre-cleared, and we
21 offered them for pre-clearance and argued that
22 they should be pre-cleared, and they were
23 pre-cleared based on our submission.

24 You know, there are some who say, "Well,
25 we should have come here with preordained maps

1 and just put them down and then said, 'By
2 golly, take it or leave it.' My guess is if we
3 would have done that, we would have had
4 criticism from people who said, "Well, why
5 didn't you listen first?" And, frankly, and I
6 don't mean to be cynical, we might have heard
7 that criticism from some of the very same
8 people who are saying, "Why in the world are
9 you letting citizens speak first, why don't you
10 just come and give us the answer?"

11 There's someone who suggested there ought
12 to be -- that redistricting ought to be based
13 on registered voters only. Well, federal law
14 won't let us do that. Federal law says that
15 districts must be based on population, not just
16 on people who choose to vote. People who
17 choose not to vote have just as much right to
18 be represented equitably as people who do vote.
19 So it can't be based on registered voters or on
20 people who decide to vote.

21 And then someone else had an idea that I
22 wish we could do. They said, "Why don't you
23 just have computer graphics, just program this
24 into a computer, let the computer draw the
25 maps?" Well, first, we have had groups of

1 students from as far away as Columbia
2 University look at redistrict in Florida and
3 offer maps based on computer models. But the
4 Constitution says that it is the Legislature,
5 not the computer, that has to vote, because you
6 can vote us out if you don't like what we do,
7 but if we just trust it all to a computer, will
8 the computer take into account all of the
9 concerns that you have laid out in our hearing
10 today? I am not so sure.

11 So computer models are welcome. If you've
12 got one, send it in. We've had several people
13 who have done it. We will be using computer
14 models. We have provided the computer software
15 that would be used by policy makers, it is on
16 the website and you can use it. So if you
17 think a computer model might be useful, go
18 ahead. But at the end of the day, there still
19 have to be accountable decisions made by people
20 whom you elect.

21 Then there was -- there have been a couple
22 of comments made, and I find this to be
23 interesting as well, I am sure all of us do,
24 and that is, "Well, we really have a state here
25 where, you know, the plurality of voters are

1 Democrats, and the next group either are
2 Republicans or non-party affiliated, depending
3 upon where you count, and then the
4 fastest-growing group of voters are non-party
5 affiliated, so why can't the Legislature just
6 be divided that way?" Well, the reason is
7 because we can't guarantee how people are going
8 to vote. There are 40 Senate districts, and
9 there are 28 Republicans in those 40 Senate
10 districts, we have 28 Republican Senators. But
11 Barack Obama carried eight of the districts
12 that are represented by Republican Senators.

13 Now, you know, should we force people, go
14 to the polls and say, "Well, now, look, you are
15 Republicans, you can't vote for Barack Obama"?
16 You know, what happened was that Barack Obama
17 had, you know, a better campaign, a more
18 persuasive campaign, a better message in the
19 eyes of many, many Independents and Republicans
20 who voted for him.

21 So we can't -- we can't guarantee results.
22 We still have to allow Republicans, Democrats
23 and that growing group of voters who are
24 Independents to make their own decisions. And
25 I can tell you this, that there are many people

1 who will vote for a Democrat for one office, a
2 Republican for another office, because they are
3 looking at the individual and the campaign and
4 the message and the issues. Very few people
5 now vote a straight party line. And so we
6 can't guarantee that the state is going to come
7 out numerically exactly the way the voting
8 population does, because we can't force people
9 to vote a straight party line. And there is no
10 way to draw districts to do that.

11 There have been a couple of references
12 today to a lawsuit and the government suing its
13 citizens. Anybody here been served with a
14 lawsuit about redistricting? Anybody here
15 gotten the sheriff to come to your door and
16 tell you you are being served on a lawsuit
17 about redistricting? I don't think so. The
18 fact is that the government is not suing its
19 citizens. The real fact is that there is a
20 lawsuit. The lawsuit has been brought by two
21 members of the United States Congress, a
22 Democratic member of Congress and a Republican
23 member of Congress. The lawsuit has nothing to
24 do with state redistricting. It has to do with
25 only congressional redistricting. And I am not

1 a lawyer, but as I understand it, the lawsuit
2 seeks clarification as to any apparent
3 inconsistencies between the Voting Rights Act
4 and Amendment 6. And anybody has a right to do
5 is that.

6 My guess is that that won't be just the
7 first lawsuit. That will be one of many
8 lawsuits that might be filed, because now we
9 are in a time when, arguably, more people will
10 feel like they have standing to file a lawsuit
11 when, as the Constitution now says, "No line
12 may be drawn with the intent to either favor or
13 disfavor any incumbent or any political party."
14 That is what Amendments 5 and 6 say: "No line
15 may be drawn with the intent to either favor or
16 disfavor any incumbent or any political party."
17 Now draw the first line. You see, there will
18 be people who feel that they have a standing to
19 file a lawsuit. Two members of Congress have.
20 That is the lawsuit that people are talking
21 about.

22 Now, it is true that the House of
23 Representatives is an intervenor in that
24 lawsuit to seek this clarification. The Senate
25 choose not to be an intervenor. But I think

1 it -- we probably need a little fact-checking
2 on the assertion that somehow there's millions
3 and millions of dollars being spent by the
4 government suing its citizens. That is not
5 true. The lawsuit is by two members of
6 Congress, one a Democrat and one a Republican.

7 Lastly, Mr. Chairman, there are several
8 people who have said, "Keep it simple." We
9 sure would like to, we sure would like to, but
10 imagine today, and my eight pages of notes bear
11 this out, I am sure others have notes as well,
12 there's not agreement in this room. We might
13 keep it simple and make you happy or make you
14 happy, but I am not sure we could keep it
15 simple and make everybody happy.

16 What we have to do is follow Amendments 5
17 and 6, they are in the Constitution, but as we
18 have seen today, there's a lot of difference of
19 opinion about what those terms might really
20 mean. We have to follow the Voting Rights Act.
21 We have heard differences of opinion today
22 about what that might mean. You know, is it
23 communities of interest? Is it geographic
24 boundaries? Is it political boundaries? We
25 heard today about growth centers. Maybe growth

1 centers, that is a new term, ought to be used
2 to define communities and districts.

3 That is why we are doing the 26 hearings,
4 to hear from you. That is why we have the
5 Internet sites up, because we want you to
6 propose what you think makes sense. We are not
7 asking you to do our job. We are asking you to
8 do your job as a citizen in a town meeting to
9 stand up and say what you think ought to be
10 done with something that is critical to our
11 democracy, and that is the determination of how
12 we will be represented, a determination that we
13 make once every ten years.

14 I just want to thank you again. We have
15 received extraordinary input, input we couldn't
16 have received any other way other than you
17 being here. So thank you very much. Thank
18 you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing all of this
19 input today. And we hope that if you have
20 further comments to make -- this is not your
21 last time to have input. This is your first
22 time. You can have input through the Internet,
23 through snail mail, through additional public
24 hearings. We are going to be in St. Augustine
25 tomorrow. If you are part of the traveling

1 road show -- we have some folks who travel with
2 us and give the same testimony at every
3 hearing -- you are welcome to come to St.
4 Augustine. But thank you very, very much for
5 being citizens who cared and participated.
6 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
8 very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all, ladies
9 and gentlemen, for being here and for your
10 input, and Chairman Gaetz moves we rise.

11 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
12 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 205 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 1st day of November, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2011

6:00 P.M.

NEW JOURNAL CENTER AT DAYTONA STATE COLLEGE

DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA

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 HUKILL: Thank you,
3 members. The Joint Senate House Redistricting
4 Hearing is called to order. Several committee
5 members are here, as well as other
6 Representatives and Senators, and I am going to
7 ask that each introduce themselves and just
8 tell us where they are from. So if we could
9 past the mike around.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Could we begin with
11 Senator Lynn, in who's district we are
12 delighted to be, Senator Lynn.

13 SENATOR LYNN: I am so happy that you are
14 all here, and I want to thank the two Chairmen.
15 Is it on?

16 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Yes, it is on.

17 SENATOR LYNN: Can you all hear me?

18 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: No.

19 SENATOR LYNN: Okay, now, we go. I want
20 to thank you all for being here, because
21 certainly this is an opportunity for you to
22 tell us whatever it is you think is important
23 as we look at redistricting, but I also want to
24 thank Representative Weatherford and Senator
25 Gaetz were kind enough and our own

1 Representative Hukill is a Co-Chair on the
2 House side, but they were kind enough to have a
3 meeting here in Daytona Beach which I very,
4 very much appreciated because I think it is so
5 important that we all have opportunities
6 throughout the state to have input.

7 There are very many meetings and we will
8 be going to a lot of them throughout the entire
9 state, but I thought it was very important,
10 because in this area we have reached a
11 diversity of opinion on so many things.

12 So I do thank you, Chairman, for doing
13 this and I thank you all for being willing to
14 come out and I look forward to hearing what you
15 have to say. Where would you like me to pass
16 this now?

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Anywhere you want.

18 SENATOR HAYS: Do you want me to take it?
19 You can tell we get along well. Thank you for
20 being here. I am Alan Hays, Senator for
21 District 20, which includes the western half of
22 Volusia County and points on further west than
23 that, but we are glad you are here. We
24 appreciate you coming and we look forward to
25 hearing what you have to say.

1 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Could we pass that
2 down here, because I would like to have
3 Representative Costello and Representative
4 Taylor introduce themselves since this is
5 Volusia County, and Representative Brodeur. I
6 am sorry, let's get Representative Brodeur, he
7 is right there, it is easier.

8 SENATOR THRASHER: I am Senator Thrasher.
9 I am John Thrasher. I represent Senate
10 District 8 which includes part of Nassau,
11 Duval, St. Johns, Flagler and I am proud to
12 say, Volusia County. Thank you for being here.
13 I appreciate it.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BRODEUR: Thank you, I am
15 Jason Brodeur, State Representative from
16 District 33. I represent, I live in Sanford in
17 Seminole County, but I represent parts of
18 Volusia County, in the western part, parts of
19 Deltona, Osteen and Enterprise. So very
20 excited to be here and thank you for coming
21 out.

22 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Let's just keep
23 it, Representative Precourt, just take it. We
24 are moving around too much.

25 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, your

1 call. I am Steve Precourt, House
2 Representative from District 41 and Vice-Chair
3 of the House (inaudible).

4 A VOICE: Senator Caldwell.

5 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Representative
6 Matt Caldwell from southwest Florida, District
7 73, Lee County.

8 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Representative Jim
9 Boyd from District 68, Manatee County, which is
10 Bradenton, Florida, just south of Tampa Bay.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Kathleen
12 Passidomo, Collier County. I represent the
13 City of Naples, Marco Island, Everglades City
14 and a lot of the Everglades.

15 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Representative Peter
16 Nehr from Pinellas County and Pasco County.

17 SENATOR EVERS: I am Representative Greg
18 Evers. I represent Senate District 2 in the
19 panhandle, great northwest.

20 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Hi, my name is
21 Janet Adkins, I represent House District 12,
22 which is Nassau, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Union
23 and Duval County.

24 SENATOR MONTFORD: I am Bill Montford,
25 State Senator from District 6 with 11 counties,

1 rural counties and around Tallahassee, Leon
2 County, and ten others, all or a part of them.
3 Glad you are here, appreciate you coming and
4 sharing your ideas with us.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PLAKON: My name is Scott
6 Plakon, House District 37, and I represent
7 parts of Orange and Seminole Counties.

8 SENATOR DEAN: State Senator Charlie Dean.
9 I represent District 3, the Florida Senate from
10 Baker county west to Leon County, south to
11 Citrus County, Hernando County and all or part
12 of 13 counties.

13 REPRESENTATIVE DORWORTH: Hi there, my
14 name is Chris Dorworth. I am a Representative,
15 I serve in Seminole and Orange Counties.

16 REPRESENTATIVE LOGAN: Representative Ana
17 Rivas Logan and I represent parts of Miami Dade
18 County.

19 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Hi, I am Dennis
20 Baxley, House District 24, serving Ocala,
21 Marion County, and I am a graduate of Mainland
22 High School. It is great to be back.

23 REPRESENTATIVE KIAR: Hi everybody, my
24 name is Martin Kair, and I am The state
25 Representative for House District 97 which is

1 located solely within Broward County. Thank
2 you for coming today.

3 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good evening, I am
4 Hazelle Rogers. I represent eight cities in
5 Broward County, 1.8 million residents in
6 Broward County, one of the most diverse
7 counties in the State of Florida. Good to be
8 here. Thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good evening,
10 I am State Representative Gwyndolen Clarke-Reed
11 and I represent House District 92, which is the
12 northeast part of Broward County down to Ft.
13 Lauderdale. Glad to be here and I want to hear
14 what you have to say.

15 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good evening,
16 Chuck Chestnut, House District 23, a portion of
17 Alachua County and a portion of Marion County.

18 REPRESENTATIVE JONES: Good afternoon,
19 State Representative Mia Jones from
20 Jacksonville.

21 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good evening,
22 State Representative Mack Bernard from West
23 Palm Beach, Florida.

24 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Welcome, I am
25 Representative Jim Frishe, I represent the

1 western edge of Pinellas County, all of the
2 beaches.

3 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good evening. My
4 name is John Patrick Julien. I represent House
5 District 104. It is a pleasure to be here and
6 look forward to hearing what you all have to
7 say.

8 REPRESENTATIVE DRAKE: Brad Drake, Fifth
9 House District, panhandle Florida.

10 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: Good evening, Ed
11 Hooper, House District 50, part of Pinellas
12 County.

13 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: Clay Ford, House
14 District 3, parts of Escambia and Santa Rosa
15 County. It is the Pensacola area.

16 REPRESENTATIVE COSTELLO: Good evening,
17 everybody, Fred Costello, District 22, I am
18 honored to represent many of you. Let me just
19 tell you something. This is one group of
20 wonderfully honorable people. I want you to
21 give them a warm Daytona Beach, Volusia County
22 welcome.

23 REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: Representative
24 Costello is hard to follow, but I am
25 Representative Dana Young. I represent the

1 City of Tampa and part of Hillsborough County.
2 Welcome. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good evening,
4 everyone, I am Dwayne Taylor and I am proud and
5 honored to represent you here in Daytona Beach
6 and in Volusia County.

7 I just want you to know I have a bunch of
8 wonderful colleagues that I would like to
9 welcome, not only to my district, but my home
10 where I spent 43 years of my life here. I want
11 to thank the Chairs, chair Weatherford and
12 Chair Gaetz for honoring Daytona Beach by
13 bringing this House Redistricting Committee
14 here.

15 We need the money in this community, and
16 folks, please don't say anything to embarrass
17 me tonight. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Forty-three.
19 We thought he was a lot older than that. My
20 name is Will Weatherford. I am a State
21 Representative from District 61. It is in
22 Pasco County and part of Hillsborough County.
23 Honored to be here.

24 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you so much.
25 My name is Dorothy Hukill, and I represent

1 District 28, Volusia County. I am so proud
2 that so many of my fellow Volusians came out
3 tonight to greet us and to tell us how they
4 feel about this process and what they think is
5 important to them.

6 I, along with my Senate colleague, Don
7 Gaetz, sitting to my right, will be chairing
8 today's hearing which is being webcast
9 statewide by the Florida Channel over the
10 Internet.

11 Our sole purpose tonight is to hear from
12 the public about how you believe the legal
13 standards governing redistricting should be
14 applied in your community so that you will be
15 represented in Washington and Tallahassee
16 fairly, equitably and sensibly.

17 Our procedures today are simple but
18 important. It is important that you sign in so
19 that we create an accurate public record of all
20 attendees and speakers.

21 Also, you may opt to join our e-mail list
22 so that you can keep informed about the
23 redistricting process and how it is working
24 over the next several months.

25 If you have not signed in and we have many

1 people signed in, if you have not signed in to
2 speak tonight, please raise your hand and a
3 staff member will give you an attendance card.

4 If you wish to speak today and have not
5 filled it out, please do that now. Before we
6 begin the Chair will recognize Senator Gaetz to
7 explain how today's hearing fits into the
8 redistricting process. Chairman Gaetz.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.
10 Thank you, Representative Hukill. I am Don
11 Gaetz and I represent five coastal counties in
12 northwest Florida in the panhandle, from
13 Pensacola to Panama City.

14 Every ten years the Legislature is
15 required by our State Constitution to
16 redistrict the state based on decreases,
17 increases or movements of population from one
18 place to another, and because Florida has grown
19 more than other states in the last ten years,
20 we also move up from 25 members of the U.S.
21 House of Representatives to 27 members, and we
22 also pick up two more electoral votes in the
23 electoral college as a result of our increased
24 population.

25 Now, because some parts of our state have

1 increased or decreased disproportionately to
2 others, many Senate and House Districts will
3 change either adding or losing population.

4 There is a chart in the back that many of
5 you I saw were looking at when you came in.
6 You can look at it during the hearing or on
7 your way out and it indicates all of the
8 Congressional House and Senate Districts in
9 this part of Florida, and how many additional
10 voters those districts will have to pick up or
11 lose in order to be equal in population.

12 Because when redistricting is done,
13 Congressional Districts must be equal in
14 population and every Congressional District in
15 America and every Congressional District, of
16 course, in Florida, must contain 696,345
17 people.

18 There are 40 Senate Districts in Florida,
19 and they must be nearly equal at about 470,000
20 people, and our 120 House Districts must also
21 be nearly equal at about 156,700 people.

22 There are displays that you can see.
23 There are maps in the back of the room showing
24 the current boundaries of our current districts
25 in this part of the state, and you can see over

1 on the chart over in that part of the room the
2 number of persons that have to be added to or
3 subtracted from current districts to achieve
4 equal representation. So those are the maps.

5 Those are the districts that we can use as
6 a take-off point to say, here is what is wrong
7 with this district, here is where that line
8 needs to be changed, here is where this makes
9 sense or doesn't make sense.

10 You have an opportunity to use that as a
11 take-off point for any of your comments tonight
12 or your comments going forward, but equality of
13 representation isn't the only legal requirement
14 that redistricting plans have to meet.

15 The laws and the important court cases
16 governing redistricting are explained in detail
17 on the House and Senate websites.

18 Those websites are listed on the
19 Redistricting 2012 brochure that was available
20 when you came in. The gentleman in the yellow
21 shirt down front has one. Would you hold it
22 up, just hold it up? There you go. That is
23 the brochure.

24 That brochure summarizes Federal and State
25 laws and outlines topics that we hope to hear

1 from you on tonight. If you did not get a copy
2 when you came in, they are available as you
3 leave, and our staff will be happy to get you a
4 copy.

5 The brochure lists our websites and the
6 websites are packed with information about
7 redistricting, including an explanation of the
8 laws and the important court cases governing
9 this topic.

10 You see the Legislature can't do what it
11 wants, we have to follow Federal law, State
12 law, constitutional requirements and applicable
13 court cases, and they are all listed in detail
14 on the website for you to look at if you would
15 like.

16 The website will also deliver to your
17 fingertips all of the demographic information
18 that is used to draw districts, and you will
19 also see overlaid on the demographic
20 information the same computer programs that
21 Legislators and policymakers would use to draw
22 lines.

23 So the demographic information provided to
24 Florida from the Bureau of the Census, and we
25 got our demographic information later than many

1 states. We got, got it in a later tranche.
2 That is why some states are ahead of us, but
3 all of that information is on the website, and
4 then the software that we will be using to draw
5 districts is there, so that you can use the
6 software if you would like and build districts
7 and submit a plan for your neighborhood, your
8 community, this part of the state or the whole
9 state if you would like.

10 Recommendations from citizens and from
11 groups of citizens, interest groups will be
12 made publicly available as soon as we get them
13 from you. In fact, some public submissions
14 already are available on the web.

15 We are delighted, yesterday when we were
16 in Jacksonville during our hearing there were
17 three maps submitted by groups, by individuals
18 in the state of Florida just dealing with
19 Senate Districts alone, and we received
20 Congressional District maps and other maps
21 during that hearing as well.

22 So we are already receiving a lot of
23 information and input. The maps are on the
24 website and we would be delighted for you to
25 look at them and comment on them.

1 The submission of proposed maps from
2 Legislators as well as from the public is the
3 best way for you to show your public
4 participation in the redistricting process.

5 Now, the redistricting schedule, the
6 timeline under which we are operating is
7 imposed by the State Constitution. We can't
8 change it. The Constitution does not permit
9 the Legislature to act on legislative maps. We
10 can't vote on them before the second year after
11 the census.

12 In other words, we can't vote until 2012.
13 Now, in order to accelerate that process
14 because we want to make sure that candidates
15 and incumbents and political parties and
16 citizens mostly know what the maps are and what
17 the process is as soon as possible, we have
18 accelerated the redistricting process as much
19 as we could by moving up the 2012 legislative
20 session from March, when we usually start to
21 January, the first time we could do it
22 constitutionally.

23 And we are beginning our statewide
24 hearings five months in advance of the 2012
25 session. Now, some folks have suggested that

1 the Legislature should just draw the maps and
2 bring them here and say, go ahead and you
3 comment on them and we will draw them, you
4 comment on them, but we believe that that puts
5 the answer ahead of the question.

6 We think there ought to be in this
7 important process no preconceptions created by
8 politicians. We already have maps that we can
9 use as a take-off point, but rather public
10 testimony should be free and unrestricted by
11 any political preconceptions that members of
12 the Legislature have.

13 In fact, Ellen Freidin, the Chairperson
14 for Fair Districts stated in testimony before
15 the Legislature last year that no maps could be
16 drawn. She wouldn't even attempt to draw maps
17 until after the public has had an opportunity
18 to comment, and we agree with Ms. Freidin in
19 Fair Districts on that issue.

20 Our intent is to use the recommendations
21 made of the 26 public hearings that we are
22 holding and the input we are receiving through
23 our Internet sites as the basis for developing
24 one or more options for district maps.

25 Then we will discuss those options in open

1 public meetings before any votes are taken. So
2 this is not your last opportunity for input.
3 It is your first opportunity for input, and any
4 map that is drawn or submitted by any member of
5 the Legislature, any interest group, any
6 citizen, you will see it and you will have a
7 chance to comment on it again before the first
8 committee vote is taken.

9 Whenever the Legislature passes a map or a
10 plan or looks at one or more options, then that
11 is submitted for judicial review to ensure that
12 a final plan meets every legal requirement. So
13 the Court has to review anything that we
14 finally do.

15 Because our purpose today is to hear from
16 you now that we have kind of laid out what the
17 process is going forward, all of the time
18 between now and our adjournment tonight at
19 9:00 will be used to ensure that every member
20 of the public who is here and wishes to speak
21 will have time to present testimony and be
22 listened to respectfully, without interruption
23 and without argument, but there is no gag rule.

24 Every, after every citizen has had his or
25 her say, then if there is time remaining and we

1 hope there will be before scheduled
2 adjournment, then any member of the committee
3 may make any statement, offer any observation,
4 answer any question or offer any proposal or
5 map.

6 Madam Chair, I hope that this description
7 of our schedule and the process going forward
8 helps set the stage for a successful hearing
9 and we look forward to hearing from the people
10 who have come here tonight to share their
11 views.

12 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you,
13 Mr. Chairman. Before we proceed with that
14 process I want to recognize one of our former
15 colleagues. We have now County Council Woman
16 Joyce Cusack, former State Rep. Joyce, could
17 you to stand up? Good to see you.

18 No, I didn't, and we also have, I can't
19 see with the lights, but Pat Patterson, former
20 State Rep Pat Patterson, where are you? There
21 you are. Welcome. Thank you for coming
22 tonight.

23 All right, we will adjourn promptly at
24 9:00 tonight. So far there are 36 individuals
25 -- Senator -- I am sorry. We have Senator

1 Baker, is Senator Carey Baker here?

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Senator Baker.

3 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you for
4 coming. All right, we will adjourn promptly at
5 9:00 tonight. There are 36 individuals signed
6 up to speak so far.

7 Is there anyone else who wishes to speak,
8 please raise your hand and we will get a card
9 to you.

10 To ensure that each person is heard we are
11 going to divide the time equally and ask each
12 testifier to please limit your time to three to
13 five minutes.

14 Please be considerate of all of the people
15 behind you. We want the first person who
16 speaks and then the last person who speaks to
17 have the same amount of time. So please be
18 considerate.

19 I am going to call on a person and then
20 have the next up so that you know that you are
21 on deck and you will be ready.

22 Our first speaker tonight will be Jim
23 Cameron from the Daytona Regional Chamber,
24 followed by Sandra Rose.

25 Mr. Cameron, you are recognized. The

1 floor is yours.

2 MR. CAMERON: Thank you. I am Jim
3 Cameron, Senior Vice-President of Government
4 Relations, Daytona Regional Chamber, and I want
5 to say we are glad to have you in town tonight.

6 We appreciate you going on the road,
7 taking the input of people like we have out
8 here throughout the state. So we think this is
9 the right process, because you are getting the
10 input from the people.

11 Like Senator Gaetz said, you don't have
12 maps come in here already drawn, you are
13 getting the input first, so we like that
14 process there.

15 We, at the Chamber, as far as Volusia
16 County, we have had a nearly 12 percent
17 increase from the last process though, but we
18 have had some shifts in population, but we want
19 to support any type of plan that is going to
20 increase voter turn out.

21 We can't get enough of that, but we feel
22 that communities of like interests should be
23 well represented as a top priority. We want to
24 make sure that minorities, all constituencies
25 are represented in the Legislature as well as

1 Congress.

2 As for Volusia County, our Chamber, we
3 would like to see two to three Congressional
4 Districts and we would like to see these built
5 around strategic economic drivers. Our
6 beaches, our ports, airports, speedway,
7 industrial parks, higher educational
8 facilities. So that is what we are looking at,
9 two to three congressional districts.

10 As for Senate Districts, we are saying no
11 more than four Senate Districts with at least
12 one being Volusia majority based. As for the
13 House, no more than six House Seats in Volusia,
14 but with at least three of those being, again,
15 Volusia majority based.

16 I also want to commend, like I say, all of
17 you for coming here tonight. As I said earlier
18 for taking the time and doing this process. I
19 wanted to also thank your staff, because I have
20 been working with my District Builder, it is a
21 little bit different from the Fred System ten
22 years ago though, but Alex and Jason, they have
23 done -- they have been very patient and walked
24 me through the process and all. So I wanted to
25 thank them as well. Thank you for coming

1 tonight.

2 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
3 much, Mr. Cameron. Thank you for your
4 testimony. Next up we have Sandra Rose,
5 followed by Ann McFall. Ms. Rose, you are
6 recognized.

7 MS. ROSE: Good evening. As we know, the
8 Legislature cut \$300 million in corporate
9 taxes. Now you are suing us with our own
10 money. You have put up saying maybe up to \$30
11 million that you are willing to spend to sue
12 the taxpayers.

13 What I want to know, if we are supposed to
14 be cutting back, saving money, why are you
15 willing to spend \$30 million of my money, their
16 money, to sue us for Amendments that we have
17 already voted for and passed. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
19 much, Ms. Rose. Ann McFall and Ann is our
20 Volusia County Supervisor of Elections,
21 followed by Lynn Peterson. Ms. McFall.

22 MS. MCFALL: Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you for your
24 service to our county and our state.

25 MS. MCFALL: Thanks. And Senators and

1 Representatives, welcome to Volusia County. I
2 have been to this rodeo before. In the '90s, I
3 served on the Volusia County School Board
4 during the reapportionment and the
5 redistricting. In 2000, I was the Chair of the
6 Volusia County Council when we redistricted,
7 and the most challenging job there ever is, is
8 to be Supervisor of Elections when lines are
9 drawn. It makes you a little testy, if you
10 will.

11 I just want to share a few minutes,
12 political jurisdictions going through Volusia
13 County and I don't want to sound selfish. This
14 is not exclusive to Volusia County. I think
15 everyone on the dais knows this happens in
16 their counties as well.

17 Volusia County shares political
18 jurisdictions with 13 other counties. We have
19 three Congressional Districts, 3, 7 and 24;
20 four State Senate seats, 1, 7, 8 and 20; six
21 State House seats, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33; five
22 County Council districts; five School Board
23 districts, elected by zone; an elected hospital
24 district, going through half of Volusia County
25 alone, not all of Volusia County votes in the

1 west Volusia hospital district; five Soil and
2 Water seats elected county-wide.

3 We have 16 cities, four of which run by
4 zone, Daytona Beach, Deltona, Ormond Beach,
5 Orange City. Volusia County has 179 precincts.
6 It cost the general fund of Volusia County
7 about \$1,500 per precinct per election.

8 Of the 179 precincts, 43 precincts are
9 split. Well, what does that mean? That means
10 every time a line is drawn and then another
11 line is drawn and another line is drawn, you
12 have splits in that one precinct, because the
13 precinct is there for ten years as well.

14 Precinct 602 I think is probably the
15 poster child for split precincts. It has eight
16 different splits, and that is the Pelican Bay
17 area. The eight splits during our primary
18 means you have a Democratic ballot, a
19 Republican ballot and an MPA ballot. So three
20 times eight gives you 24 different ballots in
21 one precinct.

22 If Volusia County had no split precincts
23 we would have 290 precincts. Of those 290, 55
24 would have less than 100 voters. So you see
25 the impact and I am sure everyone on the dais

1 understands the impact of drawing a line, and
2 what impact it has for the next ten years on
3 every department of elections statewide.

4 So I ask that you look at the lines, maybe
5 be appreciative of political jurisdictions,
6 whether it is a county or a city. I don't care
7 how many districts there are, just let me know
8 in plenty of time, so ideally I -- actually,
9 the VTDs we presented last year to the
10 legislative staff, Volusia County, if things
11 were drawn a little clearer, would just need
12 129 precincts, we wouldn't need 179.

13 So I just ask that you be mindful of that.
14 I don't care where you draw the lines, but be
15 mindful of the political jurisdictions, and I
16 thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
18 much, Ms. McFall. All right, next up we have
19 Lynn Peterson, followed by Lisa Walker.
20 Ms. Peterson, you are recognized.

21 MR. PETERSON: Thank you. I received an
22 e-mail reply from Will Weatherford,
23 Redistricting Chair and Don Gaetz, the
24 Reapportionment Chair thanking me for my
25 interest in speaking at this hearing.

1 The e-mail describes this as the most open
2 transparent and interactive redistricting ever.

3 However, it did not claim to be efficient
4 or done in a timely manner, which is of huge
5 concern to me and others. The process seems to
6 be purposefully stalling, intentionally slow to
7 thwart the time and opportunities that new
8 legislative hopefuls will have to prepare and
9 execute an effective campaign for office.

10 In addition, voters' time to familiarize
11 themselves with candidates and issues will also
12 be curtailed. It feels as if the residents of
13 Florida are not your main concern, but that
14 favoring your reelection, with reelection of
15 incumbents seems most important.

16 And in speaking of voting, in 2002, the
17 people of Florida voted to limit public school
18 classroom size. Parents wanted small classes
19 so their kids could get more help, teachers
20 wanted it because they are more personally
21 interactive with 25 kids rather than 35 kids.

22 I am a teacher in Volusia County and right
23 now I am scheduled to have 178 students in my
24 six classes. This is because even though we
25 voted to limit class sizes, the Florida

1 Legislature defied our vote and has changed
2 what voters --

3 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Ms. Peterson,
4 could you please limit your comments to
5 redistricting?

6 MR. PETERSON -- voted for. Oh, I am. I
7 have never taught 178 students before, and you
8 should tremble at the thought that I have that
9 much to do.

10 Now, you think I have gotten sidetracked.
11 Again, after 63 percent of the people of
12 Florida voted, voted for fair redistricting,
13 the Florida Legislature wants to ignore the
14 voters of Florida again and challenge in court
15 our wishes and fair, for fair and compact
16 redistricting.

17 We would like our Representatives to
18 represent Floridians, not extreme right wing
19 Floridians, not extreme left wing Floridians,
20 but just plain old every day Floridians. Thank
21 you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
23 much. All right, next we have Lisa Walker
24 followed by Robert Field. Ms. Walker, you are
25 recognized.

1 MS. WALKER: Good evening, everybody.
2 Thank you for allowing me to speak at this
3 meeting.

4 First of all, I want to say that I am for
5 the Amendments V and VI and hope that you all
6 will follow that law that was agreed on by
7 63 percent of the voters last November.

8 Specifically, what I would like to speak
9 about tonight is the town that I live in. I
10 live in the town of Deltona, and Deltona right
11 now is the largest city in Volusia County.

12 Deltona has almost 85,000 people. Back in
13 2000, when the redistricting was done, I don't
14 know why it was done the way that it was, but
15 Deltona was split in so many different ways
16 that Deltona now does not have any
17 Representatives.

18 Deltona has split into two Congressional
19 Districts, two State Senate Districts and four
20 State House Districts, and none of those
21 Representatives live within 30 miles of
22 Deltona.

23 They don't come to our City Commission
24 meetings. They basically, Deltona is being
25 ignored in the State House and the State Senate

1 and within our Congress, and I hope when you go
2 ahead and redraw the lines that you do follow
3 Amendments V and VI and follow the lines so
4 that you make Deltona be in a State House
5 District by itself, a State Senate District by
6 itself, and also a Congressional District by
7 itself, and that is basically what I have to
8 say. Thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
10 much, Ms. Walker, for your testimony. Next we
11 have Robert Field, followed by Charles
12 Moskowitz.

13 MR. FIELD: Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Mr. Field, you are
15 recognized.

16 MR. FIELD: I was a supporter of V and VI
17 and I support the aims of 20 and 21 for compact
18 and contiguous districts that are consistent
19 with existing political boundaries.

20 I think this is paramount, not just to
21 represent the voters, but also to encourage
22 turn out. When people know who their
23 Representatives are, when their Representatives
24 are the same as their neighbors, their
25 co-workers, their family members, they are more

1 likely to vote. They feel involved in the
2 process.

3 Now, I think some of the preliminary maps
4 that I have seen are encouraging in some
5 respect, but I have one major concern.

6 We have, it seems that we may continue
7 this practice of gerrymandering majority
8 minority seats. Now let me say right up front,
9 I am in favor of minorities in government. I
10 have worked for minority candidates in the
11 past. I will again in the future.

12 I am committed to the ideal of a
13 representation in our legislative bodies that
14 represent our demographics as a state and as
15 communities.

16 However, I think the cost that we pay for
17 these safe seats for candidates is too great,
18 because what it does, is at the cost of
19 offering representation to certain minority
20 groups, it then disenfranchises members of
21 those minority groups, because when people who
22 live in what should be three or four different
23 districts and you should be competitive in
24 those competitive districts, are instead,
25 sheppard into one district. Their votes are

1 neutered.

2 They don't have a real impact on the
3 future of their state or the future of their
4 nation. I think this is a grave problem. We
5 should address it aggressively. We should --
6 we should apply the ideals of 20 and 21 for
7 compact and contiguous districts with
8 consistency with existing political boundaries,
9 absolutely, thank you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
11 much, Mr. Field, for your testimony. Next we
12 have Charles Moskowitz, followed by Judy
13 Ngying. Am I saying that right, N-g-y-i-n-g?
14 All right, Mr. Moskowitz, you are recognized.

15 MR. MOSKOWITZ: Thank you. Good evening
16 everyone, we do appreciate everybody coming up
17 this evening to hear and answer questions.

18 I have two questions for you. Since
19 Amendments V and VI passed, I am a little
20 puzzled about why we, I guess the people, the
21 State, the Legislature, whatever, had to hire a
22 law firm to try to find fault with Amendments V
23 and VI. That is my first question.

24 The second question is, is, which law firm
25 did we have to pay \$300 per hour of taxpayer

1 money to try to find fault with Amendments V
2 and VI. I hope you have answers to that,
3 because there is a lot of other folks that are
4 going to ask me the same question and I
5 couldn't answer them. Thank you very much.

6 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
7 much, Mr. Moskowitz for your testimony. Judy
8 Ngying, followed by Candy Gilman.

9 MS. NGYING: Hi, I am Judy Ngying, and I
10 am a resident of Deltona and I am happy to be
11 here, and I am going to piggy-back a little bit
12 on Charles, what he just said.

13 I like my money and some of my money has
14 been taken away with the three percent on state
15 employee, with a three percent for my pension,
16 and then I am also seeing that \$30 million of
17 my tax money, not personally, of course, but of
18 Florida, is being used to fight that Amendment
19 that 63 percent of us voted for.

20 And we know that many of you sitting here
21 right now did not even get 63 percent of our
22 votes. So we have a super majority that have
23 voted for this Amendment, yet our tax dollars
24 are being spent to fight the Amendment and then
25 defend the Amendment.

1 It is very hard to explain to the upcoming
2 children who are going to be voters how such a
3 thing can happen. So that is my statement, and
4 my question and I hope that we do have a
5 resolution to that very quickly before that \$30
6 million is exhausted. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Madam Chair.

8 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Yes.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Just since that question
10 has been raised a couple of times at, you know,
11 our goal tonight is not to -- not to argue with
12 anybody but to listen, but everybody is
13 entitled to their opinion, but everybody is not
14 entitled to their own set of facts.

15 There is no \$30 million. I don't know who
16 told you that, ma'am, but there is no \$30
17 million that has been set aside to sue anybody.

18 There is a lawsuit that has been entered
19 into by two members of Congress, one a Democrat
20 and one a Republican, dealing with the Federal
21 issue in Amendment VI, but the lawsuit has
22 nothing to do with state redistricting.

23 The Senate is not a party to that lawsuit.
24 The House is an intervenor in the lawsuit. I
25 am not a lawyer, but my understanding is that

1 they are an intervenor in order to get
2 clarification as to any inconsistencies between
3 the Federal Voting Rights Act and Amendment VI,
4 but the lawsuit is not entered into, was not
5 started by the Legislature, and there is no \$30
6 million.

7 So whoever told you that, please encourage
8 them to give me a call and I would be happy to
9 share with them any information that I have.
10 Thank you, ma'am.

11 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
12 much, Mr. Chair. Next we have Candy Gilman,
13 followed by Ellen Darden.

14 MS. GILMAN: Well, first of all, I would
15 like to say thank you very much for giving us
16 the opportunity to come out and meet with you
17 and this is democracy in my opinion, and I
18 think we have got a great group of people
19 sitting on that table, at the stage, I am
20 sorry. And you have done an excellent job.

21 You have done a wonderful job for Florida
22 and I think our Governor has done an
23 outstanding job. He is cutting our cost --
24 folks -- shame, shame on you.

25 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Ms. Gilman, Ms.

1 Gilman, just hang on one minute. Members of
2 the audience, please, out of respect for the
3 speaker, let's not have a reaction to what is
4 said.

5 Give her the opportunity to say what she
6 wishes to say just as you want that opportunity
7 when you are at the mike. Thank you very much.
8 Go ahead, Ms. Gilman.

9 MS. GILMAN: That was mainly what I want
10 to say. I have listened here and I am going to
11 go on home to my mom, but I want to say thank
12 you from the bottom of my heart, and if
13 Floridians do not understand what you go
14 through, they shouldn't be trying to wear your
15 shoes. Thank you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
17 much, Ms. Gilman for your comments and your
18 testimony. Next up we have Ellen Darden,
19 followed by Matty Rose. Ms. Darden, you are
20 recognized.

21 MS. DARDEN: Good evening, I am Ellen
22 Darden. I reside in New Smyrna Beach. I want
23 to thank you all so much for allowing me to
24 address you today.

25 I have got three brief points that I would

1 like to make, but the first one is the most
2 important one to me, and that is to
3 congratulate you and to thank you for being
4 here for us in this series of meetings around
5 the state.

6 I am here just as a concerned citizen, but
7 I have never in my life seen a redistricting
8 reapportionment process being carried on in
9 such a positive, open and transparent method.

10 You have to take my word for this, but I
11 spent my entire life interested in or
12 participating in good government, public policy
13 and politics, and straddled two redistricting
14 times in Tallahassee while I was working in and
15 around the Capitol.

16 This is unique and I think the people in
17 this audience and around the state need to
18 understand how unique it is for the
19 transparency, for the opportunity for
20 individual citizens who aren't anybody to get
21 up in front of you all and tell you what we
22 think for the site that you have up on the
23 website where you are even giving us the tools
24 to help law the lines. It is unbelievable.

25 Everybody has always thought of

1 redistricting as sneaky stuff done in back
2 doors and I, behind closed doors and dark rooms
3 and that sort of thing. I don't think there is
4 anyway that we can evaluate this process in
5 such a fashion.

6 Secondly, I want to address the protection
7 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Voting
8 Rights Act, we all are proud of. It has been
9 in place for 45 years, but this process isn't
10 -- is about protecting the sacred rights of all
11 of us for an equal and fair opportunity to
12 vote.

13 So I am hoping that through this process,
14 given the fact that over the last 45 years, so
15 many of the people who were called minorities
16 have achieved magnificent positions of power
17 and responsibility and population and so on
18 that perhaps our districts could go away from
19 being those, some of those snaky little
20 squiggly things that I think dilute
21 representation, to be more of communities of
22 interest where the districts are more compact.

23 I think certainly our most recent
24 elections, just look at the evidence here in
25 Florida, where a minority gentleman, Marco

1 Rubio is now a State Senator, a U.S. State
2 Senator and Mr. Allen West is now a Congressman
3 in a district that demographically he may not
4 represent, shows how far we have come. So
5 perhaps we could get those districts a little
6 bit more compact.

7 And then finally just a couple of wishes
8 for my home county, Volusia County. We have
9 needs that are different in various
10 geographical areas of our county. As you
11 consider the House Districting, consider
12 perhaps a seat that represents the coastal
13 area.

14 The needs of the coast are different than
15 the more rural areas in the western part of our
16 state. And secondly, on the Senate side, if
17 there is anyway possible to dedicate a Senate
18 seat to Volusia County so that we don't have
19 people spiking in from other communities of
20 interest.

21 That is just a couple of points I wanted
22 to make, but most importantly, thank you all
23 for this process. It is amazing.

24 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
25 much, Ms. Darden, for your comments and your

1 testimony. Next we have Matty Rose, followed
2 by Ken Ali.

3 MR. ROSE: Good evening, stage people. My
4 name is Matty Rose, and I am a resident of
5 Volusia County, a long time resident in
6 Florida.

7 I come before you because I am a voter, a
8 registered voter, and I voted in the last
9 election and I voted on the prevailing side for
10 Amendment V and VI.

11 I also want to tell you my story. If you
12 turn around and look at the screen, it says
13 tell us your story. And I want to share
14 something with you, and then I will get into
15 the specifics of redistricting.

16 Many years ago when I was a young man I
17 joined the Army voluntarily because those that
18 were in the hierarchy of the military service I
19 admired. I admired because they always looked
20 good, they dressed in uniform and they made
21 decisions that I had to follow, and the
22 Congress of the United States and the President
23 of the United States were admired because those
24 in power, you had respect, due respect for
25 them.

1 And later on in life after I got out of
2 the service I started to become politically
3 involved and I start to admire in the same
4 respect those that were in the military, but
5 those that were in the political scene, and
6 because they always looked good and they always
7 talk good and you can always depend upon those
8 that were elected to do the right thing for
9 you, but those of you that are on the stage
10 that are representing this meeting here today,
11 I don't have that same feeling, and I am very
12 disappointed not only in the current
13 Congressional Districts that are gerrymandered
14 and have been for a long time, to just seek
15 different needs of different people or
16 different political parties.

17 You are gerrymandering the process,
18 although these are open meetings and they are
19 dragged out and the road show, to put all of
20 you on stage here to hear comments, I am of the
21 opinion that you your mind, your voting made up
22 and this is just an event and all of the other
23 events scheduled around the state to have
24 individuals come and speak and hear my story.

25 So what I would like to ask you to do

1 tonight and in the other hearings you go to is
2 not just listen, I would like to see some
3 action. I would like to see those maps drawn.

4 You have enough information, you are all
5 well-schooled and you are on the political
6 scene, you are behind the scenes, you know much
7 more than I do, and I would hope that you would
8 draw these district lines to represent the
9 people in Florida.

10 You don't need anymore information. You
11 should have been here already showing us what
12 you have done and not asking us what you should
13 have done. Thank you very much.

14 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
15 much, Ms. Rose. Next we have Ken Ali, followed
16 by Joe, I can't read the name, but is it
17 Siegmerster. Is that an S? S, okay, I am
18 sorry. All right, Mr. Ali, you are recognized.

19 MR. ALI: Thank you, I am Ken Ali and I am
20 glad to be here and I want to welcome you all
21 it Volusia County. I am a proud immigrant
22 American, and I want to say I am proud to be
23 American.

24 I came to this country legally. I crossed
25 legally, I went through the process and I

1 became a citizen. This is the first census
2 that I am experiencing as an American citizen
3 and I am proud of the process.

4 I have been to countries where
5 representatives don't get to come and meet the
6 people, and I welcome you. I want to thank you
7 for the work that you have been doing, and this
8 country is a great country, and we cannot
9 afford to lose it.

10 We cannot afford to slip, and you are our
11 representatives. You are charged with the
12 responsibility of representing us in
13 Tallahassee. I came to this country, I started
14 a business. I ran for office after I became a
15 citizen.

16 I was a candidate for City Commissioner in
17 this city and in no other country can you do
18 that, and I believe in the exceptionalism of
19 America and we got to continue going forward.

20 I appreciate each and every one of you,
21 regardless of which side of the aisle you are
22 on. We vote for who we want to represent us,
23 and I hope that this process will be a fair
24 one, that each group is represented.

25 I agree with Ms. McFall that precincts

1 should not be sub divided and it puts more
2 strain on her department and her budget cuts is
3 going to be tougher.

4 So I would ask that you look at that, and
5 as I always say, I always say, I wasn't born in
6 this country but I will die for this country.
7 My son has just back from Afghanistan, two
8 towers in Iraq, one in Afghanistan.

9 And to all of our sons and daughters, we
10 are proud of them, we are proud of our
11 veterans, I know there are veterans up there
12 that have served this country, who have given
13 their lives and we have got to continue moving
14 forward. Going back is not an option. Thank
15 you very much.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
17 much, Mr. Ali. Thank you so much for your
18 testimony, and I want to thank you specifically
19 for your service to our country, and also your
20 family members. Thank you very much.

21 All right next, we have Joe Siegmerster.

22 MR. SIEGMERSTER: Siegmerster.

23 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: I am sorry, and
24 followed up by Patricia Drago.

25 MR. SIEGMERSTER: Yes.

1 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Go ahead. You are
2 recognized.

3 MR. SIEGMERSTER: First off I would like
4 to thank all of you for coming. I know as you
5 go around the state that you will have people
6 that are on your side and people that are
7 against you, and to sit up and take some time
8 is not an easy thing. So as a voter and as a
9 citizen, I thank you for your citizen activist
10 in being in the place that you are.

11 I am a citrus farmer, an entrepreneur, a
12 former teacher. I am an agriculturalist and I
13 live and reside in Volusia County, and what I
14 would like to do is just say a little bit
15 tonight, as you go, and as you do these
16 districts, as well as your job, that you
17 remember that agriculture is an important part
18 of this state and this country.

19 We have always been a free country because
20 we are able to feed ourselves. At the time
21 when another country controls our food, we no
22 longer have that control.

23 As you go out and you go, most people do
24 not realize that agricultural is the second
25 leading industry in the state, and when we talk

1 about jobs and tourism and in building and in
2 the other legs of the stool of the support,
3 agriculture continues to do that.

4 So when you make these districts, I ask
5 that you take that one person who has talked
6 about the rural concerns, that you take that
7 into account, because I can tell you that my
8 concerns are not the same concerns as the
9 people of Daytona Beach.

10 I have had the opportunity to deal with
11 several of you, because I have agriculture
12 interest in other parts in other districts, and
13 I can say that the people that we have in
14 office, whether Democrat or Republican, have
15 always treated me with the utmost respect and
16 took notice of my concerns.

17 My concern is, is that with term limits
18 some of you on both sides will not be there in
19 the future, and if these districts aren't drawn
20 to take into those considerations, you could
21 have people put into or elected in the
22 districts that are split where that is not
23 taken into account.

24 The average American is more than three
25 generations from a farming background, and

1 most, I would venture to say that I could
2 probably find one person in any group that
3 thought that food came from Winn-Dixie or
4 Publix.

5 So as you do this and as you go, please
6 take heart and do that. Just to give you an
7 example, agriculture and related industries is
8 the number one employer in Volusia County,
9 okay. It is number two in the state.

10 We account for, you know, 40,000 jobs in
11 this county alone. And so please, you know,
12 thank you once again for doing that, and, you
13 know, people are going to agree with me and
14 disagree with me, that is fine, I can deal with
15 that, but thank you for coming, thank you for
16 listening, and please, you know, remember
17 agriculture as you sit down through this
18 process.

19 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you so much.
20 Very important comments. Thank you very much.
21 All right next we have Patricia Drago, followed
22 by Tony Ledbetter, and then just so you can get
23 ready, John Hoyt has a presentation. All
24 right, you are recognized, Ms. Drago.

25 MS. DRAGO: Thank you. I am speaking this

1 evening on behalf of the Volusia County League
2 of Women Voters. I have been designated. I
3 want to say as many of our other speakers did,
4 thank you for holding these hearings. I know
5 that it takes a great deal of time and energy
6 traveling the state and not all of what you
7 hear is what you want to hear and a lot of what
8 you hear is just a repeat, repeat, repeat. So
9 thank you for your patience.

10 As you hold these public hearings around
11 the state I know that a lot of the input in the
12 absence of maps is going to be generalities.

13 Well, the generalities really are in sync
14 with much of the language of Amendments V and
15 VI that passed recently in the 2010 election.
16 And just for your information, they passed by
17 greater than 70 percent in Volusia County.

18 So your audience has been strong
19 supporters of the change to the Constitution
20 with Amendments V and VI. We heard
21 compactness, we heard geographic contiguity and
22 we heard racial minorities and ethnic
23 minorities and making sure that those are
24 protected.

25 Please draft and publish the proposed maps

1 as soon after the conclusion of these hearings
2 in September as you can. This would facilitate
3 in another, I know we welcome it, another
4 citizen input prior to legislative session and
5 the committee hearings.

6 As I saw on your schedule, the committee
7 hearings are from the end of September to
8 December. So if the hearings conclude at the
9 end of September, that is a very short turn
10 around to get the maps out to the public and to
11 take that input.

12 I think we heard from our Supervisor of
13 Elections not just the number of --
14 presentation of the maps, taking input and then
15 adoption by the Legislature, reviewed by the
16 voting rights, compliance with the voting
17 rights by the Justice Department.

18 There are a lot of other steps in this
19 process, to make sure that not just Volusia
20 County Supervisor of Elections, but every
21 Supervisor in the state is able to prepare the
22 ballot for a good election.

23 Florida has not always had the smoothest
24 elections. Any delay would threaten that
25 process and if this is done smoothly with great

1 attention to the schedule, it is conceivable,
2 not probable, conceivable that the maps could
3 be adopted early in the legislative session.

4 We appreciate the fact that you scheduled
5 the session up. We hope that that would
6 expedite that. We also want to say, thank you,
7 Senator Gaetz, for clarifying about where the
8 role of the Senate and the House and the
9 litigation, but I think you heard from us as
10 taxpayers and as citizens that we have a
11 concern that taxpayer dollars are clearly spent
12 now in enforcement and defense of the
13 legislation that was adopted and not to go
14 further afield than that.

15 We feel very strongly that that has, it is
16 now law, and we look for you to implement it
17 and we thank you very much for your time.
18 Thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
20 much, Ms. Drago. Next up we have Tony
21 Ledbetter and then John Hoyt.

22 MR. LEDBETTER: My name is Tony Ledbetter.
23 I live in Ormond Beach. I would like to also
24 thank you for coming to have these hearings
25 here.

1 I think it is important. I want to echo
2 my friend, Ellen Darden, Candy Gilman and Ken
3 Ali. I had, I back up 100 percent what they
4 said.

5 I think this is the first time that we,
6 the people, have been involved in these kinds
7 of meetings, and I think that is important
8 because we, the people, are who you are
9 supposed to be listening to, and I am going to
10 make my comments short.

11 I believe that you have the ability to
12 look and draw the maps in a fair way. So I
13 would trust you to do that, you know, and it is
14 very important that the people have input and
15 that is what we are doing today, is having
16 input.

17 So I just believe that you have the
18 ability to take the information and draw the
19 maps fairly and I appreciate you coming and we
20 will see you in 2012.

21 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you,
22 Mr. Ledbetter, so much for your comments. Next
23 we have John Hoyt with a presentation, and then
24 we have -- let me just make a comment right
25 now.

1 We are going to need to limit this very
2 strictly to three minutes after your
3 presentation, because we have many, many more
4 people who have signed up, which I am really
5 happy about, but we have limited time. Go
6 ahead, you are recognized.

7 MR. HOYT: First of all, good evening, and
8 just, I think it is great that you all here to
9 listen to some specific proposals.

10 I hope they are of interest and are
11 reasonable. I have a partial redistricting
12 proposal for Volusia County and portions of
13 northeast Florida.

14 My name is John Hoyt, I am a resident of
15 Port Orange and I am the President of the FMO,
16 that is the Federation of Manufactured Home
17 Association in Florida, homeowners in Florida,
18 and my responsibility extends from Volusia
19 right up through the northern border of the
20 state.

21 My proposal suggests some boundary changes
22 for the House, Senate and U. S. Congress
23 Districts in Volusia County, as well some
24 changes in adjacent districts due to these
25 changes.

1 If you will look at the screen up there,
2 you are looking in the center there at House
3 District 25. Now, you will see on the eastern
4 boundary of that a little green area there
5 sticks out into Volusia County, picking up
6 Deberry and half of Deltona.

7 Now, that is problematical. I had someone
8 that lived in a mobile home park there and I
9 wanted to find out who their Representative was
10 so that they could promote something important
11 to mobile home owners, and I called three
12 different Representatives and they didn't know
13 from that address whether or not that person or
14 that park was represented in their district.

15 They said I have to contact their aides.
16 Well, I contacted the aides and the aides said,
17 well, I will call you back. I have to look it
18 up by the address to see if you are in my
19 district. That is ridiculous.

20 We need to have these boundaries along
21 geographical boundaries or political boundaries
22 that are easily recognizable. So if you come
23 from a given town, that is your Representative,
24 that is your Senator.

25 So Volusia County, the district boundaries

1 currently divide many cities that are currently
2 resulted from severe gerrymandering efforts
3 during the last redistricting effort. I hope
4 we get away from it this time around.

5 Now, my proposal attempts to realign
6 district boundaries along more logical
7 political and geological boundaries.

8 Now, Volusia County has natural
9 boundaries. You have a series of wildlife
10 management areas running north and south
11 dividing the state east and west. You have the
12 Spruce Creek area which is a logical division
13 between cities north of Ponce Inlet and south
14 of Ponce Inlet, and then you have St. Johns
15 River which is a natural boundary on the west,
16 and the ocean, of course, on the east.

17 The four major populations area are
18 Deltona, the Daytona Beach, Orlando area, a
19 cluster of towns along I-95 in the western part
20 of the state, and a string of towns from Ponce
21 Inlet down to the southern boundary from Spruce
22 Creek.

23 Now, House District 25 currently includes
24 the very end portion of Deltona. This boundary
25 should be moved westward to the St. Johns River

1 and compensating adjustments of District 25 can
2 be made to the west.

3 House District, next slide, please. House
4 District 26, now, look at that thing. It kind
5 of wraps around the center part of Daytona
6 Beach, and it actually includes part of Deland
7 and some of the north Deland area.

8 I suggest that that entire area be moved
9 eastward to the wildlife management areas so
10 that that section would be added to 26.

11 Now, compensating adjustments to 26 can be
12 made either on the northern boundary or down in
13 the south. You will see that 26 has half of
14 Deltona in there.

15 Now, we can either exclude Deltona and
16 move it over to 27 or move it down to Deberry
17 or back up, but one way or another we need to
18 do something about Deltona so that it is not
19 split into two districts. It can easily be
20 done.

21 Next slide, please. Now, 27, that is
22 where most of us live right here in the Port
23 Orange area. It is illogical to divide Port
24 Orange in half there.

25 You hear someone from Port Orange, you

1 don't know what Senate or House District they
2 are in. I recommend that the southern boundary
3 of District 27 be moved down to Spruce Creek.

4 That is natural geographic boundary, and
5 that compensating adjustment be made by
6 deleting Deland and just moving that whole
7 western boundary to the wildlife management
8 area. I believe that should be sufficient.
9 If you need more adjustment you can go up there
10 and adjust that northern boundary with Ormond
11 Beach.

12 Next slide, please. House District 28 is
13 reasonably well-founded. It takes in all of
14 south Volusia County, and it is well-designed,
15 except that I recommend moving that northern
16 boundary in my previous slide down to the
17 Spruce Creek area, the Ponce Inlet. Ponce
18 Inlet would be in there, but the New Smyrna
19 Beach down to Oak Hill would be still remain in
20 28.

21 And to compensate for that I would suggest
22 moving the western boundary over to pick up
23 Deltona or Deberry or both of them. You would
24 have to juggle the population figures to figure
25 out how best to do that, but I just mention

1 District 25. It is that little piece of green
2 there, that should be moved west so that we can
3 allow for some compensating area put in 28, and
4 perhaps 26.

5 Next slide, please. The Senate. This
6 needs some work. Look at that thing. That is
7 some of the worse gerrymandering I have ever
8 seen in my life. Look at the one in the middle
9 there, that gray thing. I don't know who
10 managed it, he must have had some political
11 pull, but he has got all of the center of
12 Jacksonville, comes right down through Flagler
13 and St. Johns and picks up the International
14 Airport and the Speedway.

15 Now, tax revenue or something, he had some
16 clout, I am telling you, but that needs some
17 work.

18 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Mr. Hoyt,
19 Mr. Hoyt, we have so many people who are signed
20 up. I want do get to them. Please, can you --

21 MR. HOYT: Okay.

22 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: One minute.

23 MR. HOYT: One minute, you got it. Okay,
24 in summary, move the district that -- a
25 district that includes what some of the part of

1 Volusia, make that district all of Volusia, and
2 then District 8 along the coast, make that the
3 district above District 1 and District 1 would
4 lie between 8 and then adjust the boundaries
5 westward for the population centers.

6 For the U.S. Congress Districts, again,
7 District 24, U.S. Congressional District should
8 include all of Volusia, and to move the
9 boundaries westward and upward and make
10 compensating changes elsewhere.

11 District 3, again, District 3 slide. We
12 need to move that District 3 slide such that it
13 does no longer come down as a spike into
14 Volusia County. That should be moved right up
15 north of Volusia.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Okay, Mr. Hoyt, I
17 am going to have to stop you.

18 MR. HOYT: Okay, that completes my
19 presentation, thank you for listening to me.

20 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Mr. Hoyt, if you
21 haven't done this already you can submit it
22 on-line, and submit it to staff, too, all
23 right. So just talk to one of our staff
24 members, please.

25 MR. HOYT: Yes, I submitted in an e-mail

1 to the staff.

2 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
3 much. Right, next we have Joe Stich followed
4 by Sally Gillies and then Tom McGurn. Mr.
5 Stich.

6 MR. STICH: Okay, everyone, please, let's
7 try to limit our comments because we have so
8 many people signed up. Thank you very much.
9 Mr. Stich, you are recognized.

10 MR. STICH: Thank you. My name is Joe
11 Stich. I live in New Smyrna Beach and I do
12 thank you all for showing up here this evening.
13 It is -- it is very well appreciated by the
14 community and I thank you for it.

15 What I wanted to address is something that
16 is going on in our country that affects where
17 the population lives. And what I am talking
18 about is Agenda 21, and Agenda 21 is a movement
19 inside the United States to move the population
20 to --

21 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Mr. Stich, Mr.
22 Stich. You need to limit your comments to
23 redistricting.

24 MR. STICH: I am.

25 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: That is not

1 redistricting.

2 MR. STICH: It affects redistricting.

3 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Could you talk
4 about the process of redistricting? Thank you
5 very much.

6 MR. STICH: The movement of people into a
7 confined area that is the process that is going
8 on with it affects how those districts are
9 going to be drawn, and what happens is the
10 people that are not in a confined district have
11 limited populations for their area. Five
12 people for 20 acres, whatever the case might
13 happen to be.

14 You are disenfranchising their votes,
15 because across the street is an apartment
16 complex that has 400 people living in it, and
17 if you don't take into consideration the
18 disenfranchisement of the voting population of
19 the people in conservation areas, which is what
20 is happening with this process, then you end up
21 with no option, except to gerrymander, because
22 there is no way to put the people anywhere
23 else, except to reach out and grab 300 people
24 over here and 200 people over there, to
25 compensate for the numbers that you need.

1 Presently 40 percent of the land in
2 Florida is owned by the government, and
3 40 percent of the land in Volusia County is
4 owned by the government, and that pushes people
5 into these confined areas and it makes it, in
6 my opinion, a bad situation for representative
7 government.

8 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
9 much, Mr. Stich. Next we have Sally Gillies,
10 followed by Tom McGurn. Ms. Gillies, you are
11 recognized.

12 MS. GILLIES: Thank you, Chairman Hukill.
13 And thank you all for being here to listen to
14 us. I had no idea so many of you would come
15 down, and I think that is pretty cool.

16 I hope that you do hear us though about
17 contiguous small districts. It is just insane
18 the way it has been going here. I lived in
19 Palm Beach County for 20 years. I don't want
20 to see that in my new county.

21 I have been up here in Volusia for, since
22 2003, and I love it. I think it is just a
23 great beautiful place, but I don't want to see
24 what happened down there happen up here, and
25 drawing the districts so that they are small,

1 contiguous, people are a community that have a
2 Representative or a Senator I think is very
3 important and I appreciate your interest very
4 much.

5 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
6 much, Ms. Gillies. Next we have Tom McGurn,
7 followed by James Harper. Mr. McGurn, you are
8 recognized.

9 MR. MCGURN: Thank you. Tom McGurn,
10 Daytona citizen for all of over 60 years, I
11 believe. Forty years ago I was a District
12 Manager for the Federal Census which all of you
13 realize takes place every ten years and I had
14 11 counties.

15 I had about 1,000 employees that I had to
16 find, I had to recruit, test and then have them
17 trained all in three months. We got -- we had
18 a successful census. I believe we had a
19 million people we counted at that time and we
20 covered from St. Augustine all of way down to
21 Brevard County, and all of the way across to
22 Pasco and Hernando.

23 Ever since that time I have been very
24 interested in the population process here in
25 Florida. I have been very dismayed at the

1 gerrymandering that has been going on and these
2 maps out here in front, to me, they are
3 reprehensible, and I wish that we would have
4 had a few sample maps here.

5 I heard some excuses saying, well, people
6 would be afraid if we had some type of pre -- I
7 can't think of the right word, but we could
8 have at least had some of the sample maps
9 sitting out here to look at.

10 I haven't had a chance to look on-line to
11 look at some of these things, but I will later
12 on. It would have been nice if I could have
13 looked at them and made some comments on them
14 this evening. Unfortunately that didn't
15 happen.

16 Long before Ann McFall became the
17 Supervision of Elections I was involved in the,
18 every so often when I wasn't on military duty I
19 would get involved in the election process
20 here, and I saw some of these split precincts
21 that she is talking about.

22 I think I have -- I worked in one of those
23 precincts, and it had six splits in it and I
24 was appalled. People were putting their
25 ballots in the machines, in the wrong machines,

1 this way and that way and the clerks didn't
2 have any idea on how to run things.

3 I hope that somebody will have enough
4 sense to do something about that. Deltona is
5 probably the biggest city in Volusia County
6 now. It has District 33, 25, 26. How many
7 people in Deltona know Dr. Costello?

8 They probably know Jason Brodeur because
9 he lives over there in that -- close to that
10 area there, okay. Somebody down there needs to
11 be in that one area there.

12 Geographical compactness, city, county
13 lines should be taken into effect. I think
14 that is all I can say right now.

15 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
16 much, Mr. McGurn. Next we have James Harper,
17 followed by Les Thackston. You are recognized,
18 Mr. Harper.

19 MR. HARPER: Good evening, my name is
20 James Harper, and I am a resident of Daytona
21 Beach, Florida. I want to take a 30 second
22 side bar.

23 Someone said something about the Voting
24 Rights Act earlier. Basically the purpose of
25 the Voting Rights Act wasn't so that blacks

1 could get elected to office, it was so that we
2 could vote, we would have the right to vote.

3 So just to say that very clearly, you
4 know, and having said that, I am glad to see so
5 many black Representatives up on the stage, and
6 unfortunate -- well, don't anybody take
7 anything I say personal, but unfortunately, a
8 lot of you are only window dressing.

9 You have no power, you have no voice,
10 because you are dominated by a Republican led
11 Senate and House.

12 So therefore, I say this only to go to the
13 redistricting point. The minority/majority
14 districts basically is legalized segregation.
15 That is basically what it is.

16 There was a point in time -- there was a
17 point in time when it was needed, because there
18 was no black representation in elected office,
19 but as we continued to do better, you know, it
20 is not the color of the person today
21 necessarily that needs to be voted into office.
22 It is the person, itself.

23 Now, let me qualify that. We need black
24 representation, we need minority representation
25 or women representation, but if their voices is

1 not heard, and I don't mean they can speak and
2 you hear them, it doesn't really mean a hill of
3 beans.

4 So they are now and now the lines are
5 drawn so that the majority Republican
6 districts, which are majority white districts,
7 do not have to cater to their black
8 constituents.

9 These white majority districts you all
10 have drawn them, I wouldn't call it a
11 conspiracy, but they have been drawn in such a
12 way that the blacks that vote do not, you do
13 not have to be accountable voters because your
14 districts are drawn so that there are no blacks
15 and Hispanics in them. All of the blacks and
16 Hispanics are in the minority/majority
17 districts.

18 So you all need to be accountable to all
19 of the residents of the state of Florida.
20 Again, we need, you need to cater to everybody.

21 Very quickly, and I am going to wrap this
22 up, because I see you all fumbling and jumbling
23 up there, which is fine, you know, because the
24 thing is, you need to be accountable to all of
25 us.

1 These white majority Republican districts
2 have got to stop. As I mentioned earlier, the
3 Voting Rights Act was important because at that
4 time we could not vote and it is important
5 today even more so because the Republican
6 Congress and House and Senate are doing things
7 and it is getting harder for people to vote
8 today.

9 You are making it harder for us to vote
10 today. You know what you --

11 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Mr. Harper, please
12 stick to redistricting, and just can you wrap
13 up your comments, thank you.

14 MS. HARPER: Yes, ma'am, I will do that.
15 As I was saying, wrapping it up, and what I was
16 saying in tying it in was things that you all
17 have done recently in reference to the voter so
18 that we can vote you all in, okay, have been
19 done to make it harder for us to vote, and you
20 know what you have been doing.

21 And I will just say this real quickly and
22 I will get out of here, so that Barack Obama
23 isn't elected in 2012. We know what you are
24 doing, but I just -- I am partial, but having
25 said that I hope, you know, you do things that

1 make it easier for all of us to vote, for
2 people to get to vote easier, but also most
3 importantly, draw the districts so that these
4 white majority districts --

5 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: All right,
6 Mr. Harper, Mr. Harper.

7 MR. HARPER -- aren't drawn in such a way
8 that you all are not accountable to your
9 minority Representatives.

10 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
11 much. All right, next, could I please ask
12 members of the audience to refrain from the
13 whistles, et cetera, so we can get moving.

14 Mr. Thackston, followed by John Nicholson.

15 MR. THACKSTON: Good evening, Les
16 Thackston.

17 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: You are
18 recognized.

19 MR. THACKSTON: I live in the world's most
20 famous beach, that is Daytona Beach in case
21 anybody wants to know.

22 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: We can't hear you.
23 Can you talk into the mike, please?

24 MR. THACKSTON: Sure.

25 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you.

1 MR. THACKSTON: A little low. I live in
2 the world's most famous beach, that is Daytona
3 Beach. I got to say it twice.

4 I would like to speak on being in a state
5 that has a mandate, and I think ya'll know what
6 mandates are. Someone earlier said that most
7 of you probably didn't get in with 63 percent.
8 Well, if you don't do something about the
9 redistricting on V and VI, there will be
10 another mandate next year. I think there is
11 going to anyway.

12 So please make them compact, as compact as
13 you can. I would like to make an observation
14 on the maps, on the District Builder maps. I
15 asked the gentleman outside what they were
16 going to be used for and how they were going to
17 be aggregated to come up with something, and he
18 said they weren't. They were going to be
19 looked at by somebody.

20 I think that is a real waste of time. I
21 am not sure if it is just something to make
22 people feel good, but if you are not going to
23 do anything but just look at them and not use
24 the data that you get from them, and then what
25 happens if four million people send them again.

1 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
2 much. All right, next up we have
3 Mr. Nicholson, and then Mike Nolan. Mike
4 Nolan? Mike Nolan? I have to get my other
5 stack.

6 All right, we will put Mike Nolan aside.
7 Faye McHugh followed by Elizabeth Albert. Faye
8 McHugh? Do you want to waive your time?

9 Okay, next we have Elizabeth Albert,
10 followed by -- Matty Rose we had, no? Okay,
11 Elizabeth Albert.

12 MS. ALBERT: Yes.

13 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: You are
14 recognized.

15 MS. ALBERT: Good evening. Before I start
16 I want to just put a little sidebar in, not as
17 aggressive as our previous speaker, but a
18 moment ago the \$30 million was discussed, and I
19 excited the forum to check some sources.

20 And I just want to say that three
21 independent media outlets researched that \$30
22 million, and those would be the St. Peter
23 Times, the Orlando Sentinel and the Miami
24 Herald and they found the denial that there was
25 a fund to be false.

1 Now, this is a public input hearing. I am
2 a member of the public and I hope that you are
3 hearing me as I notice some of you are
4 participating in text messaging.

5 I am going to go ahead and read the
6 comments that I had prepared because I spent my
7 time preparing them, and I would hope that you
8 would just listen. If you don't like what I
9 say, that is fine, but I am going to start now.

10 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Go ahead.

11 MS. ALBERT: Thank you so much. Good
12 evening, I would like to begin by saying thank
13 you, thank you all, the citizens of Florida who
14 sit here this evening.

15 Thank you to all of the members of the
16 audience who have given their time to exercise
17 their constitutional rights and participate in
18 this public hearing. Thank you for donating
19 time that should be spent with a spouse,
20 children or loved one.

21 Thank you for coming out to fight for what
22 63 percent of voters approved in 2010. My
23 focus this evening is on the current lawsuit
24 filed to oppose the implementation of Fair
25 Districts. I urge the Legislature to drop this

1 unnecessary and very expensive lawsuit.

2 The Legislature should be working to
3 uphold the Constitution, not working to protect
4 the interest of the incumbents by spending
5 \$30 million taxpayer dollars to fight what
6 approximately two-thirds of the voting public
7 approved.

8 I want to know how the taxpayers can
9 afford to fund this lawsuit during a time when
10 our state cut the education budget by \$1.3
11 billion. How can \$30 million be spent to fight
12 fair districts when 2,000 State employees will
13 be forced into unemployment?

14 Couldn't \$30 million be spent to avoid
15 layoffs for workers in State mental health
16 hospitals, juvenile justice facilities and
17 state prisons?

18 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Ms. Albert, could
19 you limit your comments to redistricting,
20 please?

21 MS. ALBERT: I am wrapping it up, yes,
22 ma'am, I sure am.

23 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you.

24 MS. ALBERT: Thank you. How does the
25 Legislature justify spending \$30 million

1 taxpayer dollars when social services are being
2 cut to the most needy citizens of our state and
3 there are nearly one million Floridians out of
4 work.

5 To quote a former Governor of our great
6 state, this is a do nothing Legislature. Well,
7 it seems when referencing the implementation of
8 fair districts, you are still a do nothing
9 Legislature.

10 To quote the current Governor, let's get
11 to work. Why don't we get to work on stopping
12 this lawsuit and creating fair districts?
13 Thank you for hearing me.

14 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
15 much.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: I am going to ask
17 the audience, please, let's refrain, it is
18 going to take time away from people who really
19 want to speak and we want to hear them.

20 All right, next we have Kathy, I can't
21 read it, from Ocean Terrace, Kathy. Is it
22 P-o-l.

23 MS. POGAS: P-o-g.

24 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: P-o-g, Pogas, I am
25 sorry. Followed by Michael Arth. You are

1 recognized.

2 MS. POGAS: Most of what I want to talk
3 about has already been brought up, but I do
4 want to make a point.

5 Mr. Hoyt, who brought these maps up and
6 showed us what they look like, that had an
7 impact, we could see how things are drawn.

8 If you would please make some maps, get
9 them out to us and let us see what they are and
10 then we can make good comments and points
11 specific to what we are looking for.

12 Right now we are making general comments,
13 general ideas of what we want, but it is hard
14 to put that altogether. We need a place to
15 start and work together towards a goal where
16 everybody is represented. That is all we
17 really want.

18 We want everybody to be represented
19 fairly, and we want the people that represent
20 us to know who we are and be there for us.
21 Thank you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
23 much. All right, next we have Michael Arth,
24 Michael, followed by Reverend Victor Gooden.
25 You are recognized.

1 MR. ARTH: My name is Michael Arth, I am
2 an urban designer and a policy analyst, and I
3 have a bumper sticker that says if voting
4 actually worked, it would be illegal.

5 Why would I have such a bumper sticker? I
6 spent 17 years working as a policy analyst
7 trying to understand our system, and I also ran
8 for Governor. So I got an intimate look at how
9 our system works, and I voted for Amendments V
10 and VI because I think they are little baby
11 steps in the right direction, and I hope you
12 will implement the policy that has been voted
13 by a quorum of the voters.

14 But unfortunately, V and VI are not fair,
15 equitable or sensible. It is only slightly
16 better than what we had before. Much like when
17 we go to the polls and we vote for a Democrat
18 or Republican, we are usually voting a lesser
19 of two evils.

20 The system that is put before us, it is
21 sort of like a mommy with her two-year-old. Do
22 you want spinach or do you want broccoli. At
23 least that mommy cares about the two-year-old,
24 but when it comes to the political system, the
25 Democrats and the Republicans do not care about

1 the voters. They care about staying in power.

2 We have seen this because we have what is
3 called a winner take all system, which forces
4 us into a duopoly.

5 Now, we could take a little baby step
6 further and improve our districts by having
7 what is called instant run off voting where you
8 rank your candidates in order of preference.

9 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Mr. Arth, can you
10 limit your comments to redistricting, please?

11 MR. ARTH: This is about redistricting,
12 this is how to have fair districts. May I
13 continue, please?

14 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Well, can I --

15 MR. ARTH: The way you have a fair
16 district, all right, and the way you have a
17 fair district is you rank your candidates in
18 order of preference.

19 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Mr. Arth, please
20 limit your comments to redistricting.

21 MR. ARTH: Okay.

22 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: It has been
23 adopted. It is in the Constitution. We are
24 going to follow it. So let's talk about
25 redistricting. Thank you.

1 MR. ARTH: What I am going to explain is
2 how to have fair districts, if you will just
3 give me a minute. This is how we can make V
4 and VI work even better.

5 Just like the Republicans in their own
6 internal election, this is how they elect the
7 Chair. They have what is called rank choice
8 voting, and they don't want most Americans to
9 know about this, but it is a fair, it is
10 called, it is a fair and equitable way and
11 sensible way to elect a leader.

12 The system we have only creates about
13 12 percent representation in Congressional
14 Districts, 12 percent. So if you want full
15 representation and you want a fair and sensible
16 and equitable system, then you implement and
17 this is something that could be done on the
18 legislative level.

19 You will have rank choice voting. You
20 don't have spoilers, parties are not so
21 important, and you will -- you will never have
22 to have a redistricting fight if you also
23 implement proportional representation, which
24 would take it even one step further. Thank
25 you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
2 much. Next we have Reverend Victor Gooden,
3 followed by Jim Oddie. Reverend, you have
4 signed up twice.

5 REVEREND GOODEN: Two different groups.
6 Going to speak once though.

7 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Okay, thank you
8 very much. Go ahead, thank you, Reverend.

9 REVEREND GOODEN: Madam Chair, Mr. Chair,
10 Senators and Representatives, good evening.
11 First of all, thank you for all that you do and
12 we certainly appreciate it.

13 My name is Reverend Victor Gooden, I am
14 coordinator for Governmental Relations at the
15 great Bethune Cookman University, and I have
16 lived and voted in Daytona Beach for over 22
17 years.

18 Communities of interest should be
19 represented as a top priority over arbitrary
20 geographical boundaries. We want to make sure
21 that minorities are represented fairly in
22 Tallahassee and Washington, especially in the
23 area of higher education.

24 When you sit down to finally draw these
25 new lines, remember us here in Volusia County,

1 because of the factors that drive our economy
2 are diverse and different, such as our beaches,
3 the world's most famous beach, airports, the
4 speedway, other businesses and higher
5 education.

6 We need at least two to three
7 Congressional Districts, no more than four
8 Senate Districts, at least one of those would
9 be based in our county. No more than six House
10 Districts with at least three of those based in
11 our county, and fairness should be the major
12 issue throughout this whole process.

13 It is important for people to have a say
14 in how the district lines are drawn, and the
15 Legislature's redistricting hearing process
16 that we are having tonight is legitimate and
17 the best way to do it.

18 Judges, Commissions and Panels are okay,
19 but not for this particular situation. You are
20 the ones that we elected. You are the ones
21 that we are holding accountable, and again, we
22 thank you for all that you do, and please
23 remember Volusia County. Appreciate it.

24 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
25 much, Reverend, so much for your comments. We

1 are going to have adhere strictly to the clock
2 now. So please use your time wisely.

3 MR. ODDIE: Oh sure, when I get up here.

4 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Starting with you,
5 Mr. Oddie, yes.

6 MR. ODDIE: Now we stick to the clock,
7 okay.

8 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: You are recognized
9 Mr. Oddie.

10 MR. ODDIE: That is okay.

11 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Followed by Peter
12 Kouracos.

13 MR. ODDIE: I should be able to go under
14 the time because I have the benefit of being
15 able to reference to specific speakers.

16 My name is Jim Oddie, I am a long time
17 resident of Volusia County, a business owner
18 and a part of the Republican Executive
19 Committee.

20 And tonight I would like you to give
21 special weight to what Mr. Jim Cameron has said
22 about our business, and also Ms. Ann McFall,
23 our Supervisor of Election as far as making it
24 easier on their office and the complexities of
25 getting people out to vote.

1 I would also like to recognize what
2 Mr. Ken Ali said. He tied up a lot of things
3 about service to our country and what it means
4 to be an American, especially when you are not
5 born here.

6 And I would also you very much to consider
7 what the gentleman spoke about the agriculture.
8 I think that is very important. Since I had
9 the advantage of being able to reference off of
10 those people, now I would just like to get to
11 my own point.

12 And that is we saw the judicial, the
13 judicial branch keep some amendments off the
14 ballot in this last election, things that
15 referred to protecting us from healthcare
16 initiatives that were given to us from the
17 Federal government. Those weren't on the
18 ballot.

19 We saw V and VI that were allowed on the
20 ballot, and at the Federal level we see that
21 Amendment VI is being challenged, and that is
22 good, because this isn't a democracy.

23 This is a representative Republic, and we
24 did things for 140 years when one party was
25 making the decisions and now that the other

1 party is doing it the same way, it is being
2 challenged.

3 So I want you guys to do the same things
4 that they are doing in Congress for Amendment
5 VI, and challenge that, challenge Amendment V.
6 We elected you to go up there and make the
7 districts and I am asking you guys to keep it
8 out of the hands of the judiciary.

9 We already know it is going to be reviewed
10 by them, but let's play by the same rules that
11 worked for a long time and not change it just
12 because another party is doing the
13 redistricting or is in charge of it, because I
14 would like to reiterate one other speaker up
15 here.

16 We don't need black representation. We
17 don't need white representation. What we need
18 is good representation, and we have seen now
19 that that is good or bad is not limited by what
20 color they are or where they are from.

21 So with that in mind, let's use the rules
22 we had, but let's keep the districts compact
23 and fair so that we can avoid the judicial
24 review. Thank you.

25 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you,

1 Mr. Oddie, so much.

2 MR. ODDIE: Thank you for coming out
3 tonight for this transparent process.

4 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you. Next
5 we have Peter and then followed by Harry
6 Rosenthal. You are recognized.

7 MR. KOURACOS: Madam Chairman,
8 distinguished members of the State Legislature.
9 I am not sure if the public knows that we have
10 the incoming Senate President and the incoming
11 Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives
12 here, am I correct?

13 Anyway, I want to make this very brief.
14 The first thing that I would start at is, this
15 is a very big issue, and it has affected us a
16 number of times throughout the course of my
17 lifetime as redistricting has occurred at least
18 four times in my lifetime that I can recall.

19 I would like to start by asking the most
20 high Lord God to impart the wisdom of Solomon
21 upon the entire Legislature as it would relate
22 to the crafting of the districts in question
23 for this redistricting.

24 And I would like to touch on briefly the
25 Congressional Districts in this county which,

1 and my comments are basically reserved toward
2 Volusia County only. For many, many years in
3 the earlier part of my lifetime, probably about
4 35 years ago, Volusia County comprised one
5 county in whole as part of its Congressional
6 District.

7 At that time it was Congressional District
8 4. Throughout the course of several
9 redistrictings which really started to occur as
10 the Democrats started to lose their grip on
11 power maybe about 20 or so years ago, the
12 district or the county became carved up several
13 times and now we have at least three
14 Congressional Districts here. District 24,
15 Sandy Adams, District 7, John Mica and District
16 3, Corinne Brown. I think the time has come at
17 this particular point that Corinne Brown is
18 really living too far away to -- to have a
19 position in this county. She is too distant
20 and it is really too gerrymandered.

21 So Congressional District 3 needs to be
22 reformed out of this county and as far as the
23 remainder of the county, it really either needs
24 to fall into Congressional District 24 or
25 Congressional District 7, one or the other,

1 whichever is easier for the Legislature to do.

2 Insofar as the State Senate boundaries, I
3 am sure it is a hassle for Senator Thrasher to
4 come all the way down here and campaign in this
5 county. Senator Lynn has served us extremely
6 well as a Senator, I as an individual elector
7 in this county have been very pleased with her.

8 I don't know what you need to do with
9 that, but something needs to be done with it,
10 and I have to say, you know, 30 or so years ago
11 there were a lot of complaints from the four
12 towns area, which is Deltona, Deberry,
13 (inaudible) City and Enterprise.

14 During that time period the Democratic
15 Legislature refused to give a State House seat
16 over in that area over the complaints of many
17 of the residents of that time period,
18 principally because they were afraid that it
19 would create a Republican seat.

20 Well, that may or may not be the case
21 today, because of changes in the demographics
22 in the population in the city of Deltona.

23 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: I need to stop
24 you.

25 MR. KOURACOS: Okay.

1 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
2 much. Sorry. All right, Harry Rosenthal,
3 followed by Ed Kelley. And after Ed Kelley, we
4 have Andy Kelly. You are recognized,
5 Mr. Rosenthal.

6 MR. ROSENTHAL: My name is Harry
7 Rosenthal. For 53 years I have been a
8 registered voter in Daytona Beach. I want to
9 thank each of you for being here. I don't
10 remember this ever having occurred before.

11 I understand that Volusia County is
12 represented by four State Senators and six
13 State Representatives. That is 10 percent of
14 the State Senate and five percent of the State
15 House.

16 Are we over represented in the Senate or
17 are we under represented in the State House of
18 Representatives? One or the other has got to
19 be true.

20 The second is, if we have 40 Senators and
21 120 Representatives, then why not we have three
22 House seats in every Senatorial seat at our
23 district and therefore you have eliminated a
24 lot of this problems that you have with
25 overlapping. Thank you very much.

1 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
2 much for your comments, Mr. Rosenthal. Ed
3 Kelley. Good evening, Mayor.

4 MR. KELLEY: That followed up that pretty
5 easy, because one of the concerns that we have
6 and we adopted it at our Commission meeting,
7 that District 26 we feel would be well served
8 by combining that to have Ormond Beach in that
9 District 26.

10 I have nothing against Senator Thrasher.
11 He is my Senator. Senator Lynn also represents
12 Ormond Beach and I am sure that we will send a
13 letter supporting that as well. You have heard
14 from most everyone that that is part of the
15 problem.

16 We were told that we would be better off
17 having more people representing a smaller part.
18 Maybe it is time to look at the other way and
19 try to keep us all uniform. Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
21 much, Mayor, for your comments. Andy Kelly.
22 Good evening to our County Council member.

23 MR. KELLY: Thank you very much. That is
24 what I came up to say was good evening to you
25 on behalf of the Volusia County Council. And

1 Co-Chair, I am looking for Ms. Joyce Cusach
2 right here, thank you very much, and
3 Ms. Alexander is here as well. Carl Persis is
4 here, thank you very much.

5 I would be happy to read this, thank you,
6 but if I may, I wanted to say welcome and I
7 wanted everybody on the floor, general floor
8 that are going to be redistricting in the
9 county, as well as your local cities are, and I
10 want to say thank you to each of the
11 Representatives past and present for serving us
12 as you have been serving us.

13 I think what you have heard the
14 predominant message is very loud and clear, is
15 that you hear us, and then please that you be
16 fair to our Volusia County. Ms. Cusach, would
17 you would like me to read this?

18 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Mr. Kelly, do you
19 want to continue?

20 MR. KELLY: Dear Representative, this is
21 from the concurrent Chair, Frank Bruno. "Dear
22 Representative Taylor. The Volusia County
23 Council unanimously voted at its July 7th
24 meeting to let Florida Legislators know that
25 our preference to put boundary lines that will

1 be created for Florida Senate District 7. As
2 you know, Volusia County residents currently
3 are represented by four State Senators from
4 Districts 1, 7, 8 and 20.

5 Voters in the last election made it clear
6 that they wanted to have districts that are
7 more compact and follow natural boundaries.
8 The County Council agrees, and we request that
9 the new boundaries that are drawn and make
10 Volusia County the core of Senate District 7.
11 Thank you for your consideration."

12 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
13 much. Can we -- I have not seen a copy of
14 that. Has that been sent to us? All right,
15 if you could just leave us a copy of it, I
16 would appreciate it.

17 Next up we have Jerry, is it Doty, D-o-t
18 -- is that D-o-t-y? Jerry from Flushing
19 Avenue, Daytona Beach? Followed by Eddie
20 Stamm. Okay, Jerry not here? Jerry? No. All
21 right, Eddie Stamm. You are recognized, Mr.
22 Stamm, followed by Sussanne Jones.

23 MR. STAMM: First off, thank you for
24 coming. I moved here from Washington, D. C.,
25 about three years ago. I grew up in Baltimore,

1 Maryland, and I have to say this would have
2 never happened up there.

3 You guys could have been home doing
4 whatever you wanted to do. So I just wanted to
5 take the time to thank you. It is a
6 representative government, and since I have
7 been involved with some of the political
8 processes here, I know the people in their
9 candidacy to get elected, I have met these
10 people and I feel that, you know, I can speak
11 to any one of them or call their office if
12 there is something that I am not really
13 comfortable with.

14 I don't know a lot about the
15 redistricting. I know it is an issue that for
16 years has troubled depending on what side you
17 are on, but I think if, you know, the
18 transparency you are showing right now, we
19 couldn't ask for anything more, and, you know,
20 the industry of grievance continues on.

21 There is always going to be somebody that
22 has something that they don't like, and
23 hopefully, you know, that can get worked out,
24 so I want to thank you for coming. This is
25 something that is very hard for me to believe,

1 coming from Washington, D. C. It would be very
2 unlikely that this would happen, so thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you, Mr.
4 Stamm, for your comments and your testimony.
5 Next we have Susanne Jones, followed by Lois
6 Troxell. You are recognized, Ms. Jones.

7 MS. JONES: Thank you for allowing me to
8 give my opinion. My name is Susanne Jones and
9 I am from New Smyrna Beach. I have a question.

10 Why is the Legislature even drawing up
11 these districts when it should be done by a
12 nonpartisan commission, a computer could even
13 do it.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Madam Chair, let's give a
15 factual answer.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Go ahead.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Because the Constitution
18 of Florida requires the Legislature to do it,
19 and does not allow anyone else to do it. That
20 is the answer.

21 MS. JONES: I am glad I have my answer
22 then. Well, I believe that the districts
23 should be drawn geographically, contiguous with
24 the diverse people in our areas to prevent
25 safe, safe seats from being continuing forever.

1 That will make the politicians have to
2 understand all of the issues of the people in
3 this community so that they don't just address
4 the few.

5 The other comment I want to make is, and I
6 think that fair districting is appropriate, but
7 why on earth have you voted to suppress the
8 vote?

9 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
10 much for your comments. Next we have Lois
11 Troxell, followed by Harold Butts. You are
12 recognized, thank you.

13 MS. TROXELL: Hi, I am Lois Troxell from
14 Edgewater, Florida. It was very discouraging
15 to hear you when you were telling your -- who
16 you represent. A piece of this county, a piece
17 of that county, a piece of this city, a piece
18 of that city.

19 Doesn't that sound crazy to you? Doesn't
20 it sound crazy to you? And some of you were
21 probably involved in it before when it was done
22 this way. This is what we don't want.

23 We don't wouldn't you to do
24 gerrymandering. We don't want you to protect
25 your seat. Give us a little credit. You draw

1 fair districts and we will vote for the best
2 candidate, and that will be the best for the
3 state, and that is what you should be
4 interested in ethically, morally, every other
5 kind of way. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
7 much for your comments. Harold Butts, followed
8 by Kleu Nguyen. I might be misstating that. I
9 hope not.

10 MR. BUTTS: Good evening, honorable ladies
11 and gentlemen. I am from Daytona Beach. In
12 fact, I was born in Daytona Beach. How many in
13 the room were born in Daytona Beach? Five
14 other fellow members -- six. I compliment you
15 for being here.

16 I have been active in politics for
17 probably 30 years, both here, California, and
18 North Carolina. I have never seen a pamphlet
19 like this. I had no idea that the emphasis
20 would be so much on protecting minorities of
21 their representation, and I am appreciative
22 that probably the demographics of Florida are
23 somewhat represented by the whites and the
24 blacks up there.

25 However, there is one color I don't see on

1 that stage. What about the browns? How are
2 they represented if this purpose of this whole
3 effort is to give representation to minorities,
4 why are there no browns up there with you,
5 Latinos I am referring to. Have you thought
6 about that?

7 I don't know the demographics of the House
8 and the Senate. Is it roughly that proportion,
9 Hispanic? I ask you that. That is all. If
10 you don't have it, look with them.

11 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Let me tell you,
12 we have a Hispanic member serving. He just may
13 not be here today, all right. Thank you. Do
14 you have further testimony?

15 MR. BUTTS: That is it.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Okay, thank you,
17 Mr. Butts. Next, how do you say your last
18 name, I am sorry. Nguyen all right, and
19 followed by Joyce Cusach. Thank you very much,
20 you are recognized. Ms. Nguyen.

21 MS. NGUYEN: Hello. I can't believe that
22 out of the all people here I am the shortest
23 one. Thank you. I am here representing the
24 City of Deland, Mayor Robert Apgar. He was
25 unable to attend tonight because of budget

1 meetings.

2 So I am just going to read a letter that
3 he drafted and I will sent the letter out to
4 the Representatives later on this week.

5 "Dear Representatives. As you begin your
6 deliberations on the establishment of new State
7 House and Senate Districts for the state of
8 Florida, we want to share with you our
9 thoughts.

10 Over the past decade Volusia County has
11 been served by six House members and four
12 Senators who's districts are spread across
13 several counties.

14 While we have always enjoyed good
15 representation by those elected to serve us, we
16 think that west Volusia and all of Volusia
17 County will be better served by fewer
18 districts.

19 West Volusia and Volusia County as a whole
20 have shared interests that are best represented
21 by having Representatives and Senators that are
22 solely dedicated to the needs, values and
23 aspirations of the people they serve.

24 Having fewer districts with the vast
25 majority of the people in it reside within west

1 Volusia and Volusia County would enable
2 Legislators to achieve compliance with
3 Amendments 5 and 6 and enable our
4 Representatives to focus more clearly on the
5 concerns of the people they serve.

6 As always, we appreciate your service and
7 for taking the time to weigh our thoughts and
8 concerns. Sincerely, Mayor Robert Apgar."

9 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
10 much. Please convey our thanks to the Mayor.
11 All right, next we have Joyce Cusack followed
12 by Charles, K-n-a-u-s-e, is that correct? From
13 Sunny Brook Circle. Good evening, you are
14 recognized.

15 MS. CUSACK: To the wonderful folk that
16 are before us, to the august body of the
17 Florida Legislature. I greet you in the
18 beautiful city of Daytona Beach and the home of
19 Volusia County. I am glad to see you.

20 It has been too long. I want you to know,
21 Baxley, it is good to see you. I want you to
22 know that we are honored that you are here in
23 Volusia County and I bring you greetings from
24 Volusia County Council where I was elected to
25 be a part of that august body this past

1 November. So I am still serving as you are
2 serving.

3 I want to talk, tell us your story, well,
4 I have a story to tell, but you probably know
5 my story, that I live in west Volusia and ended
6 up in east Volusia with the redistricting.

7 So I would want you to know that drawing
8 compact districts is very important. It is
9 just so that not every person that lives in
10 west Volusia would be able to represent east
11 Volusia, as it happened to me, Representative
12 Hukill, in 2000.

13 So just keep these districts compact,
14 contiguous and make sure that they are a
15 representative of the people, and I do not need
16 to have a minority district. I just need to
17 represent people, and so, and that is what
18 happened to me in 2000. I represented the
19 people, so make that happen.

20 Make that happen and the citizens in
21 Volusia County and the state of Florida will
22 always be eternally grateful for you and the
23 service that you provide for all of us. Thank
24 you, and God bless you all.

25 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very

1 much. All right, next we have I believe
2 Charles has waived his time, so we have Carl
3 Persis, followed by Dana Swanson, followed by
4 Benetta Standly. Where is Mr. Persis? Did Mr.
5 Persis leave? Is Carl Persis back there?

6 All right, let's take Dana Swanson, can
7 you come, Dana, and we will come back to Mr.
8 Persis. You are recognized.

9 MS. SWANSON: Thank you very much for
10 coming out here tonight. Again, a lot of
11 people have said, you could have had other
12 things you could have been doing for your
13 evening.

14 And as a resident of Volusia County since
15 I was four years old, as a resident of west
16 Volusia County and also have also worked in the
17 east side, I also know that each side has its
18 own special unique qualities and its own
19 special unique traits, and that I hope that you
20 try to represent, draw the lines to best
21 represent both sides as fairly as possible.

22 And that I know sometimes you can't draw a
23 box and have everything work out perfectly,
24 especially like on our coast line, yes. So I
25 just would hope that you would try to draw them

1 as compact as possible, but still maintaining
2 the interests of that community. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
4 much, Ms. Swanson, for your comments. Next we
5 have Benetta Standly, followed by Anita
6 Lapidus. Ms. Standly, you are recognized.

7 MS. STANDLY: Thank you, Madam Chair.
8 Good evening, my name is Benetta Standly.
9 Welcome to Daytona Beach. I direct the
10 northeast Florida Office for the American's
11 Civil Liberties Union of Florida.

12 I am here tonight on behalf of Dr. Joyce
13 Hamilton Henry who directs our north central
14 Florida office and she is not able to be with
15 you tonight.

16 So I am here to hold you accountable. You
17 work for the voters across Florida. I am here
18 to give voice today to the voters who supported
19 Amendments 5 and 6 last November. The
20 disenfranchised and the folks who simply
21 couldn't be here tonight that needs to have
22 their voices heard.

23 I want to make sure that everyone
24 understands that Amendments 5 and 6 actually
25 adds minority voting rights protections into

1 the Florida Constitution for the first time,
2 which helps the provisions that are within the
3 Federal Voting Rights Act.

4 As I have said before to you all, to the
5 delegation, we need information from you on how
6 many majority, minority districts exist in
7 Florida, where they are located and how your
8 maps will protect them.

9 Perhaps you could do that through having
10 some sort of voter workshop across the state.
11 You know you have a legal obligation to make
12 sure that the minority voters have the
13 opportunity to pick the candidates of their
14 choosing.

15 As you know, the new rules for drawing the
16 legislative boundaries have been overwhelmingly
17 approved by the voters, but we need the Florida
18 Legislature to follow by these rules.

19 You said you will, but hear me, people do
20 not trust the work that you are going to do.
21 Quite frankly, I am disappointed that the House
22 has intervened in the Amendment 6 lawsuit, and
23 you guys continue to oppose and fight these new
24 rules.

25 Quite frankly, it is insulting to the

1 voters. We understand that when redistricting
2 happens all around this country, and Florida is
3 no different, that the political party in
4 charge is likely to draw lines that favor
5 themselves. That is not acceptable.

6 The entire purpose of Amendments 5 and 6
7 were for voters to choose their politicians,
8 not the other way around. This is supposed to
9 be a fair nonpartisan process. I trust that
10 you guys will make sure that that is adhered
11 to.

12 Again, as I have said before, these
13 hearings are window dressing, they are fake and
14 they are not really a conversation. We don't
15 want any insider back room deals. This is
16 quite frankly a slap in the face. You guys
17 haven't presented us with any information to
18 give you public comment on.

19 We want you to stop wasting taxpayer
20 money, because quite frankly, Senator Gaetz,
21 \$30 million in the State House has been set
22 aside in reserves to fight these Amendments,
23 and we know that in the Senate \$8 million has
24 been set aside.

25 So stop undermining the will of the voters

1 in Florida. It is your job to draw these maps,
2 not mine. Stop suggesting to the public that
3 we submit maps to you. It is your job. It is
4 written into the Constitution.

5 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: All right. I need
6 to cut you off. Your three minutes is up.
7 Thank you very much.

8 MS. STANDLY: Well, I am going to make one
9 final point. Let's have a real conversation.
10 Give us some maps, let us react to those.

11 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
12 much. All right, next we have Anita Lapidus,
13 Anita Lapidus, followed by Sally Sherman. You
14 are recognized.

15 MS. LAPIDUS: Hi, I am Anita Lapidus.
16 Good evening, and thank you for coming. Most
17 of what I would say has been said. I agree
18 with the League of Women Voters. I even find
19 myself tonight agreeing with Ann McFall that
20 precincts shouldn't be subdivided into postage
21 size voting areas.

22 We need sensible solutions, common sense
23 approaches, contiguous districts, and we need
24 to see them in order to have trust in this
25 process.

1 You have heard a lot of angry people.
2 Well, I was one of the people who sat in a
3 theater and handed out the little petitions to
4 get this on the ballot, to have it voted for,
5 and I want to see that it means something, that
6 it means we can have truly fair elections.

7 I am sure that is what you want, too, but
8 things get pulled to one way or another. Stand
9 firm. Look for the honest fair election.
10 Thank you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
12 much, Ms. Lapidus, for your comments. Next,
13 Sally Sherman, followed by Heidi Herzberg,
14 Herzberg, I am sorry. Ms. Sherman, you are
15 recognized.

16 MS. SHERMAN: Thank you. Good evening,
17 Madam Chair and to our distinguished panel. I
18 would like to bring you greetings from the
19 Flagler County Board of County Commissioners,
20 chaired by our own Alan Peterson, Commissioner.

21 On July 6th, our Board of County
22 Commissioners met and they sent me here to
23 deliver a very simple message that is important
24 and has a lot of impact. We ask as you go
25 through the redistricting process, please keep

1 Flagler County whole.

2 We ask again, for the Senate seat, keep
3 Flagler County whole, include any other whole
4 county districts as needed to make your numeric
5 thresholds.

6 As it relates to the House seat, we are
7 going to ask, please keep Flagler County whole,
8 to the extent possible. We do recognize that
9 in order to meet our numbers a few years ago we
10 were included as a part of St. Johns and
11 Volusia County, but again we say, please keep
12 Flagler County whole. Thank you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
14 much for your comments. Very good. All right,
15 next, we have Heidi Herzberg, followed by
16 Dennis Bonilla. You are recognized.

17 MS. HERZBERG: Thank you, good evening,
18 ladies and gentlemen, first of all, as a
19 Representative and a Commissioner of the City
20 of Deltona, I would like to thank you for
21 providing all of us, the residents of Volusia
22 County, this opportunity to speak to you and to
23 see all of you in person. We appreciate your
24 coming here and your representation.

25 I speak to you as a resident of 25 years

1 of the City of Deltona. We are the largest
2 city in Volusia County. We are the second
3 largest city in central Florida. We have a
4 population of 85,000 people.

5 Currently we are experiencing the three
6 levels of redistricting that many of our cities
7 are, city redistricting, county redistricting
8 and state redistricting for which you are here
9 this evening.

10 With each level of redistricting our
11 citizens become more and more limited and
12 diluted as to what their role is and to what
13 representation they have. They have city
14 redistricting, then we have county
15 redistricting and now state.

16 In the City of Deltona we have two
17 Congressional seats, we have two State Senate
18 seats and we have four State House
19 Representative seats. Not one of our
20 Representatives, as you heard here before this
21 evening, lives in the city of Deltona. Some of
22 them live as far away as Jacksonville.

23 Our Representatives, as some of you are
24 you up here, do the best with the limitations
25 that they have. We understand that it is very,

1 very difficult when most of you have a small
2 section of Deltona and many of our residents do
3 not know which Representative represents their
4 part of Deltona.

5 This evening you have heard one out of
6 every five speakers that have come up here
7 mention the city of Deltona, and almost every
8 map that was presented to you by the gentleman
9 prior mentioned Deltona and the fracturing that
10 has occurred in our city.

11 This fracturing is very confusing for our
12 residents. And it encourages, unfortunately
13 encourages voter apathy as well as
14 disenchantment in our elected officials as it
15 is very difficult for the residents of Deltona
16 to know who their Representatives are and who
17 to contact.

18 I encourage you to consider the city of
19 Deltona as the largest city in the county, the
20 second largest city in central Florida when you
21 are providing your redistricting. I would
22 encourage you to look at the lines and see how
23 we are fractured.

24 We have 85,000 people. It is a huge voter
25 base for everyone. You have the opportunity to

1 make history. This challenge of redistricting
2 and the census comes along once every ten
3 years, and it is your wisdom as Representatives
4 and your responsibility as Representatives of
5 the citizens of the state of Florida to shape
6 the future of our state, and I encourage you to
7 do so, and please look at Volusia County and
8 please look at the city of Deltona and try to
9 pause our Representatives to have better
10 representation for the citizens in our county,
11 because we do have a large voter block and I
12 thank you again very much for allowing all of
13 us to be a part of this opportunity.

14 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you. Thank
15 you for your service, too. Next we have Dennis
16 Bonilla, followed by Nick Koval. Dennis, you
17 are recognized.

18 MR. BONILLA: Thank you. My name is
19 Dennis Bonilla, and I am a brown man, and --
20 but that is how it was described, but I like to
21 think of myself as off white.

22 Now, I have lived in Volusia County for 41
23 years and consider myself almost a southerner.
24 My main concern here this evening is that the
25 work that you have been charged with that has

1 been spoken to by the voters be done so that it
2 is completed in time for the 2012 election, and
3 that would mean my understanding is that you
4 get through with these sessions by
5 September 1st, and you have upped the time for
6 your regular meetings through January, and this
7 should be the first order of business.

8 I am a great believer in the Constitution
9 and I do not feel our courts, I support them
10 and respect them. I want the opportunity to
11 see the work that you are going to do and if I
12 don't agree with it, have the opportunity to
13 challenge in court and then have the court
14 decide between them in time for the next
15 election. Thank you very much.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
17 much for your comments. All right, next we
18 have Nick Koval and Amy -- I am sorry, Barry,
19 Barry Maquire. You are recognized.

20 MR. KIVAL: Good evening, ladies and
21 gentlemen, my name is Nick Koval. I live in
22 the city of Deberry.

23 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: A local elected
24 official.

25 MR. KOVAL: Thank you very much. There is

1 only a few things that I would like to comment
2 on, and I am listening here to all of these
3 folks give you ladies and gentlemen an idea
4 that we are here to try to re-enforce our duty
5 as citizens of Volusia County.

6 My suggestion, if anybody realizes or have
7 been involved in a redistricting plan, at best
8 it is a monumental task. My suggestion would
9 be to look at Volusia County and where at all
10 possible keep cities or municipalities or towns
11 intact, where possible.

12 Where that is not possible, use physical
13 feature boundaries so it doesn't confuse the
14 voters, and what I mean by physical feature
15 boundaries, streams, railroads, power lines and
16 major roads where possible. This way that
17 would set the lines of these alignments.

18 This way it gives the voters a clear idea
19 of where they are supposed to vote, who they
20 are supposed to vote for and give them a
21 general idea and understanding on what the
22 redistricting plan is.

23 Ladies and gentlemen, I know it is a
24 monumental task. I don't envy you, but one
25 that has been involved with the Census Bureaus

1 since 1970, and worked on redistricting plans
2 from where I originally came from, I know what
3 a difficult task it is, but I believe that if
4 you keep the population that is assigned to
5 each census tract within a municipality, within
6 a county, I think your job would be much easier
7 following those boundaries.

8 Thank you very much for listening to what
9 I have to say and my suggestions and I believe
10 that everybody here is all looking at the same
11 idea. Thanks very much, everybody.

12 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
13 much for your comments and for your service
14 also. All right, next we have Barry Maquire,
15 followed by Richard Gardner.

16 A VOICE: Barry Maquire waives his time.

17 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Waive, thank you
18 very much. Richard Gardner, followed by
19 William Ternent. Richard Gardner? There is
20 Richard.

21 MR. TERNENT: Hello, I am Bill Ternent.
22 As many other folks have said, thank you for
23 being here and thank you for what you are
24 doing.

25 My message will be short, just really in

1 two parts. Many of you I have met and talked
2 to you on other issues before, so I have been
3 out talking with a number of different groups
4 and suggesting that they do get involved in
5 this process, urging them to be here tonight
6 and to be in contact with you as it moves
7 forward.

8 The first part of that message is just
9 simply follow through on what it is the voters
10 have asked you to do. It is not that
11 complicated. I know that there is some
12 ambiguities in it, but they are not excessive,
13 and I know that you are strong enough and
14 courageous enough and thoughtful enough to
15 follow through on what it is that they have
16 asked.

17 The second thing that I have found though
18 in talking with folks in various settings, I
19 have encouraged them to go out and get on-line
20 and try to use the materials that are there so
21 that they could directly participate, and I
22 think that that is very good that you have
23 tried to reach out to encourage people to
24 participate, but what I am finding from most
25 people is that they say, those materials are

1 very, very difficult to use.

2 That the instructions that are out there
3 are not adequate for them to be able to do what
4 it is that they intended to do when they moved
5 out to that. So I would encourage you to have
6 whomever is in charge of that part of the
7 project to really take a very close look at it
8 and see what can be done in order to make those
9 materials more useful and that would allow more
10 people to give you their direct input in a
11 meaningful way. Thank you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
13 much, and for clarification, that was William
14 Ternent. I happen to know Bill, so, and Bill,
15 I will give you a number of a person where you
16 can talk to someone from staff to give you
17 clarification.

18 All right, next we have Richard Gardner.
19 He just preempted you while you were working
20 your way down.

21 MR. GARDNER: That is quite all right.

22 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you, you are
23 recognized.

24 MR. GARDNER: Thank you, Representative
25 Hukill. My name is Richard Gardner. I live in

1 Ormond-by-the-Sea, and I am a registered
2 Independent and I vote. And the slide behind
3 you says tell us your story, and my story
4 tonight is one of perception.

5 62.6 percent of the voters voted to sort
6 of change the rules or to change the game a
7 little bit on setting up districts and
8 redistricting, and I think it is imperative
9 that the Legislature follow that, follow that
10 lead, and the perception out there though is
11 something I think quite different.

12 The perception, whether it is \$30 million
13 in reserve or the \$900,000 that has already
14 been spent to try to overturn this, or the
15 organization is that some of you up there on
16 the stage belong to that have contributed to
17 the Diaz Balart and Brown lawsuit, it all goes
18 to the perception that the Legislature is
19 trying something nefarious to overturn 62.6
20 percent of the public that voted for it.

21 And given the fact that we also have a
22 Supreme Court decision, Citizens United, now we
23 don't even know who might be out there
24 distributing money to overturn what actually is
25 an overwhelming number of people that voted to

1 change this. So I would urge all of you, urge
2 to look inside, urge you to work hard. As
3 Senator Gaetz pointed out, it is your job to
4 draw those districts.

5 While you might say, might be a good
6 little game for us to play that, to play
7 Legislator for a day and draw those districts,
8 it is really going to come down to what you all
9 do.

10 Please do the right thing. There is going
11 to be people that are going to be watching. We
12 have confidence in our form of government and I
13 want to make sure that that confidence remains
14 and destroy those perceptions that are out
15 there. Thank you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you so much,
17 Mr. Gardner, for your comments. All right,
18 next we have Judy Reiker, followed by Jane
19 Mealy. Judy, are you here, is Commissioner
20 Reiker here? No, okay, Jane Mealy, followed by
21 David Buldautt. Jane Mealy? Okay. You are
22 recognized, thank you.

23 MS. MEALY: Thank you, I am Jane Mealy, I
24 am the Commissioner in City of Flagler Beach,
25 which is the jewel of the east coast for the

1 people from Daytona Beach not to be
2 competitive.

3 We are the only beach that is three miles
4 from 95, so come visit us. Flagler Beach is
5 about the size of Deltona, so I can well relate
6 to my colleagues from Deltona who complained
7 about being split up, and in no way do I mean
8 to say anything negative about Dr. Costello or
9 Representative Taylor or any of our others, but
10 we are divided up and it doesn't work well.

11 Flagler County is a very small county. We
12 have about 90,000 people. Flagler Beach only
13 has 5,500. I am represented by a person who
14 represents part of Putnam County, part of St.
15 Johns County and on up the beach.

16 I don't have very much in common with the
17 people from Ponte Vedra, and I feel like I have
18 more in common with the people in Daytona. I
19 would like to see, as Sally Sherman said before
20 representing the County Commission, that
21 Flagler be made whole or become whole.

22 We have five cities in Flagler County,
23 some very small, one very large by comparison.
24 We are working very hard to work together to
25 come up with solutions to our common problems.

1 Parts of Flagler County are agriculture.
2 Parts are typical suburb area, coming from New
3 York, that is, compare Palm Coast to. Flagler
4 Beach is very much a beach community. Bunnell
5 is more an industrial and agricultural area.

6 So we are very diverse. We are very
7 diverse in our population as well, but we are
8 working very hard. We meet quarterly, each of
9 the city governments, to try and find ways that
10 we can help each other.

11 If we had one set of government people
12 that we could turn to, it would work better and
13 I see Dr. Costello agreeing. So I am hoping
14 that when you do your redistricting that you
15 will keep things like that in mind for the
16 citizens of Flagler County, and others that are
17 similar to us.

18 We may be small, but we have a lot of
19 voters, too, and they do vote, I can tell you.
20 And our votes count just as much as the people
21 from the big cities. So please keep this in
22 mind. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
24 much for those comments and for your service.
25 Thank you. Next we have David Buldautt

1 followed by Carolyn Morgan. Mr. Buldautt, you
2 are recognized. Good evening.

3 MR. BULDAUTT: Chairman Hukill, members of
4 the Volusia voters, legislative delegation,
5 Senator Gaetz, thank you for coming here.

6 Thank you for hearing us, my name is Dave
7 Buldautt, a life long resident of Deland. As
8 far as redistricting goes, I like what we have
9 here, because I actually think having nine
10 people on our legislative delegation gives more
11 count to Volusia than it would be having only a
12 few.

13 I kind of like it. I don't feel like I am
14 a disenfranchised voter. I love Deland and I
15 live in District 26, Fred Costello is my State
16 Representative. I live in State Senate 7.
17 Evelyn Lynn is my State Senator, and I live in
18 Congressional District 7, John Mica has been my
19 Congressman since the day I turned 18 and
20 registered to vote, so I like my
21 Representatives. I like where I live. I don't
22 want to see it changed. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
24 much, Mr. Buldautt, for your comments. Next we
25 have Carolyn Morgan, followed by Leslie Parent.

1 You are recognized, Ms. Morgan.

2 MS. MORGAN: Thank you. I am from Flagler
3 County. I work in Clay County. I have to
4 admit that I attended the Clay County
5 delegation meeting and was quite surprised to
6 see so many of our Flagler County
7 Representatives all of the way up in Clay
8 County.

9 But I think that the compact districts are
10 essential to what we are doing. I think that
11 the confusion that so many of our voters have
12 as to who they represent, who represents, whom
13 we would contact in terms of any issue that is
14 before the Legislature, it is just really hard
15 to keep track of.

16 The districts are extruded. They are
17 strange looking, I think they need to be
18 compact. They do need to watch reasonable
19 boundaries, the kinds of boundaries that people
20 can relate to. I think it would make a better
21 representative situation.

22 I think the Legislature needs to stop
23 fighting the Amendment 5 and Amendment 6, and I
24 will, as a Flagler County person I would say
25 that Flagler needs to have -- to be made whole.

1 It is too small a county to be separated
2 and parsed out into different districts the way
3 it is. We already I know from working in
4 Flagler and now in Clay, that we are pulled to
5 the north by regional transportation issues.
6 We are pulled to the south by the District 5
7 designation that we are following for
8 transportation at DOT.

9 We have got a media market that is
10 Orlando. We have got representation that is
11 Jacksonville. We don't, if you are listening
12 to Bright House television, you haven't got a
13 clue what is happening in Jacksonville. Nobody
14 will tell you what is even happening in St.
15 Augustine.

16 We really need to be put in one place.
17 Flagler suffers so badly from being pulled
18 apart. Thank you very much.

19 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you so much
20 for your comments. Next we have Leslie Parent,
21 followed by Alan Peterson. Leslie? Leslie
22 Parent? Alan?

23 MR. PETERSON: Good evening, Madam
24 Chairman, Senator Thrasher, Representative
25 Costello, my name is Alan Peterson. I am

1 Chairman of the Flagler County Board of County
2 Commissioners.

3 I am here tonight to represent all 95,000
4 residents of Flagler County. You have heard
5 other people speak tonight. Please keep
6 Flagler whole. We are represented by two
7 Representatives currently and two Senators, but
8 the Senate Districts for example run 100 miles
9 from Duval down into Volusia County. It makes
10 no sense in today's environment.

11 So please, as others have spoken tonight
12 from Flagler County, please keep Flagler County
13 whole, give us one Senator, one Representative.
14 Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you,
16 Chairman, for your comments and for your
17 service. Now we have David Corcoran, David
18 Corcoran? Is Mr. Corcoran here?

19 MR. CORCORAN: Yes.

20 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: There you are.
21 Let me just say, there are certain people who
22 did not respond when I called their name. So
23 if they are here, Carl Persis, Mike Nolan,
24 Jerry Doty and Leslie Parent, we will get you
25 right after Mr. Corcoran, you are recognized.

1 MR. CORCORAN: Thank you very much,
2 Ms. Hukill, Senator Thrasher, members of this
3 Committee, and the citizens of Volusia and
4 Flagler and maybe Seminole County, wherever.

5 My name is David Corcoran. I live
6 occasionally in Daytona Beach, sometimes in
7 Orlando, and then sometimes I go to Phoenix,
8 Arizona area to work as a food service worker
9 during the fall football season.

10 So I have a lot of interest about the
11 redistricting and all of this stuff and
12 everything, and I know it is all part, you
13 know, the Constitution, you know, the census
14 every ten years it has to be done.

15 But let me give a little history lesson to
16 all of the people here, you know, in the good
17 old days they used to have the old good old boy
18 ways of politics. You know, they stack the
19 deck for however is in power.

20 Now, the Legislature, whether with the
21 Democrats or the Republicans and they are going
22 to make it all in favor of their, and maybe
23 give a little more for the minority candidate
24 districts, maybe here or there, but in these
25 days, now, I got to make one thing.

1 We know that the Republicans can throw the
2 cards for the next two years, we know Rick
3 Scott is the Governor and he was elected with
4 huge Tea Party support, that stands for tax,
5 enough already, and we know for a fact that in
6 2000 when George W. Bush was elected, that
7 Kathleen Harris had a large part with her dirty
8 old hands with the Secretary of state, and what
9 was her reward?

10 The Legislature, some of you guys went
11 out, made a special district in Sarasota just
12 for her, and to let the people know,
13 Representative Harris was so incompetent, she
14 got out real quick and got beat by Bill Nelson
15 a couple of years ago in a landslide.

16 To make it real short, ladies and
17 gentlemen, we know that everybody wants their
18 piece of the pie. Everybody knows they want
19 their little bit of the money coming from D. C.
20 and Tallahassee, so they can take care of their
21 little pet projects, but at the end of the day,
22 watch out for the lobbyists, watch out for the
23 attorneys, because if you go to Tallahassee
24 during the season, there is sometimes more
25 lobbyists and attorneys talking to all of you

1 guys that can fill the whole football stadium
2 at Doak Campbell Stadium when the Florida State
3 Seminoles play and that is about 90,000.

4 So a lots of eyes and ears. It is more
5 than we the people, sometimes follow the money.
6 Thank you very much.

7 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
8 much for your comments. All right, next Carl
9 Persis, is Carl here? Not here, okay, Mike
10 Nolan, Mike Nolan from New Smyrna Beach. Jerry
11 Doty, Jerry, from Daytona Beach? And Leslie
12 Parent? Who am I seeing? No, Leslie Parent
13 from Holly Hill.

14 All right, last call for those four. All
15 right, that concludes the list of those who
16 have already signed up who wish to speak. Yes,
17 sir.

18 MR. NICHOLSON: I had a card, John
19 Nicholson.

20 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Yes, we did, I
21 think. Come forward, yes. I am sorry.

22 MR. NICHOLSON: Not a problem.

23 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: All right, John
24 Nicholson.

25 MR. NICHOLSON: John Nicholson, Daytona

1 Beach. I have four people up there that
2 represent me and I don't know whether you are
3 here or not. I mean, I have neighbors up
4 there, Dwight (inaudible) lives across the
5 bridge from me, but I don't know whether he
6 represents me or not. I have Fred that lives
7 up the road on Ormond, but I don't know whether
8 I am in his district or not, because they
9 gerrymander Daytona Beach in such a fashion
10 that they think they are doing the right thing,
11 but it really ends up that I am confused, and I
12 can tell you, I go to one or two meetings so I
13 am familiar with how politics works.

14 If I am confused, you can imagine what the
15 rest of the community is confused. They will
16 ask me and I will say how in the heck do I
17 know. I have to look at my card to let me know
18 who is where and what.

19 So what I am asking you is there used to
20 be a dirty word called gerrymandering. It was
21 wrong back then, and now gerrymandering is
22 okay. When you gerrymander, and I understand
23 you can look us straight in the face and say
24 that Corrine Brown's district had nothing to do
25 with race.

1 I am sorry, when you say that to me, I
2 know you are lying, okay. It had everything to
3 do with race. The Supreme Court says you can't
4 do it. If you look at it with the fact that,
5 well, she can't get elected any other way, what
6 I am telling you, that in Daytona Beach we have
7 70 percent white voters and the previous Mayor,
8 we had 60 percent of our City Council was
9 black, all right.

10 We had a Commissioner from a 99 percent
11 white district was voted in. It can happen.
12 Things are changing. This is 2012. You are
13 looking at 2020. Things are changing. We have
14 to look at who the person is, and if they can't
15 be qualified to get elected on any other reason
16 then they shouldn't be there in the first
17 place.

18 So I am asking you, I know you think you
19 are doing us a good favor by dividing us up
20 into 10, 12, 15 districts, and having that many
21 Representatives, but we really don't. You only
22 get a small portion of their time.

23 If Evelyn was for Volusia County only we
24 could go to her and we could know that she
25 backed us, but when she represents God knows

1 how many other counties, then where does her
2 allegiance lie.

3 That is the same thing when all of you get
4 divided up, where does your allegiance lie. I
5 know you want to represent all of us in
6 Florida, but we are distinct communities. So I
7 ask you to try to keep whole the cities, first
8 of all, and the counties, second of all. Try
9 to keep the communities together. Thank you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
11 much for your comments. All right, we have
12 Charles Field. Mr. Field wants to speak. Yes.
13 You are recognized, Mr. Field. Thank you.

14 MR. FIELD: Thank you. When I came here
15 tonight, I didn't know whether I would have
16 anything relevant to say that my son, Rob, Rob
17 Field is, you know, very active in the
18 community.

19 I am a retired labor economist from
20 northern Virginia, worked in Washington, D. C.,
21 for 30 years. When I try to synthesize what
22 has been said here tonight, I have two
23 additional things that I would like to say that
24 I think are relevant.

25 Number one, I have traveled all over the

1 country for many, many years. In this county
2 there must be at least 15 independent cities
3 involved.

4 Some of them are contiguous, some of them
5 aren't, that the other thing is, and what has
6 been, you know, most of the people say that
7 cities, I mean, if a city can't stand on its
8 own, it should be combined with the city next
9 to it, that so we don't have a lot of
10 gerrymandering.

11 On the other hand, we do have a lot of
12 minorities in this -- in this county. Many of
13 them, most of them I guess are located in
14 Daytona Beach, but there has been, I have
15 noticed over the 11 years that I have been here
16 that the minorities is spreading out to other
17 cities within the county, that -- but I would
18 like to see both of these concepts recognized
19 in redistricting.

20 That -- so that -- so that minorities have
21 an equal chance of being or a larger chance of
22 being elected and also that the districts are
23 (inaudible) so that, and consolidated.

24 I live in south Daytona which has 13,000
25 residents. Thank goodness, we only, you know,

1 that we are not divided. I would hate to see
2 something like that happen. Thank you for
3 listening to me.

4 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
5 much for your comments, Mr. Field, and
6 Mr. Field, I am going to have a staff member
7 bring a card over to you. We don't have a card
8 from you. We have one from your son. So I
9 would appreciate it if you would fill that out.
10 Thank you very much.

11 All right, is there anyone else in the
12 audience who would like to speak? I have
13 called all of the cards and we have recalled
14 people who did not -- who left the room or had
15 to leave completely.

16 Anyone else who would like to speak?
17 Going once, going twice, no. I just want to
18 tell you, especially representing Volusia
19 County, how proud I am for the input.

20 You have just turned out in mass, in
21 numbers, with wonderful ideas and I am so
22 proud. We have actually some time left. So I
23 am going to see if there are members, House
24 members who would like to speak and Senate
25 members. I think we will start with the Senate

1 first.

2 Any Senators which to say anything, or
3 comment? Okay, there being none, all right,
4 House members?

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I think Senator Montford
6 has something.

7 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: I am sorry, go
8 ahead. You are recognized.

9 SENATOR MONTFORD: Thank you. This is the
10 first time I have taken the opportunity to
11 speak after a public hearing, but I felt moved
12 to do so, and if you may just bear with me just
13 for a moment.

14 My, I am a freshman. I may not look like
15 it, but I am a freshman among this group, but
16 my experience has been about 40 years in the
17 public school system, and two terms, two terms
18 as a County Commissioner, three terms elected
19 as School Superintendent, and I participated
20 over the 40 years in a lot of public hearings.

21 Public hearings about growth management
22 when we didn't have a Growth Management Act in
23 Florida, school rezonings, redistricting and
24 all of you have been through that, know how
25 tough that is, but I sat here tonight and this

1 is the ninth public hearing that I have
2 participated in with this group, especially
3 under the leadership of Senator Gaetz and
4 Representative Weatherford, and I am proud to
5 be a part of this process.

6 Going into this process when we began, I
7 anticipated and thought I would learn
8 something, and I have, but I have learned far,
9 far more than what I ever dreamed I would.

10 I thought I sort of knew it all, but from
11 Pensacola to Tallahassee, Ft. Walton Beach,
12 Panama City, Jacksonville, St. Augustine and,
13 where are we? I apologize, it has been a long
14 day.

15 This is the ninth one and I have learned
16 so much. So I want to say thank you. Every
17 time there has just been a different flavor and
18 what has been so important to us in this group
19 and I think I can speak for my colleagues, is
20 the sincerity and honesty with which we have
21 been granted the opportunity to learn from you,
22 but I also want to give, hopefully give you
23 some comfort.

24 And I am a Democrat, so I am -- I am one
25 the ones that asked to be on this Committee as

1 a freshman and was granted the opportunity, but
2 I, in all of my years I don't think I have
3 worked with a group of colleagues that have
4 been more dedicated and open to the process.

5 You talk about a transparent process.
6 This is transparent, but what goes even deeper
7 than that, and I have learned over these nine
8 public hearings and working with my colleagues
9 here how genuinely sincere they are in what I
10 call growing up, doing what is right.

11 Now, we all are not going to agree. I
12 don't think any of us will probably agree with
13 exactly what we come out with, but I can go to
14 sleep on tonight and when we finish the
15 process, I will know that I worked with some
16 colleagues that really honestly did it right,
17 and I have got, I have a lot of experience in
18 that.

19 Again, we may not all happy with the
20 process. I may not be happy with it, I mean
21 with the results, but I promise you, you can
22 sleep tonight knowing that these
23 Representatives and Senators will do what is
24 right in their heart and I honestly believe
25 that, and I promise you, I wouldn't say that if

1 I didn't believe it.

2 So thank you for the opportunity to say a
3 few. This is the first time I have done this.
4 Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you so much,
6 Senator, for your comments. Thank you.
7 Representative Taylor.

8 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Thank you, Volusia
9 and Flagler for showing up tonight. It is
10 important that you did come out and you shared
11 your story. You have made me be envy of the
12 Legislature because I know all of my members
13 here are jealous that I have got the number one
14 group of people who have come out in support
15 and shared their stories.

16 So thank you for coming out. Thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you very
18 much, Representative Taylor. Representative
19 Costello.

20 REPRESENTATIVE COSTELLO: Thank you very
21 much for coming out. I want to thank Senator
22 Montford for his comments, because I echo that.
23 This is an outstanding group of people. I
24 mentioned that up front.

25 I just want to tell you and I know we are

1 not to get specific, Deltona, I represent, I
2 love it, I love them, I am honored to represent
3 them. They want one Representative.

4 Deberry, I represent part of Deberry. I
5 am honored to represent them, they want one
6 Representative. Deland, I am honored to
7 represent part of them, they want one
8 Representative. Ormond Beach, I represent part
9 of Ormond Beach. I am honored, I was Mayor
10 there for eight years, they want one
11 Representative.

12 Flagler County, I am honored to represent
13 part of Flagler County. They want one
14 Representative. Whatever I end up
15 representing, I am honored to represent you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Very good. Thank
17 you, Representative Costello. Next we have
18 Representative Baxley.

19 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thank you,
20 Chairman. First of all, I wanted to thank all
21 three of our fine Chairmen for the leadership
22 that we have had, the decorum with which these
23 meetings have been conducted for us to hear
24 things that we needed to hear, and I am very
25 grateful.

1 I hope many of you will come join this
2 fine crew as they get near my home at The
3 Villages tomorrow, a very different environment
4 and also in Gainesville tomorrow night. So you
5 come and travel with us, but thank you and for
6 the freedom that we have felt as members to
7 participate.

8 No one has ever told me that I shouldn't
9 say something, but I believe that this is,
10 there is a time to listen and there is a time
11 to speak, and for the bulk of these hearings it
12 has been a great time for us to listen. Thank
13 you, Chairman.

14 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you,
15 Representative Baxley, so much, for your
16 comments.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Madam Chair?

18 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Yes, Chairman.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, and
20 thanks to all of you who have hung with us.
21 There are other things that you could have done
22 tonight that probably would have been even more
23 entertaining.

24 Let me just say as the Senate Chair of the
25 Reapportionment Committee, that this has been

1 extraordinarily helpful to me.

2 I think there is somebody who has been
3 traveling with us from hearing to hearing who
4 made the comment tonight that this was window
5 dressing, but yet it is her third hearing that
6 she has been to.

7 I can tell you that I took eight pages of
8 notes earlier today. I took four pages of
9 notes tonight. There are things that I have
10 learned from your testimony about -- about the
11 east and west Volusia County, about Deltona,
12 about the way that you look at your communities
13 that we couldn't have learned if we would have
14 sat in Tallahassee in an echo chamber and drew
15 some maps and said, well, here they are.

16 It is much better it seems to me, that we
17 should listen first and then make a proposal or
18 a series of proposals, and I want to emphasize
19 that any member of this committee can offer a
20 map at any time today, tomorrow, tonight.

21 Any member of the Legislature who is not
22 on this committee can offer a proposed map any
23 time they want to. Any member of this
24 audience, any special interest group who is
25 represented here tonight or who wasn't

1 represented here tonight can propose a map at
2 any time.

3 They will all be made public and we will
4 all have a chance to comment on them before any
5 votes are taken. So this isn't your last time
6 to participate. This is your first time to
7 participate in what we believe will be an open
8 process.

9 Someone mentioned earlier tonight that
10 Florida hasn't had the most, you know, perfect
11 record as far as elections are concerned. That
12 is true, but ten years ago when these maps were
13 drawn, by the way, I should say hardly anybody
14 in the Legislature was there ten years ago.

15 So I, for example, ran in a district that
16 somebody else drew, and that is the case with
17 all or most everybody on this stage. We didn't
18 create the districts we are running in. We are
19 running in districts that somebody else drew.

20 But I would tell you this, that the
21 redistricting process that Florida has used has
22 been honored nationally for being open and
23 transparent and this is more open and
24 interactive with the public than any in the
25 country.

1 There is a reason that some states have
2 finished earlier, and that is because they had
3 some people who went in a back room, drew some
4 maps, came out, voted, that was it. That was
5 Illinois.

6 There are other states that vote in off
7 years, like Louisiana and others, and they got
8 their census information before we did and they
9 were able to act before we did. We were one of
10 the last states to get our census data from the
11 Bureau of the Census, not the last, but one of
12 the last, and as soon as we got the census
13 information, the demographics information upon
14 which redistricting is based, it was
15 immediately put on the website so that the
16 people of Florida could see all of the
17 information that we would see, and then we
18 placed the software that we will use to draw
19 the maps on our websites so that you could look
20 at that software and we are delighted that
21 Mr. Hoyt tonight offered up his maps.

22 We had maps that have been offered in the
23 last two days. We have had three Senate maps
24 that have been proposed. We have had two
25 Congressional maps that have been proposed. We

1 have had a House map that was proposed by
2 Mr. Hoyt, as well as the Senate and the
3 Congressional map, and if you go on the
4 websites you will see that there are plenty of
5 maps to react to, and it is not that it is
6 going to be some official map that will be
7 drawn by some member of this committee.

8 Any member of this committee or member of
9 the Legislature or you can propose a map at any
10 time, but before any votes are taken those maps
11 will be publicly available and you will have a
12 chance to see them and you will have a chance
13 to react to them.

14 Let me mention a couple of other things,
15 Madam Chair. There was someone who said
16 tonight, and I wrote it down because I so wish
17 it were true. He said this is not a
18 complicated process, there are some
19 ambiguities.

20 Well, I wrote that next to all of the
21 specific requirements and recommendations that
22 people made for what ought to determine a
23 district line, and here they are.

24 Natural geographic boundaries, geological
25 boundaries, strategic economic driver

1 boundaries, county lines, city lines, racial
2 and ethnic minorities, contiguous lines,
3 communities of interest, streams, roads,
4 railroads, power lines.

5 Now, it would be hard to draw maps that
6 would make everyone happy using all of those
7 indicators, so I wish it were simple. I wish
8 everyone could agree, but if you have the
9 perspective tonight to listen as we did, and it
10 was such a great gift to listen to all of you,
11 gosh, we had people in this room who disagreed
12 strongly with each other.

13 We will have people on this committee,
14 Democrats and Republicans, House members and
15 Senators who will disagree with each other.
16 This Representative democracy stuff, it is a
17 little bit messy.

18 It probably would be easier if we had a
19 group of people who just said, here are the
20 maps, take them or leave them, if you don't
21 like it, sue us, but that is not the way we
22 have chosen to operate.

23 So we look forward to the interactive
24 process, and if the gentleman, the letter
25 carrier who came forward, I will tell you, that

1 was Americana when he said I want a chance to
2 see everything, and if I don't like it, I want
3 a chance to take my case to court, and that
4 opportunity will be there, too, because
5 anything we draw has to be submitted for
6 judicial review and anything that is drawn and
7 voted on, it can be submitted as well to the
8 courts under a legal case that any member of
9 the public wants to bring forward or any
10 special interest group wants to bring forward.

11 Finally, Madam Chair, I would just say
12 this. So many people said tonight, you know,
13 you just need to abide by Amendments 5 and 6,
14 quit fighting them.

15 Just a couple of notes. First, I hope we
16 have, I don't know where it got in the blood
17 stream that there was \$30 million in the House
18 and what was the number, eight or \$9 million in
19 the Senate dedicated to fighting Amendments 5
20 and 6. I don't know how it got in the blood
21 stream, but if I had a quarter for every rumor
22 that we heard in Tallahassee we wouldn't have
23 had a \$3.8 billion budget deficit last year.

24 I will just tell you this. It was the
25 House and Senate that submitted Amendments 5

1 and 6 for pre-clearance to the Department of
2 Justice. We submitted them through
3 pre-clearance, we made the arguments through
4 our lawyers that we paid with your money that
5 Amendments 5 and 6 would comply with the Voting
6 Rights Act and ought to be carried forward.

7 We submitted them and they were
8 pre-cleared. We took an oath to preserve and
9 protect and defend the Constitution of the
10 United States and of the State of Florida,
11 Democrats, Republicans, House and Senate
12 members, you know, that is in the Constitution.
13 We are going to follow our oath.

14 And finally I would just say this. You
15 will have a chance to see whether the final
16 products and it may not be one product, it may
17 be several options that are laid before the
18 Legislature and the courts, are faithful to
19 what you believe Amendments 5 and 6 were
20 intended to do, and if you don't like it you
21 will have the opportunity to stand up in public
22 and say you don't like it, and if you are part
23 of a group or even if you are an individual you
24 will have the opportunity to challenge it
25 politically and challenge it legally.

1 That also the way the process is supposed
2 to work. So thank you for helping us take the
3 first step toward a conversation that we
4 believe will end in plenty of time.

5 We don't plan to drag our feet a bit. We
6 are bound by the Constitution in terms of the
7 timeline, we can't vote until January. If the
8 fair districts people thought that it was wrong
9 and we should vote sooner, maybe they should
10 have included it in their Constitutional
11 amendments. They didn't.

12 So we can't vote until January, but by
13 golly, you will see plans, you will already, if
14 you go on the websites now, you will see plans
15 that are already available that people are
16 already debating and discussing and you will
17 have the opportunity to see those just as we
18 will.

19 So thank you, Representative Hukill, for
20 doing a good job chairing our meeting tonight.
21 Thank you, Senator Lynn and Senator Thrasher
22 for having us in your district. Thank you all
23 for being here, and God bless you. This is
24 what it is all about.

25 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Thank you. Thank

1 you very much, Senator. I want to thank
2 Senator Gaetz's Chair and Chairman Weatherford
3 for the way they have conducted these meetings.

4 The committee will be moving on tomorrow
5 to two more meetings in different cities. Just
6 for you in the audience, I want to thank you
7 the most for your contributions, your comments.
8 This is truly representative democracy at its
9 best.

10 If you spoke and have more to say you want
11 to add, you can do a written extension of your
12 remarks on-line. If you did not speak and wish
13 to submit comments on-line, you can.

14 I do want to say that all of the records
15 from today's meeting, video, pod cast,
16 transcripts will be available in the coming
17 days via the Senate and House Redistricting
18 websites.

19 Please continue to follow us so we can
20 participate together to draw the lines that
21 will define our community and how we are
22 represented in Washington and Tallahassee in
23 the days and weeks to come.

24 Thank you once again, Volusia.

25 (Whereupon, the proceedings were

1 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 144 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 20th day of September, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2011
FLAGLER COLLEGE (AUDITORIUM)
ST. AUGUSTINE, 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 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much. The
3 Joint Senate House Redistricting hearing here
4 in St. Augustine is called to order. We want
5 to thank our friends at Flagler College for
6 allowing us to use this outstanding facility.

7 Typically when we have meetings like this
8 we are in a much more intimate relationship
9 with the audience. I feel as though we have a
10 football field and a half between us and you,
11 and that is not the way we like it.

12 Usually we like to be where you can see
13 the whites of our eyes, but this is a beautiful
14 facility and we are extraordinarily grateful to
15 the folks at Flagler for making it available to
16 us.

17 Thank you all for being here, especially
18 the members of the public who have come to
19 share their comments and their recommendations
20 to help shape Congressional Senate and House
21 Districts for the next decade here in our
22 state.

23 My name is Senator Don Gaetz and along
24 with my colleague immediately to the left, the
25 Speaker Designate of the Florida House of

1 Representatives, Will Weatherford, I will be
2 chairing today's hearing which is webcast
3 statewide by the Florida Channel over the
4 Internet.

5 Our sole purpose today is to hear from the
6 public about how you believe the legal
7 standards governing redistricting ought to be
8 applied in your community and in your part of
9 Florida so that you are represented in
10 Washington and Tallahassee fairly, equitably
11 and sensibly.

12 Our procedures for today's hearing are
13 simple, but important. First, it is important
14 that you sign in so that we with can create an
15 accurate public record of all of who attended
16 and all who spoke, and also you may wish to
17 join our e-mail list so that we can keep you
18 informed about how the redistricting process is
19 working and moving forward.

20 If you have not signed in, please raise
21 your hand. If you haven't signed in and a
22 member of our staff will find you with a sign
23 in card. If you wish to speak today, but you
24 have not yet filled out a speaker card, please
25 raise your hand and we will get you a card so

1 that you can be called on in order and we won't
2 miss the benefit of your testimony.

3 It is the same attendance card, whether
4 you wish to speak or simply listen and record
5 your attendance.

6 Before we begin, the Chair recognizes
7 Speaker Designate Weatherford to explain how
8 today's hearing fits into the redistricting
9 process. Mr. Speaker.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
11 Chairman Gaetz, ladies and gentlemen, thank you
12 for being here and taking the time to share
13 with us your thoughts.

14 Every ten years the Legislature is
15 required by the Constitution to redistrict the
16 state based on increases and decreases in the
17 movements that are within our population.

18 Because Florida has grown so significantly
19 over the last ten years we are moved up from 25
20 Congressional Seats to 27 Congressional Seats.

21 Because some parts of our state have
22 increased or decreased disproportionately in
23 population, many Senate and House Districts
24 will change either adding or losing population.

25 When redistricting is completed,

1 Congressional Districts must be equal in
2 population and contain 696,345 people. The 40
3 Senate Districts must also be nearly equal and
4 contain about 470,000 people, and our 120 House
5 Districts must also be nearly equal at about
6 156,700 people.

7 We have displays at the very front of the
8 auditorium that show the current boundaries of
9 districts in this area of the state and the
10 number of persons which must be added or
11 subtracted from the current districts to
12 achieve equal population.

13 Equality of representation is not the
14 legal requirement redistricting plans must
15 meet. The laws and important court cases
16 governing redistricting are explained in detail
17 on both the House and the Senate websites.

18 Those websites are listed on the 2012
19 Redistricting brochure that was available to
20 you when you came in. Our Redistricting 2012
21 brochure summarizes Federal and State laws and
22 outlines topics we hope you will discuss here
23 at today's hearing.

24 If you did not get a copy when you came
25 in, they are available on the tables outside

1 the meeting and our staff would be happy to get
2 you a copy if you would just raise your hand.

3 The brochure also lists House and Senate
4 websites. The websites are packed with
5 information about redistricting in Florida,
6 including explanation of laws and important
7 court cases governing redistricting.

8 The two websites are complimentary and are
9 updated frequently. If you visit the two -- it
10 is a great way for you to stay current about
11 your new Congressional, new State Senate or new
12 House Districts as they are taking shape.

13 The websites also deliver to you at your
14 fingertips all of the demographic information
15 that will be used in drawing districts, and at
16 the end the exact same computer programmers,
17 programs that us as Legislators use to draw
18 districts within the state of Florida.

19 Any member of the public can participate
20 in building plans or seeing maps submitted by
21 Legislators or other citizens.

22 Before or during the hearing, Senate and
23 House professional staff are available to show
24 anyone the steps into getting on-line, building
25 districts and submitting a plan to us as the

1 Legislature in the weeks to come.

2 Recommendations from citizens and groups
3 of citizens will be made publicly available
4 immediately. In fact, just as of yesterday we
5 had four plans submitted before this committee,
6 three Congressional plans and one Senate plan
7 all during our hearing.

8 The submission of these proposed maps that
9 makes sense for your community is the single
10 most effective way that you can participate in
11 the redistricting process.

12 The redistricting schedule under which we
13 are operating is imposed by the State
14 Constitution. The Constitution does not allow
15 the Legislature to act on state maps before the
16 second year after the census.

17 In other words, 2012. I am going to say
18 that again. The Constitution does not permit
19 the Legislature to act on any state legislative
20 a maps before the second year after the census
21 which would be 2012.

22 We accelerated this process as much as we
23 possibly could by moving our session up from
24 what normally starts in March, to early
25 January. It has been suggested that the

1 Legislature should draw maps first and then ask
2 the public for comment.

3 We believe that that puts the answer ahead
4 of the question. There should be no
5 preconceptions created by politicians, but
6 rather public testimony that is free and
7 unrestricted from you.

8 In fact, a principle author of Florida's
9 new redistricting standards and the
10 Chairperson, the Florida Fair Districts dot
11 org, actually came and spoke before a committee
12 in Tallahassee and specifically told us that
13 she thought you could not draw any districts in
14 the state of Florida until you got public
15 testimony from people just like you and we
16 agree with her wholeheartedly.

17 Our intent is to use these recommendations
18 that have come from our 26 public hearings and
19 through our Internet sites and all of the other
20 ways that we are gathering information and to
21 use those to draw the maps for the state of
22 Florida.

23 Throughout the process we will solicit
24 additional public input so that proposed maps
25 can mature with public involvement all before

1 the Legislature approves them in 2012.

2 Whatever the Legislature passes, then it
3 is submitted for judicial review to ensure that
4 the final plans meet every single legal
5 requirement.

6 Because our purpose today is to hear from
7 you, all of the time between now and 11:00
8 will be used to ensure that every member of the
9 public who is here and who wishes to speak has
10 enough time to tell us their thoughts.

11 If after every citizen has had his or her
12 say and there is time remaining before the
13 scheduled adjournment, any member of this
14 committee may make a statement, may offer an
15 observation and, of course, any member of this
16 committee or any person here could submit a
17 plan or a map to this committee.

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

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
22 Mr. Speaker. We will adjourn promptly at
23 10:00 this morning in order to move down the
24 road to our next hearing. There are a good
25 number of individuals, we are very grateful, a

1 large number of individuals who have signed up
2 to speak.

3 If there is anybody else who wishes to
4 speak during the course of the hearing, just
5 raise your hand if you came in late and we will
6 have somebody get to you with a speaker card so
7 that we can call on you.

8 And to ensure that we all have time to
9 speak, I want to take the prerogative of the
10 Chair and ask that everyone try to limit your
11 comments to about three minutes.

12 That way we can make sure that the last
13 person who is on the agenda, the last member of
14 the public has as much opportunity to speak as
15 the first person.

16 Before we begin, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to
17 ask if we could allow the members of the panel
18 to introduce themselves, just briefly indicate
19 what part of the state they come from. That
20 way the audience knows who they are talking to
21 and where they come from. If we could start
22 with Senator Lynn, please, John.

23 SENATOR LYNN: Good morning, all, thank
24 you for being here. I am Senator Evelyn Lynn.
25 I represent Volusia, Clay, Marion and Putnam

1 Counties in District 7.

2 SENATOR DEAN: Good morning, my name is
3 Charlie Dean, I am a Senator from District 3.
4 I represent all or part of 13 counties from
5 Baker County to Leon County, down to 98 and 19,
6 the Citrus and Hernando County line.

7 REPRESENTATIVE SCHENCK: Rob Schenck,
8 Hernando County.

9 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good morning, John
10 Patrick Julien, representing House District
11 104, which is basically northeastern Miami Dade
12 County. It is a pleasure to be here, and thank
13 you all for coming out.

14 REPRESENTATIVE KIAR: Hi, everybody, my
15 name is Martin Kiar. I am the State
16 Representative for House District 97, which is
17 solely within Broward County. Thank you so
18 much for coming today.

19 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good morning,
20 Mack Bernard, District 84, West Palm Beach,
21 Florida.

22 REPRESENTATIVE DRAKE: Brad Drake, Fifth
23 House District, panhandle.

24 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: Good morning, Tom
25 Goodson, District 29, House of Representatives

1 which is from Mims, Florida, to the St. Lucie
2 County line. Thank you.

3 SENATOR HAYS: Good morning, I am Alan
4 Hays, a State Senator for District 20 which
5 encompasses parts of Volusia County, Seminole
6 County, Lake County, Sumter County and Marion
7 County.

8 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good morning,
9 Representative Chuck Chestnut, House District
10 23, a portion of Marion County and a portion of
11 Alachua County.

12 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good morning, state
13 Representative Gwyndolen Clarke-Reed, House
14 District 92, northeast Broward County.

15 SENATOR MONTFORD: Good morning, I am Bill
16 Montford, I am State Senator from District 6,
17 which is Tallahassee and the surrounding ten
18 counties.

19 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Good morning, I am
20 Janet Adkins, representing House District 12,
21 which is Nassau, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Union
22 and a bit of Duval counties.

23 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good morning,
24 Hazelle Rogers, representing District 94,
25 Broward County, a population of 1.8 million and

1 very, very diverse. Thank you. Good morning.

2 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Good morning, State
3 Representative Peter Nehr, representing
4 Pinellas and Pasco County.

5 SENATOR THRASHER: Good morning, and first
6 of all, welcome to St. Johns County to all of
7 my colleagues. I am Senator John Thrasher from
8 District 8. I represent parts of Nassau,
9 Duval, St. Johns, Flagler and Volusia Counties.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thanks for the
11 home team, right, Senator. Great to be in your
12 district. I am Dennis Baxley from Florida
13 House District 24, that is Ocala, Marion
14 County. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: Good morning, I am
16 Ed Hooper, representing, a Representative from
17 District 50, part of Pinellas County.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEINSTEIN: Good morning, I
19 am Mike Weinstein, House District 19,
20 representing parts of Duval, Clay and St. Johns
21 County.

22 REPRESENTATIVE McBURNEY: Charles
23 McBurney, District 16, from Jacksonville.

24 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Good morning,
25 Matt Caldwell, District 73 down in southwest

1 Florida, Lee County.

2 REPRESENTATIVE JONES: Good morning, State
3 Representative Mia Jones from Jacksonville,
4 north and west.

5 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: Representative Clay
6 Ford, Pensacola, the Florida's other oldest
7 city.

8 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Good morning,
9 Dorothy Hukill, representing Volusia County,
10 District 28.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Good morning,
12 Kathleen Passidomo, Collier County. I
13 represent the city of Naples, Marco Island,
14 Everglades City and a lot of the Everglades.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Good morning, I am
16 Representative Jim Boyd. I am in District 68,
17 which is the south side of Tampa Bay, Manatee
18 County.

19 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Good morning, I am
20 Jim Frishe, from Pinellas County. I represent
21 the beaches in Pinellas County, it is a tough
22 duty.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You may wonder why we
24 have joint hearings, House and Senate together.
25 It is because when Senators make statements,

1 then the House can correct them. I have
2 already made a misstatement.

3 We are happy to be here until 11:00 this
4 morning. I wish we could stay all day, I love
5 St. Augustine. But we will be here until 11:00
6 or as long as there is public testimony to be
7 heard or comments or observations or proposals
8 by members of this Committee.

9 Here is how we will proceed today. I am
10 going to call two names at a time. That way
11 you know you are next, you are on deck. So if
12 you could be ready, that way we could have
13 limited time between speakers.

14 We are going to start with Gloria LeBlanc,
15 representing the St. Augustine Coffee Party and
16 our next speaker will be Sandra Parks, with the
17 Stetson Kennedy Foundation.

18 So we will start with Gloria LeBlanc.
19 Ms. LeBlanc, thank you very much for being with
20 us this morning. I am sorry that you are so
21 far away from us, but we are delighted to have
22 you here and look forward to your testimony.
23 You are recognized.

24 MS. LEBLANC: Thank you, can you hear me?

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Yes, ma'am, but you may

1 want to speak directly into the mike so that
2 everybody here can hear you.

3 MS. LEBLANC: Good morning, my name is
4 Gloria LeBlanc. I have been a resident of
5 Florida since 1970, and a resident of St.
6 Augustine for most of those years.

7 I am also the coordinator of the St.
8 Augustine Chapter of the National Coffee Party.
9 The Coffee Party is a transportation partisan
10 grassroots democracy movement which seeks to
11 empower citizens in the political process.

12 Our goal is an informed and involved
13 electorate that takes seriously the
14 responsibilities of citizenship, not only for
15 the purpose of winning elections, but to ensure
16 effective and just governance on behalf of we,
17 the people, and not on behalf of special
18 interests.

19 Gerrymandering of voting districts is an
20 assault on our democratic form of government,
21 and an insult to the voters of the state. I am
22 requesting that fair districts be created, not
23 only according to the letter of the law, but
24 according to the spirit of the law.

25 I am deeply concerned about the need to

1 speed up redistricting timelines. I, and also
2 I think we need to provide preliminary maps to
3 encourage meaningful discussion and feedback.

4 I strongly urge you to provide maps for
5 just consideration now so that there can be
6 sufficient time for thoughtful examination and
7 consensus building as well as the speeding up
8 of the current timeline.

9 The most important consideration in
10 creating the new districts should be a focus on
11 ensuring that the individual vote of each
12 citizen within a district counts. With that in
13 mind, districts should not be power blocks of
14 political, racial, economic, rural, urban or
15 other group interests.

16 I am asking you to set up districts in a
17 way that preserve as much as possible the one
18 person, one vote I deal for each district. As
19 we try to achieve consensus as to what is truly
20 a fair district, we would do well to consider
21 the guiding principles of our founding fathers
22 as outlined in the preamble to the
23 Constitution.

24 The preamble begins, "We, the people of
25 the United States", it does not say, we, a

1 select constituency group or special interest
2 group. It continues, "in order to form a more
3 perfect union", it does not say in order to
4 create imbalance, division and polarization
5 among groups and parties, or in order to form
6 power monopolies in voting districts.

7 To establish justice, gerrymandering is a
8 clear violation of justice that, in effect,
9 disenfranchises large segments of our
10 population.

11 Finally, creating truly fair districts
12 according to the spirit of the law is indeed a
13 challenging task. I would ask this committee
14 to keep in mind a long term vision as you
15 create the new maps.

16 Consider how the districts you set up now
17 will lead to a more perfect union in the years
18 to come. It is high time to end the
19 polarization that is infecting our politics and
20 our culture.

21 Please protect the power of one person,
22 one vote so that the form of democracy
23 envisioned by our founding fathers is restored
24 and preserved for future generations.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. LeBlanc,

1 very, very good testimony. And next Sandra
2 Parks from the Stetson Kennedy Foundation, and
3 then following Ms. Parks, Stetson Kennedy from
4 the Stetson Kennedy Foundation.

5 Sandra Parks, you are recognized. Thank
6 you very, very much for being here.

7 MS. PARKS: And thank you for this
8 opportunity and I know that there is going to
9 be a greater peace in the family if I invite my
10 husband, Stetson Kennedy, to speak first.

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: It is ladies first here,
12 but you are allowed to yield to your husband.
13 Mr. Kennedy, you are recognized.

14 MR. KENNEDY: Mr. Chairman, members of the
15 Commission, thank you for this opportunity to
16 be heard. My name is Stetson Kennedy, I reside
17 at Beluthalatchee Park, 1523 State Road 13, in
18 Fruit Cove, Florida.

19 I am here this morning primarily to say a
20 few words in behalf of the sanctity of the
21 referendum as an institution of higher
22 democracy.

23 At age 94, you can imagine how many
24 redistrictings I have lived through here in the
25 state of Florida. It is something of a Florida

1 and American history book.

2 I have -- I am painfully aware of the
3 historic fact that the Democratic Party for not
4 only decades, but generations, a century even,
5 was able to use redistricting in addition to
6 the poll tax and the white primary as a means
7 of manipulating the vote and the outcome of the
8 vote in many of the southern states.

9 These things went hand in hand. The poll
10 tax affecting whites as well as blacks,
11 cumulative in many states. The white primary,
12 it was a common custom to simply change the
13 location of the voting booth on the night
14 before the election and tell only the white
15 folks where the new location would be.

16 So that I born and witnessed all manner of
17 things under the heading of redistricting.
18 When I think of the word my first thought is of
19 that great Republican, Abraham Lincoln, who
20 said all of the people, by the people, for the
21 people will not perish from the earth, and I,
22 standing here in the year 2011, and continue to
23 share that concern.

24 Back in those days, as I said, the poll
25 tax, white primary, white supremacy and white

1 rule and enforced racial segregation,
2 residential segregation all went hand in hand.
3 They were all cornerstones in a political
4 edifice. The KKK and the FBI were quite right
5 in regarding me and thousands of other
6 southerners, Americans, of being subversive of
7 that system.

8 We were just as subversive a white rule as
9 we could be, and I am proud of the fact and
10 proud and very happy that I have lived this
11 long to see as many changes as we have, even
12 including my hometown of Jacksonville which we
13 often said would be the last place on earth --

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And Mr. Kennedy, I
15 apologize. We have a large number of people
16 signed up behind you to speak and even
17 Mr. Lincoln kept it to less than five minutes
18 at Gettysburg.

19 So we thank you very, very much for your
20 testimony, and Ms. Parks, you are recognized to
21 speak, and thank you, Mr. Kennedy.

22 MS. PARKS: I come forward -- I come
23 forward this morning to suggest two principles
24 for redrawing districts that are bold, that are
25 rare and that are difficult.

1 The first is that the demographics of the
2 people that you represent should be the primary
3 consideration in how the districts are drawn.

4 I am asking you to put principle above
5 both personality and party, to assure that as
6 much as possible the people of St. Johns County
7 are well represented.

8 We have, this county of a little under
9 200,000 people, we have three Senators and
10 three Representatives. This means that we the
11 people have a very difficult time knowing who
12 to go to when we have issues we care about or
13 measures that we need to have addressed.

14 I would recommend this morning that as
15 much as possible that St. Johns County remain
16 intact within any redistricting plan and that
17 we be coupled whenever possible with our
18 neighbors to the south in Flagler County
19 because our issues are very similar.

20 Julington creek and Ponda Vedra are not
21 south Jacksonville. These are families who
22 have invested heavily in their tax dollars to
23 produce the finest school system in the state
24 of Florida, and we expect our Representatives
25 to protect that investment.

1 We have more in common with our neighbors
2 to the south in Flagler County because we share
3 beach issues. We share large farming
4 communities that need to be represented
5 somewhere in the body of politic in
6 Tallahassee.

7 We represent -- we share growth issues.
8 Our concerns are different from Duval County.
9 If district lines have to be drawn for the
10 proper numbers, we urge you to move them south
11 into Volusia County, keeping as much as
12 possible the integrity of the farm issues that
13 so many of our families pull to be important.

14 The second principle that I ask you to
15 consider as you are drawing redistricts is to
16 be sure that these districts are compact enough
17 that we know you and you know us.

18 While Senator Thrasher and his staff are
19 as conscientious as anyone could be in trying
20 to know and be known by the people that they
21 represent, when his district stretches from
22 Georgia to Volusia County, along a narrow
23 stretch of land, it is very difficult for him
24 to know us and for us to know him, inform him
25 of our needs and hold him responsible for what

1 we in our county need.

2 So I ask you as you draw these districts
3 to please consider the primary criterion, not
4 party, not self, but the people that you serve.
5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
7 Ms. Parks, we appreciate your testimony. Next
8 we will have, and I apologize for not giving
9 you a heads up, Edwin Dupont, Edwin Dupont
10 would be next, followed by Benetta Standly with
11 the American Civil Liberties Union.

12 Mr. Dupont, if you are here, we would be
13 delighted to hear from you, and you are
14 recognized before the Committee, and
15 Ms. Standly, if you would be on deck, please.

16 MR. DUPONT: Thank you very each, and I
17 would like to go, I would prefer to go by Ed,
18 if you don't mind.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Yes, sir.

20 MR. DUPONT: Again, I am Ed Dupont and I
21 am a life long resident of St. Johns County and
22 I now reside in Pandra Vedra Beach. I would
23 like to thank the Committee for the service you
24 are doing to the state and to us for taking
25 time, not to rush into these decisions and put

1 in the effort you are doing right now.

2 I know you are sitting through a lot of
3 hearings and I know it is pretty tedious
4 because you are hearing a lot of the same
5 ideas, but it is appreciated.

6 Last November, Amendment 5 was passed by
7 the majority of voters by actually a margin of
8 almost, well, actually over three to two.
9 Amendment 5 reads something like this.

10 "Congressional districts or districting
11 plans may not be drawn to favor or disfavor an
12 incumbent or political party. Districts shall
13 not be drawn to deny racial or language
14 minorities the equal opportunity to participate
15 in the political process and elect
16 representatives of their own choice."

17 "Districts must be contiguous, unless
18 otherwise required, districts must be compact,
19 as equal in population as feasible and where
20 feasible, must make use of existing city,
21 county and geographical boundaries."

22 I don't want to lecture here, but, because
23 you know this better than me, but contiguous
24 means all parts must be attached. It does not
25 mean, and it does not mean by artificial means.

1 It must, compactness is -- has to do with
2 shape, a reasonable shape. You know, you could
3 say you have your basic circle and square or
4 even a rectangle, triangle or an oval, if the
5 proportions are not too extreme.

6 Equal in population as feasible basically
7 means one person, one vote, as feasible, as
8 feasible, and, of course, feasible might be up
9 to interpretation, and that is where you folks
10 come in.

11 And one more thing I would like to say,
12 whatever you do, if you must, you must if at
13 all possible keep this out of the courts. They
14 could abridge the will of the voters and delays
15 will reap havoc upon the next upcoming
16 elections. Thank you for your time.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Dupont,
18 thanks, Ed, an Ms. Standly, with the ACLU is
19 next, and following Ms. Standly, Robert Veit.

20 Ms. Standly, thank you for being here, it
21 is good to see you, you are sort of traveling
22 with us from place to place and we are
23 delighted to have you here today.

24 MS. STANDLY: Absolutely. It is my job to
25 hold you accountable and I am happy to do it.

1 So good morning, my name is Benetta
2 Standly. I am with the American Civil
3 Liberties Union and I want to welcome members
4 of the Florida Legislature to the nation's
5 oldest city.

6 I direct the northeast Florida office for
7 the ACLU, and as you know, I testified
8 yesterday in Jacksonville and I will testify in
9 any corner of my region to represent voters who
10 passed Amendments 5 and 6 who could not be
11 here, who are disenfranchised or simply don't
12 have the courage to speak up and share their
13 voice.

14 As I mentioned yesterday, I need to
15 correct some misinformation. People are
16 stating that Amendments 5 and 6 will harm the
17 Federal Voting Rights Act.

18 That is absolutely not true. Amendments 5
19 and 6 actually added minority voting rights
20 protections into the Florida Constitution for
21 the first time. It adds to the provision of
22 the Federal Voting Rights Act.

23 You guys know this already. What we need
24 from you is to tell us how many majority
25 minority districts exist in Florida, where they

1 are located and how your map which you are
2 responsible for drawing, not me, how your map
3 will protect them.

4 You all have a legal obligation to make
5 sure that the minority voters in Florida have
6 the opportunity to elect their candidates of
7 their choosing.

8 Secondly, the new rules of drawing these
9 legislative boundaries have been overwhelmingly
10 approved by nearly 63 percent of Floridians,
11 and it said that no political party would be
12 favored.

13 We need you to follow those rules.
14 Actually, I am disappointed that you guys have
15 continued to oppose and fight these new rules
16 by entering into or intervening into
17 litigation.

18 Third, the political party in charge has
19 been known to draw maps that will likely favor
20 themselves. That is absolutely problematic. I
21 hope that you guys don't do that.

22 The entire purpose of Amendments 5 and 6
23 were for voters to choose their politicians,
24 not the other way around. This is supposed to
25 be a fair and nonpartisan process. We didn't

1 want fake public hearings where you guys are
2 not giving us feedback, we are not producing
3 map. We don't want any insider back room
4 deals. We want this to be a fully transparent
5 and informative process.

6 The ACLU strongly advises you to please
7 stop spending taxpayer dollars on lawyers and
8 lawsuits. Just simply draw fair maps. If you
9 draw good and fair maps perhaps there will be
10 no further lawsuits.

11 Five, quite frankly, and we talked about
12 this yesterday. Where are the maps? It is
13 your job to draw the maps, not mine. You
14 cannot have a really meaningful public
15 discussion when you invite the public here and
16 you have nothing for us to comment upon.

17 You have had the census information for
18 several months now. You need to present a map
19 to us. People, as you know, people are trying
20 to run for office. They need to figure out
21 what district they are in.

22 They need to start campaigning. The
23 sooner we can get that done, the better for all
24 of us. Thank you so much.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you. It is good to

1 see you again, Ms. Standly. Next is Robert
2 Veit and following Mr. Veit we will have Susan
3 Godby.

4 Mr. Veit, thank you for being here this
5 morning, and you are recognized.

6 MR. VEIT: Thank you very much, my name is
7 Bob Veit pronounced but that is okay.

8 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Is it Veit, sir?

9 MR. VEIT: That is right.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I apologize for
11 mispronouncing your name.

12 MR. VEIT: No problem, everybody has done
13 it all my life.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You should see what they
15 do to mine.

16 MR. VEIT: Just as an aside, I happened to
17 be an elected state assemblyman in New Jersey
18 during the redistricting based upon the 1970.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Your seat is right up
20 there at the end, sir.

21 MR. VEIT: 1970 census, and we were
22 essentially given a map that was carved out by
23 the leadership and the Congressional
24 delegation. So I applaud you for what you are
25 doing and going and listening to the public for

1 what they have to say prior to drawing up a
2 map.

3 A map will be useful in the future, but at
4 this point I applaud for what you are doing.
5 And I guess my only concern -- excuse me. My
6 only concern in the -- what will be considered
7 is the implementation of the racial and
8 language minority protections.

9 And in reading the 14th Amendment which is
10 overriding our Constitution it -- it is moot on
11 how you draw your districts, except that it
12 requires equal protection under the law.

13 So when you are drawing your districts, if
14 you are protecting one group against another,
15 that -- the one that is not protected is
16 certainly not getting equal, equal protection.
17 So I ask you to consider that in your
18 deliberations. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very, very much
20 for your testimony, sir. And next is Susan
21 Godby, and then following Ms. Godby is Gail
22 Wadsworth, the Flagler County Clerk.

23 Ms. Godby, you are recognized. Thank you
24 for coming this morning.

25 MS. GODBY: Thank you very much. I am

1 with the St. Augustine Tea Party, the Molasses
2 Junction Tea Party and the Putnam County Tea
3 Party and I am sorry, I forgot to put that on
4 there.

5 I have been in Florida for 18 years and I
6 live in St. Johns County. District 19, I am
7 just going to give some figures, District 19
8 and 20 must shrink. District 18 is slightly
9 over population, and District 21 is under
10 population.

11 What we would like to see is that District
12 21 come down to the St. Johns County line, then
13 go all of the way down to Flagler County.
14 There is a lot of interests in tourism and they
15 have a lot of things in common.

16 Then we like to see 19 to come below 295,
17 and in the St. Johns County, and then it also
18 crosses Julington Creek area, we would like to
19 see that backed up.

20 We have three boundaries which is the
21 Atlantic ocean, St. Johns River and then I-95.
22 So we would like to see those changes made.
23 The Mandrian and Julington Creek areas have a
24 lot of things that are in common and if you
25 would coordinate those areas, that way it does

1 need to shrink in that area. That is all I
2 have to say. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, thank you,
4 Ms. Godby, very helpful testimony. And next is
5 Gail Wadsworth, the Flagler County Clerk, and
6 behind Ms. Wadsworth will be Henry Lange.

7 Ms. Wadsworth, thank you for your service
8 to the people of Flagler County and we are
9 delighted to have you here today.

10 MS. WADSWORTH: Thank you, and thank you
11 for coming today. What you are doing isn't
12 easy. For a little history's sake, I was born
13 in Florida. I am one of those rare people, I
14 am an eighth generation Floridian.

15 And years ago in 1965, I was a teenager
16 working for my dad in the House during that
17 crazy reapportionment period when small
18 counties lost their House members.

19 However, we gained an alliance with St.
20 Johns County, and we were well represented then
21 by Charlie Eucena and later Gus Craig, and not
22 so long ago, Doug Wilds and today, Dr. Proctor,
23 and today, John Thrasher, but before him there
24 was Senator Polk.

25 I knew all of those people, and I cherish

1 the knowledge of those people and the
2 similarities between Flagler County and St.
3 Johns County. I know Flagler County hasn't
4 grown enough even since the last census to have
5 its own, but walking around Flagler County and
6 talking to people, all I hear is, we want to be
7 together, and, of course, we want to have our
8 own.

9 We are not large enough yet. So like
10 Ms. Parks, I would love to hear you say you are
11 going to scoop Flagler County up, keep its
12 wonderful relationship with St. Johns County,
13 understand its demographics, its agriculture,
14 its silviculture and its beautiful beaches in
15 the Hammock where we do have some wealthy
16 people, keep us whole.

17 More importantly, we want to be kept
18 whole, and more importantly to me, I like our
19 history with St. Johns County and would like
20 for you to keep us there, and that is really
21 all I have to say. Thank you so much.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you so much. We
23 appreciate your testimony. Henry Lange is
24 next, and then John Webber is on deck.

25 Mr. Lange, we are grateful you took time

1 to come here this morning, and you are
2 recognized.

3 MR. LANGE: Yes. Good morning, and thank
4 you very much, members of the Committee, for
5 having us here.

6 My name is Henry Lange and I live in St.
7 Augustine, been a resident for 12 years. Prior
8 to that I was an executive with an
9 international high tech company and of all
10 places, Orlando.

11 And I am representing four members of my
12 family because at this early hour on a working
13 day prevents them from taking the morning off
14 from work to represent them.

15 Further, please recognize that this venue
16 here at the college requires those of us who
17 are here to pay for parking, when if it was
18 held in the St. Augustine regular offices, free
19 parking would be available.

20 This is an additional unnecessary burden
21 placed on the citizens of St. Augustine. You
22 didn't do this in Jacksonville.

23 The citizens of Florida last year with an
24 overwhelming 62 to 63 percent vote, voted for
25 the election districts to be -- to be

1 redistricted in a fair, compact, unambiguous
2 and continuous manner.

3 If you will look at the map of District 7
4 it is appalling, it is the most screwed up
5 arrangement, ranges the southern end down in
6 Longwood and area ranging all of the way to the
7 northern part of St. Johns County, is 135 miles
8 long.

9 I have a map of this district. You also
10 have one, I realize in front of us here. This
11 is not what the citizens of the state of
12 Florida want in the future.

13 More of the same is probably shown
14 elsewhere in Florida. We have so much of this,
15 we have had too much of this and this election
16 last year stated why we want it changed.

17 The legislation has a mandate. Waiting
18 like they are does not indicate that there are
19 -- may indicate that there are back room
20 arrangements that have been made or in the
21 works in spite of what you have said.

22 What are we to take from the delays of
23 showing us maps? You already know what you
24 have in mind. We need these maps now to be
25 able to take advantage of where we will be

1 called upon. Some of us may have to change
2 districts. Some of us may want to run for
3 political office.

4 We need to know in advance what these maps
5 will be. The Legislature needs to provide all
6 of the citizens a date certain when these maps
7 will be available for us to examine.

8 Please act in a responsible manner,
9 provide us with these maps before the months
10 that you are required by law so that we can
11 ascertain what our position would be like and
12 how we will act in the future. Thank you very
13 much for your time.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you so much, Mr.
15 Lange. Our next speaker is John Webber, Mr.
16 Webber, representing the St. Johns Democratic
17 Executive Committee.

18 MR. WEBBER: Well, I am not exactly
19 representing them. I have a membership with
20 them.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I am sorry, that is what
22 you had written down.

23 MR. WEBBER: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And following, excuse me,
25 Mr. Webber, following Mr. Webber will be Vicky

1 Oakes, so if you could be on deck, Ms. Oakes.

2 Mr. Webber, you are recognized. Thank you.

3 MR. WEBBER: Okay, I have lived in the St.
4 Augustine area since 1987, and I just mention
5 that, and I worked in all parts of St. Johns
6 County and I have also worked in Flagler County
7 at times.

8 The one recommendation I would make for
9 the State House is that one seat come out of
10 St. Johns County which has more than enough
11 people for a State House member, and if Flagler
12 County likes to be a part of St. Johns County
13 in with its population in the State House, then
14 I would have no problem with that.

15 We should be able to come up with one
16 House seat that has nothing but St. Johns
17 County residents in it.

18 Now, there are approximately three State
19 Senators, a ratio of three to two when you are
20 dealing with Congress. Now, you come very
21 close to the population for two members of
22 Congress when you combine Nassau, Duval, Clay
23 and St. Johns counties.

24 You might have to add a small population
25 like Baker or Putnam County to get the two

1 Congressional seats.

2 Now, that, you should be able to come up
3 with a minority responsive Congressional seat
4 out of that area in the second one, without
5 running afoul of any kind of minority denial or
6 rights or anything like that, and you should be
7 able to come up with three State Senators out
8 of that same area. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
10 We appreciate your being here, and Ms. Oakes
11 represents the Supervisor of Elections Office
12 in St. Augustine, and following her is Chris,
13 and I believe it is Ranung, R-a-n-o-n-g, if I
14 understand it correctly, representing the AITSI
15 Local 477.

16 So Ms. Oakes, thank you for being here,
17 and we are delighted to have somebody from the
18 Supervisors' Office to give us good guidance
19 this morning.

20 MS. OAKES: Thank you, and good morning,
21 Ms. Haliburton, the Supervisor, sends you her
22 greetings and her regrets that she could not
23 make it to the meeting today.

24 However, I would like to speak on behalf
25 of our election officials. We are entrusted

1 with conducting fair and impartial elections,
2 our voters expect no less.

3 It is very important for us as election
4 officials that you stick to a specific timeline
5 with the redistricting process. If the
6 Legislature, the Attorney General, Supreme
7 Court, Justice Department, all complete your
8 work on schedule as election officials we have
9 less than two weeks to adjust the records of
10 11 million Florida voters before the first
11 absentee ballots are scheduled to go in the
12 mail.

13 You see, when your work ends, our work
14 begins. Time for us is critical. We need time
15 to efficiently and effectively prepare for the
16 elections in order to be ready for our
17 August 12th primary election.

18 We have to redraw precinct lines,
19 establish new polling places, gain approval
20 from our local Board of County Commissioners
21 and our own public hearings. We also have to
22 verify the information is correct.

23 As local election officials we not only
24 deal with Congressional, Senate and House
25 lines, we also deal with County Commission,

1 School Board, municipal, special districts and
2 community development district lines.

3 It is critical in the election process
4 that we have time to make sure our information
5 and all of these lines are perfect. There is
6 no room for error.

7 We also must notify all of our registered
8 voters in advance of their new district lines,
9 through new precinct lines and their new
10 polling places in order to have our voters
11 prepared and ready for the election.

12 As you know, candidate qualifying occurs
13 the first week of June. From then our
14 tabulation systems must be programmed. Our
15 ballots laid out, proofed, printed, and
16 absentee ballots prepared and ready to mail 45
17 days prior to the election.

18 The first absentees that are mailed go to
19 our military and overseas voters. It is
20 Federal and State law that they be mailed 45
21 days before the election. That date is
22 June 30th.

23 Let's not disappoint our absentee voters,
24 our military overseas voters who are fighting
25 for our freedom.

1 Secondly, please respect communities when
2 drawing your district lines. Compact districts
3 are the best, including the lines for the
4 counties. While there is much attention to
5 Florida's meandering districts right here in
6 St. Johns County, in the city of St. Augustine,
7 we have a perfect example.

8 The city of St. Augustine has 9,000
9 registered voters. They are currently divided
10 into two Senate and two House Districts. This
11 happens too much of the time. Communities need
12 to be kept intact.

13 This year working with your legislative
14 staff we have had unprecedented opportunities
15 to establish voting tabulation districts.
16 These keep communities together. They keep our
17 cities together and we request that you please
18 adhere to these lines whenever possible.

19 It is in the best interest of the voters,
20 and same neighborhoods that have things in
21 common, to have the same Representatives, have
22 the same candidates on their ballots and be
23 able to vote on the same issues.

24 We all know that 2012, will be a very busy
25 election year and it will be a challenging one.

1 I do believe we share a common goal of wanting
2 Florida to have not just successful but
3 outstanding elections as we know the world
4 would be watching.

5 Thank you for the opportunity to speak,
6 and for having these meetings.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very, very
8 much. Excellent advice, and now, I apologize,
9 Chris, how do you pronounce your last name?

10 MR. RANUNG: It is Chris Ranung, and thank
11 you, Senator.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 representing Local 477, and we are glad you are
14 here, and you are recognized.

15 MR. RANUNG: Thank you very much. I hope
16 I am close enough to this. Can you hear me?
17 Thanks.

18 Yes, I live in St. Augustine. I am Chris
19 Ranung. Like everybody in this room, I deeply
20 care about and love Florida, and, yes, I am
21 from organized labor. We are somewhat of a
22 minority --

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Sir, I apologize, so that
24 everyone can hear your testimony, could you
25 speak up just a little more?

1 MR. RANUNG: How is that?

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: That is great. Thank
3 you. Thank you.

4 MR. RANUNG: Okay, good. I am from
5 organized labor. We are a bit of a minority in
6 this state, but that is okay. Some of my
7 points of view may not jive with yours, but
8 that is okay. I have the freedom to speak with
9 you any time. I have exercised that freedom
10 and I appreciate that you are here and giving
11 us all an opportunity to speak.

12 I am very aware that I am standing in
13 front of a mostly Republican panel. I may
14 wonder why Democrats are a minority majority in
15 this state, but that is all part of why we are
16 here this morning.

17 I know some of you well enough to respect
18 you very much. I know some of you well enough
19 to be wary of you. I don't know some of you
20 yet, but I intend to.

21 Some of you know that I go to Tallahassee
22 quite a lot. I still trust the fact that
23 ultimately we work together for the common
24 good. So there is much I would like to say but
25 probably the most important thing is this.

1 Our country, or democracy is always and
2 only at its finest when diversity is allowed a
3 clear and strong voice. The diversity between
4 those of us who are wealthy and those who
5 struggle, the diversity of religion over race,
6 that of sex, gender, age, political opinion,
7 philosophy, on and on, all of this is our
8 country speaking, and we need to allow it to
9 speak.

10 Your redistricting must respect and
11 incorporate this diversity because it gives our
12 democracy its strength. So we the people are
13 trusting you to protect the voice of diversity.
14 That is your job.

15 The purpose of redistricting is not to
16 preserve a veto proof majority for the next ten
17 years. It is to let the people speak, and I am
18 confident going forward that we all share this
19 very fundamental goal. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, sir, very good
21 testimony. Next is William O'Malley, and
22 behind Mr. O'Malley is, I believe it is
23 Patricia, and I apologize, ma'am, I am sure it
24 is my eyes. I think it is Patricia Gill,
25 representing the League of Women Voters, living

1 at 218 B Street here in St. Augustine. You are
2 on deck, but Mr. O'Malley, you are next.

3 We will give you all of the time you need,
4 sir. While Mr. O'Malley is coming to the
5 microphone I want to thank those who have been
6 respectful of those speakers behind them who
7 want to speak and have stuck to our three
8 minute time limit. That way all of the members
9 of the public will have a chance to share their
10 opinions.

11 Mr. O'Malley, we are grateful you took
12 time to come this morning and you are
13 recognized.

14 MR. O'MALLEY: Well, you didn't give me a
15 little warning. That is why it took me so
16 long. I live in north St. Johns County and in
17 looking at the population maps I see that there
18 is a possibility we may lose our Congressman.

19 I am going to echo a lot of the things
20 previous speakers have said. I, too, would
21 like to see a tentative redistricting map some
22 time ahead of time so that we could have some
23 more input as we are today.

24 I am also obviously in St. Johns County,
25 and I agree with the lady that said, St. Johns

1 County has a fine school system, health system,
2 we would like to keep it that way, and we hope
3 you will respect our county lines, et cetera,
4 and I want to thank you for your patience.

5 I have been watching the videos and you
6 folks show a lot of patience. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
8 We appreciate it, and Ms. Patricia, I
9 apologize, it is my bad eyes, I am sure I
10 couldn't read your last name. Could you please
11 tell us your last name, ma'am?

12 MS. GILL: My name is Patricia Gill,
13 G-i-l-l.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Gill,
15 representing the League of Women Voters and you
16 are recognized.

17 MS. GILL: Thank you. There are three
18 areas of concern to the public that I would
19 like to discuss today at these public hearings.

20 Redistricting timeline which has been
21 mentioned by a number of people and certainly
22 the concern by our Supervisor of Elections'
23 Office into doing something about this
24 timeline, which is just crazy.

25 Taxpayer money to oppose the Fair District

1 Amendments and the gag order for the
2 Legislature on these issues.

3 Last night I participated in the ceremony
4 swearing in two new police officers in St.
5 Augustine Beach. Part of the ceremony these
6 new officers swore allegiance to defend the
7 Constitution of the State of Florida.

8 That is what I am here today, is to ask
9 you to defend the Constitution of the State of
10 Florida and the will of the people, as
11 63 percent of the voters approved Amendment 5
12 and 6.

13 The two Amendments outline standards for
14 establishing Congressional District boundaries
15 after the census of 2010. The current timeline
16 established by the Legislature is calculated to
17 protect incumbents by delaying finalization the
18 Congressional and Legislative districts, until
19 almost time for the election, which is
20 June 8th, sorry, the qualifying, which is
21 June 8th.

22 Legislative session begins January, and
23 the decisions will not be made until March. It
24 is submitted that we could delay finalization
25 of the qualifying. This timeline does not

1 allow for the public to provide adequate input,
2 confines the public since people will, or
3 potential candidates to express their opinion
4 to the people and unfairly benefits incumbents.
5 We do see the amount of time for potential
6 challenges to have a campaign.

7 Despite the clear will of the Florida
8 voters who approved the Fair District
9 Amendments in 2010, the Legislature is using
10 taxpayer dollars to fight the new standards at
11 every stage.

12 The Florida Legislature has taken
13 extraordinary steps using taxpayer money to
14 avoid having to follow the Fair District rules.

15 It is a party to two suits to keep
16 measures off the ballot after spending more
17 than 1 million in legal fees to find fault with
18 the Fair District Amendments, both Houses
19 approved a competing amendment which was
20 ultimately thrown out by the courts as
21 misleading.

22 Now the House of Representatives is using
23 more money, money to sue the State of Florida,
24 to stop implementation of reforms. Florida
25 taxpayers are paying large sums for lawyers to

1 represent both the Plaintiff and the Defendant
2 in this particular lawsuit while we are having
3 trouble with schools and so many other issues
4 as far as costs are concerned in the state.

5 Finally, lift the gag order you have
6 placed on Legislators for the hearings. You
7 have indicated that Legislators should not make
8 public statements about redistricting, least
9 they betray and tend to engage in political
10 favoritism.

11 You have recently written to your members
12 forbidding them to speak at the upcoming
13 hearings. We are hopeful that such intent to
14 draw districts to favor incumbent or parties
15 does not exist.

16 However, in order to remain silent creates
17 an impression that there is some, something to
18 hide. We urge you to reconsider the gag order
19 and encourage the productive give and take at
20 each of the hearings. This will give voter
21 confidence that the representation intended to
22 fully comply with the new redistricting
23 standards.

24 And I am asking you, please, to move that
25 timeline up so that we can get our election

1 moving, and there is no reason you can't do
2 that.

3 Now, you did say this morning in your
4 introduction that you can't do anything for two
5 years after the -- after the redistricting, but
6 you can do, you can do potential maps and we
7 need those maps right now, at least potential
8 maps and you have had a number of suggestions
9 at your hearings. Thank you very much.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
11 Ms. Gill. Ms. Gill, it is possible that you
12 weren't here at the very beginning or maybe you
13 were, but I don't know if you have had a chance
14 to observe the web casts of the other hearings.

15 I am not sure where the gag order came
16 from, but I don't think you could keep all of
17 these people quiet. At every single hearing
18 from the very beginning in Tallahassee, until
19 the hearing yesterday, we have had members
20 speak.

21 What we are trying to do though is to make
22 sure that everybody in the public has a chance
23 to speak first, and then we give members a
24 chance to speak.

25 So thanks a lot for your comments and the

1 Speaker Designate will -- is also taking notes
2 so that we can respond to a couple of the
3 factual issues that have been raised today, not
4 to be argumentative with anybody.

5 Everybody is entitled to their opinion,
6 but everybody is not entitled to their own set
7 of facts, and the Speaker Designate will remark
8 to that at the end of the hearing, if there is
9 time, giving everybody a chance to speak.

10 Next we will hear from Mary Lou Woods and
11 follow is Ms. Woods, from Gina Burrell.

12 Ms. Woods, if you are here, we would love
13 to hear from you this morning. And Ms. Burrell
14 would be next, and following Ms. Burrell will
15 be Denise Caldewood, I believe, Denise
16 Caldewood, who also represents the League of
17 Women Voters.

18 Ms. Woods, thank you for being here. You
19 are recognized.

20 MS. WOODS: Thank you. My name is Mary
21 Lou Woods and I live in the same community as
22 that of John Thrasher, so we are on the same
23 page.

24 Right now it seems like the system is so
25 flawed. Instead of the voters choosing the

1 politicians, the politicians are literally
2 choosing the voters.

3 This is done by pre-determinating
4 districts whether it represents Republicans or
5 Democrats, so that they can get who they want
6 to vote for them.

7 Now, for example, Corrine Brown and John
8 Mica, one is a democrat, one is a Republican.
9 Corrine Brown lives in Jacksonville, yet she
10 represents all of the way down there in a part
11 of Orlando.

12 How are we supposed to know who is
13 representing us? And then you have John Mica
14 who drives over 100 miles every day to get to
15 his office in St. Augustine. This is not fair
16 representation.

17 We are trying to fix things here. More
18 than three million people in this state voted
19 to end gerrymandering last year and we
20 supported the Fair District Amendments to the
21 Constitution. That is more than 60 percent of
22 the voters demand that the future districts be
23 drawn upon compact geographical sense rather
24 than party affiliation.

25 It would be a very good day for democracy

1 when all is done fairly. However, I doubt very
2 seriously that Corrine Brown or Dean Cannon
3 will ever want that day to pass, because both
4 of them benefit from gerrymandering, and they
5 are trying to -- well, the Fair Districting
6 votes then in a falling outrageous thing our
7 Speaker Dean Cannon has decided the State
8 Legislature should join the lawsuit and spend
9 our money trying to overturn the vote that we
10 just passed.

11 This is still America, right? Think about
12 the park for a moment. If a dictator or
13 someone, some other third world leader spent
14 the public's money trying to overturn its own
15 vote, we as Americans would be appalled, but
16 yet business as usual in the state of Florida.

17 What I am asking seriously is I come from
18 New York, I have lived in Florida for several
19 years now. Let's be fair. Let's make it
20 compact so that we can all work together for a
21 better Florida. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Woods,
23 very helpful. Ms. Burrell, you are next, and
24 following Ms. Burrell will be Denise, I believe
25 it is Caldewood, with the League of Women

1 Voters.

2 Ms. Burrell, thank you so much for being
3 here, you are recognized.

4 MS. BURRELL: Thank you for being here.
5 My name is Gina Burrell, I live in the city of
6 St. Augustine. I have been here in the city
7 for 17 years and the state of Florida for 47.

8 When a group of us were asking St. Johns
9 voters to sign our petitions in support of
10 Amendments 5 and 6 redistricting, we had
11 Republicans and Democrats do so. We got a few
12 hundred petitions signed. They considered it a
13 fairness issue.

14 Neither political party should be in
15 complete control. In November 2010, Amendments
16 5 and 6 passed overwhelmingly with 63 percent
17 of the vote statewide.

18 Now in the Florida Constitution these
19 amendments prohibit political favoritism,
20 requires that districts be compact, continuous
21 and follow city or county lines where feasible.
22 Amendments 5 and 6 will stop the gerrymandering
23 and the splitting up of a city.

24 For example, here in St. Augustine Senate
25 District 8, Precinct 507, which has many black

1 voters is removed from District 8.

2 Florida House District 18 comes into St.
3 Augustine to May Street, Florida House District
4 20 continues from May Street south to the rest
5 of St. Augustine. This breaks up Precinct 503
6 and is confusing for voters.

7 On May 31st, 2011, U.S. Justice
8 Department, the civil rights section voting
9 rights, approved these two amendments for
10 preclearance stating they don't discriminate
11 against minorities.

12 Why does it have to take the Florida
13 Legislature so long to get redistricting done?
14 Many other states, including Alabama, Arkansas,
15 Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana,
16 Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada,
17 Oklahoma, have already completed or almost
18 completed their redistricting.

19 We hope this will get done as much faster
20 than you have said it. Thanks a lot.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you so much. And
22 Ms. Burrell, you have raised a good question
23 which the Speaker Designate will remark to at
24 the end, and that is why Florida is later than
25 some other states in redistricting. Excellent

1 question.

2 Denise, is it Caldewood or Caldewell?

3 MS. CALDEWOOD: How about Caldewood.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Caldewood, and after
5 Ms. Caldewood, who represents the League of
6 Women Voters, we will have Annette Ackerman, if
7 you could be on deck.

8 Ms. Caldewood, thanks for taking time to
9 come today, and you are recognized.

10 MS. CALDEWOOD: Thank you very much, I
11 appreciate it. And it is the Flagler County
12 League of Women Voters.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And, ma'am, I apologize,
14 so that we can all hear your testimony, could
15 you speak directly into the microphone, maybe
16 someone could help you there to make sure you
17 got the mike right by your face.

18 MS. CALDEWOOD: Okay, thank you very much,
19 how about now?

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, much better.

21 MS. CALDEWOOD: Okay, perfect. And it is
22 important to say that it is Flagler County and
23 I agree with the previous speaker. The
24 Legislature's timeline for drawing districts
25 has been unfair to Florida voters.

1 The Legislature plans to pass out the
2 district maps at the end of the 2012 session on
3 March 9th, expectedly, which means Florida maps
4 will be approved later than most every other
5 state in the nation.

6 That only gives us three months after that
7 to actually examine it and look at it, so that
8 becomes a question, and according to that
9 timeline the maps will not be finalized and
10 approved before qualifying closes on June 8th,
11 and that may not be finalized until even after
12 August, if everything goes well as planned
13 issues and that is, you know, a very short
14 timeline.

15 The House's own redistricting attorney,
16 Miguel De Grandy, has predicted that this
17 timeline will cause massive voter confusion.
18 Challengers or new candidates will have little
19 if any time to mount campaigns and voters will
20 be voting for candidates they have little
21 opportunity to get to know.

22 So why won't the Legislature prepare the
23 maps earlier, debate them in the fall, and pass
24 them the first week of the session, doubling
25 the time for the litigation and preclearance,

1 and it gives the appearance that the late maps
2 may help incumbents, you know, and this can be
3 construed as an incumbent protection plan, and
4 that is concerning.

5 The Florida Legislature should also not be
6 spending taxpayer money to oppose fair
7 districts. Currently the Legislature has spent
8 over \$1 million of taxpayer money hiring
9 lawyers to fight fair districts.

10 It helped -- it fought the approval of the
11 Amendments for the ballot in 2008, which the
12 Supreme Court ruled for fair districts anyway.
13 It held more than 30 hours of committee
14 meetings in 2009 and '10, to try to find fault
15 with the Amendments, and they tried to take a
16 second attempt at fixing the issue, arguing in
17 court that the Amendments should be stricken
18 from the ballot.

19 The Supreme Court also rejected that
20 argument. And it has tried to confuse voters
21 by placing Amendment 7 on the ballot with
22 misleading language and the Supreme Court
23 struck Amendment 7 from the ballot.

24 It even Representatives of the district
25 have sued the state, itself, and the

1 Legislature is using taxpayer money to attack
2 and invalidate a provision of our State
3 Constitution that was supported by 63 percent
4 of the voters. So it appears that the
5 Legislatures aren't even listening to Florida
6 voters.

7 It appears that the politicians feel free
8 to spend outrageous sums to protect their seats
9 while leaving the people of Florida
10 unprotected. We feel that the Legislature
11 should be working to uphold the Constitution,
12 not spending our money to protect their own
13 interest at the expense of the provision placed
14 there by almost two-thirds of the electorate
15 last November.

16 And then the other question is, where are
17 the maps? Other states have had hearings so
18 far in order to allow citizens the opportunity
19 to comment on the maps and we haven't seen
20 them, you know, so the comment, is where is the
21 beef, where is the maps?

22 Have Legislatures drawn the maps yet, and,
23 if so, why are they not showing them to us.
24 When will they show them to us, and if the maps
25 haven't been drawn yet, why not. We have GIS

1 systems that can produce them very easily
2 without input and without paying for
3 consultants, you know, so, you know, these
4 sessions are important, it is great to be
5 listened to, everybody wants to be listened to,
6 but they are just that.

7 It gives you the opportunity to listen to
8 us, but we need the time to actually, you know,
9 propose good input on the maps with good
10 information, and you can use Palm Coast as an
11 example.

12 They just went through their own city
13 redistricting and they actually, you know,
14 redistricted a candidate who was actually
15 already approved by the, you know, the -- yes,
16 was approved to run and they actually voted him
17 out of the process, the redistricting process
18 and he threatened a lawsuit to actually put
19 himself back on.

20 So that is an example of how this can
21 happen for the future. So please don't let
22 that happen to this state. Thank you very
23 much.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
25 Ms. Caldewood, and you as well have raised some

1 interesting factual points which the Speaker
2 Designate and other members of the Committee
3 may wish to respond to after we hear from all
4 members of the public.

5 After Annette Akerman, our next speaker is
6 Robert Zeis who is with the AARP. Ms. Akerman,
7 thank you for coming this morning, and you are
8 recognized.

9 MR. AKERMAN: Thank you very much. I
10 really don't represent anyone. I do have to
11 say that my grandfather fought all through the
12 American Revolution and in two major battles in
13 New York, and I speak from the heart as a
14 concerned citizen.

15 What I have seen lately has been a
16 tremendous shift in the use and the definite
17 misuse of our Constitution. My biggest concern
18 here is what a serious overreach of
19 redistricting can mean to the freedoms that we
20 enjoy because there is a lot to be considered
21 here.

22 It cannot and must not be allowed through
23 any political ploys to fall into further decay
24 via special interests or subverting agendas.

25 Gentlemen, you have a job to do, ladies

1 and gentlemen, excuse me, you have a job to do
2 and I hope you take it seriously to heart.

3 Please use the truths that have been set
4 forth in the Constitution to make redistricting
5 fair and representative of each and every one
6 of us. That is your sworn commitment and we
7 will appreciate your upholding that. Thank you
8 very much.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Akerman,
10 excellent guidance for all of us. Robert Zeis,
11 representing the AARP. Good to see you again,
12 and the next, Pam Linder, I believe it is,
13 would be on deck.

14 Mr. Zeis, you are recognized.

15 MR. ZEIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I wish
16 to thank you and the entire Committee for
17 allowing so many people to come forward and
18 give their opinion.

19 AARP, of course, represents nearly four
20 million voters in the state of Florida.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And could you speak a
22 little closer into the mike so that we can
23 catch every word?

24 MR. ZEIS: I can do that and I can tell
25 that is much better, thank you, sir.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you.

2 MR. ZEIS: Our concerns are much more
3 theoretical. We really believe that the
4 Committee needs to perform this redistricting
5 in a very timely manner, stay with the
6 constitutional requirements of contiguousness
7 and truly avoid any appearance of conflict of
8 interest.

9 It is most important that our local
10 communities and neighborhoods stay intact,
11 having subdivisions and smaller, small
12 neighborhoods even within cities to have
13 deferring representation literally across the
14 street is something that has to be avoided.

15 I think that you are all doing a job that,
16 as I understand, is actually quite unusual with
17 the rest of the states. Very few states are
18 having the opportunity for public access and
19 information, and I encourage everyone to
20 partake of the websites that are available and
21 they can really glean maybe a better handle on
22 how the redistricting process takes hold, and
23 input their own ideas. And I thank you very
24 much.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, sir, thank you

1 very much for your testimony. Pam Linder is
2 next, and following Ms. Linder, Connie White,
3 if you would be on deck.

4 Ms. Linder, thank you for coming this
5 morning, and you are recognized before the
6 Committee.

7 MS. LINDER: Thank you. I was hoping all
8 of my questions would be asked so that I
9 wouldn't have to talk, but I am here, because
10 four of my questions have not been answered.

11 I didn't quite understand at the
12 beginning. Would ya'll just raise your hand if
13 you represent more than three counties? Just a
14 quick raise of hands, one, two, three, four,
15 five, six, seven. Seven, okay.

16 And I also was wondering, how many people
17 were in the Legislature, legislation when the
18 2002 redistricting happened? Could you all
19 just raise your hands if anybody was there?
20 One, two, three -- three, okay, and I was also
21 wondering, how many of ya'll would actually be
22 opposed to working between now and January, so
23 that we could have preliminary maps ready in
24 January when the sessions started? Is anybody
25 opposed to doing that?

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, I will tell you
2 what. We will ask the Speaker Designate to
3 respond to that in terms of the legal
4 requirements, as well as what the process and
5 schedule are. I think you will be placed with
6 the answer, at least I hope you will, but
7 please continue your testimony.

8 MS. LINDER: Okay, and I wondered, how
9 many people voted to oppose Amendment 5 and 6
10 and actually asked that money be spent?

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Now, we don't, ma'am,
12 ma'am, ma'am, in the United States of America,
13 we don't ask people how they voted in a secret
14 ballot.

15 So you are welcome to talk to people
16 individually, but we are not going to anybody
17 on the spot today about how they voted in the
18 secret ballot. This is still America. Please
19 continue with your testimony.

20 MS. LINDER: Okay, and I was wondering if
21 anybody would consider suing the state if their
22 redistrict changed?

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Again, ma'am, you know,
24 there are people in this audience who may have
25 a cause of action, special interest groups who

1 are here who followed us from hearing to
2 hearing who may file lawsuits.

3 We are not going to put them on the spot.
4 They have the right to file a suit. Your right
5 to access to the courts is guaranteed by the
6 Constitution. We are not going to put them on
7 the spot today or anybody else. Any other
8 testimony?

9 MS. LINDER: Yes, I did just want to say
10 that as a woman and a mother and a healthcare
11 provider and an educator, I am disenfranchised
12 in my district.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much for
14 your testimony. Next we have Susan McCool.

15 MS. WHITE: Corrine White.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Connie White, I am
17 jumping ahead. Connie White and then Susan
18 McCool.

19 MS. WHITE: Corrine White.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Ms. White, thank you for
21 being here today and we are delighted to have
22 your testimony.

23 MS. WHITE: Thank you very much for the
24 opportunity, and thank you all for being here.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And could you speak

1 directly into the mike so we can all hear you?

2 MS. WHITE: Yes, sir.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I am sorry that the
4 acoustics here require you to do that.

5 MS. WHITE: Is this better? Is that
6 better?

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Much better, thanks a
8 lot.

9 MS. WHITE: Okay. Thank you. I would ask
10 that you consider after the maps are submitted
11 and you have gotten all of the testimony from
12 across the state, that you turn over the
13 process of re, actually redrawing the
14 Congressional Districts to an independent
15 nonpartisan commission, because we have four
16 criteria that have been articulated here which
17 are population equality, contiguity, unity of
18 counties and cities and compactness.

19 And we have a goal of districts being
20 represented by a member of their own community
21 who are familiar with their concerns, which as
22 we all know, which is why the Constitution
23 requires that Senators and Representatives be
24 inhabitants of the state that elect them.

25 So attempts to lock out, to lock in party

1 advantage sacrifices the important
2 Constitutional guarantee that a Legislator
3 serve as the voice of the community.

4 As you probably well know, 13 states so
5 far have established nonpartisan redistricting
6 commissions, and two additional states have
7 created advisory commissions.

8 While the systems vary, some commissions
9 actually propose the plans the Legislators must
10 approve, others strip the Legislators from
11 redistricting authority. Each of these states
12 recognize that partisan drawing of
13 Congressional District boundaries has hurt the
14 democratic process, leaving elected officials
15 dependent and beholdng to the party bosses who
16 draw them.

17 So I ask you, please, to consider turning
18 over after you have done your marvelous work,
19 turning over the redistricting process in
20 Florida to an independent nonpartisan
21 commission. Thank you very much.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much. And
23 that as well will be a -- that as well -- stay
24 calm, ma'am. That as well will be, will be a
25 question that we will ask the Speaker Designate

1 to take up.

2 Now we are delighted to have Susan McCool,
3 who is the Supervisor of Elections in Palatka
4 with us. Thank you for your service to the
5 people of that community, and you are
6 recognized.

7 MS. MCCOOL: Thank you very much, and that
8 is Putnam county, not just Palatka.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: That is right, it is the
10 whole county.

11 MS. MCCOOL: I am Susan McCool, Supervisor
12 of Elections of Putnam county. I just want to
13 thank you for allowing the State Supervisor of
14 Elections to have a more, be more involved this
15 year in the process of redistricting by
16 allowing us to show you our voting tabulation
17 districts.

18 Remember the economic factor when
19 splitting and dividing counties and
20 municipalities. That hasn't been brought up
21 yet. And by the way, St. Johns County did a
22 wonderful job in the presentation and you are
23 going to hear this throughout the state. The
24 rest of the sessions that you have.

25 We all have the same agenda, as you well

1 know. We are concerned about the time frame
2 and about the splitting. So if you remember
3 the economic factor in that, because one thing,
4 it involves the more splits we have, the more
5 precincts are involved, the more ballot styles
6 we have.

7 The more ballot styles we have the more it
8 costs, and this -- the way that paper is now,
9 of course, you know, the state is a paper
10 ballot. We destroy many, many ballots, paper
11 ballots a year for those people who do not
12 vote.

13 And so the less ballot styles, the less
14 paper that we have to destroy. Well, if I let
15 go of it, I can't turn the page.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are doing fine.

17 MS. MCCOOL: Okay. Just remember that
18 less is better. It has already been brought up
19 about the time frame. We want to make sure
20 that you definitely remember that, because in
21 the redistricting process it takes several
22 months to train our poll workers, move voters,
23 print the cards to give to the electors,
24 process the change, mail out the cards,
25 securing polling locations, which securing

1 polling locations you may think it doesn't
2 take, you know, just call them and say, okay, I
3 have got an election, but there is a lot of
4 things on the polling places calendars that
5 have to be cleared, so we have to remember that
6 also.

7 We have to type, proof and then print the
8 ballots, and that does take quite a bit of
9 time, so remember the time frame, and thank you
10 very much, appreciate it.

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
12 Ms. McCool, for being here today. Excellent
13 information.

14 Next we have Rebecca Johnston representing
15 the Young Democrats of St. Johns, and following
16 Ms. Johnston, Richard Hebert.

17 So Ms. Johnston, if you are here, we are
18 delighted to have your testimony this morning.
19 Thank you for coming.

20 MS. JOHNSTON: Hello, I am Rebecca
21 Johnston, and I am the President of the St.
22 Johns Young Democrats.

23 First of all, I am not attempting to do
24 your job but offer suggestions. I understand
25 you have a very difficult task as you consider

1 the 2010 census data that shows many districts
2 with increased population.

3 In St. Johns County, two of our three
4 State House Representatives live in
5 Jacksonville. The citizens in St. Johns County
6 feel like they are not being represented
7 sufficiently.

8 District 19, for instance, includes part
9 of northeast Clay, southwest Jaxs and northwest
10 St. Johns County, and currently it is 12.9
11 percent over the desired population for the
12 district.

13 All of St. Johns County districts are
14 currently over the population desired, and
15 districts north of us and west of us are under
16 the desired population.

17 District 20 is over 28.9 percent, and it
18 encompasses the majority of Flagler, St. Johns
19 and it continues into Clay County. Next to it
20 is District 21 of Putnam County and it is under
21 by 7.49 percent. Please consider pushing their
22 line east and north into the current District
23 20.

24 We currently do not appreciate our tax
25 dollars being used to conduct hearings where

1 we, the people are not receiving any
2 information from you, our Representatives, or
3 seeing any proposed plans for us to give input
4 on.

5 If this, if Amendments 5 and 6 are not
6 followed properly, there will most likely be
7 some challenges which will be time consuming
8 and costly.

9 This will also result in delay in the
10 redistricting and it will hinder citizens who
11 wish to file as a candidate for the 2012
12 election, because they will not know their
13 district.

14 Incumbents will be given an advantage over
15 their opponents, because campaign and
16 fundraising time will be constrained. We
17 understand that some districts may need to be
18 drawn cross counties.

19 We ask that when you do, you do not draw
20 the lines to cut in and out of a county where a
21 particular political party is favored. We ask
22 that you draw lines to encompass an area
23 containing people with similar interests, way
24 of life, job market, infrastructure and
25 monetary.

1 By doing these things and following your
2 legal obligation to the voters, it not only
3 benefits the people, but the elected
4 Representatives. They will be able to better
5 represent their constituents to a one person,
6 one vote standard.

7 America is about fairness and equality.
8 We the voters need to see that in Florida.
9 Thank you very much.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Johnston,
11 we really appreciate you being here. Richard
12 Hebert is next, and following Mr. Hebert,
13 Annette Cappella, if you would be on deck,
14 please.

15 Mr. Hebert, thank you for taking time to
16 be with us this morning, and you are
17 recognized.

18 MR. HEBERT: Thank you, sir, I pronounce
19 it Hebert.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I am sorry, sir? Hebert.

21 MR. HEBERT: Hebert, thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I apologize to you. I am
23 sorry for mispronouncing your name.

24 MR. HEBERT: That is okay, at least you
25 didn't say Herbert.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are recognized.

2 Thanks from coming.

3 MR. HEBERT: You have heard a lot of anger
4 out here and you shouldn't be surprised at it,
5 considering the history of Amendments 5 and 6.
6 I second everything that you have been hearing.

7 I don't want it reiterate detail by
8 detail, but just remember that we have gone
9 through two years of collecting 1.7 million
10 signatures to put those two Amendments on the
11 ballot, and we faced nothing but obstruction
12 from the State Legislature, from lawsuits to
13 the Governor's refusal to submit it for
14 approval to the Department of Justice.

15 We had to go to court to enforce that.
16 The citizens are upset, and I think
17 understandably so. You just look at some of
18 these snake like districts that curl and carve
19 all the way around the state of Florida, it is
20 a sham, and without getting into more detail,
21 you have set aside, as I understand it, \$30
22 million to fight redistricting related
23 lawsuits.

24 Half of that is supposed to go to this
25 lawsuit that you have joined in with Corrine

1 Brown to basically again try to nullify. I
2 mean, how many times does the Supreme Court
3 have to tell you you don't have a case, but
4 they keep going back to court to fight the
5 voters, using taxpayers, using our money to pay
6 to sue ourselves and then to defend ourselves
7 against our own lawsuit.

8 And I think the voters have finally seen
9 through this sham and I beg you, please, do the
10 right thing, stop postponing the day of
11 reckoning.

12 It is time now, draw the districts, these
13 hearings are a waste of our own money and our
14 time. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, thank you for
16 coming in any case. Next, Annette Cappella,
17 you are recognized, and following Ms. Cappella,
18 Nell Toensmann, I believe it is, and I want to
19 just indicate that we do have a number of other
20 speakers who would like to be heard.

21 So all of us and especially the people
22 behind you are grateful for your respect of the
23 three minute rule. Ms. Cappella, you are
24 recognized. Thanks for being here.

25 MS. CAPPELLA: Thank you, thank you for

1 having me here. I also thank you for
2 listening. I hope you are hearing as well. So
3 many good things were said today and I don't
4 want to re-echo or reiterate much of it which I
5 have in my notes.

6 However, I am a U. S. citizen. I love
7 this country and I love Florida. I adopted, I
8 adopted it in 1978, and have watched some
9 things happen that I am very concerned about.

10 One of the things now is we have an
11 Amendment 5 and 6 that has been passed in the
12 past 2010 election by 63 percent of the voters,
13 and as Richard Hebert just said, you are
14 fighting it. Why?

15 We have a problem with economics in this
16 state and in this country yet you chose to
17 spend over a million dollars to fight it, of
18 our money.

19 Also, you also have set aside about \$30
20 million to keep fighting it. Why? These are
21 questions I have. I hope you are able to
22 answer them.

23 I also want to know why close to a dozen
24 states have already mapped out what their plans
25 are for redistricting. I know Florida is a

1 large state, and now I know it is crucial to
2 the upcoming election, and we do have one party
3 in power.

4 Does that mean you want absolute control?
5 That is another question I have. We have major
6 problems in this country, and it is time we
7 looked at the U.S. Constitution and followed
8 it, and as you as citizens and as patriots, we
9 should be able to follow it and not try to buck
10 it, and I am afraid that is what has been
11 happening.

12 I want St. Johns County to be contiguous.
13 You heard the Supervisor of Elections and the
14 problems she has. I work very closely many
15 times with them on elections and I see the
16 problems and the confusion with the voters.

17 What you are doing right now by postponing
18 maps and getting them to the public is going to
19 confuse not only the voters, but also the rest
20 of the world.

21 What is Florida about? We are known for
22 our, in fact, we are notorious for the kinds of
23 elections we have held in the past. Are we
24 going to continue to do that? Come on now.
25 You represent us.

1 Do your job, please. Make Florida and
2 make St. Johns County proud of you. Keep us in
3 our diverse contiguous place, not with three
4 Senators who represent four or five or six or
5 seven districts from Nassau County all of the
6 way to Volusia, or three representatives who
7 represent three, four, different districts and
8 counties. I mean, these poor men are confused.

9 They don't even know who they are
10 representing, because they don't even have a
11 handle on who we are. St. Johns and Flagler do
12 have much in common, and I agree.

13 Look at that map. Put us together. We
14 make good buddies and good brothers, thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Cappella,
16 and Ms. Cappella, I hope you can stay until the
17 end of the hearing because I think some of the
18 points that you raised probably will be
19 remarked to.

20 MS. CAPPELLA: Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Our next speaker will be
22 Nell Toensmann, I believe, or Toensmann, and
23 following Nell will be Randy Covington, and I
24 apologize if I mispronounced your name. Could
25 you pronounce it for the record?

1 MR. TOENSMANN: Toensmann.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much.

3 MR. TOENSMANN: It is a German name and I
4 have a German husband.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you.

6 MR. TOENSMANN: I grew up in St.
7 Augustine, Florida, at a time when Berl Polk
8 was Senator and we could often find him sitting
9 on a park bench in the plaza.

10 He talked to the people he represented,
11 and he represented us very well. Since then I
12 have spent 32 years in Europe with a German
13 husband whom I brought over here about seven
14 years ago, and I have looked back at Florida
15 and I have looked back at the United States
16 sometimes in utter amazement at the kind of
17 things we do and how they reflect on the rest
18 of the world.

19 Florida is very well known not only around
20 the United States, but it is also known in
21 Europe, and I was over there in the 2000
22 election when the German American Club had a
23 party to celebrate the election of a new
24 President, which went on for a few months.

25 The party actually ended some time in the

1 wee hours of the morning, however, and it is
2 kind of -- it is the kind of thing that when
3 things are being done that are not well thought
4 out and for all of the people, it is not only
5 the people of the state of Florida that are
6 watching, it is the people outside of the
7 state.

8 They are looking at us from all around the
9 United States, but they are also looking at us
10 from Germany and France and Spain, and believe
11 me, their international news is a lot better
12 than our international news which is almost non
13 existent.

14 They know what is going on. They knew
15 everything about the whole election process in
16 2000, and this is why you guys and gals, men
17 and women have to do something right this time
18 around.

19 You have to do it soon, you have to do it
20 contiguously so that we have proper
21 representation, and believe me, when we have
22 three Senators that we almost never see and we
23 have three House members, one of which does
24 live in St. Augustine, but none of them really
25 properly represent us in St. Johns County.

1 We want it to be compact. We do not want
2 to have precincts that are divided among two
3 House seats or two Senate seats. We do not
4 want to have the Supervisor of Elections people
5 have to do an incredible amount of work to
6 divide and subdivide and re-subdivide and try
7 to get precincts contiguous with the House
8 seats or the Senate seats, et cetera.

9 It is not an easy process I know for you,
10 but the sooner you get it done the sooner our
11 Supervisor of Elections can get to work. The
12 sooner the people who want to run for office
13 will know what district they can run in, the
14 better it will be for all of the people in the
15 state of Florida. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you so much for
17 your testimony. Next is Randy Covington, and
18 following Randy Covington will be Julie
19 Penrod-Glenn. So Ms. Penrod-Glenn, if you
20 would be on deck.

21 Mr. Covington, thank you so much for being
22 here, and you are recognized before the
23 Committee.

24 MR. COVINGTON: Thank you, and I want to
25 thank the Committee first of all, all of you

1 for your service in this recent session. I
2 know you did struggle with a great many of the
3 things and at the end of the day you did the
4 best job that we could expect. We appreciate
5 your service. Thank you.

6 Secondly, it is really interesting to me,
7 I have heard a lot of people speak of
8 diversity. It seems they were all reading it
9 from the same piece of paper.

10 I will tell you for certainty I have to
11 take strong exception to this. I don't care
12 one wit what Spain and England and France care
13 about our electoral process. It is our
14 Constitution. The process belongs to us, not
15 to them.

16 Secondly, I heard a lot of talk yesterday
17 about concentric circles and geometry. I think
18 that would actually be rather fun if you
19 produced those maps so you could watch people's
20 heads explode seeing what they suggested.

21 And lastly, I would just say this, at the
22 end of the day the fairness of this process
23 will not be traced to the production of the
24 maps. It is going to be traced to how you
25 openly conducted these hearings and gave

1 everybody their input to this process.

2 That is what matters here. The Fair
3 Districts people clearly drew language that was
4 intended to force this process to end up being
5 decided by seven unelected people. We don't
6 want that. That would be the ultimate
7 unfairness.

8 We trust you, we believe you all to be of
9 good intent. Continue on your process, don't
10 pay attention to all of the continuous
11 criticisms of you fighting to represent
12 everybody in the state. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
14 Mr. Covington. Next, Julie Penrod-Glenn and
15 then following Ms. Penrod-Glenn, if William
16 McCormick would please be on deck.

17 Ms. Penrod-Glenn, thank you for coming
18 today and we look forward to your testimony.

19 MS. PENROD-GLENN: Thank you for having
20 us. Thank you for being here. I have been
21 thinking about what I wanted to say today in
22 three minutes and I will try to keep my time, I
23 will keep my time to three minutes.

24 All of you all and everyone in this room
25 has heard multiple times that in the United

1 States we have one of the lowest voter turn
2 outs in the world in democracies.

3 Voters say, my vote doesn't count. There
4 is no need for me to vote, nobody listens to
5 what I have to say. How many people have heard
6 that? I have heard it multiple times.

7 When the voters of Florida passed the Fair
8 District 5 and 6 Amendments to the Florida
9 Constitution, that represented voters saying,
10 hey, you all, I want my vote to count.

11 I don't want to continue to be apathetic
12 and believe that my vote won't be heard, my
13 vote doesn't matter. These two Amendments give
14 the Florida Legislature a chance to have every
15 single person that is eligible to vote in the
16 state of Florida to be heard.

17 What we have now in Florida is a gross
18 example of gerrymandering. Gerrymandering in
19 the United States has a long and very infamous
20 record. It goes back to the founding, before
21 the founding of the Constitution wherein slave
22 states, slave owners wanted to count
23 100 percent of their slaves as people, but the
24 Constitution said, hey, no, they only count for
25 a third.

1 Gerrymandering has continued all through
2 history. However, this is our opportunity to
3 change history, to change what we have been
4 doing in the past and make it right.

5 I urge you to have open hearings, to
6 release the maps, to speed up the process so
7 that people that want to run for election will
8 be able to have time. People that are running
9 elections will have time to let voters know who
10 is running, what the election process is all
11 about.

12 We have time to get it straight. Eighteen
13 states have already done it. It is time for
14 Florida to step up and do the right thing.
15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you,
17 Ms. Penrod-Glenn. Excellent advice for us all.
18 William McCormick is next, and then following
19 Mr. McCormick, David Sullivan.

20 Mr. McCormick, thank you for coming this
21 morning. We look forward to your testimony.

22 MR. MCCORMICK: Well, can you hear me
23 okay?

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Yes, sir.

25 MR. MCCORMICK: Thank you for letting us

1 speak at this public hearing. I want to begin,
2 by the way, I live in St. Augustine, 9224 July
3 Lane. I represent myself, but I want to begin
4 my statement with a quotation from, and I think
5 a very statesman like quotation, from a pretty
6 influential public servant, and the person I am
7 going to quote is George W. Bush.

8 So the following he his quote. "One way
9 to reduce the influence of ideological extremes
10 is to change the way we elect members of
11 Congress.

12 2006 only about 45 of 435 House races were
13 seriously contested. Some members in so-called
14 safe districts do not have to worry about a
15 challenge from the opposite party. Their
16 biggest vulnerability is getting out planked in
17 their own party.

18 This is especially true in the era of
19 bloggers who make national targets out of
20 politicians they deem ideologically impure.

21 The result is that members of Congress
22 from both parties can towards extremes as
23 insurance against primary challenges.

24 Our government would be more productive
25 and our politics more civilized if

1 Congressional Districts were drawn by panels of
2 nonpartisan elders instead of State
3 Legislators.

4 That would be, make for more competitive
5 general elections and a less polarized
6 Congress. Making the change would make
7 politicians, would require politicians to give
8 up some of their power, never an easy task, but
9 for future Presidents looking to tackle a big
10 problem, this would be a worthy one to take
11 on."

12 Using those quotations as by stepping up
13 point and I will keep this short, by the way,
14 those quotations are from George W. Bush,
15 decision twice, pages 306 and 307, 2010
16 copyright.

17 Using those statements as my starting
18 point, I want to emphasize five points.

19 First, the voters of Florida, 63 percent,
20 have spoken. They want -- they want the
21 Legislature and the Governor to follow the
22 wording and the intent of the specific
23 guidelines set forth in Amendments 5 and 6.

24 Two, they want those guidelines followed
25 in establishing the new districts in a timely

1 manner, well before the 2012 elections.

2 Third, borders clearly understand the;
3 polarizing and paralyzing effects that
4 gerrymandered districts have on the political
5 process.

6 And fourth, and I am going to quote a wise
7 man, one of our, by the way, one of our six
8 Legislators, State Legislators, that represents
9 part of St. Johns County, but basically they
10 understand the power that legislative leaders
11 have in affecting policy and funding.

12 As that wise State Legislator said in a
13 public discussion that we had prior to the
14 passage of the Amendments, Junior Legislators
15 accomplish little when they come to Tallahassee
16 and those in the minority party accomplish even
17 less.

18 He cited the example of one powerful
19 Committee Chairman who went against the wishes
20 of the leadership of the State Legislature and
21 put forth an amendment that they didn't want
22 put forth and the next day he was no longer
23 Chairman of that Committee. He wasn't even on
24 that Committee.

25 It shows you what kind of impact, a long

1 time in the Senate or in the House, whether you
2 are talking national or state, the power that
3 these people have.

4 Finally, you are among the parties'
5 leaders. Well, let me say this. One thing
6 that Bush, George Bush did not say, and he
7 could have, is that the reason why we have all
8 of this money funneled to special interests is
9 because of the gerrymandering that goes on.
10 Just look at what West Virginia, just look at
11 Mississippi. Just look at Alaska.

12 Who gets the money? Why? If you live
13 long enough, you are going to keep your office
14 in a gerrymandered district, and of course you
15 are going to get the money going to your
16 district.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Sir, in respect to the
18 people behind you, could I ask you to wrap it
19 up?

20 MR. MCCORMICK: All right, I will make my
21 last comment, I got off script. You are among
22 your parties' leaders and certainly party
23 leaders choose to circumvent the wishes of the
24 vast majority of Florida voters, you will
25 surely be reminded of that should they seek

1 re-election or election to higher office in the
2 future. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
4 Appreciate your comments. Next is David
5 Sullivan and then following Mr. Sullivan is
6 Robert Phillips, if you will be ready,
7 Mr. Phillips.

8 Mr. Sullivan, thank you for coming today,
9 and we look forward to your testimony.

10 MR. SULLIVAN: Thank you for having me.
11 Dave Sullivan, I am a resident of Flagler
12 County, specifically Palm Coast, here on my
13 own, Volusia.

14 I appreciate the previous members who have
15 spoken for Flagler County and the city of Palm
16 Coast. I have some specific statistics I would
17 like to reiterate just to remind people of
18 where we are.

19 The 2010 Census is the reason we are doing
20 this redistricting. Flagler County has been
21 the fastest growing county in the United States
22 for four years in the mid-2000s.

23 The city of Palm Coast now has over 75,000
24 people. That comes as a shock to some people.
25 It is clearly the largest city between

1 Jacksonville and Orlando, and over the next few
2 years it will go over 100,000.

3 I, coming from Palm Coast and Flagler
4 County, want to make sure that we do stay
5 attached to St. Johns County. I think those
6 two counties have a lot in common, and so maybe
7 when you are doing the State and House and the
8 State senate redistricting, why not start
9 south?

10 Start at the Flagler County south border
11 and go north. When you get to 100 and,
12 whatever it is, 60,000 people, that is one
13 district and you continue on north and so
14 forth.

15 There is, it looks to me like there is
16 about room for two State Representatives in
17 that place and this, the two Senate Districts
18 make no sense at all right now, dividing it up,
19 coast and inland.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, thank you very
21 much, Mr. Sullivan, excellent observations.
22 Next we will hear from Robert Phillips and
23 following Mr. Phillips, if Lee Owen
24 representing the Minorcan Families would be on
25 deck and ready to proceed, we would be

1 grateful.

2 Mr. Phillips, from the Duval County
3 Supervisor of Elections. Thank you very much
4 for being here and we look forward to your
5 testimony.

6 MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you very much, and
7 good morning, and I send regrets from
8 Mr. Holland, the Duval County Supervisor of
9 Elections.

10 He is actually out of the country right
11 now. He actually wanted me to attend
12 yesterday's meeting that you had in Duval
13 County, but I was actually down in our neighbor
14 Volusia County enjoying some of our wonderful
15 state parks.

16 So I saw the news last night so I know I
17 missed a good one, but after I saw, I wasn't
18 going to speak this morning, but when I saw
19 several members of the Duval delegation here,
20 including my Representative and then my
21 compatriots from Putnam and St. Jones County, I
22 just wanted to add, first of all, what St.
23 Johns County and what Putnam County said.

24 I don't have anything to add to that
25 because they said it so well. I would just

1 like to say that we, for the first time, the
2 state allowed us to produce those VTDs and all
3 of the Supervisors spent a lot of time last
4 year working with them.

5 We appreciate the fact that we have had
6 this input. This is actually my third
7 reapportionment that I am going through with
8 the state, and I could tell you some horror
9 stories from the '92 one that a lot of the
10 Supervisors talked about, how bad that one was.

11 It was also a Presidential year, and some
12 of you may remember, it was held out by
13 lawsuits and things like that. So I just
14 wanted to ask that you do take those VTDs into
15 consideration.

16 A lot of the supervisors put a lot of time
17 into them and also offer ourself as a resource
18 because we do have a lot of experience with the
19 precincts and we are the ones who get the
20 countless phone calls that say, I am
21 represented by this person and the person
22 across the street is represented by someone
23 else. How does that happen.

24 So just anything we could do to offer our
25 assistance, and also I would like to take this

1 opportunity to personally thank Mr. Guthrie who
2 I understand has been there quite a while.

3 He has always been very responsive when I
4 have called him and asked him for assistance,
5 so it is good that you have someone like that
6 as a guiding hand behind the process. Thank
7 you very much.

8 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you
9 very much for your testimony today, and next is
10 Lee Owen from the, if I understand this
11 correctly, the Minorcan Families and after Mr.
12 Owen, John, I think it is Danahy, on Oglethorpe
13 Boulevard, if you could be on deck, please.

14 Mr. Owen, thank you for coming today.

15 MR. OWEN: Thank you. If many of you do
16 not know the Minorcans of this area have been
17 here before even the inception of Florida as a
18 territory to the United States.

19 We have seen political maps change. We
20 have seen districts change. We are what I
21 guess you can say closest to a true native of
22 Florida besides the Indian tribes that have
23 been here.

24 There has been the universal message
25 presented today that the left and the right of

1 our political spectrums can agree upon, and
2 that is the fact that we emphasize the need for
3 every district to be as local as possible and
4 every election to have local results.

5 It is a great feat when one man can shake
6 someone else's hand that they know, and they
7 can vote into office and I can say that,
8 because I have had the opportunity to shake
9 hands with Senator John Thrasher. I have had
10 the opportunity to vote for someone that I
11 know.

12 That is what we have to pursue in this
13 redistricting. A local election is an involved
14 election, an involved election is the true
15 meaning of a democratic republic. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, Mr.
17 Owen, we appreciate it. Mr., is it Danahy?

18 MR. DANAHY: Yes, that is correct.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Mr. Danahy, thank you for
20 taking time to come this morning, and you are
21 recognized.

22 MR. DANAHY: Thank you very much.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And following Mr. Danahy,
24 if William Stuart will be on deck, and then
25 Mr. Stuart is our last signed up person who

1 wishes to speak. If there are other people who
2 have been inspired to share their views with us
3 and haven't signed up yet, if you will raise
4 your hand, we will have a House or Senate staff
5 person come and give you a card so that we can
6 hear from you as well.

7 Mr. Danahy, you are recognized. Thank you
8 for being here.

9 MR. DANAHY: Thank you. Before coming
10 into the auditorium I spent I think a fair good
11 amount of time with some of the folks that you
12 have out there giving me some background, et
13 cetera.

14 Also giving me some background as to what
15 is, I have to say, supposed to be because I
16 don't know whether it is going to work out that
17 way or not, how the redistricting law is going
18 to bring equity broadly, ethnically, racially,
19 well, not ethnically, because I would like to
20 have an Irish contingent, quite frankly.

21 But from what he said and how they are
22 going to form the -- assist the Committee in
23 helping to actually propose the redistricting,
24 when all is said and done, it is going to come
25 down to the decision of those who have the

1 vote, and if those that have the vote on the
2 results of this is not being proposed
3 satisfactorily, it is going to change.

4 You cannot sit there and tell me that you
5 are blankly going to assume and accept the
6 recommendations of those of the staff that are
7 putting the redistricting together according to
8 the law. I just, I just can't believe it.

9 I have lost faith and hope in so many
10 Legislators and I am going to stick strictly to
11 the state, and I have lost hope and faith in
12 our courts.

13 Not so much our local courts but our state
14 courts, and I have to go to the Federal court
15 as well, but I have lost faith in all of that,
16 because no matter what we have done and no
17 matter what we say, it is going to come down,
18 politics.

19 I don't care if you say it is going to be
20 helped put together by non voting. If you say
21 you don't have a partisan thought in this
22 thing, you are lying through your teeth.

23 Everyone has a partisan interest in
24 everything that is going on here, everything
25 that is said, and everything that is going to

1 come as a result of it. There is no way on
2 this earth that anyone of you can say, I am
3 going to set aside politics. It just cannot be
4 done.

5 You are human beings, you are political
6 human beings and it cannot be done. So my
7 interest is in a fair fight. That is all I
8 want, a fair fight.

9 We saw a fair fight in Jacksonville with
10 Mayor Brown, God I gloried in it, not because
11 he was black and he won, but he was an
12 underdog, big underdog, and he won. He won
13 because he had a fair fight.

14 Now, if the supporters are going to assume
15 in that fight that the opponent can't win,
16 well, that is their hard luck. It is up to the
17 -- not because you have an advantage in
18 redistricting.

19 Here in St. Johns County we have a
20 preponderance of Republican voters. Now, does
21 that mean that we are not going to have a fair
22 fight? If the issue, if the person is going to
23 create a fair fight, that person has every
24 right to win. So that is all I am looking for,
25 a fair fight.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much. And
2 William Stuart is next, and if there is anyone
3 else, Mr. Stuart, before you begin, if there is
4 anyone else who would like to speak, if you
5 would raise your hand we will get to you.

6 Mr. Stuart, thank you very much for being
7 here. Thanks for your patience in waiting
8 through everybody else's testimony. We are as
9 anxious to hear from you as we were from the
10 very first person who testified.

11 MR. STUART: Well, thank you very much for
12 allowing me to testify. I am William Stuart.
13 I have lived all my life in Florida, I am a
14 Floridian and I have lived in the same Federal
15 Seventh District for half of my life, 54 years
16 old.

17 Needless to say, that is a safe district.
18 There hasn't been much competition for that
19 seat as long as I have lived there, and I have
20 seen the face of St. Johns County change so
21 much in the 34 years I have lived in St. Johns
22 County.

23 Before Flagler County was growing at the
24 rate it grew, and simultaneously, St. Johns
25 County has grown, and what I think the people

1 are asking for when they voted overwhelmingly
2 for redistricting, is just what my predecessor
3 have just said at this microphone today,
4 fairness and that is basically what I came
5 down.

6 I am not going to go into a long thing
7 about it. I think everybody here, that is what
8 they want, fairness. So when an incumbent is
9 so safe that he doesn't even have or she
10 doesn't even have to campaign, that is when we
11 know there is a problem, and I have seen that
12 election after election after election where if
13 you don't worry enough about competition that
14 you don't even air a commercial, put any signs
15 out, there is something, that is when I know
16 the system is broken.

17 So all I ask you is for you people to take
18 it seriously. There was a mandate, it wasn't
19 like the Governor's race, it was a mandate that
20 we won, this redistricting done and we want it
21 done fairly, and I also, I just wanted to say
22 in closing, I don't appreciate us having to
23 support a legal battle on both sides of the
24 issue. I don't think that is fair to the
25 voters of Florida, so.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Stuart,
2 and as a reward for your hanging with us
3 through the whole hearing, we will certainly
4 get to a couple of the points, the very
5 important points that you made and see if we
6 can provide some factual information for you.

7 Is there anyone else who would like to
8 testify? Tommy, have you got somebody? Okay,
9 let's get that card up here, and, sir, you can
10 come to the microphone while your card is being
11 brought forward, and if you would kindly
12 identify yourself, sir, for the record?

13 MR. RETTY: My name is Dick Retty. I had
14 not intended to speak. I just want to make a
15 parallel to the Administrative Procedures Act
16 that governs all, all Federal government
17 agencies if the rulemaking process which begins
18 with a statute of and proposed rule to
19 implement the statute, a period of public
20 comment which may include hearings, an analysis
21 of all public comment and their agency response
22 and the publication or final rules.

23 One of the fundamental problems in this
24 morning's hearing, as I sat through this, is
25 you have gone from the requirement of a

1 regulation in this case, redistricting, to
2 public comment without a proposal, and without
3 the proposal the public comment has very little
4 meaning and you should have inverted the whole
5 thing and whether it is a charade or not it is
6 hardly the kind of procedure that is embedded
7 for now over 50 years, 60 years in Federal
8 government rulemaking. Just make that comment.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Retty,
10 that is very kind of you. Is there anyone else
11 who, like Mr. Retty, was inspired to offer some
12 final comments? Anyone else? Third call?

13 First, let me as Chair of the Committee
14 and on behalf of the Speaker Designate,
15 Representative Weatherford, offer my thanks to
16 every single person who testified.

17 We couldn't have gained the specific
18 information about neighborhoods and counties
19 that we received today had we not come here and
20 had public hearings as the -- as the founder of
21 Fair Districts urged us to do prior to the
22 drawing of any maps.

23 I would like to now turn to members of the
24 Committee and start with House members to ask
25 if they have any observations, if they have any

1 suggestions or if they have any proposals to
2 make as a consequence of today's hearing or of
3 this process.

4 Any members of the House of
5 Representatives wish to make any comments?
6 Yes, sir, Speaker, go ahead.

7 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thank you, I want
8 to thank both of our Chairmen for the
9 leadership that they have provided, and I want
10 to make it perfectly clear, no one has limited
11 my ability to speak. There has been no gag
12 order.

13 There is a time to listen and there is a
14 time to speak, and this has been a time to
15 listen and I thank everyone who contributed to
16 this. I think it is very important.

17 Chairman, I don't think people would have
18 been very happy if we would have just rolled
19 out a map and no one had a chance to comment on
20 this process beforehand, and so I am very
21 grateful for the way in which it has been
22 conducted and I am very grateful for the
23 information that I have gleaned from being a
24 part of this process. Thank you, sir.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much. Any

1 other member of the House of Representatives
2 who is on the Committee, Democrat or Republican
3 from any state of the state?

4 Then let me turn to members of the Senate
5 who are on the Committee, Senator Hays, you are
6 recognized, sir.

7 SENATOR HAYS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
8 and I would like to thank each one of you who
9 did come out this morning and even listened,
10 but those especially who participated by giving
11 us your thoughts and your ideas.

12 I have something I would like for you to
13 consider though. Those who are advocating to
14 have only one Senator or only one
15 Representative for each county, or to have an
16 entire county under the district of only one
17 Senator or only one Representative.

18 The reality is, if that one Representative
19 or Senator that is -- that has your entire
20 county happens to not be of the same political
21 party that the leadership of their respective
22 House is, your county is probably going to be
23 toast until you get somebody in the Legislature
24 who is of the same political party that the
25 leadership is.

1 If your county, if your Legislator is the
2 only Legislator that represents your county and
3 they get cross ways with the leadership of
4 either House, you are probably toast. Your
5 interests are going to be ignored.

6 Now, is that the ideal way? No, that is
7 not the ideal way, but as I told you before, I
8 am giving you a taste of reality as it truly
9 is.

10 So you might want to really, really give
11 some serious consideration before you advocate
12 that your entire county have representation by
13 only one Legislator. That would be a very --
14 plus, if your county is split up into two or
15 three different districts, instead of having
16 only one voice in Tallahassee advocating for
17 you, you have multiple voices in Tallahassee
18 advocating for you.

19 I live in Lake County, and there are,
20 there is, I apologize, I don't know what the
21 number is now, but say roughly 200,000 people
22 in Lake County, enough for one whole House
23 District and a little bit more.

24 But Lake County has six Legislators, two
25 Senators and four Representatives that are

1 advocating for Lake County in Tallahassee, and
2 I don't care how strong that one person is,
3 four in the Legislature is, six in the
4 Legislator is a far sight better than only one.

5 So I really think you might want to give
6 some serious consideration to keeping the
7 counties with multiple districts in them.
8 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Other comments? Senator
10 Thrasher, you are recognized.

11 SENATOR THRASHER: Thank you, Senator
12 Gaetz and Representative Speaker Designate
13 Weatherford for your great leadership in
14 today's meeting.

15 Let me just say, first of all, the input
16 from all of you all has been incredibly
17 valuable. I don't think a member will leave
18 here today who hadn't been touched by some of
19 the comments that have been made and the
20 concerns and the passion for our process that
21 you all have exhibited here today.

22 This is the fifth of 26 hearings that this
23 Committee will hold around the state of Florida
24 in order to try to reach out to as many
25 citizens as we can, and I will tell you that I,

1 I can't speak for everybody here, but I think I
2 can on this one point.

3 That there is no member of this Committee
4 that does not intend and cares about upholding
5 the Constitution of the State of Florida.
6 Amendments 5 and 6 were voted on. They are the
7 law and we intend to stand by those Amendments
8 and do everything we can in our power to make
9 sure that we abide by them.

10 I know I do and I know every member of
11 this Committee does, and for you all who have
12 come here today and asked us to do that, I can
13 assure you that when we raise our hands and are
14 sworn into the Florida Legislature and agree to
15 uphold the Florida Constitution, we will
16 certainly do that in respect to these two
17 Amendments.

18 I will tell you the other thing. I have
19 been around a long time. I -- in and out of
20 the process of the Florida Legislature. I have
21 never seen this process be more transparent,
22 have more opportunities for citizen input from
23 the standpoint of technology.

24 I wish I understood it all, frankly, but I
25 am getting better, but it is, it is incredibly

1 transparent, and when we come back from these
2 hearings which I think end in August, we will
3 start the process of Committee hearings in
4 Tallahassee.

5 They are open to the public. They are
6 open to any citizen. We will begin that
7 process and we will begin the constructive
8 process and the dialogue of beginning to
9 understand the input that we have had from the
10 folks here.

11 I have heard you, and I think every member
12 here heard you, sooner than later. Contiguous
13 and compact, one person, one vote. Those are
14 all important principles and concepts that we
15 will be guided by.

16 The one thing I would remind you though,
17 and this is why we are doing these hearings
18 around the state. We have 27 Congressional
19 Districts to draw. We have 40 Senate Districts
20 to draw and 120 House Districts to draw, for
21 18 million people in the state of Florida.

22 I wish we could go back to the 60s. I
23 heard someone reference former Senator Berl
24 Polk, the lion of the St. Johns. I wish those
25 days were simpler, where we could simply, you

1 know, draw a contiguous district in a county,
2 in a county and-a-half or whatever, but
3 unfortunately, Florida has grown to the point
4 where we have 18 million people, and our job is
5 to try to -- try to do based upon the
6 principles that we have outlined, the best job
7 we can do based upon the input that you have
8 given us.

9 I can tell you, I wish Florida was a
10 square and that the population was all divided
11 out. It would make our job a lot easier, but
12 as you well know, the state of Florida ain't
13 drawn that way.

14 It is a different kind of state than most
15 states, and we have to deal with the
16 population, where they are, where they live,
17 and all of the considerations of contiguously
18 that you have pointed out to us.

19 None of us in here want to travel
20 150 miles probably from one point of our
21 district to the other point. It would be much
22 easier to do it in a more compact basis. So
23 those principles which have been outlined in 5
24 and 6 and some of the issues which
25 Representative Weatherford will address, I

1 think are the principles which we will be
2 guided by, but your input today has been
3 valuable. It has been professionally presented
4 and we thank you for it. God bless you, thank
5 you.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Senator
7 Thrasher. Are there any other comments from
8 members of the Senate who are here? If not,
9 let me just say that you are welcome to contact
10 any member of this Committee to have a one on
11 one conversation, either by e-mail or on the
12 telephone, or by letter.

13 You are welcome to contact the House
14 Committee and the Senate Committee, the web
15 information, the Snail Mail information is on
16 the brochures that you received. This isn't
17 the beginning of our conversation. This is
18 just the beginning, it is not the end, and all
19 conversations start with somebody saying
20 something.

21 If we both talk at once, we can't hear
22 each other. So we have heard you today and you
23 will be hearing from us as we gather more input
24 from across the state.

25 And now, without objection, I would like

1 to turn to the Speaker Designate,
2 Representative Weatherford who Chairs the House
3 Committee.

4 Representative Weatherford has made some
5 notes so we can provide some factual
6 information in response to some of the comments
7 and questions that have been made today so that
8 we can all leave here with the same set of
9 facts.

10 Mr. Chairman, you are recognized.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
12 sir, thank your, Chairman, and I just want to
13 echo the comments that were made about how much
14 I learned today, frankly, about northeast
15 Florida and some of the issues and the
16 communities of interest of the surrounding
17 counties here in Flagler and St. Johns and
18 Clay, and I think every member of this
19 Committee is going to walk out of here with a
20 better understanding of the unique and special
21 nature that you have here.

22 It is a beautiful part of the state and it
23 was very enlightening for me to hear about
24 specifics and things that you wanted to see
25 this Committee consider as we are making

1 decisions. So thank you for doing that.

2 Mr. Chairman, I would like to just go over
3 a few facts to make sure that we all walk out
4 of this room with the same understanding about
5 what the law says and what we have to do and
6 what is incumbent upon us.

7 The first of which deals with the
8 timeline. The timeline seems to come up at
9 every hearing that we go to. It seems to be an
10 area that people appear to be scripted up to
11 talk about and mention at every hearing, but I
12 just want to make sure that everyone is clear
13 about this.

14 The Constitution of the State of Florida
15 tells us that we cannot redraw any districts or
16 vote on districts until the session starts in
17 2012.

18 Now, what we have done is we have moved up
19 our session two months, not in March, which was
20 mentioned earlier here today, we have moved our
21 session up to January, so that we can produce
22 the maps as soon as our Constitution allows us.

23 It is also important for you to know,
24 there are only two other states in the United
25 States of America that have similar timing

1 constraints as Florida, and they are Maryland
2 and Vermont.

3 And so Florida, not because we decide to,
4 but because the voters voted for a Constitution
5 that told us that we cannot redraw those maps
6 until January of 2012, it is the earliest we
7 can possibly do it.

8 So we are merely following the law and the
9 Constitution that is set out before us. I also
10 want to mention a lot of the states that were
11 talked about that have already drawn the maps,
12 that have already voted on maps and have passed
13 them, many of those states have off election
14 cycle elections, which what that means is,
15 their elections are this November, in 2011, not
16 in 2012.

17 And so states like Virginia, New Jersey,
18 Mississippi, Louisiana, those states got their
19 census data almost six or eight months ahead of
20 the state of Florida, Mr. Chairman, and
21 therefore, were able to vote on maps because
22 they had an election this year.

23 As we all know, the state of Florida is
24 not an off cycle state. Our election is in
25 November of 2012. So we got our census data in

1 the very last tranche of census data that went
2 out to the last block of states.

3 That came in late March. We have utilized
4 that data. We had it available to the citizens
5 of Florida immediately as soon as we possibly
6 could, and I think that is an important note to
7 make.

8 There was also some comment in regard to
9 the maps and whether or not we should produce
10 maps to show you first as opposed to take
11 public testimony, and I just have to tell you,
12 and I don't know if any member of this
13 Committee feels differently, I don't think they
14 do, but I don't want to speak for them, but to
15 me this is one of the rare opportunities for
16 politicians, public servants, where they are
17 actually listening first before we are making
18 decisions.

19 The most criticism I get back in my
20 district in Pasco County is that we make
21 decisions before we listen to the citizens of
22 Florida. This is a case where we have decided,
23 both Speaker Cannon and President Haridopolos,
24 myself and Senator Gaetz, that we are going to
25 listen first before we draw the first map, and

1 I think that is out of respect for you more
2 than anything.

3 Also, in regards to that, the framers, the
4 actual framers of Amendments 5 and 6, Ellen
5 Freidin and Former Speaker Mills, both stated
6 before a joint hearing in the Legislature that
7 they would not even try to attempt to draw maps
8 until they had heard from the public first.

9 These are the framers of Amendments 5 and
10 6 which I have sworn to defend and protect as
11 it is part of the Constitution. They said they
12 would hear from the public first and that is
13 why we are hearing from the public first as
14 well.

15 When it comes to Amendments 5 and 6, and I
16 think this was spoken very eloquently and I
17 will not try to belabor the point, but we did
18 take a constitutional oath last November in our
19 organizational session to uphold and protect
20 and defend the Constitution of the United
21 States and the Constitution of Florida, and I
22 want everyone to walk out of here with the
23 confidence that you understand that the
24 Amendments 5 and 6 which passed with
25 overwhelming majorities in the state of

1 Florida, will be upheld and will be protected
2 by this Committee and by the Florida House and
3 by the Florida Senate because it is the law of
4 the land in the state of Florida. I want you
5 to know that is going to be the case.

6 In regard to the gag order, again, I
7 thought Representative Baxley, you spoke to it
8 very eloquently. There is no gag order.
9 Again, there seem to be the same scripts that
10 are floating around that we hear at every
11 public hearing, but there is no gag order, and
12 as you heard today, there were multiple members
13 who spoke, if anyone wants to speak to us
14 individually after this hearing, we would be
15 more than willing to speak with you.

16 The gag order does not exist, it never
17 existed. And also, there were comments made in
18 regards to litigation and I want to be very
19 clear about the litigation.

20 The first is, there is no pot of money set
21 aside by the State legislature, House or
22 Senate, that is focused on spending money on
23 fighting Amendments 5 and 6. There is no pot
24 of money set aside, that does foot exist.

25 That being said, that being said, the

1 litigation that people have been talking about
2 and that newspapers have been writing about was
3 filed by two Congressmen, one Congressman and
4 one Congresswoman, a Republican and a Democrat.

5 They filed the litigation, the Florida
6 House chose to intervene in that litigation
7 because what we were doing is seeking
8 clarification as to whether or not Amendment 6,
9 which only deals with Congressional Seats, not
10 Amendment 5, but in regard to Amendment 6, as
11 to whether or not it is constitutional
12 according to the Federal Constitution, not the
13 State Constitution.

14 So we are seeking clarification on that.
15 We did not file the lawsuit because it affects
16 the Legislature, we have intervened in that
17 lawsuit and we are a partner in that, but that
18 is an important distinction that needs to be
19 discussed.

20 Someone else mentioned that we should
21 create an independent commission after we take
22 all of the public testimony, get all of the
23 data, hand it over to an independent commission
24 and let them do the work for us.

25 Ladies and gentlemen, I am sure there are

1 members on this Committee that would love to do
2 that, but there is a slight problem there, and
3 that is that the Constitution gives us the sole
4 authority to draw the maps.

5 We have a responsibility according to our
6 Constitution to draw the maps ourselves and not
7 to hand it over to a commission. If the
8 framers of Amendments 5 and 6 wanted it to be
9 an independent commission and not the
10 Legislature, they could have made it that way,
11 but they chose not to. So we have the sole
12 responsibility of drawing those maps.

13 Lastly, there was a point that was made in
14 regard to political registration and that that
15 can somehow guarantee political results.

16 I want people to understand that in the
17 Florida Senate, for example, there are 28
18 Republicans and there are 12 Democrats.
19 However, 20 of those seats were carried by
20 President Obama in 2008, when he ran for
21 President, 20 of them.

22 So that means there were eight seats where
23 there is a Republican sitting in the State
24 Senate where that same seat voted for a
25 Democratic President of the United States.

1 We all know that voters are independent.
2 We all know that not all Democrats vote for
3 Democrats. We all know that not all
4 Republicans vote for Republicans, and we
5 certainly know that Independents can go either
6 way, and it is important to understand that the
7 seats in the state of Florida are not drawn and
8 will not certainly be drawn with political
9 intent, and when I talk about us upholding the
10 law in regard to 5 and 6, you have to
11 understand, when the Constitution says that we
12 cannot show intent to favor or disfavor a
13 political party or a candidate or an incumbent,
14 we believe that. We know that.

15 I have told every member of this body that
16 we don't want to know where you live. We don't
17 want to know what your political agenda is. We
18 are here to do a job to draw the seats
19 according to what the law states and according
20 to what the law and the Constitution requires
21 us to do.

22 And so, Mr. Chairman, I hope that brings
23 some clarity. There was some great public
24 testimony today, but the facts have to be the
25 facts and we have to make sure that the

1 citizens of Florida and particularly the ladies
2 and gentlemen who took time out of their busy
3 day to be here understand what the facts are.

4 We are grateful for your participation
5 today. Thank you for giving us an opportunity
6 to present in this wonderful facility. We are
7 grateful to Flagler College and Mr. Chairman, I
8 will turn it back over to you, sir.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
10 Mr. Speaker. Let me give you a little bit of
11 previous upcoming attractions.

12 As Senator Thrasher indicated, we will
13 continue having the public hearings that we
14 have publicly noticed to give people in
15 communities across the state the same
16 opportunity that you had today, to share your
17 views, whatever they might have been.

18 Then when we get back to Tallahassee,
19 contrary to what someone may have told you or
20 somebody may have scripted, the fact is there
21 is no requirement that votes can't be taken
22 until March.

23 Votes can be taken as soon as the
24 Legislature goes in to session, which by
25 Constitution, cannot occur until January.

1 Now, we will begin committee meetings in
2 September, votes can be taken in committee.
3 Any time anybody makes a proposal, any member
4 of the Florida Legislature, it can be a member
5 of the House or Senate Committee, it can be a
6 member of the Legislature who is not on the
7 Committee, can offer a proposal, could offer a
8 map, any time they want, and it can come before
9 the Redistricting Committee and the House
10 Reapportionment Committee and the Senate any
11 time that it is proposed.

12 Similarly, we have had individual citizens
13 and interest groups already propose maps.
14 Yesterday when we were in Jacksonville during
15 the time we were at the hearing, there were
16 three maps that were proposed by groups in the
17 state of Florida.

18 Those all will be publicly available and
19 can be brought before committees at any time by
20 members of the committee or by members of the
21 Legislature or brought in testimony by
22 individual citizens or special interest groups,
23 and when I say special interest groups, I don't
24 mean it as a pejorative, but rather there are
25 people who are a part of groups that have a

1 special interest in this issue. Nothing wrong
2 with that. That is America.

3 So votes can begin as soon as proposals
4 are made. As Chairman Weatherford has
5 indicated, we are having hearings around the
6 state to hear from voters, but at the same time
7 maps are already being proposed. So if you
8 want to know where the maps are, you may go
9 on-line to either the House or Senate websites
10 and you will already see proposed maps that you
11 can begin to comment on, that you can point
12 out, here is what is right about it, here is
13 what is wrong about it, here is where it takes
14 into account our concerns, here is where it
15 fails to take into account our concerns, and
16 you can convey your information and your input
17 to the House or Senate Committees.

18 You as Speaker Designate Weatherford said,
19 will have the opportunity as all citizens will
20 to comment on any map, any proposal that comes
21 before any committee before any vote is taken
22 and we will, we will move with all dispatch to
23 do that as soon as we have heard from the
24 public and as soon as we have proposals in
25 front of us.

1 To end our session this morning, we are
2 fortunate to have the Chancellor of Flagler
3 College and the State Representative from this
4 area, Dr. Bill Proctor here.

5 Dr. Proctor, if you could make your way to
6 the microphone we would love to have you give
7 us the benediction this morning in political
8 terms, of course.

9 Dr. Bill Proctor. Thank you for allowing
10 us to be here, Dr. Proctor, in this beautiful
11 auditorium and on your outstanding and
12 picturesque campus and you are recognized for
13 any comments you wish to make, sir.

14 DR. PROCTOR: Thank you so much. I don't
15 think that I am professionally qualified to
16 give benedictions, but I do want to welcome
17 you, glad to have you here.

18 I wish I could have been with you earlier,
19 but we did have a little illness in the family
20 that delayed my arrival, but I am so glad to
21 have you on the campus and I appreciate you
22 taking the time to be with us.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Dr. Proctor,
24 and there being no business, Chairman
25 Weatherford moves we rise.

1 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
2 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 126 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 29th day of September, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2011
6:00 P.M.
SANTE FE COLLEGE
GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

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 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: My name is Don Gaetz. I
3 am Chairman of the Reapportionment Committee.
4 I serve five coastal counties in northwest
5 Florida, from Pensacola to Panama City, and
6 along with my -- with my colleague,
7 Representative Precourt, Chair Precourt, who is
8 here tonight, I will be chairing this evening's
9 meeting.

10 The meeting is being broadcast, webcast,
11 statewide by the Florida Channel over the
12 Internet, and podcasts will be available in
13 case you miss part of it, or in case you would
14 like to go back and relive part of it.

15 Those will be available to you on the
16 Internet. Our sole purpose tonight is to hear
17 from members of the public about how you
18 believe the legal standards governing
19 redistricting ought to be applied in your
20 community so that you are ably represented in
21 Washington and Tallahassee fairly, equitably
22 and sensibly.

23 Our procedures tonight are simple, but
24 important. It is important that you sign in so
25 that we can create an accurate public record of

1 all attendees and all speakers, and also you
2 may opt to join our e-mail lists so that we can
3 keep you informed as to the redistricting
4 process and how it is going forward.

5 If you have not signed in, we, and you
6 would like to speak or if you have not signed
7 in just period, we would hope you might raise
8 your hand and one of the House or Senate staff
9 members will come and give you a card. That
10 way if you choose to speak tonight we will be
11 able to have you in the stack and give you an
12 opportunity to have your opinions heard, which
13 is what we would like very much.

14 If you wish to speak tonight and have not
15 yet filled out an attendance card, we will get
16 you one so that you can be called on. We don't
17 want to miss your testimony.

18 It the same attendance card whether you
19 wish to speak or whether you just want to sit
20 and listen to your friends and neighbors give
21 their opinions.

22 Before we begin the Chair will recognize
23 Representative Precourt from the House of
24 Representatives.

25 This is a Joint House Senate hearing, and

1 Representative Precourt will explain how
2 today's hearing fits into the redistricting
3 process and schedule. Representative, you are
4 recognized.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, Chair
6 Gaetz. I appreciate the opportunity to be here
7 with all of you as well tonight. Again, my
8 name is Steve Precourt and I represent the
9 southwest side of the Orlando area, as well as
10 all of the citizens in the state of Florida in
11 the Florida Legislature and I am Vice-Chair of
12 the overall House Redistricting Committee.

13 That great staff that the Chairman
14 mentioned has also provided some notes to make
15 sure that we touch on all of the key points to
16 keep you informed of what the process is and
17 how we are going to go through it and I don't
18 miss anything.

19 As many of you know, every ten years our
20 Legislature is required by our State
21 Constitution to redistrict the state based on
22 increases, decreases and movements in
23 population.

24 Because Florida has grown more than the
25 other states around the country in the last ten

1 years, we are going to add, move up from 25 to
2 27 members of the U. S. House of
3 Representatives. So we will get two new
4 districts, and therefore, have to redraw the
5 congressional lines statewide.

6 Because some parts of our state have also
7 increased more or decreased to a degree,
8 disproportionately in population, many of the
9 Senate and House Districts that are within the
10 state, the numbers remain the same, 40 Senate
11 seats, 120 House seats, but many of those
12 boundaries will have to change either adding or
13 losing population to make sure that at the end
14 of the day they all still have the same
15 population within them.

16 When our redistricting process is
17 completed the Congressional Districts must be
18 equal in population and contain 696,345 people.
19 The 40 Senate Districts must also be nearly
20 equal, at about 470,000 people, and our 120
21 House Districts must also be nearly equal at
22 about 156,700 people.

23 Now, we have some displays that you saw as
24 you came in there in the back corner of the
25 room right over there, showing the current

1 boundaries, the current boundaries of the
2 Districts in this area of the state and the
3 number of persons in that table beside them
4 which must be added or subtracted from the
5 current Districts to achieve equal
6 representation, which is a requirement of law.

7 Equal representation though isn't the only
8 legal requirement that our redistricting plans
9 must met. The laws and important court cases
10 governing redistricting are explained in great
11 detail in the House and Senate websites.

12 Those websites are listed in the brochures
13 that you should have received on the way in and
14 that are available and if you need one, just
15 raise your hand and our staff will make sure
16 that you have that information.

17 The particular redistricting 2012 brochure
18 that you will get, summarizes Federal and State
19 laws and outlines topics that we hope you will
20 discuss here at today's hearing.

21 If you didn't get copy when you came in
22 and I see a whole bunch of folks' hands up
23 right now, if staff can't get them to you as
24 soon as you need them here, they are also
25 available outside on the tables.

1 The brochures also list the House and
2 Senate websites and that is a key piece of
3 information in today's world. These websites
4 have a tremendous amount of information about
5 redistricting in Florida, including explanation
6 of the laws, important court cases governing
7 redistricting, as well as a lot of the data and
8 the geographic information associated with the
9 process.

10 The two websites, the House website and
11 the Senate website, and they are separate ones,
12 are complimentary and they are updated
13 frequently. So visit both and check back
14 often, because it is a great way to stay
15 current with about how your new congressional
16 State Senate and State House Districts are
17 taking shape as we move forward.

18 Also on these websites you can get all of
19 the demographic information that will be used
20 from the 2010 Census in drawing the districts
21 and the exact same computer programs, I want to
22 reemphasize that, you as individuals have
23 access to the exact same computer programs that
24 our Legislators and professional staff are
25 going to use in drawing these maps.

1 Any member of the public can participate
2 in building plans or seeing maps that were
3 submitted by citizens, by special interest
4 groups, by Legislators, by whoever, all of the
5 maps that are submitted will be there available
6 for your review.

7 Now, before, during and after this hearing
8 our professional staff in the House and the
9 Senate will be available to show you how to use
10 this information as well.

11 If you need to know some of the simple
12 steps about getting on-line, building districts
13 with the district builder tool that we have on
14 there for drawing and building districts or
15 submitting a plan, they are available now.
16 They will be available by phone and over the
17 Internet for the rest of this process for you
18 to use.

19 Now, recommendations from citizens and
20 groups of citizens will be made publicly
21 available. So when you or your neighbors
22 submit something, it will be up there for
23 everyone to see.

24 In fact, there are a number of public
25 submissions that are already available on the

1 website and we received a couple more today at
2 this morning's meeting. We hope to see a few
3 more today.

4 The submission of these proposed maps that
5 makes sense for your community is, and I can't
6 emphasize this more strongly, the single most
7 effective form of public participation in the
8 redistricting process in my opinion.

9 That is because, like the old saying goes,
10 a picture paints a thousand words. You can
11 describe how, what the community is in words,
12 but as soon as you draw those lines, then we
13 have, aha, that clear picture of what you
14 intend for a particular district.

15 The schedule of the redistricting process
16 under which we are operating is imposed by our
17 State Constitution. The Constitution does not
18 permit us as Legislators to act on State
19 Legislative maps before the second year after
20 the decennial census. In other words, we can't
21 act on the 2010 redistricting until 2012.

22 However, we have accelerated the process
23 as much as we possibly can by moving up the
24 2012 legislative session from when we usually
25 meet in March and April, we have moved it up to

1 January and February.

2 In addition, we are beginning this
3 statewide process by holding these public
4 hearings five months in advance of that newly
5 accelerated 2012 session.

6 Now, it has been suggested by some that
7 the Legislature should draw maps first and then
8 ask the public to comment. Now, we believe
9 that puts the cart before the horse. That puts
10 the answer ahead of the question.

11 There really should be no preconceptions
12 created by politicians or anyone else about
13 what the redistricting maps should look like
14 before you, the public, have an opportunity to
15 tell us what your opinion is. To provide us
16 with that additional information on your
17 communities.

18 In fact, one of the principle authors in
19 Florida's new redistricting standards and the
20 Chairperson for fair districts campaign, they
21 are on record as in agreement with the notion
22 that new maps should not be drawn until after
23 the public has had the opportunity to provide
24 comment and input.

25 Now, our intent is to use the

1 recommendations made at these meetings, and
2 there is 20 -- there is going to be 26 of them
3 scheduled formally, and through our Internet
4 sites and through any other way that you send
5 us information, whether it is by Snail Mail or
6 handing us, handing it here tonight, we are
7 going to use that as the basis for developing
8 one or more options for district maps.

9 Once we have those options developed we
10 will discuss those options in additional public
11 meetings before any votes are taken as part of
12 the committee process that we will be starting
13 in September.

14 Now, throughout this process we will
15 continue, we will continue to solicit
16 additional public comment so that proposed maps
17 can develop and mature with the public engaged
18 and involved in that process, all before, well
19 before the Legislature actually approves any
20 final maps.

21 Now, whatever the Legislature passes will
22 then be submitted for judicial review to insure
23 that the final plans meet every legal
24 requirement.

25 Now, because our purpose today is to hear

1 from you, all the time between now and when we
2 adjourn at 9:00 will be used to ensure that
3 every member of the public who is here and
4 wishes to speak will have time to present
5 testimony and be listened to respectfully and
6 without interruption or argument.

7 Now, if every, if after every citizen that
8 is here has had his or her say there is still
9 any time remaining, any member of the committee
10 may make a statement or offer any observation
11 subject to Chair Gaetz' discretion, and of
12 course, any members of the Legislature at any
13 time could submit a map or proposed man and we
14 -- if they do, make that available to the
15 public on our website almost immediately for
16 your review as well.

17 Chair Gaetz, I hope that this description
18 or our schedule and the process sets the stage,
19 so to speak, for a successful public hearing
20 today.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Representative
22 Precourt. We have a large number of
23 individuals who want to speak tonight, and that
24 is great. We have a hearing that will last
25 three hours. We will adjourn promptly at 9:00

1 according to the public notice that we have
2 given for the hearing.

3 We have 58 people who have signed up to
4 speak so far. So let me be an advocate for
5 Dave Schneider. Dave Schneider so far is
6 number 58, and I think Mr. Schneider ought to
7 have the same chance as Ann stone, who is
8 number one.

9 And so, therefore, my hope is that
10 everybody will stick to and we have to do this
11 just to give everyone a chance. I hope that
12 you will stick to about two and-a-half minutes.
13 If you go to three minutes then Dave Schneider
14 won't have a chance to talk. So let's be an
15 advocate for Dave.

16 Now, before we begin, and I ask members to
17 be extraordinarily brief because of our time
18 tonight, please indicate so that the audience
19 will know who you are and what part of the
20 state you represent.

21 Let's start with Senator Thrasher on my
22 right.

23 SENATOR THRASHER: Hi, I am John Thrasher.
24 I represent Senate District 8 which includes
25 parts of Nassau, Duval, St. Johns, Flagler and

1 Volusia Counties.

2 SENATOR OELRICH: Hi, I am Steve Oelrich,
3 District 14, Senate District 14. I have half
4 of Lake City, all of Gainesville, half of
5 Ocala, over to Levy county and over to
6 Interlochen area, roughly a square box.

7 SENATOR EVERS: Hi, I am State, I mean, I
8 am State Senator Greg Evers. I represent
9 Senate District 2, which encompasses north
10 Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton,
11 Washington and Holmes counties.

12 REPRESENTATIVE DRAKE: Brad Drake
13 representing the Fifth House District,
14 panhandle of Florida. I am a graduate from the
15 University of Florida, and I represent
16 Okaloosa, Walton, Holmes, Washington and
17 Jackson Counties and I saw my Supervisor of
18 Elections here, Paul Lux, from Okaloosa County.

19 Paul, thank you for making the trip. We
20 look forward to tonight's proceedings.

21 SENATOR DEAN: Good evening, my name is
22 Charlie Dean, I am the District Senator
23 District 3. My district goes from Citrus,
24 Hernando County line and 98 and 19, to the
25 Baker and Duval County line, the Georgia line,

1 west to Monroe Street and the Capitol, the
2 largest district east of the Mississippi River.

3 SENATOR LYNN: Good evening, I am Senator
4 Evelyn Lynn. I represent District 7, and I
5 have large parts of Volusia, Clay, Marion and
6 Putnam Counties, and thank you all for being
7 here.

8 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good evening
9 everyone, my name is John Patrick Julien. I
10 represent House District 104, which is in Miami
11 Dade County, and earlier today after the
12 meeting that we had in The Villages I had a
13 pleasant conversation with several members of
14 the Citrus County Democratic Party, and they
15 recommended that each one of us mention our
16 party affiliation.

17 So keeping in light with that spirit, I am
18 a member of the Democratic Party.

19 REPRESENTATIVE KIAR: Hello, everybody, my
20 name is Martin Kiar. I represent District 97
21 in the Florida House of Representatives, which
22 is located solely within Brevard County,
23 Florida. Thank you all so much for coming out
24 tonight.

25 SENATOR ALTMAN: Thad Altman, Senate

1 District 24, which is east central Florida,
2 Brevard, Orange and Seminole County.

3 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Mack Bernard,
4 State Representative from West Palm Beach,
5 Florida, and a graduate of the University of
6 Florida College of Law.

7 SENATOR MONTFORD: I am Bill Montford,
8 State Senator, District 6, which is all or part
9 of 11 counties, including, Leon, Tallahassee,
10 and the surrounding counties. Glad to be here.
11 Thank you for being here.

12 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good evening,
13 I am State Representative Gwyndolen Clarke-Reed
14 representing House District 92 in Broward
15 County, the northeast quadrant. I represent
16 seven cities in that area.

17 REPRESENTATIVE JONES: Good evening, I am
18 State Representative Mia Jones from
19 Jacksonville, representing District 14.

20 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good evening,
21 Hazelle Rogers, State Representative for
22 District 94 in Broward County. The county that
23 boast 1.8 million residents, the most adverse
24 county in Broward County, representing eight
25 cities. Thank you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Good evening,
2 Representative Jim Boyd from District 68 which
3 is Manatee County, down south of Tampa Bay.
4 Thank you for being here tonight.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Representative
6 Kathleen Passidomo from Collier County. I
7 represent the City of Naples, Marco Islands,
8 Everglades city. Thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: Hi, I am
10 Representative Dana Young, and I represent the
11 City of Tampa and parts of Hillsborough County.
12 Thank you for being here.

13 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Good evening,
14 Matt Caldwell, Representative of District 73
15 down in Lee County, Ft. Myers, but born here at
16 Shands Medical Hospital.

17 REPRESENTATIVE BEMBRY: Leonard Bembry,
18 District 10. I represent all or part of ten
19 small counties in north central Florida, that
20 is including Jefferson, Madison, Hamilton,
21 Taylor, Dixie, Levy, Franklin, Wakulla. So we
22 have a lot of good people in this part of the
23 world.

24 SENATOR HAYS: I am Alan Hays, I represent
25 Senate District 20 which is parts of Volusia,

1 Seminole, Lake, Marion and Sumter Counties, and
2 one proud graduate of the University of Florida
3 College of Dentistry, charter class.

4 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good evening,
5 everyone, my name is Dwayne Taylor. I
6 represent House District 27 which is in Volusia
7 County, and I represent six cities in Volusia
8 County. Thank you for coming.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thank you. I am
10 Dennis Baxley, Florida House District 24,
11 Ocala, Marion County. Thank you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE LOGAN: Anna Rivas Logan,
13 Miami Dade County, House District 114, and I,
14 too, am a proud Gator, College of Engineering
15 and both my daughter and my son-in-law are both
16 Gators.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PORTER: Hi, Elizabeth
18 Porter, District 11, represent all or part of
19 Alachua, Suwannee, Gilchrist, Lafayette, a
20 little tiny bit of Dixie, part of here. So
21 happy to be here.

22 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Hi, my name is
23 Janet Adkins. I represent House District 12,
24 which is Nassau, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Union
25 and Duval Counties.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PERRY: My name is Keith
2 Perry. I represent parts of Alachua, Levy and
3 Marion Counties and it gives me the distinct
4 honor and privilege to be your Representative
5 for some of you in this room. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good afternoon,
7 Chuck Chestnut, representing a portion of
8 Alachua County, Marion County, House District
9 23. Again, thank you all for coming and I
10 would like you all to help me welcome the
11 Legislature here to Gainesville and Alachua
12 County. And thank you for coming.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: All right, we have now
14 picked up seven more people, and now Michael
15 Bowie is number 70. So now we are going to, in
16 order to be fair to Mr. Bowie and make sure
17 everybody has a chance to speak we would like
18 to, we would like to move quickly.

19 Here is what we would like to do. You
20 will speak from there. So if Ann Stone will
21 come forward, followed by James Elland, Fred
22 Pratt, and James, I think it is Desjardin, and
23 those seats there will be on the deck seats.

24 So Ann Stone will speak first and then
25 Mr. Elland and Mr. Pratt and Mr. Desjardin if I

1 get that name correctly, if you will be on the
2 on deck circle we can move quickly.

3 And I apologize to you, but in order to be
4 fair to everyone who wants to speak, I would
5 ask that we hold our remarks as briefly as we
6 can. If somebody has already said what you
7 have said, you know, you don't have to feel
8 constrained to say it begin, and I know we all
9 want to express our views and our feelings
10 about our speakers, but the more we applaud or
11 boo or anything else, that takes time away from
12 the people who are at the back end.

13 So let's get started, and Ms. Stone, you
14 are recognized for two and-a-half minutes.

15 MS. STONE: Hi, I am very nervous so I
16 have written out what I want to say.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are doing fine.

18 MS. STONE: My name is Ann Stone and we
19 live in Newberry, we have been there for 12
20 years. I want to thank you for this
21 opportunity to tell you how important the
22 redistricting is to my husband and me.

23 As you have guessed, we are retired and
24 that means Social Security. It is very
25 important to us to be able to communicate face

1 to face with those who represent us.

2 Steve Oelrich's district is perfect. We
3 don't have to use a week's allowance of gas to
4 meet with him. I believe that is the way it
5 should be for everyone. Thank you very much.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Stone, and
7 next, James Elland.

8 MR. ELLAND: My name is James Elland.
9 First I would just like to say, thank you for
10 actually coming, and actually listening to us,
11 instead of a lot of the people in the County
12 Commission that we dealt with last night, they
13 want to argue with us and not try to move
14 anything, but we do want to thank you for
15 coming, and that is all I have to say.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
17 Mr. Pratt, you are recognized, sir. Thank you
18 for coming.

19 MR. PRATT: Is it on?

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Yes, sir.

21 MR. PRATT: Thank you for being here. I
22 am really kind of puzzled, you know, there are
23 no maps. I mean, how are we supposed to make
24 -- how are you supposed to talk about things
25 when there is no maps, and I am really in favor

1 of the Fair Districts Florida plan which is
2 continuous districts that encompass a county, a
3 city.

4 Don't break up the county like you have
5 Alachua County where Alachua County is in, some
6 of it is in one district and some of it is in
7 another district and the same with Gainesville.
8 I mean, that is only fair. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Pratt, for
10 that good testimony. And I apologize, James
11 Desjardin, followed by John Reiskind from the
12 Alachua County Democratic Party, and then Dr.
13 Gunnar Paulson is on deck, and I, if I have
14 butchered your name, sir, I apologize.

15 MR. DESJARDIN: That is close enough. My
16 name is Jim Desjardin or Desjardin, and I am a
17 member of the League of Women Voters in this
18 county, and also a member of the Democratic
19 Party.

20 And along with many, many other people I
21 work very hard to get this amendment, well,
22 first of all, to get the amendment on and then
23 to get it passed, and I am here to plead that
24 you will perhaps follow the law and make
25 compact contiguous districts rather than having

1 them a yard wide and 200 miles long to pick up
2 parties, people from your party.

3 I think that the district should choose
4 the Representatives and not the different --
5 the Representatives pick out the voters they
6 would like to have voting for them.

7 So please, we could do a much better job
8 if we had maps that we could comment on, that
9 really is your job. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, thank you so
11 much for that testimony, John. I think it is
12 Reiskind from the Alachua County Democratic
13 Party, and then Dr. Gunnar Paulson, and then
14 Roy Abshien, you are recognized, thank you for
15 being here tonight, sir.

16 MR. REISKIND: Sure, the name is Reiskind.
17 I wanted to go into a little history of
18 gerrymandering, which the change of our State
19 Constitution is going to make a lot more
20 difficult and hopefully ban.

21 There may be, there may often be good
22 idealistic reasons to produce geographically
23 distorted districts, but they are still
24 distortions and I wanted to talk about the very
25 first case of this in America that I believe

1 took place 25 years before Governor Jerry of
2 Massachusetts imposed such a districting plan
3 in his state and gave the name gerrymandering
4 to gerrymandering.

5 The perpetrator was the Governor of
6 Virginia, Patrick Henry. He was strongly
7 opposed to the new U.S. Constitution which he
8 felt could lead to a monarchy, a Constitution
9 that took too many rights away from the states.
10 A Constitution that did not have provision to
11 protect many of the rights of citizens. He was
12 considered at the time an anti Federalist.

13 Now, James Madison, the father of our
14 Constitution, was a Federalist who promised
15 that he would do his best to add as amendments
16 a Bill of Rights to the Constitution, but
17 Henry, Governor Henry was skeptical and blocked
18 Madison's Senatorial aspirations.

19 So James Madison decided to run for
20 Congress in 1789, the very first Congress.
21 Governor Henry then gerrymandered the first
22 Congressional District of Virginia, putting in
23 all of the anti Federalist counties he could,
24 in addition to the home county of James
25 Madison, and found a former tall General to run

1 against him by the name of James Monroe, but
2 Madison campaigned very hard.

3 It was in February, it was cold, and
4 Madison was a very slight, he was shorter than
5 I was, am, and he won that race in spite of
6 Patrick Henry's gerrymandering.

7 He fulfilled his promise, as politicians
8 should, and we have our Bill of Rights today.
9 So this is just a little story about I think
10 the dangers of gerrymandering.

11 Now we have for the first time criteria to
12 apply to redistricting, that we have neutral
13 districts, that they are compact, et cetera, as
14 in our amendments to the Constitution.

15 It should make our elected Legislators
16 more responsive to the communities they serve.
17 Maps would, of course, help us at this process,
18 but I understand your introduction.

19 This process, if done properly, will be a
20 very good thing. It is time to stop, to end
21 the distortions, whether it is to keep
22 incumbents in office, or to put as many of one
23 party into as few districts as possible.

24 I urge you to do your legal duty and do
25 your best this coming year. Thank you very

1 much.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, thank you for
3 some of that great background. And now
4 Dr. Gunnar Paulson, followed by Roy Abshien,
5 and then Robert Jordan would be next.
6 Dr. Paulson, thank you for being here.

7 DR. PAULSON: Thank you for being here
8 tonight. It is interesting what John was
9 talking about gerrymandering because you are
10 sitting in a county that is the epitomy of
11 gerrymandering.

12 Here we are in a county of a quarter of a
13 million people and we have four pieces of four
14 Representatives in the House. That is
15 gerrymandering. So I think the other thing is
16 about the maps, I disagree with you. If I was
17 going to do something I would have had maps
18 first.

19 I know when I had to write my dissertation
20 I didn't just -- I didn't just go around and
21 write it in pieces, I wrote it and then I had a
22 draft and then I corrected it from there, but
23 if you can't have the maps tonight, what really
24 needs to be done, and I would like you to think
25 about this.

1 I think you should give us a deadline that
2 you do have maps. Don't give us maps next
3 June. Don't give us maps at the end of the
4 legislative session. You could say you could
5 have maps to be ready in January. You could
6 say that you have maps that are debated and
7 given to us this fall and I hope you take that
8 into consideration, because I don't think then
9 if you say no to that, I don't think your
10 argument would be logical or valid what you are
11 giving to us tonight if you don't give it to
12 us.

13 The next thing is, you know, I looked at
14 this about setting boundaries. If you look at
15 Alachua County, Alachua County, like I said,
16 has a quarter of a million people, but we are
17 really unique in that we have 215,000 people in
18 the urban area.

19 I live right next door here. I don't live
20 in the City of Gainesville, but our urban area
21 has 215,000 people, and if you look at the map,
22 Marion County has 331,000 people. They have
23 three seats down there and two of them just
24 filled in their district and then you have
25 parts in ours.

1 We could have two full seats here, and I
2 hope that takes into consideration, or you can
3 look at, I was looking at it, it took me five
4 minutes to do this. I looked at us in
5 Gilchrist County and Levy county, there is
6 635,000 people, five seats are 650,000 people.

7 You have boundaries of four counties, you
8 have the river, Santa Fe and the Suwannee
9 river. These are the kinds of things that I
10 hope you look at.

11 Now, one of the last things is, I have got
12 all of my degrees from the University of
13 Florida and I am glad we have so many Florida
14 graduates up there. If you really care about
15 the University of Florida, and we need to be
16 guaranteed representation in this county and
17 this city.

18 We don't need to have parts of just all of
19 these different places where we have our seats,
20 and I hope you take that into consideration,
21 because it is the flagship University, we are
22 the major urban center in north central
23 Florida, and I hope we do have that, it is all
24 taken into consideration and I am a proponent
25 of the fair districts and for what that is, you

1 are trying to keep political and natural
2 boundaries and it is contiguous. I think I
3 have given you all of these when I spoke to
4 you.

5 Again, I appreciate it. I hope that you
6 can take it again, the last thing I want to
7 leave you with is, please, set a deadline for
8 the maps. Even if you have, if you feel like
9 you are entitled and not giving us maps
10 tonight, you don't need to give us maps in
11 April. You don't need to give us maps in May.

12 Set a deadline, let us know so that we
13 really can have an input. Again, thank you for
14 coming here tonight and I appreciate you
15 listening to us, and go Gators.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you,
17 Dr. Paulson. And Dr. Paulson, just so you
18 would know, just as a factual matter, there is
19 absolutely no prohibition to any maps being
20 introduced by any Legislator as soon as today.

21 So, you know, there is certainly no
22 requirement that maps be introduced late in the
23 process. They can be introduced today. In
24 fact, we have maps now that are on the website
25 that have been proposed.

1 Ray Abshien and then next, Robert Jordan
2 and following Mr. Jordan, Goldie Schwartz from
3 the Sierra Club.

4 Ray Abshien, you are recognized, and
5 thanks so much for coming tonight.

6 MR. ABSHIEN: Yes, sir, thank you,
7 Mr. Chairman, that is Roy Abshien. Before I
8 read this, for reasons that will be obvious, I
9 want to tell you who the signatories are on
10 this letter.

11 It is Reginald Landers, Jr.,
12 Vice-Chairman, Marion County Democrat Executive
13 Committee, and Roy Abshien, Chairman of the
14 Marion County Republican Executive Committee.

15 Mr. Chairman, on behalf of our Marion
16 County community, thank you for the opportunity
17 to address you and the committee members and to
18 provide input on this most important
19 redistricting process.

20 We implore you to consider the
21 significance of Marion County and its five
22 municipalities of Ocala, Bellview, Dunellen,
23 McIntosh, and Redding, as a designated
24 community of interest in your redistricting
25 process.

1 With the explosive growth over the past
2 ten years, and a current population of over
3 330,000 people, Marion County's land mass of
4 over 1,660 square miles makes us the fourth
5 largest county in Florida.

6 While we acknowledge and appreciate the
7 exceptional public service and I want to pause
8 here, there are four, we are blessed to have
9 four Senators and they are all on stage tonight
10 and we thank you for the job you are doing for
11 us.

12 While we acknowledge and appreciate these
13 folks, the public service of all of our
14 legislative delegation under present
15 conditions, we have only one member out of the
16 seven members that is from Marion County.

17 While all have been attentive, their
18 primary seat of interest is in another
19 community, and we have not yet had a Senator
20 from Marion County in over 20 years.

21 The county is currently divided into four
22 separate Senate Districts with each
23 representing only a portion of our community.

24 It is imperative that Marion County have
25 contiguous representation whenever possible.

1 These fractured districts preclude our ability
2 to speak with one voice as a community.

3 In addition, the current district
4 configuration has created a logistical hardship
5 in advancing our community issues and needs to
6 the Legislature.

7 The time to act is now. We, the citizens
8 of Marion County, together, speak as one voice
9 on this redistricting issue. Please assure
10 that our voices heard by giving us compact,
11 contiguous and equitable legislative
12 representation. Our economic vitality, our
13 prosperity and quality of life, our very future
14 is at stake.

15 Respectively submitted again, Reginald
16 Landers, Jr., Vice-Chairman, Marion County
17 Democratic Executive Committee, and Roy
18 Abshien, Chairman of the Marion County
19 Republican Executive Committee. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Great bi-partisan
21 comments. Thank you. Robert Jordan is next,
22 and following Mr. Jordan, Goldie Schwartz, and
23 then Anna Jordan is next after Goldie Schwartz.

24 Mr. Jordan, thank you for being here
25 tonight. We look forward to your testimony.

1 MR. JORDAN: Thank you. My name is Robert
2 Jordan. I am a retired attorney and by the
3 way, Anna Jordan will not be speaking.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you. Okay.

5 MR. JORDAN: My comments will be brief. I
6 am concerned about the constitutionality of
7 redistricting. You base your redistricting on
8 the U.S. Census which counts all of the
9 population of the state of Florida regardless
10 of citizenship.

11 Therefore, some districts are based on
12 people who are not legally allowed to be here
13 and are not legally allowed to vote.
14 Therefore, the people who legally can vote get
15 more representation than counties and areas
16 where everybody there is basically legally
17 there.

18 Instances of south Florida, Dade and
19 Broward County have a substantial amount of
20 representation. They also have a substantial
21 amount of illegal aliens. That is
22 unconstitutional.

23 I doubt that there is anything that you
24 can or will do about that, because you have to
25 base your numbers on the U. S. Census, but it

1 is not fair to counties like Levy County where
2 I am from, because we get less representation.
3 That is unconstitutional. Thank you very much.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Jordan,
5 and next, Goldie Schwartz and following Goldie
6 Schwartz, Darlene, I think it is P-i-F-a-l-o,
7 and then Adelia Vachon, Vachon, is that right?

8 Ms. Schwartz, you are recognized. Thank
9 you for coming tonight.

10 MS. SCHWARTZ: Thank you so much for
11 coming here, too, and it was kind of a last
12 minute thing that I came and obviously from the
13 previous speakers, I didn't do a lot of
14 homework.

15 All I came to represent is my favor to
16 what the citizens passed, which was Amendment V
17 and VI, and I want you to, recommend that you
18 follow the actual language that was presented.

19 And I also would like to recommend that
20 cities not be separated, and I agree with a lot
21 of what the previous speakers have said about
22 natural areas, natural cities, boundaries being
23 kept as you are in the process of
24 redistricting. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,

1 Ms. Schwartz. And now, is it Darlene, I
2 apologize, PiFalo, is that correct?

3 MS. PIFALO: Yes.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. PiFalo,
5 and then Adella Vachon is next, and then
6 Rosalie, I am not even going to try. We are
7 just going to call you Rosalie from the League
8 of Women Voters.

9 MS. PIFALO: Thank you, and that was a
10 very good pronunciation, but I go by Darlene.
11 Thank you for being here. It is an honor to
12 have you all sit and listen to us.

13 I was listening, when I was listening to
14 people and trying to figure out why am I here,
15 and I think about our Constitution, but someone
16 just brought up something, I won't take long,
17 but the Census.

18 I thought that was very interesting,
19 because I have been, I am a realtor, I have
20 been a realtor for 38 years in the state of
21 Florida, but with the Census it brought
22 something to mind, because actually the Census
23 takers, I called the National Association of
24 Real Attorneys, the Florida Association of
25 Realtors on this, because the Census, when

1 taking the Census, they were calling realtors
2 to ask them how many people lived in that
3 house.

4 And I took the liberty of saying I don't
5 have a right to tell you that, because I think
6 it would have skewed the numbers of the Census
7 and if they were doing it all over the country,
8 it frightens me that that is what they were
9 doing, because I didn't know if I had a house
10 listed, if there were five people in there, ten
11 people in there, or nobody in there.

12 So that kind of concerned me when the
13 Census was being taken. So I just want to
14 leave you with that question in your mind.
15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Very good point. Thank
17 you very much. Ms. Vachon, is it Vachon,
18 ma'am? Thank you very much and we look forward
19 to your testimony. Rosalie, you are on deck,
20 and then Jean Calderwood, would you please be
21 ready?

22 MS. VACHON: Yes, I am Adella Vachon and I
23 also live in Levy County and near the city of
24 Williston and that is one of the points I want
25 to make.

1 When you are talking about how lines are
2 drawn, my understanding is that right down
3 Noble Avenue, which is down the center of
4 Williston, one side is one district and the
5 other side is the other district.

6 And so obviously that is not a very
7 unified district in, group in that district
8 because you have one Representative on one side
9 of the street and the other one on the other
10 side. So it is a little hard for them to speak
11 for everybody if they are halfway divided.

12 So I think one of the things we need to
13 look at is to make sure that these are drawn
14 fair and equitable, so everybody has fair
15 representation regardless of whether it is a
16 political party, regardless of minority group
17 or whatever they are, all of us should be able
18 to be represented.

19 So I think that going along with the idea
20 of gerrymandering and all you have to do is to
21 look at our maps in color and it is very
22 obvious that what we have been dealing with
23 since 2000, there is a lot of gerrymandering in
24 Florida.

25 I think they should be contiguous, they

1 should be compact if it is possible. Honor
2 city lines, honor county lines to get your
3 people in a group so you are not dividing
4 cities, you are not dividing counties.

5 They have alluded to this, the County of
6 Alachua has four different districts, it should
7 never be like that. They should be able to
8 speak with one voice for that city.

9 It reminds me of a child playing baseball,
10 and Papa becomes the coach so the kid can play
11 even though he is not a good player. We go out
12 and we draw these lines so regardless of what,
13 you know, what you are doing, you are just
14 really not up to par representing everybody
15 equally, and I don't think that should be.

16 And this needs to be done in a timely
17 manner. As I understand that your maps can't
18 be out until 2012. Okay, that is fine, but
19 let's get them done because if you don't get
20 them done and then they have to be signed off
21 on by the Florida Supreme Court, they have to
22 be signed off by the Department of Justice.

23 My question to you is, what if they get
24 signed off by the Florida Supreme Court and
25 they go up and they don't get signed off by the

1 Justice Department and we are already up to
2 May, because you have to declare for your -- if
3 you are going to be a candidate to run in June.

4 So where is your time going to be to
5 redraw those and for people to know,
6 particularly in your Congressional Districts
7 when you are adding two districts. There are
8 people now in their districts, as you said,
9 they change in the population.

10 Somebody that is representing a district
11 may no longer live in the district they are
12 currently representing, and one map I want to
13 show you in particular, and we are up here in
14 the rural area, and I know that Representative
15 Bembry, if you look at his district, and if you
16 look at Senator Dean's district, all you have
17 to do is look at their districts in these
18 colored matches and you understand the
19 territory they cover.

20 How on earth can they represent people
21 over such an area? There isn't any way
22 possible they can ever meet with all of these
23 people in their district or even a very low
24 percentage of them.

25 But look at our Congressional District 6

1 and tell me this isn't gerrymandering.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Could somebody assist Ms.
3 Vachon to hold that up so that the audience can
4 see it? And Ms. Vachon, I would like to ask
5 you, just because of the large number of people
6 behind you, if you could wrap it up, please.

7 MS. VACHON: Yes, I am going to with this.
8 Look at the yellow, that is Congressional
9 District 6.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Yes.

11 MS. VACHON: I think it is very obvious
12 there has been gerrymandering there, and I have
13 other maps that show that --

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
15 ma'am, for your testimony. Thank you. And
16 just as a point of factual information, the
17 people who are on this stage didn't draw maps
18 and then run on the maps they drew.

19 Actually somebody else drew the maps in
20 the districts we had to run in. So we
21 understand that.

22 And now we would like to hear from
23 Rosalie, and Rosalie, out of curiosity, can you
24 help me with your last name?

25 BANDYODHYAY: Sure, absolutely. I am

1 Rosalie Bandyopadhyay, that is how you say my
2 name, Bandyopadhyay.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Bandyopadhyay.

4 MS. BANDYOPADHYAY: Uh-huh, perfect.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Got it, thank you very
6 much, and thanks for being here on behalf of
7 the League tonight.

8 MS. BANDYOPADHYAY: Thank you. I am a
9 member of the League of Women Voters for 37
10 years, and our members, we have about the first
11 three rows here, we are sitting all front and
12 center, and we would like to welcome you all to
13 Alachua County, Gainesville, on behalf of the
14 League and welcome to Gator country.

15 There is a great deal of interest and
16 concern in our area, as you hear, about the
17 redistricting process. As the Legislature
18 makes one of the most important decisions of
19 the decade, apportionment of legislative and
20 congressional lines.

21 Throughout these hearings you have been
22 hearing from citizens and League members about
23 how upset they are that the state of Florida is
24 spending taxpayer money to go to court to try
25 and invalidate the will of 63 percent of the

1 voters, 3.1 million, who voted in favor of the
2 Fair Districts Amendments in November.

3 Some have said that you are not spending
4 money to invalidate the will of the voters, but
5 that you have simply joined the lawsuit in
6 order to clarify how the amendments impact the
7 Federal Voting Rights Act.

8 As a long time resident of this area and a
9 past League president, I need to state that
10 this statement is contrary to the facts. I
11 have here the complaint and other legal papers
12 that have been filed by Gray Robinson of
13 Speaker Cannon's previous law firm on behalf of
14 the House.

15 Nowhere in these legal papers is there any
16 request for clarification as some of you have
17 said, that it is only for clarification, and in
18 fact the only thing the House is asking in
19 these papers for the Court to do is invalidate
20 Amendment VI by ruling it unconstitutional, and
21 I quote from these.

22 "Wherefore, the House of Representatives
23 respectfully request."

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Let's let Rosalie talk,
25 please.

1 MS. BANDYOPADHYAY: Thank you. I am just
2 reading, quoting from here. "Wherefore, the
3 House of Representatives respectfully request
4 the Court to declare the Amendment facially
5 unconstitutional under the election clause of
6 the United States Constitution." This
7 specifically as it is addressed here is Article
8 1, section (4), clause 1 of the U.S.
9 Constitution.

10 Misrepresentation of the purpose of this
11 lawsuit gives the League members and the League
12 of Women Voters of Florida grave concern and
13 should be of concern to every Florida citizen.

14 So we now ask this committee and the
15 Legislature to drop the lawsuit, stop spending
16 taxpayer dollars for it, follow the law of the
17 land and let's get to work on drawing these
18 maps. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very. Jean
20 Calderwood is next, Ms. Calderwood. And
21 following Ms. Calderwood, Alton Hines and
22 following Alton Hines, Alex Patton.

23 Ms. Calderwood, thank you for being here.
24 We look forward to your testimony.

25 MS. CALDERWOOD: Thank you, and thank each

1 and everyone of you for being here. We know
2 that a lot of you are far away from your homes
3 and this has been a very tedious and laborious
4 project that is again important for the future
5 generations of the state of Florida of Florida,
6 so we appreciate you being here and listening
7 to us.

8 I can tell you that I proudly served as
9 the Mayor of the City of Alachua, which
10 compared to Gainesville, we are the next
11 largest city in Alachua County, but even though
12 we only boast about 10,000 people, I formally
13 served about four years as Mayor and seven
14 years on the Commission.

15 And even though we are a small proud rural
16 community, we did end or act very much with the
17 urban areas and our representation with the
18 House and the Senate from the State standpoint
19 and Congressional standpoint, our interaction
20 there often meant that we had to make sure that
21 the voice of the rural folks was heard.

22 When you start looking at Amendment V and
23 Amendment VI and the compactness and the
24 contiguous lines around counties and city
25 borders, we don't want to sacrifice the vote or

1 the voice of the rural folks that are out
2 there.

3 If you will look at the City of Alachua,
4 we are 46 square miles. When you look at an
5 area, that sounds like a pretty decent amount
6 of land, but when you are competing with urban
7 areas, and that is the case throughout the
8 state of Florida, the rural concerns and the
9 rural needs can be very much different from
10 those in the urban areas.

11 We want all districts to be fair. We want
12 everyone to be represented. We want every
13 voice to be heard and every vote to count, but
14 let's not sacrifice those that cross county
15 lines into rural areas.

16 An example would be the legislation last
17 year that had to do with septic tanks in the
18 state of Florida. That was an issue that
19 probably didn't bother anybody at all in Miami,
20 Florida. It probably didn't bother a lot of
21 people in Jacksonville, but in the
22 unincorporated areas of many counties, that
23 became a very expensive contentious issue and
24 some of our Representatives, where they crossed
25 rural lines, heard that voice. So that

1 representation was extremely important,
2 Representative Porter, some of our people,
3 Representative Chestnut, Senator Oelrich from
4 these areas know, Representative Perry, know
5 firsthand what that means.

6 So we ask when you look at the appeal to
7 be compact and contiguous, don't exclude your
8 rural people from those lines. Don't set a
9 line that is going to make their voice not
10 heard when there is legislation enacted,
11 statewide or in the Congress. Thank you very
12 much.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you for
14 your service to your community. Next is Alton
15 Hines, please, and following Alton Hines, Alex
16 Patton and we have a very large number of
17 speakers.

18 So please, in deference to your friends
19 and neighbors, if somebody said it before,
20 maybe, maybe you can just say ditto, but
21 Mr. Hines, we are delighted to have you here
22 and look forward to what you have to say.

23 MR. HINES: Thank you very much for
24 allowing us this opportunity. I represent the
25 Columbia County Republican Executive Committee

1 and I would like to speak to you for just a
2 moment on our thoughts and views on the issue
3 before us.

4 In Columbia County, it has a population of
5 about 67,000 people, yet we have got four
6 Representatives in Tallahassee, and I guess you
7 could say that would be, that would be good,
8 but at the same time, we would prefer to see
9 Columbia County whole in a state and in the
10 State Senate and also in the State House of
11 Representatives.

12 I know that U. S. 90 is a good line of
13 demarcation for dividing the districts in half,
14 but at the same time, it is not necessarily
15 good for the citizens of Columbia County.

16 Columbia County takes our politics and our
17 politicking very seriously with a series of
18 rallies where we invite both the Democrats and
19 the Republicans to speak before the -- those
20 who come, and we will have in excess of 100 to
21 150 people come out on five or six different
22 nights all throughout the county.

23 And if Columbia county was all in one
24 State Senate seat, then we would be able to
25 have our Representative there all of the time

1 for all of the districts, for all of the
2 different precincts.

3 You know, the other issue that comes to
4 mind is the excess work that multiple Senate
5 and House seats puts on the Supervisor of
6 Election's Office, particularly when it comes
7 to tabulating the votes.

8 It delays the announcement of the final
9 results, but it also just puts additional work
10 on the Supervisor as far as training poll
11 workers and educating the public.

12 It is very often in Columbia County that
13 we have voters who are disappointed because for
14 one reason or the other they show up at the
15 wrong poll, and they try to vote in the wrong
16 district. If everybody was in the same
17 district, that problem would not exist.

18 And the other issue -- okay, I thank you
19 very much. To summarize, I could say we would
20 like it say that we would like to see the State
21 districts and the Senate seats all contiguous.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much.
23 Next, Alex Patton, followed by Robert Hoffer
24 from the American Postal Workers Union, and
25 behind Mr. Hoffer, Kathy Kidder, another

1 representative of League of Women Voters.

2 Mr. Patton.

3 MR. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My
4 name is Alex Patton, I have been following the
5 redistricting debates since 1990, when I worked
6 on my very first campaign and I do not envy the
7 complex process that all of you are going
8 through.

9 In fact, I am starting to question who
10 each one of you individually made angry so that
11 you drew this short straw. However, we welcome
12 you to Gainesville and we are glad that you are
13 allowing us to have our input into this very
14 valuable process.

15 I am afraid that this process may be even
16 made more difficult with the Fair Districts
17 Amendments that were passed last year.

18 Obviously, fair districts are something
19 that sound like a really good thing. However,
20 and again, who wouldn't want these districts to
21 be drawn fairly? But at the end of the day I
22 just don't understand the language used in the
23 Amendment and exactly what they are trying to
24 intend to do.

25 For example, the law says these districts

1 may not be drawn with the intent to favor or
2 disfavor the incumbent or political party.
3 That language in itself is problematic.

4 It is like saying something is pink or
5 unpink. Now, I am a pretty bright guy. I went
6 to the University of Florida, and I don't know
7 what in the hell that means. So, again, I wish
8 you well. These laws, themselves, make
9 absolutely no sense to me, and I think that
10 that is the kind of confusion that these types
11 of rules and these types of amendments that are
12 passed that are feel good amendments that are
13 going to certainly lead me to not envy the task
14 that all of you are undertaking.

15 So I do thank you all very much for your
16 patience and your ability to listen to all of
17 us, and my only hope is, is that I wish you the
18 best of luck in drawing these maps.

19 However, I want you to pay particular
20 attention to protect our right to equally
21 proportional districts and there are strong
22 arguments made by minority participation in the
23 districts in the way that they are drawn, and
24 also something that respects the Voting Rights
25 Act of 1965. Thank you all very much, and I

1 wish you well.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, sir. Robert
3 Hoffer, and following Mr. Hoffer, Kathy Kidder
4 and then Laurie Newsom.

5 Mr. Hoffer, thank you for being here on
6 behalf of the Postal Workers Union. We look
7 forward to anything you might have to share
8 with us.

9 MR. HOFFER: Well, I appreciate the
10 opportunity to address the gathering here, and
11 I was going to go on a tirade about how this is
12 costing a lot of money and there is no maps.

13 So what are we talking about, but although
14 it is an expensive exercise in public
15 interaction with their Legislators, I won't get
16 into that.

17 I do appreciate the difficulty that you
18 are having. I know that maps are being drawn.
19 I mean, that anybody that sits here and thinks
20 that there aren't maps being drawn is pretty
21 naive.

22 And the previous speaker was talking about
23 how contiguous and just wants to be fair. I
24 know that as an objective person, when I look
25 at some of these districts, they look awfully

1 strange, and as an objective person, they don't
2 seem right.

3 It just seems like they have been drawn up
4 with a particular purpose in mind, and I won't
5 get into that, but we felt like there is
6 something needed to be done, that it just had
7 gotten out of hand, and that is why the
8 Amendments passed, and overwhelmingly.

9 So for our Legislature to be fighting it
10 and be hiring a legal team to be fighting it is
11 unconstitutional, you know, it is kind of hard
12 to swallow by most people.

13 The speaker did say something about how
14 you could contact these people by e-mail or
15 Snail Mail. Sir, Snail Mail goes pretty dang
16 fast compared to the Legislature and the postal
17 service is very secure.

18 As far as voting, I would like for
19 everyone to consider that vote by mail would
20 reduce the cost of a lot of -- the cost
21 incurred by the Supervisors of Elections and it
22 would make it where even people that are in
23 these big huge areas, it would make it easier
24 for them to get their votes cast and counted.

25 The mail is secure, it is inexpensive,

1 hopefully we will still be around for years
2 more to come and deliver your ballots by mail.
3 Thank you for my opportunity --

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, and you get
5 the prize for the best one liner of the night
6 so far. And you are right, maps are being
7 drawn, there is about a dozen of them on the
8 websites now. Thank you, Mr. Hoffer.

9 Kathy Kidder, also from the League of
10 Women Voters, followed by Laurie Newsom and
11 then Nicholas Wilson and Ron Gonzalez, if you
12 will be ready as well. Ms. Kidder, thank you
13 so much for being here.

14 MS. KIDDER: Thank you. I am here to say
15 on behalf of the League that voters are
16 ill-served by the timeline you have set for
17 redistricting. The Legislature plans to adopt
18 redistricting maps in March, at the end of the
19 legislative session.

20 That is too late. Potential candidates
21 won't know the boundaries of the new districts
22 in time to effectively campaign and voters will
23 hardly have a chance to get to know the
24 candidates before fall elections.

25 One could think that this whole process is

1 simply designed to protect incumbents. Is
2 there an alternative? Of course. Other states
3 are already well into redistricting. Some have
4 completed it. Florida needs to get moving.

5 It is not an easy process and it takes
6 time. You have repeatedly said that the
7 Constitution prevents you from acting on
8 redistricting until the 2012 legislative
9 session.

10 Let's be very clear. You can do
11 everything but vote on the final plans right
12 now and through this year. Why can't you
13 advance the time table so that the Legislature
14 votes on redistricting in early January, staff
15 and committees could be drawing maps right now
16 as the hearings continue.

17 Perhaps that is occurring. Maps can
18 certainly be prepared and released soon after
19 the final hearing on September 1st. That
20 allows four months for citizen input, committee
21 work and legislative study to discuss and
22 refine the proposals so the lawmakers can vote
23 on them in the very first week of the January
24 session.

25 An extra two months will allow for the

1 litigation that is certain to come and for
2 court and Justice Department review. I was
3 appalled as I listened to yesterday's hearing
4 to hear the suggestion that the Court speed up
5 their process rather than taking the full time
6 allotted for their review.

7 You have the power to speed up your
8 process. The League wholeheartedly supports
9 the Supervisors of Election who have been
10 appearing regularly at these hearings to tell
11 you that conducting effective fair elections
12 under this timeline is going to be problematic.

13 Adopting a realistic, a redistricting plan
14 in January is realistic, very possible, and
15 eliminates the difficulties that Supervisors,
16 voters and candidates will have under your
17 plan.

18 Why can't you revise the redistricting
19 timeline so that Legislators can approve the
20 plan in the first week of the 2012 session?
21 The League of Women Voters urges you to make
22 your redistricting plans available soon, to
23 solicit citizen input on these maps and to
24 advance the date for adopting new districts.

25 Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Kidder.
2 And again, factually, just so you will know,
3 Ms. Kidder, there is nothing that prevents any
4 member of the Legislature from offering a map
5 today or from votes being taken as early as
6 January. So you are exactly right.

7 Next is Laurie Newsom and then Nicholas
8 Wilson, and then Bud -- I am sorry, Rod
9 Gonzalez. Ms. Newsom, thank you for being
10 here, and you are recognized.

11 MS. NEWSOM: Thank you, I am Laurie
12 Newsom. A proud member of the Alachua County
13 Republican Executive Committee, and as such
14 have been intensely involved in this whole
15 process.

16 I will be brief because Mr. Alex Patton
17 voiced one of my concerns, which is the
18 ambiguousness of the language of the two
19 amendments, and I hope that that is dealt with
20 fairly, because I am concerned that the
21 intention of the Amendments will be distorted
22 and actually cause possibly the opposite of
23 what the intent was meant to be.

24 I also can be brief because former Mayor
25 Jean Calderwood summed up my feelings

1 completely when it comes to the redistricting.
2 I am very concerned that the rural concerns
3 will be set aside and not attended to properly
4 in the redistricting process.

5 I am very concerned and interested in the
6 benefit of our rural areas, the citizens
7 involved and the lands involved. So I would
8 hope that this would be something that would be
9 taken with grave concern and great sincerity
10 when you do apply your expertise, and thank you
11 very much.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Ms. Newsom. And next is Nicholas Wilson and
14 then Rod Gonzalez, and then I am sorry, Manny,
15 it could be Lucoff, at 5000 Southwest 25th
16 Boulevard. Your -- would you please be on
17 deck. Nicholas Wilson, thank you for coming.

18 MR. WILSON: Good evening, I am Nicholas
19 Wilson, I was born and raised here in Alachua
20 County. I just want to thank all of you for
21 taking the time tonight and the time that you
22 have continued to take by coming out and
23 listening to your community members and their
24 concerns.

25 The website that you have designed for us

1 is very informative, and the tools are very
2 helpful in allowing us to understand the
3 process.

4 It is frustrating though to hear of those
5 who are trying to slow and hinder your efforts
6 through to the Amendments passed last year and
7 I hope that when it is time to draw the new
8 districts that logic and common sense are used
9 and all of those involved will help instead of
10 hinder and allow the redistricting to move
11 quickly and smoothly.

12 I also want to say that I agree with
13 Ms. Calderwood and Mr. Patton in what they
14 said. So I don't really have much more to add
15 there. Thank you very much.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Wilson.
17 Rod Gonzalez, you are up, and followed by Mr.,
18 I think it is Lucoff, and then Kathleen
19 Shiverick, I believe. Mr. Gonzalez, thank you
20 for coming tonight.

21 MR. GONZALEZ: Mr. Chairman, Senators,
22 Representatives, my name is Rod Gonzalez. I
23 appreciate you all being here today.

24 Call me sinical, I guess, but politics
25 being what they are, I can only assume that

1 those who started this whole process marketed
2 Amendment V and VI to the public who voted for
3 it, have defended it in court and are defending
4 it currently, must have had an image, a map
5 already drawn out.

6 You don't spend millions of dollars trying
7 to push this without already having something
8 in mind and kind of already knowing what the
9 outcome would be if you get it.

10 I mean, remember, this is politics,
11 nothing is left to chance. So I would only ask
12 that they already share those maps with the
13 public and with the committee.

14 These Amendments potentially mean a large
15 change to the state laws which are going to
16 cost us millions of dollars beyond what the
17 census would normally require we do every ten
18 years.

19 So I would ask that once again, those who
20 really were for this and pushed it initially
21 kind of perform a civic duty, save us time,
22 effort, money and litigation and share these
23 potential maps with us, the public and
24 yourself.

25 A lot of the individuals who are against

1 this are Democrats and Republicans, so
2 bipartisan. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
4 And next is, is it Manny Lucoff? Mr. Lucoff,
5 thank you for your testimony tonight, and you
6 are recognized before the committee.

7 MR. LUCOFF: Thank you for coming. Thank
8 you for getting it right. When one goes into
9 public service and wants to pursue political
10 office, one wonders what is the reason behind
11 why you are there where you are sitting now.

12 Is it because you are primarily interested
13 in serving the general public, or is it because
14 you have other motives? I am a little sinical
15 about this, and because there is such a large
16 outpour of members of this Legislature who are
17 fighting the fair districting, one wonders what
18 your motives are, to protect your seat and not
19 serve the public.

20 I perceive this exercise as a kabuki
21 dance, that we could save a great deal of money
22 by doing away with this public relations effort
23 to tell the public we are going to listen to
24 you. What a joke.

25 If one follows the news, reads the papers,

1 listens to the people who are in public office,
2 there is not much doubt as to what it is you
3 are up to. The majority party would love to
4 kill fair districts.

5 They are interested in redistricting, not
6 fair districting. Thank you very much.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you for your
8 testimony. Kathleen Shiverick, and after
9 Kathleen is Terry Martin-Back, and then Judy
10 Brumfield.

11 Ms. Shiverick, thank you for being here
12 tonight. We look forward to your comments.

13 MS. SHIVERICK: Yes, and thank you for
14 providing us with the opportunity to have
15 public input into this.

16 I have to confess, I was a little
17 skeptical coming here this evening, but
18 actually the statements for the bipartisan
19 impact of gerrymandering, it is really a
20 statement to the problems that we experience
21 locally here in Alachua County, and an
22 additional statement, the bipartisan letter
23 from Marion County.

24 There is no doubt that the redistricting
25 which took place ten years ago instituted in

1 Alachua County significant gerrymandering.

2 There are little slices of Gainesville
3 that go westward into very large multiple
4 county, very rural area, and it dilutes, it
5 dilutes out the voice of the cities within
6 Alachua County, as well as the University of
7 Florida which is a major economic enterprise.

8 So we would ask you to please consider
9 providing maps as soon as possible so that the
10 legal process that will need to take place next
11 spring will be done in a timely manner so that
12 fair elections can then take place in the 2012
13 election cycle. Thank you very much.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you so much for
15 your testimony. Terry Martin-Back and then
16 Judy Brumfield, and then Tamara Fleischaker, I
17 believe, and I apologize if I have
18 mispronounced that name.

19 MS. MARTIN-BACK: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
20 and Representatives here. Unlike some of the
21 folks here, I actually went on and did some
22 homework looking at the districts, and I was
23 trying to give an idea or an example of how we
24 could draw, especially Congressional District 6
25 where we can combine Marion County, Alachua

1 County and Columbia County.

2 But one thing I did notice is, is that
3 Marion County is in the central Florida
4 district, and Alachua County is in the north
5 central Florida district.

6 I would like to see a plan where we can
7 conceive to have the people of Alachua County,
8 Columbia County and the counties that
9 represented in that north central Florida
10 district. That way when we want to see our
11 Representative, we don't have to drive to
12 Orlando or we don't have to drive to
13 Jacksonville.

14 I also would like to, I beg you to please,
15 do not, do not create districts like Florida's
16 Third Congressional District. How can you
17 possibly conceive that somebody on the north
18 side of 16th Avenue has something different
19 from the guy across the street on 16th Avenue.

20 Please, I am asking you to do this, please
21 keep in mind the representation of those in
22 Union County who only have like 17,000 people,
23 keep them in consideration, and thank you for
24 being here tonight.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, very useful

1 testimony. Judy Brumfield and then Tamara
2 Fleischhaker, I think and then Delena May.
3 Ms. Brumfield, thank you for being here for
4 your testimony.

5 MS. BRUMFIELD: Thank you very much. Judy
6 Brumfield. Most of my comments have already
7 been addressed. I just want to say that these
8 Amendments, V and VI, the redistricting have,
9 is all very confusing and I just hope that you
10 people are not confused by it, and that the new
11 districts that you are drawing are not in favor
12 or disfavor of incumbents.

13 That this is not in favor of one political
14 party or another political party, and we just
15 want our tax dollars saved. We don't want you
16 to spend more money.

17 We are tired of game playing. We see it
18 enough at the local level. So please don't do
19 this to us anymore. Thank you very much.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you for your
21 comments. And Tamara, is it Tamara or Tamara?
22 And please help me with the last name. I
23 apologize.

24 MS. FLEISCHHAKER: It is Tamara
25 Fleischhaker.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Tamara, I am sorry.

2 MS. FLEISCHHAKER: Thank you, it was a
3 valiant effort. Good evening, and on behalf of
4 the Ocala, Marion County Chamber of Commerce,
5 our Board of Directors and members, I would
6 like to thank you for the opportunity to speak
7 with you this evening and present a resolution,
8 and given the time and the number of speakers I
9 am just going to present a few highlights from
10 a resolution that we have submitted to the
11 Joint Committees.

12 And under our redistricting resolution,
13 whereas, the Marion County, it is five
14 municipalities, is deemed a community of
15 interest and under the current district
16 boundaries, legislative representation at both
17 the State and Federal levels is fractured and
18 fragmented, and Marion County has experienced
19 exponential growth within the past ten years,
20 and is expected to experience additional growth
21 of nine percent over the next decade.

22 And given that, we are the fourth largest
23 county in the state of Florida, and given the
24 diversity of our economic base, coupled with
25 our strategic location in the heart of north

1 central Florida, we resolve that Marion County
2 has a significant community of interest, should
3 be maintained in a single district where
4 possible.

5 S unified legislative voice is crucial to
6 the future prosperity of Marion County, to
7 compliment the healthy business, legislative
8 voice, sorry, business environment and economy
9 as well as contribute to the quality of life
10 for all of its citizens.

11 Where possible, easily and identifiable
12 compact, contiguous geographic boundaries
13 should be followed, recognizing the districts
14 must be configured so that they are relatively
15 equal in total population according to the
16 latest census data and applicable statutory
17 guidelines.

18 Again, I would like to thank our Marion
19 County legislative delegation and the other
20 representation here from the Joint Committees
21 and I thank you for your time.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you for that very
23 specific guidance. Delana May, please,
24 followed by Thomas Hayes- Morrison and then Bea
25 Byrum.

1 MS. MAY: Hi, there. I have been here for
2 55 years, mostly in this area, and I am here
3 today to speak on behalf of my five
4 grandchildren who were all born in Florida, all
5 live in Gainesville, and that is why I am not
6 in the south of France right now.

7 I am too worried about my state and my
8 government to leave the country and that is why
9 I am working so hard to make this place a
10 better Florida and a better country.

11 I have five grandchildren and that is,
12 that is the purpose. I want to thank you all
13 for taking the giant step of coming here
14 tonight. Everybody that gives it some thought
15 knows that you didn't have to.

16 A lot of people don't go to their town
17 meetings. They, we see this all over the
18 country. The things that go on in Washington
19 that we are just appalled by and when they go
20 home on break, nobody can find them. That is
21 not the case in Florida.

22 You have all taken a giant step forward
23 and I think that a lot of cooperation and a lot
24 of toning it down would be in order.

25 Again, the -- my only message to you is to

1 say, thank you for coming. We know you didn't
2 have to. This was a giant step and we
3 appreciate it, and I appreciate it for my five
4 grandchildren because they are probably not
5 going to leave Florida.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, we hope they
7 won't. We appreciate it. Thomas
8 Hayes-Morrison, and then Bea Byrum and then
9 Drollene Brown.

10 Mr. Hayes-Morrison, thank you for coming
11 tonight, we look forward to what you have to
12 say.

13 MR. HAYES-MORRISON: Thank you, my name is
14 Thomas Hayes-Morrison, and I would like to
15 thank you all for coming and giving us an
16 opportunity to voice our opinions.

17 And I have to share with you, I was a
18 registered Democrat in Alachua County for 19
19 and-a-half years, but I shifted my party
20 affiliation in May.

21 So I realize I may show the enthusiasm of
22 the newly converted, and if I do so, please
23 bear with me.

24 My sense is most people don't choose who
25 they vote for based solely on party

1 affiliation. We actually do choose our elected
2 officials based on what we think they as
3 individuals stand for, and we vote for
4 individual candidates, not just party, and as a
5 nation we voted that way for 235 years.

6 Unfortunately, that history looks as if it
7 is being ignored and the freedom and openness
8 of choice, that is how our electoral
9 foundation will be severely restricted, if not
10 entirely eliminated in Florida.

11 Amendments V and VI can be read in such a
12 manner as to promulgate arbitrary and
13 unfulfillable restrictions that essentially
14 handicap severely any effort towards fair
15 districting.

16 One of the most often Democrat affiliated
17 groups who support Amendments V and VI,
18 including many large ones from outside of
19 Florida, talking about leveling the playing
20 field, they are conceding their failure to
21 convince our voters that their proposed
22 policies are best for the people of our towns,
23 cities, counties and state as a whole.

24 They claim it is not their fault they
25 can't gain a majority, there must be something

1 inherently crooked about the current districts.
2 They say this must be so because the majority
3 of Florida voters are registered as Democrats.

4 This ignores the fact that the vast
5 majority of Florida's voters consistently poll
6 as well as vote as conservatives. Democratic
7 registration is simply an administrative
8 convenience for most and their party
9 memberships nominal at best.

10 I remind you that President Obama won 20
11 out of 40 State Senate Districts in Florida and
12 half the state in popular vote. It doesn't
13 sound crooked to me. Rather, it displays,
14 rather the efficacy of having a clear and
15 appealing message.

16 Republicans don't hold the seats they
17 don't because things aren't fair or the playing
18 field isn't level. The Democrat message simply
19 doesn't generally ring true with many of our
20 voters.

21 So rather than develop viable policies
22 that appeal to the majority, they are taking a
23 shot at developing a partisan quota system set
24 by the courts disguised in a sound good, feel
25 good package --

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Mr. Hayes-Morrison, just
2 in fairness to everybody behind you, could you
3 bring it in for a landing?

4 MR. MORRISON: Absolutely.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Okay.

6 MR. HAYES-MORRISON: Actually, I think I
7 am at a minute and 55 seconds, but okay, we
8 will do it. Here is the landing, all right,
9 they are taking a shot at developing a partisan
10 quota system set by the courts, disguised in a
11 sound good feel good package, sold by millions
12 of dollars of false advertising to fair
13 districts.

14 I just urge the committee to follow the
15 rule of law. Thanks for letting me voice my
16 opinion.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Yes, sir, thank you very
18 much. Bea Byrum and then Drollene Brown and
19 then Hugh Calderwood. Thank you for coming.

20 MS. BROWN: Bea Byrum had to leave for a
21 few moments and I wonder if you could put her
22 card underneath the others. I am Drollene
23 Brown, I am the next person.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you.

25 MS. BROWN: I campaigned for the Fair

1 District Amendment, not because it was very
2 clear. I as an editor I can tell you that any
3 phrase that says may or may not is redundant.
4 May implies may not.

5 So we can quibble about the wording, but
6 58 years ago I was in the eighth grade and I
7 had to take Civics in St. Auburns, West
8 Virginia, and Mr. Jones, our Civics teacher,
9 told us about gerrymandering, and as a
10 13-year-old I thought, this is really dumb, and
11 that is why I campaigned for the Fair District
12 Amendments.

13 I told every -- I would go to Walmart and
14 I would tell the clerk, vote yes on V and VI.
15 I told my ophthalmologist, vote yes on V and
16 VI, everywhere I went, I did, in my small way,
17 making people aware that we want fair
18 districts, and I think you understand what that
19 means.

20 You know that if you draw something that
21 looks like a dragon down the middle of the map
22 that is not right. We just want fairness. It
23 is not Democratic, it is not Republican, it is
24 non partisan, let's be fair. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much.

1 Hugh Calderwood is next, and following Hugh
2 Calderwood, Theonia Sunquist, and then if David
3 Nessler will be ready to come behind Theonia
4 Sunquist.

5 So mr. Calderwood, we are really grateful
6 that you took the time to come tonight, and you
7 are recognized.

8 MR. CALDERWOOD: Thank you very much. I
9 want to thank all of you for coming. I really
10 actually want to thank that you put our local
11 Representatives up front so that I can see some
12 friends of mine.

13 And I also again, as we get into this, we
14 are getting into more repeating, repeating,
15 repeating, and I also want to repeat, I don't
16 envy you, your job, and I apologize if you were
17 insulted by somebody up here as to what your
18 motives are for running for public office. I
19 am sure Representative Chestnut did not
20 appreciate that.

21 And again, people who know me, I always
22 hate to follow my wife because she is much more
23 articulate than I am, and then I always just
24 feel crazy.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are not alone, you

1 are not the only guy.

2 MR. CALDERWOOD: And I do want to echo her
3 feelings about the rural, the people who are,
4 in this county is a perfect example of that we
5 have a large urban center, primarily Democratic
6 and then we have what we call around here, the
7 donut, the rest of the county around that, and
8 then there is always this argument going on
9 between the donut and the center.

10 And as an example, we recently had a
11 Charter Review Committee and there were those
12 of us who wanted to have single member
13 districts voting in the county for the -- for
14 elected offices, but, no, they didn't want
15 that, they wanted everybody to vote on
16 everybody.

17 So that we in the small towns didn't
18 really get a chance to have a Representative
19 that represented our interests versus the urban
20 interests. So I would encourage you to keep
21 that in mind.

22 I certainly don't like gerrymandering like
23 some of the districts and some of them are
24 Democratic and some of them are Republic, but I
25 don't like to see that, but I would like to see

1 interests put in protecting the rural voters.

2 We also see that in the state where we
3 have high populations in South Florida and we
4 in north Florida feel like we are not, we don't
5 have the power to really voice our concerns
6 when we are fighting the big population centers
7 in south Florida. So keep all of that in mind.
8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
10 Theonia Sunquist is next. Theonia Sunquist
11 going once, twice, Ms. Sunquist?

12 Then David Nessler, and following Mr. Nessler,
13 Jim Beniz, I believe it is, and then Paul Lux.
14 Thank you for coming today.

15 MR. NESSLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am
16 not here today as a Democrat or a Republican.
17 I kind of look back, you know, through my life
18 and I remember when the Democrats were in power
19 in this state and I remember the pork choppers
20 and they, then they made sure that they, to the
21 best of their ability, they could stay in power
22 and they did some gerrymandering, and then for
23 the last few, and that was wrong, and for the
24 last few decades we have had the Republicans,
25 and they have, your predecessors, I am not

1 going to blame you, did some gerrymandering and
2 that was wrong.

3 And as we teach our kids, two wrongs don't
4 make a right, we need to fix it. So the way it
5 looks to me is the adults decided to step up
6 and step in with the Fair Districts Amendment.

7 I also note that other states, they have
8 taken this exact same, many other states have
9 taken this exact same verbiage in these
10 Amendments and it has all passed Federal Court
11 system muster and so I am kind of confused
12 about why efforts are being made in the Federal
13 Courts to block this when it is already passed.

14 So it seems like it is kind of a futile
15 effort. I got to wonder if that is the reason
16 for that is just to run out the clock before
17 the next two-year election cycle.

18 So I would really ask you ladies and
19 gentlemen to be, is to step up and be
20 statesmen.

21 It is, you know, this is the way it is
22 going to play out. We already know that from
23 other states and other Federal Court approvals
24 of that. So step up, it is now part of the
25 Constitution, our State Constitution. So apply

1 both the spirit and the letter of the law.

2 Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
4 Mr. Nessler. And again, Mr. Nessler, just so we
5 can do a little fact checking, just so you
6 would be aware of it, the -- it was the Florida
7 House of Representatives and the Florida
8 Senate, these committees that filed Amendments
9 V and VI for pre-clearance.

10 We asked the Justice Department to
11 pre-clear them and they agreed with our
12 recommendation and our appeal that they be
13 pre-cleared, so thank you very much.

14 Jim Beniz, you are next, and then Paul Lux
15 and then William Boyette.

16 MR. BENIZ: Hello. Thank you
17 Representatives and Senators for coming here
18 tonight and listening to us. I have lived all
19 my life in the state of Florida, part of in
20 Hillsborough County, the last 25 years here in
21 Alachua County.

22 But regardless of the county you live in,
23 we all love this state and we want to be
24 represented fairly. We are tired of the --
25 some of the ridiculous districts that have been

1 drawn in this state.

2 I would, regardless of party affiliation I
3 would like to see fair districts. I would like
4 to see everybody represented properly. I can't
5 add a lot to what people have said tonight.

6 Mr. Patton, Ms. Calderwood have pretty
7 well summed everything up that I had to say,
8 but we would ask that the political games cease
9 and we get down to the business of what the
10 people need and want in this country, in this
11 state.

12 We all love Florida and we want to see
13 what is best, we want to hear you do what is
14 best for Florida. I think this Amendment is
15 ambiguous in its wording.

16 I think you were given a moving target to
17 shoot at and maybe you will come up with
18 something that the originators of the Amendment
19 intended. It would have been nice to see
20 something of a sort of a map of what they
21 thought that they were going for when they --
22 when they went after this Amendment, but we
23 just want you to do the right thing for the
24 people of Florida, and that is all I have got
25 to say. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much.
2 Appreciate your testimony. And Paul Lux,
3 Supervisor of Elections from Okaloosa County,
4 my home county, came all of the way to Alachua
5 County to see me. How are you doing, Paul?

6 MR. LUX: Good evening, and thank you,
7 Mr. Chairman, Senators, Representatives, and
8 most notably, my two Senators, Senator Gaetz,
9 Senator Evers and my personal Representative,
10 Brad Drake from House District 5, and thank you
11 for having us here today.

12 Every bit as important as the time is
13 tonight so that everyone has a chance to speak,
14 I am just here to re-emphasize that time is
15 important to the Supervisors of Elections also.

16 The second speaker from the League of
17 Women Voters alluded to the fact that our time
18 crunch is very specific. If all of the
19 timelines that have been published go according
20 to schedule, we will have less than two weeks
21 to re-precinct.

22 Now, that means, our work can't start
23 until not only your work is done, but also the
24 work of the Department of Justice, the work of
25 the Court systems and their review and then we

1 can start. That gives us less than two weeks
2 to re-precinct.

3 Now, in addition to everything else that
4 we have to do, candidate qualifying which is
5 that very first week of June, is very important
6 because most candidates probably would like to
7 know what district they are running in by the
8 time they get around to running.

9 But much more important to me is the fact
10 that 21 days after qualifying closes, I have to
11 mail ballots to my overseas military voters.
12 Federal law requires that they get them 45 days
13 prior, and that is 21 days after qualifying
14 ends.

15 And so all of the work that has to be done
16 in between time and if some of the timelines
17 aren't met, then my re-precincting is going to
18 get pushed back after a candidate qualifying.

19 So again, I would just like to
20 re-emphasize the need for the timeliness of
21 this and that we get it done quickly so that we
22 can begin our work to make sure that Florida's
23 elections are run fairly and efficiently.

24 The other thing I would like to mention is
25 district lines, themselves. I know Mr. Boyetx,

1 who is the Chief Deputy here in Alachua County,
2 Supervisor of Elections and my counterpart, the
3 Honorable Pam Carpenter will be speaking
4 momentarily, but if you have been to Pelican
5 Beach Condominiums down on south Okaloosa
6 County, if you live in the condominiums to the
7 west, you are in Congressional District 1. If
8 you are on the wrong side of the entryway and
9 you live in the condominiums to the east, you
10 are in Congressional District 2, and heaven
11 forbid, you live on the west side of the Rocky
12 Bayou Bridge, those three streets there that
13 are just a little tiny enclave of Congressional
14 District2, not even all of the houses on that
15 little peninsula.

16 So just bear those thoughts in mind as you
17 go forward and thank you again for your time.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Sure, thank you, Paul. I
19 am in one of those three streets, as you know,
20 I am in that little nipple of Congressional
21 District 2, and you are exactly right, that if
22 everyone takes all of the time that they are
23 allotted, then there would only be two weeks
24 left in the process. Let's hope that everyone
25 doesn't take all of the time that they are

1 allotted, but that they do their job
2 thoroughly, but that they do their job as soon
3 as they can. Thanks, Paul.

4 MR. LUX: And the good news is it doesn't
5 look like there are any drunken monkeys up
6 there. So I know that is who they accused of
7 drawing the lines last time and I don't see any
8 up there, so very good, very good positive
9 direction.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You get the prize for the
11 second best line of the night. William Boyetx,
12 Mr. Boyetx, and you will be followed by Terry
13 Fleming and then Dave Danvers and then Pam
14 Carpenter.

15 MR. BOYETX: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the
16 Honorable Paul Lux mentioned, I am the Chief
17 Deputy Supervisor of Elections here in Alachua
18 County. I brought some maps with me this
19 evening and I would love to leave them with
20 Mr. Guthrie or another Representative of your
21 staff. I am not sure if I have enough for all
22 of you, but I definitely have plenty to pass
23 around.

24 I would like to start with a little
25 southwest corner of Alachua County, the area

1 around the City of Archer.

2 I have got this color coded by the
3 different State House Districts, and I doubt
4 you can even see it from how close you are to
5 me, but if you look, there is this tiny bit of
6 green, State House 22, blipped off from the
7 rest of the green.

8 That is where the State House District
9 cuts one cul-de-sac inside the city limits of
10 Archer off from the rest of the City of Archer,
11 putting about four houses in a different House
12 District than the rest of the city.

13 And then we got a little V up here that
14 cuts in and takes a couple dozen voters on the
15 north edge of the city and puts them a third
16 State House District. So we have a
17 municipality with about 600 voters represented
18 by three of our Representatives on the podium
19 here this evening.

20 I am sure that they are well represented,
21 but I think they might prefer to have their
22 voice unified together.

23 Now, you will notice, the majority color
24 is the red of State House 10. If we look at
25 the county, you will see there is no further of

1 that red anywhere in the entire rest of our
2 county.

3 And no disrespect to the job that I am
4 sure that Representative Bembry does to his
5 constituents, but we would be thrilled if he
6 was not representing our county.

7 That small piece which represents less
8 than 1,000 voters in our county adds just as
9 much of a logistical overhead to every election
10 we prepare as Representative Chestnut's portion
11 of our county, and that is a burden on our
12 county every election that we prepare.

13 In a primary election, I have to prepare
14 as many as six different ballot styles for that
15 little area, the same number of ballot styles I
16 prepare for this area, and that is an amount of
17 proof reading, an amount of preparation time,
18 programming, equipment preparation, and that
19 just adds up.

20 And drawing back from those points, as
21 several other speakers have mentioned this
22 evening, the State Constitution of Florida puts
23 the Administration of Elections as a county
24 level office.

25 For that reason we feel it would be great

1 if the county limits could be the first
2 priority when drawing district lines, as that
3 would coincide with the administration of the
4 elections.

5 While the districts look great, this is
6 what we look at when we are administering it.
7 We don't see where the rest of these districts
8 go. We see it at this level in each county as
9 we prepare our elections.

10 If a county must be split, which in many
11 cases is unavoidable, then we would ask that
12 the next level down be respecting the
13 communities of interest in the municipal city
14 limits as I showed with my little demonstration
15 there on Archer, and when a city is too big to
16 be in one district, we ask if you could please
17 restrict to major arteries that are easy for us
18 to explain to the public, when they are trying
19 to ascertain their Representative.

20 If we look here, we are on the map, it is
21 pretty easy to see the interface between
22 Districts 22 and 23, but 34th Street runs right
23 here, and if I were to start at the south end
24 of Gainesville and drive north, at the
25 beginning I would be in State House 22. A

1 little bit further north to my west I would be
2 in State House 23. To my east, in 22, a little
3 bit further north, both sides I am in 23. A
4 little further north to my west, I am in 23, to
5 my east I am in 22. A little further north, to
6 both sides I am in 22. A little further north
7 to my east I am in 23. To my west I am in 22,
8 and a little further north I am back in 23 on
9 both sides.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I think we get the joke.

11 MR. BOYETX: So while looking at the map,
12 you know, a bird's eye view, it doesn't look
13 that bad. When we are communicating with our
14 public and trying to help them understand their
15 Representatives, it can very complicated very
16 fast, and I don't think that that serves our
17 public that you are elected to serve, my boss
18 is elected to serve and that I have chosen to
19 be in a field to serve the best possible.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much for
21 your testimony, and could you make sure that
22 you leave the maps that you have for one of our
23 staff members?

24 This is exactly the kind of precision
25 testimony that we need, to see exactly where we

1 need to make changes.

2 And next, please, Terry Fleming and
3 following Mr. Fleming, then Dave Danvers, then
4 Pam Carpenter.

5 MR. FLEMING: Good evening, my name is
6 Terry Fleming. Thank you for the opportunity
7 to speak. Thank you for being here. You know,
8 a Supreme Court Justice famously observed that
9 I may not be able to define pornography but I
10 know it when I see it.

11 There is a lot in common with pornography
12 with this districting process, starting with
13 the fact that is so obscene. I appreciate the
14 presentation that was just provided because it
15 really made that point, how obscene the process
16 can be, the results can be.

17 I do ask you to consider all of the
18 requirements of the Fair District Amendments,
19 compact, contiguous, communities of interest
20 and I fully support the efforts of the fair
21 districts folks to make this a bipartisan
22 effort.

23 Certainly, as has been observed up here
24 this evening, both parties are guilty of that.
25 We see the results in the maps that we have

1 seen tonight and have been shown out in the
2 lobby.

3 Please, take those things into
4 consideration, communities of interest,
5 contiguous, compact geographical boundaries and
6 please draw districts that fairly represent the
7 communities in this state.

8 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Fleming,
9 and just one fact check, communities of
10 interest have been mentioned by a number of
11 folks tonight.

12 Communities of interest are not in
13 Amendments V and VI. There was an effort made
14 by a group to actually include communities of
15 interest as a criterion for drawing districts,
16 and that was struck down by the Florida Supreme
17 Court. So communities of interest are not part
18 of Amendments V and VI, but thank you.

19 Mr. Danvers, and then Pam Carpenter and
20 then Martin Luther King, III.

21 MR. DANVERS: I would like to thank all of
22 you for coming. I want to, I have read a lot
23 on the website, and I am a bit confused because
24 a lot of this is all weighted towards outside
25 interests suggesting how we do this thing.

1 In the explanation of the two Amendments,
2 the Fair Amendments, they are talking about,
3 you do this, and if we don't like it we will go
4 to court.

5 And my main reason for standing here, I
6 would like to see the people and their elected
7 representatives accomplish this redistricting
8 and not the courts. We have spent enough
9 money.

10 No offense, lawyers, but I think we can
11 get this done, but I would like some of the
12 people who backed the Amendments, spent all of
13 that money and time to step forward and help
14 your Representatives get this accomplished.
15 There is all I have to say.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
17 And next, Pam Carpenter, who is the Alachua
18 County Supervisor of Elections. Thank you for
19 your service, ma'am, we look forward to your
20 testimony.

21 MS. CARPENTER: Thank you. Good evening,
22 and welcome to Alachua County. My staff member
23 has made a presentation before me, and he is my
24 detail man. I would like to cover some more
25 general things with you.

1 Your legislative staff has worked with the
2 election officials and the census officials to
3 establish what we have called voting tabulation
4 districts, VTDs, which take into consideration
5 intact communities, traffic patterns and
6 physical barriers.

7 Please adhere to these lines when you are
8 redistricting and redrawing your maps. A lot
9 of work has gone into them on the part of the
10 Supervisors of Elections and the Census
11 representatives.

12 The best place to draw a district line is
13 along a county line, if it is at all possible
14 and we ask that you divide our districts along
15 county lines whenever that is available to you.

16 While there is much attention to Florida's
17 meandering districts there are many more
18 examples of our small cities being separated
19 into three or four districts, as Will had shown
20 you the examples previously.

21 Some of them running right through the
22 middle of the condominiums, as Paul mentioned.
23 The best way to avoid this, again, is to follow
24 the PTD lines whenever possible.

25 I want to reiterate the need for this

1 process to be completed in a timely manner. We
2 are up a -- we are up against some really hard
3 deadlines. We have to get those ballots out 45
4 days prior to the election. We have to have
5 time to notify all of the voters of the change
6 in their districts and precinct and by law that
7 means mailing them a new card, and we have to
8 have time to do that.

9 We have to have time to allow our voters
10 to become familiar with the districts that they
11 are going to be in and the candidates running
12 from those districts. So please, move this
13 process along as quickly as you can and vote on
14 it as quickly as you can.

15 One of the other things is just a
16 reminder. We as elected officials may have
17 been elected by a majority of our voters, but
18 once elected, we represent all of our citizens,
19 and we all need to remember that.

20 It is not a partisan thing. It is a
21 citizen thing. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
23 Ms. Carpenter, and now Martin Luther King, III,
24 following Mr. King, Marcel Verrando, and then
25 Shelia Paige. Mr. King, you are recognized.

1 MR. KING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
2 Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee. I
3 am certainly honored to participate in this
4 hearing this evening.

5 Very briefly and quickly, obviously I am
6 not a citizen of the state of Florida, but my
7 father led or was one of the leaders of the
8 modern Civil Rights Movement as well as he and
9 a team of many leaders worked to create the
10 climate so that the 1965 Voting Rights Act
11 would be passed in our nation which has been
12 extended over and over again by the United
13 States Congress.

14 He often said that injustice anywhere is a
15 threat to justice everywhere. Certainly I feel
16 this applies with special urgency to my
17 neighboring state of Florida, where there
18 appears to be a multi prong effort to dilute
19 voting power of people of color, poor people,
20 and reduce the number of African-Americans and
21 Latino elected officials.

22 I am referring specifically to several
23 measures. One of these would be shortening the
24 early voting periods from 15 to seven days.
25 Another measure forces voters to cast

1 provisional ballots instead of allowing them --

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Mr. King, I am delighted
3 to hear your views on those matters, but in
4 deference and respect to those behind you,
5 could you keep your comments to redistricting
6 and I would be happy to meet with you
7 afterwards on the other matters.

8 MR. KING: Okay. Let me -- let me quickly
9 get to the issue of redistricting which very
10 simply, I know most importantly folks have
11 talked about the fair district Florida issue.

12 Obviously, redistricting is important to
13 all of us and certainly in this state and
14 really everyone across our nation, every year
15 we all want to make sure that all elected
16 officials who represent each and every one of
17 us can be elected fairly.

18 So the legislation sounds good, but I
19 think there are concerns about it. My
20 particular concern is that we ensure in this
21 state and in our nation that African-Americans,
22 Latinos and poor folk can be elected to office.

23 That is the only major issue of concern
24 that I have. So as you draw your districts,
25 and as you have done all of these years, you as

1 legislative members, I hope and pray that the
2 fair scenario really is fair for all
3 Floridians. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
5 Mr. King. Thank you for coming from Atlanta.
6 Marcel Verrando and then Shelia Paige and then
7 and then Khalil Quinan, I believe, from Santa
8 Fe College. Mr. Verrando, did I get your name
9 correctly, sir?

10 MR. VERRANDO: Yes, sir, you did.

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are recognized, and
12 we look forward to your comments.

13 MR. VERRANDO: Ladies and gentlemen of the
14 Legislature, my name is Butch Verrando, I am a
15 Director of Tea Party Solutions in Marion
16 County.

17 We have a membership of roughly 1,800
18 people that are Democrats, Republicans,
19 Libertarians, and a number of other parties.
20 We are a totally non partisan group.

21 I have been asked to come up here to speak
22 as one voice for many, and our quest is to
23 simply ask that Marion County be treated as a
24 single entity.

25 Currently our county is cut up into

1 pieces, much like a butcher's map, and we as a
2 group just ask you to treat us fairly and treat
3 us as one unit. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
5 Next, Shelia Paige, Ms. Paige, are you here?
6 Shelia Paige? Going once, twice? Three times.
7 Then it, and I apologize, Khalil Quinan from
8 Santa Fe College, and then Karen Paige and then
9 Marihelen Wheeler, I think it is, and I
10 apologize if I have messed that name up.
11 Mr. Quinan, thank you for being here.

12 MR. QUINAN: You actually got my name
13 right, Mr. Chair.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Wonderful. That is one
15 out of 350.

16 MR. QUINAN: Yes, sir, probably in the
17 United States. First I would thank everyone
18 here. I would like to specifically really
19 quickly thank Senator Oelrich and
20 Representative Chestnut for our transportation
21 Bill that we recently got passed. It has been
22 something that I have done here since I started
23 in Santa Fe College. I am the Senate President
24 Pro Tempore of Student Government, and so as a
25 fellow elected official I would like to thank

1 you for that.

2 Now, touching on redistricting, one thing
3 that I make important with my job here, it is
4 in government is the letter of the law. We
5 have our Constitution, we have our laws, we
6 have our statutes.

7 We have the way that we do things outlined
8 much like you guys do as well, and with that I
9 would like to request that you guys follow
10 Amendments V and VI and I know that you guys
11 recommended it as well, and it is just as
12 important, because it makes sense.

13 I mean, there is a lots of things that
14 have been said about the tricky wording, but
15 there is not a may or may not. It simply says,
16 and maybe it is because I want to be a lawyer
17 one day, but it simply says that you can't
18 favor or not favor somebody.

19 It is just, you can't have a situation
20 where somebody will be elected just because of
21 where they are, and being somebody who wishes
22 to be a lawyer, I wish to be a lawyer because I
23 have a strong foundation of justice.

24 I have that strong desire for justice. I
25 did the Lincoln/Douglas debate in high school,

1 and the criterion was always justice.

2 And so the ultimate point is that, it is
3 to do the right thing. I am not -- I was not
4 born in the United States. I migrated to the
5 United States, and it is, this has been my
6 adopted home because of this overwhelming sense
7 of justice and righteousness in our country,
8 and I say with grade pride, our country,
9 because I feel like I am part of this melting
10 pot.

11 And with such I request that you guys
12 please stick to Amendments V and VI, please get
13 maps out early for us to be able to criticize
14 and scrutinize.

15 As an official I write Bills as well for
16 our Senate and people criticize and scrutinize
17 and find my errors, so I request the same of
18 you. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much for
20 your time for being here. Next we have Karen
21 Paige. Karen Paige? And following Karen
22 Paige, it is Marihelen Wheeler, Marihelen
23 Wheeler. I got it right.

24 Ms. Paige, thank you for being here
25 tonight. You are recognized.

1 MS. PAIGE: I am Karen Paige. I have
2 lived Gainesville 1955. I first became aware
3 of gerrymandering when I was in junior high
4 school and high school, I really wasn't
5 interested in politics or news much before
6 then, and I learned about the pork choppers and
7 who were Democrats and they were making
8 decisions and setting up political boundaries
9 so that they could get what they wanted and
10 their political contributors wanted.

11 And now we have the, our recent
12 Legislatures have done the same thing for the
13 Republican party. Regardless of whether it is
14 Democrats or Republicans, that is not fair, it
15 is not representative, it is not democracy.

16 I am totally flummoxed by people who say
17 they don't understand Fair District Amendments
18 V and VI. To me I graduated from the
19 University of Florida, also, they are very
20 simple to understand.

21 We want everyone's vote to be counted
22 equally and fairly. We want to not have our
23 districts cherry picked so that certain people
24 or certain parties will be elected regardless
25 of whether it is Democrats or Republicans.

1 The idea of fair is a very simple idea.
2 The -- this whole idea that the people
3 supporting fair districts already have maps in
4 mind, that is so untrue.

5 We want to have impartial committees,
6 impartial people look at all of the needs and
7 the outlines and what will be fair districts.
8 Then we want Legislators that will maybe become
9 again statesmen rather than politicians.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, Ms.
11 Paige. Marihelen Wheeler, followed by Jay
12 Shannon, with the University of Florida College
13 Democrats, and then Eric Brown with the
14 University of Florida College Democrats.

15 Marihelen, thank you for being here.

16 MS. WHEELER: Thank you. I put down on
17 there that I was a citizen. I didn't represent
18 anybody because I was afraid if I put veteran
19 teacher down there that I wouldn't get a chance
20 to speak.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: No, no, citizen, citizen
22 is the, citizen is the highest post in this
23 republic.

24 MS. WHEELER: Show I chose well. I have
25 some concerns that I want to express first and

1 then I will go to a recommendation that I have
2 that maybe will make this go a little faster,
3 because --

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Please.

5 MS. WHEELER -- my concern is speed as
6 well, that we get there done. Being a teacher
7 I am a little skeptical of the public forum,
8 and I must say it is because when the House and
9 Senate Bills came up legislating my profession
10 that we had -- that we were told that there was
11 teacher input to the process, and when I went
12 with the FEA group to Tallahassee we found out
13 that, yes, indeed, there was teacher input, but
14 none of the recommendations were accepted.

15 So this makes me a little skeptical about
16 a forum here with no maps and I am an art
17 teacher, so I am very visual. So having the
18 maps there or having the redrawing the census,
19 I would like to see where the demographics have
20 shifted around.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: That is available, that
22 is available on the website. You can see all
23 of that.

24 MS. WHEELER: All right, good. So
25 according to what I, I watched the program on

1 Sunday about all of this, so I have a little
2 more information about representation for so
3 many thousand people, and I wanted to say 60 on
4 or 600, but anyway, I am an art teacher, not a
5 mathematician for sure.

6 Okay, but what I am concerned about, too,
7 is the timing on this, because it is an
8 election year, unfortunately, a national
9 election year, and Florida doesn't have a great
10 reputation when it comes to conspiracy theories
11 and things like that and elections, and I would
12 like to see this, which I know is a requirement
13 by law and it is something we have to do,
14 somehow interfere with that election and make
15 it controversial again.

16 Now, the recommendation that I have, the
17 recommendation that I have for maybe speeding
18 this up. I would really like to have seen what
19 our Senator Oelrich and our Representatives
20 could have maybe had a meeting with us first to
21 show us where those districts are and give us
22 their opinions about, you know, how it is
23 easier to manage or not manage.

24 Have some of us then also question those
25 things so that we had a better opportunity or

1 sounded more educated when we came here to say,
2 look, you know, this doesn't look right. You
3 see, as an art teacher, I think dragons look
4 really cool through the map, but, you know, for
5 -- I also taught in Levy County for ten years
6 before I came to Gainesville to teach another
7 20.

8 Yes, I am old, but the thing is, I know
9 there is a big difference in cattle farmers and
10 clammers and Town and Gown, so I would support
11 the fair districting at all costs, but the main
12 cost I think that is going to be for people
13 like me is the timing where we want to make
14 sure that our citizens have the opportunity to
15 vote without having any impediment.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, and you have a
17 very good suggestion, and a number of
18 Legislators have, I have done it in my
19 district, have met with groups, non partisan
20 groups as well I have met with, I happen to be
21 a Republican, but I met with the Democratic
22 party in my county and we went over all of this
23 as well as with Republican groups and many
24 Legislators are doing it, Senator Sachs in
25 South Florida is doing it, so that is an

1 excellent suggestion.

2 MS. WHEELER: That would speed things up.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Yes.

4 MS. WHEELER: And we would be able to get
5 with our voters.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much. Our
7 teacher, good idea. Jay Shannon from the Young
8 Democrats, College Democrats, and then Eric
9 Brown from the College Democrats and then Helen
10 Warren from the Audubon Society.

11 Welcome, and thank you for being here
12 tonight.

13 MR. SHANNON: Thank you, I appreciate it.
14 I am, as you read, I am a member of the
15 University of Florida College Democrats and
16 also I am also an intern with (inaudible)
17 Florida, which means that most of you on the
18 stage don't like me, and that is really
19 unfortunate, but I really had to say a few
20 things about redistricting.

21 I spent a lot of time campaigning for Fair
22 Districts Florida. I understand that some of
23 the language has become under scrutiny and I
24 understand that there are members of both sides
25 of the aisle that are coming out against it and

1 for it.

2 But I do want to say a few things. In
3 terms of the touchy feely support that Fair
4 Districts sort of evokes with people like me,
5 Democrats who I spend time with, you know, I am
6 sorry that we have to do that, but the reason
7 we pass legislation like that is to make sure
8 that you guys don't make that mistake again,
9 because it happened last year, it happened in
10 2000, it happened in 1990.

11 Regardless of the party you are a part of,
12 and I am a Democrat, I admit that the choppers
13 were terrible, but regardless of the party you
14 are a part of, it is still happening and when
15 we talk about minority representation, whether
16 it is Hispanics or poors or African-Americans,
17 poor people, you know, I don't feel like they
18 are getting their fair shake at representation
19 when there are people in Tallahassee passing
20 legislation that cuts their access to voting or
21 their access to education, or their access to
22 community services.

23 And, you know, the system status quo just
24 simply doesn't work, and I get so infuriated
25 when I am sitting in the corner of the room

1 when I hear people like Alex Patton come up and
2 tell me that I am a touchy feely Democrat and I
3 am supporting legislation --

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Mr. Shannon, why don't
5 you use what little time you have left to make
6 your point and not to make someone else's
7 point.

8 MR. SHANNON: Right, right, and I am sorry
9 about that. My point is, at the end of the day
10 I am a person, most recently an American
11 citizen, and I stand up for my fellow man and
12 woman, not my fellow Democrat or Republican and
13 I would really appreciate it if I felt the same
14 from you on stage, and so thank you for your
15 time.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you so much,
17 Mr. Shannon, excellent points. Eric Brown,
18 also representing the College Democrats, Eric
19 Brown, are you here?

20 A VOICE: I think he waives in support.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: A waive in support. Now,
22 we in Tallahassee say that is eloquent
23 testimony. Helen Warren is next, Helen Warren
24 and following Ms. Warren, Kyle Mitchell also
25 with the College Democrats and then Alden

1 Green. So if Alden Green will be on deck as
2 well.

3 Ms. Warren, thank you for being here, you
4 represent the Audubon Society, it says here.

5 MS. WARREN: I should probably correct
6 that, I am mostly representing just myself as a
7 citizen. Being President of the Audubon
8 Chapter I don't necessarily have views that
9 they have shared that I can say I am
10 representing them.

11 But as a citizen of this community, that
12 is what I would like to present, some of my
13 ideas and thoughts and support and thanks and
14 appreciation that you are here. It is amazing
15 to see this many people in one room without any
16 babies to kiss or dinners, meals and those kind
17 of things that usually bring a large collection
18 of politicians into one area, and really do
19 feel like you are here to hear the comments
20 from the public.

21 You have already heard many of the
22 concerns I think, I can't add anything to what
23 the Supervisors of Elections have said with
24 respect to the time of essence in this
25 situation, but the consideration when I looked

1 at the lines of where the maps are for the
2 State Districts and the Congressional
3 Districts, having previously been from Pinellas
4 County and seeing the way that those lines have
5 divided the county up with several districts
6 and then looking at the State Districts with,
7 in particular, District 3, 7, 1 and 8, it is
8 hard to imagine that there can be similar
9 representation for a group of people where you
10 have individuals living on the Georgia, Florida
11 border in District 3, as an example, that goes
12 all of the way down to possibly Cedar Key, and
13 I am not quite sure where the southern border
14 of District 3 is.

15 But I would ask for a consideration that
16 if we want to get the public, we have a very
17 large number of people who are disenfranchised
18 from the political process, which is the
19 essence of what makes this country as great as
20 it is, and when we see districts that are
21 established such as this, it is not hard to
22 imagine why so many people are feeling
23 separated from their politicians who are
24 supposed to be representing us regardless of
25 our party.

1 So I would ask for a consideration that
2 the lines look along, as well as what they are
3 saying with the county lines, but maybe the
4 consideration that there may be some kind of
5 compact 50-mile radius that could be considered
6 at sometimes, and inclusion of something
7 similar to what the Water Management Districts
8 provide so that we can have cohesion of area
9 community.

10 I think with the water issues that we have
11 got going on, there are certainly many issues
12 that surround the feelings and sentiments of
13 the public as to whether we are getting our
14 water privileges and environmental issues
15 related to that.

16 So in summary, I think you have pretty
17 well heard many of the similar things. I am
18 now rambling, but time is of the essence, let's
19 please get this done quickly and get
20 communities of the county lines more
21 coordinated.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
23 Ms. Warren. Next, Kyle Mitchell from the
24 College Democrats, Kyle Mitchell. And then
25 following Mr. Mitchell, Alden Green, and then

1 Benetta Standly is here, an old friend that
2 follows us from city to city from the American
3 Civil Liberties Union. Kyle Mitchell.

4 MR. MITCHELL: Hello, thank you for your
5 time. Senator Gaetz, you have dismissed
6 multiple speakers' concerns about the speed of
7 adoption of district maps by saying that the
8 Legislature is free to adopt maps at any time.

9 If anyone in the audience believes that
10 the leadership in the Legislature will move any
11 faster than they are required to on this issue,
12 that is exceedingly wishful thinking.

13 The three-fifths of Florida voters that
14 supported Fair Districts know intrinsically
15 that Florida is defined by its cities,
16 counties, and natural boundaries, not community
17 dividing lines drawn as a partisan power grab.

18 Senator Gaetz, the people asked that you
19 and your committee reference not election
20 results but an Atlas when drawing districts.
21 There should be many left over to use after the
22 Legislature's attack on public education.

23 Fair Districts is the law. Please follow
24 it.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Mitchell,

1 and next, Alden Green, and after Ms. Green, it
2 is Ms. Standly and then John Wasser.

3 Mr. Green, thank you for being here, and
4 you are recognized, sir.

5 MR. GREEN: Thank you. I have a couple of
6 points to make. One is I don't think that the
7 Fair Districts Amendment is ambiguous. I think
8 it is, your work is cut out for you in
9 complying with it, but I think it gives some
10 fairly simple guidelines to how to do it.

11 You know, one of the ways that Florida is
12 the laughing stock with some of my friends from
13 different states who are politically inclined,
14 I say, look at the District Map for 6, 3 and 4,
15 I think. One of them goes from Jacksonville to
16 Tallahassee. One of them goes from
17 Jacksonville to Orlando, and my own District 6,
18 it makes a sort of funny V-shape around it.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And to think we have
20 Patrick Henry to blame for all of this.

21 MR. GREEN: Well, if Patrick Henry needs
22 to be blamed, that is fine, but I think that
23 what has happened with, it is clear from
24 looking at our current map that the district
25 lines were politically drawn to protect both

1 Democrats and Republicans in the state, and I
2 think what has happened with districts that are
3 drawn with that as a basis, as a basis for
4 their being drawn, we end up in a United States
5 for Congress, for instance, of getting both
6 Democrats and Republicans who are further to
7 the left or to the right and it makes it
8 difficult, it makes it much more difficult, for
9 instance, in the current controversy about the
10 -- about the debt ceiling.

11 It makes it much more difficult for the
12 Congress to function for the benefits of the
13 citizens rather than for the parochial interest
14 of the members.

15 So I think it is important that you look
16 at the Fair Districts, you accept it as law and
17 not fight it and do your best to comply with
18 it. I know it is going to be hard, but I think
19 it is critical for the future of Florida and
20 for the future of the country. And thank you
21 very much.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Green.
23 Now, Benetta Standly with the ACLU, and then
24 John Wasser, and then Samuel Welker with Fair
25 Districts, and then Whitney Markle with the

1 Sierra Club.

2 Ms. Standly, good to see you again.

3 MS. STANDLY: Good evening, and I will
4 continue to follow you around and I will follow
5 you around when you have real hearings when you
6 show us the maps so that we can have something
7 to comment on.

8 So I am here today to represent the
9 63 percent of Floridians who voted in favor of
10 Amendments V and VI, the disenfranchised, the
11 people who are distrustful of the Florida
12 Legislature, and the people who just simply
13 could not make it here today.

14 I am here to hold you all accountable. I
15 want to publicly say this entire process is a
16 farce. It is a waste of taxpayer's money and
17 time.

18 We, the people of Florida, truly
19 understand that Amendments V and VI actually
20 protect minority voting rights. They add two
21 protections that were never in the Florida
22 Constitution. We expect you to make sure that
23 minorities have the opportunity to elect the
24 candidates of their choice and not give us two
25 or three districts around the state.

1 The new rules are something that all of
2 Florida, most of Florida has agreed upon. We
3 need you to follow those rules, but you are not
4 hearing me when I say as I follow you around
5 the state, that we don't trust that you will
6 follow the rules.

7 I am quite frankly disappointed that many
8 in the Florida Legislature continue to oppose
9 and fight these new rules, and you are using my
10 taxpayer dollars to do so. This is obviously
11 unacceptable.

12 The entire purpose of Amendments V and VI
13 was that voters can choose their elected
14 officials and not the other way around. Stop
15 wasting taxpayer money. This is an absolute
16 insult to Florida voters.

17 We know that you have \$30 million in
18 reserve in the House, we know you have \$8
19 million in the Senate reserved to deal with
20 litigation related to V and VI. Stop
21 undermining the will of Florida voters. We
22 have spoken. Follow our Constitution.

23 People are trying to run for office in
24 this state, they don't know what district they
25 reside in and they can't campaign. You need to

1 get the ball rolling, you need to do your job
2 and stop asking us to give you a map.

3 You are required to give us the map, so
4 show us the map.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Ms. Standly, you are
6 getting, you are getting your act down very,
7 very well. Good to see you again. Ms. -- John
8 Wasser is next, and then Samuel Welker from
9 Fair Districts and then Whitney Markle from the
10 Sierra Club it says here. John Wasser.

11 MR. WASSER: My name is John Wasser. I am
12 a Yankee and some of you might call me a damn
13 Yankee. I am liberal even by Yankee standards,
14 and I am angry.

15 I moved nine years ago to Union County
16 where there was a guy named Alder Crenshaw who
17 claims to represent me in Washington. He is a
18 George W. Bush Republican. He is elected by
19 fat cats in Jacksonville, for gosh sakes, and
20 his district extends all of the way to Leon
21 County.

22 At some point it is only about four miles
23 high and it must be at least 150 or more miles
24 wide, and the only reason for a district like
25 that is to deny voting rights to the people in

1 this rural county out here when he gets elected
2 by a heavily populated area in Jacksonville, to
3 represent people in counties out here where a
4 majority of the voters are registered
5 Democrats.

6 That is specifically to deny the people
7 out here their rights and I am angry. We need
8 to do something about that, and part of the
9 reason why so many Republicans got elected
10 around here is because the Democrats did such a
11 bad job of fielding candidates, not only on the
12 state level but even locally, our --

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: No, no, no, let's let
14 Mr. Wasser talk, please.

15 MR. WASSER: In 2010 we had -- we had a
16 local candidate for State Senator, is a
17 Democrat who has been openly vindictive towards
18 gays and women and probably blacks as well, and
19 I work -- done some work for temporary agencies
20 and I have done --

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Mr. Wasser, Mr. Wasser,
22 we are getting a little far afield, let's bring
23 it in for a landing, and the landing zone is
24 talking about redistricting.

25 MR. WASSER: Okay, I want to see the

1 redistricting, get these counties out here, a
2 Representative that they can be proud of and I
3 would be happy to join any lawsuit if it
4 doesn't work right. So get it right, please.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Wasser.
6 Next is Samuel Welker, from Fair Districts,
7 then Whitney Markle with the Sierra Club, and
8 then Phoebe, I think it is Papadi, or Papadi.

9 Mr. Welker, thank you for being here. We
10 are delighted to have you here tonight.

11 MR. WELKER: Thank you, I am delighted to
12 be here. I am not here for Fair Districts.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I am sorry, it says it
14 here.

15 MR. WELKER: I know. I really --

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I was just trying to be a
17 literalist.

18 MR. WELKER: I have taught in middle
19 school and high school for 37 years, most of my
20 students have been literalists. So I
21 understand that.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I hope they did well.

23 MR. WELKER: My children always do well.
24 I teach only beautiful, intelligent children.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: There you go.

1 MR. WELKER: But they have changed a great
2 deal, our children have changed a great deal in
3 the past 37 years. One of the ways that they
4 have changed is their faith in politics and
5 faith in their political leaders, whereas 37
6 years ago my students felt that government
7 service and politicians and statesmen were
8 honored, respected individuals.

9 It was a career that they wanted to go
10 into. If I were to ask my students today what
11 they felt about politicians, political leaders
12 and people in government service, they would
13 not for the most part be very flattering.

14 They have lost a great deal of respect in
15 our government. I would recommend that there
16 is no possible way that you are going to
17 satisfy everyone. We know that in here, fair
18 districts to me sound like fair districts.
19 Fair means something different to other people,
20 I suppose, but the citizens of this state voted
21 63 percent for two amendments.

22 It seems to me it would help restore a
23 great deal of faith in a lot of people,
24 including my children who are not apathetic,
25 who really do care, if in redistricting we

1 followed those Amendments and you followed
2 those Amendments. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
4 Mr. Welker. Great testimony. Whitney Markle,
5 it says here representing the Sierra Club, and
6 then Phoebe, I apologize, I think it
7 is-PAP-a-p-a-d-i, and then if Jeremiah
8 Teddersol will be ready to speak. Ms. Markle,
9 Mr. Markle.

10 MR. MARKLE: thank you, sir, last time a
11 public official called me Mr. Markle, it was a
12 Judge.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, I am not a Judge.

14 MR. MARKLE: And it is Whitey, it is not
15 Whitney, my momma named me that and I can't
16 help it.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Oh, it is Whitey, I am
18 sorry, it is my bad eyes.

19 MR. MARKLE: That is okay.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: My bad eyes, I apologize.

21 MR. MARKLE: My bad writing there. I am
22 the Conservation Chair for the Suwannee St.
23 Johns Sierra Club, and we represent 15 counties
24 here in north central Florida. A lot like
25 Charlie Dean's district, we are the biggest

1 Sierra Club group east of the Mississippi
2 River.

3 So we have resources that we are
4 concerned, our concern is conservation of
5 resources. We have the St. Johns, the Arakawa,
6 the Suwanee, Ichetucknee, Withlacoochee,
7 Crystal, Homosassa and the Chassahowitzka
8 Rivers that we have to deal with, and I would
9 like to ask you, unlike when I ran for State
10 Senate along with Senator Oelrich when he was
11 running for his first term as Sheriff in
12 Alachua County, I was running for State Senate
13 District 5 at the time against the last great
14 dean of the Florida Senate, George Kirkpatrick,
15 and I don't have to tell you who won that
16 election.

17 But I got a map from the Secretary of
18 State the day after I qualified and it was
19 about eight feet tall and about six feet wide,
20 and that map cut Palatka in half, it cut Lake
21 City in half, it cut Live Okay in half, it cut
22 Chiefland in half, it cut Bronson in half, it
23 cut Williston in half, and whoever has done the
24 rearranging at this point has done a pretty
25 good job.

1 We in Marion County would like to ask that
2 you kind of solidify Marion County rather than
3 having more than one Senator from Marion
4 County, but we would like to ask that it be a
5 continuous, like we said, compact geographical
6 boundaries, and we would like to ask you that
7 you represent not only all of the constituents
8 in your districts, but also those resources
9 that we just talked about. Thank you very
10 much.

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
12 Mr. Markle. And Ms. Phoebe, I apologize, could
13 you pronounce your last name for the committee?

14 MS. PAPADI: Sure, it is no problem. It
15 is Papadi, Phoebe Papadi.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Papadi, Ms. Papadi, thank
17 you for being here, and we look forward to what
18 you have to say.

19 MS. PAPADI: Thank you, good evening. So
20 many factors to consider, and the one I feel
21 most strongly about is the lack of partisan
22 politics.

23 If the United States is a melting pot,
24 then our redistricting map right now is a
25 goulash, it is a mess, and luckily, we have an

1 opportunity to fix it.

2 As a life long staunch liberal Democrat, I
3 would be delighted if every district turned out
4 to have a majority of Republicans, if the lines
5 were drawn with integrity and following the
6 rules.

7 So I would urge you in this process to
8 have that be your number one priority, is to
9 have integrity and follow the rules and I think
10 all of the rest would fall into place. Thank
11 you so much.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Papadi.
13 Jeremiah Teddersol, Jeremiah Teddersol? Our
14 next line up then would be Dave Schneider.
15 Dave, we got to you, Students for a Democratic
16 Society. Dave, are you here, and then George
17 Papadi, I believe and then Stan McClain. Dave,
18 I am glad we got there.

19 MR. SCHNEIDER: Yes, I am, too.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I am an advocate for your
21 right to speak.

22 MR. SCHNEIDER: Yes, yes, absolutely, and
23 I was actually commenting to some friends, this
24 might be the only time you will ever hear a
25 Republican say, I am an advocate for Dave

1 Schneider, at least a lot of people know that.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: For your right to speak,
3 for your right to speak. Dave.

4 MR. SCHNEIDER: Yes, yes, I appreciate it.
5 Thank you. You know, I think a lot of the
6 speakers here have really gotten to the points
7 that I wanted to emphasize, but I think I want
8 to clarify the issue here a little bit, because
9 we are not here just for unfair districts.

10 I think we are not here just because, you
11 know, these districts were drawn poorly. It is
12 because of what those districts being drawn
13 poorly results in, which is what we saw this
14 past legislative session where we saw unbridled
15 attacks on working families and students.

16 I, myself, am a student at the University
17 of Florida, Political Science and History
18 major. My Senator is Senator Oelrich up there.
19 Senator Oelrich, we appreciate you voting with
20 us on a lot of the Bills pertaining to graduate
21 students, graduate assistants, and especially
22 the Unions, and just the attacks that were
23 placed on people.

24 We saw this happen time and time again in
25 this past legislative session.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Mr. Schneider, as much as
2 an advocate as I am for your right to speak,
3 speak about redistricting.

4 MR. SCHNEIDER: Sir, sir, I am getting
5 there, because this --

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Get there some time soon.

7 MR. SCHNEIDER: These two are closely
8 intertwined, you know, because when we don't
9 have fair districts, when we have is what one
10 gentleman brought up, when you driver up 34th
11 Street, a major street in Gainesville and you
12 are moving from one district to the next, to
13 the next, to the next, that is not -- those
14 districts weren't drawn to be fair.

15 They weren't drawn for people like us,
16 they were drawn from democracy, but democracy
17 for the powerful few who end up getting
18 reelected time and time again in Tallahassee
19 and never represent us.

20 They are the people who brought forth
21 these attacks time and time again on Unions,
22 they are the ones that slashed millions and
23 millions of dollars.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: We are wondering far
25 afield again, let's get back to redistricting,

1 redistricts.

2 MR. SCHNEIDER: But Mr. Chair, these two
3 issues are so closely intertwined.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, you are going to
5 have to stick to the purpose of the hearing,
6 because have got 20 people behind you who want
7 to speak.

8 MR. SCHNEIDER: Yes, sir, yes, sir.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: So you have got about ten
10 seconds.

11 MR. SCHNEIDER: My point is -- my point is
12 that we need fair districts here if we are
13 going to reclaim democracy for working
14 families, for students at the University of
15 Florida and elsewhere, and for the middle class
16 who has been under such gross attack from the
17 Florida State Legislature for far too long, and
18 that is why I am here tonight.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you so much.
20 George, you are up, and then following George,
21 Stan McClain with the Marion County Board of
22 County Commissioners, then Richard Blake, and
23 then Carl Zalak.

24 MR. PAPADI: Yes, I ask that you
25 demonstrate some restraint and moderation in

1 redistricting efforts. I ask that you abide by
2 the Fair Districting Amendment, Amendments V
3 and VI, and I argue that as we all know, the
4 gerrymandering is a corrupting process and a
5 conscious focused effort to consolidate power
6 in a way that subverts our democracy.

7 I strongly disagree with the notion
8 presented by one speaker tonight that the Fair
9 District Amendments were merely a veiled
10 attempt at achieving quotas. Nothing could be
11 further from the truth.

12 The citizens who worked hard to achieve a
13 63 percent approval of that were -- were
14 focused on achieving or with the concern that
15 individual voters have the same.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: George, could you speak
17 into the mike a little bit. We want to get
18 every word.

19 MR. PAPADI: Sure. That the individual
20 votes that -- that are placed have the same
21 political weight that all citizens' votes have
22 an equal power, and I thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very, very much
24 for your testimony. Next is Stan McClain
25 followed by Richard Blake and then Carl Zalak,

1 and Mr. McClain, Commissioner McClain, thank
2 you for your service, and you are recognized.

3 COMMISSIONER MCCLAIN: Thank you, Chairman
4 Gaetz and members of the House and the Senate.
5 I had the, the Commission did put a letter
6 together to present to you. However, you have
7 already heard from three citizens from our
8 community, one representing non partisan, one
9 representing bipartisan and then also our own
10 chamber of commerce.

11 We would be in agreement with pretty much
12 anything that they have already said. What,
13 all I that would ask at this point would be
14 that the Commission be allowed to enter our
15 letter into the record and present that to a
16 clerk or whoever might be the appropriate
17 person.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Absolutely it would be,
19 we would look forward to that information.
20 Thank you, Commissioner.

21 COMMISSIONER MCCLAIN: Thank you.

22 THE COURT: Next is Richard Blake,
23 Mr. Blake? Richard Blake, are you here? If
24 not, then let's go to Carl Zalak with the
25 Marion County Board of County Commissioners.

1 Mr. Zalak, thank you for being here,
2 Commissioner, and thanks for your service to
3 the community.

4 MR. ZALAK: Honorable Senators and
5 Representatives, thank you so much for the
6 opportunity to speak this evening. Just two
7 thoughts on the redistricting.

8 If you would entertain, District 8 as it,
9 Congressional District 8 as it runs from part
10 of Marion County all of the way down to
11 Orlando, we think with the growth and the
12 statistics that is on your website, that we can
13 condense some of that, bring that a little more
14 north into Marion County, and with Marion
15 county and The Villages together in District 8,
16 it would be a great district for our future.

17 The second thing is, as our Senators are
18 so split, we would just ask that you would give
19 us a greater voice in the Senate with a
20 consolidated or a slightly consolidated Senate
21 District.

22 It is really interesting. I listened to
23 the lady a little while ago, and as a matter of
24 fact, when you guys take the time to serve and
25 come out here and listen to all of these

1 people, for someone to call this a farce, it is
2 pretty amazing to me.

3 I want to thank you for your service, and
4 it was pretty funny, because last night I had a
5 community meeting where we listened to the
6 people and we deliberated and we brought back
7 real results.

8 They called that a farce, too, it is
9 amazing. Thank you so much for your service.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, and
11 Commissioner, if you have any specifics about
12 the -- about the advice you just gave us, any
13 particular areas that you think need to be
14 included in particular lines, if you would give
15 that to us, we would be very grateful.

16 COMMISSIONER MCCLAIN: Thank you so much,
17 sir. We will get that to you.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, and now John
19 Schiffeamullon, John Schiffeamullon, please,
20 followed by Evelyn Foxx with the Alachua County
21 Branch of the NAACP, and then Kali Blount with
22 the Alachua County Housing Authority and Black
23 Nurses' Association. Mr. Schiffeamullon, did I
24 get that correctly, sir?

25 MR. SCHIFFEAMULLON: Close enough. Ladies

1 and gentlemen, thank you for giving us this
2 opportunity. Mr. Chairman, I would like to
3 thank you particularly for referring to my
4 country properly as a republic and not a
5 democracy. That all too often gets missed.

6 Fair districts, fair means different
7 things depending on who you ask. The
8 Supervisor of Elections for Alachua County
9 recently suggested that the county lines would
10 simplify the administration of the vote.

11 People who live in the City of Gainesville
12 would probably tell you that fair is the county
13 of Alachua. I live in that recently mentioned
14 city of Archer, in Precinct 11-A0, not A-1.

15 People who live in the rural districts
16 would tell you that a district that represents
17 the County of Alachua represents the City of
18 Gainesville, not the rural areas.

19 So fair depends on who you ask. I looked
20 at the -- at the Fair District Amendment and I
21 don't think very many people would have a
22 problem with the concept of compact, contiguous
23 geographic borders.

24 The rub is in the details. The exceptions
25 and I don't envy you that. The Voters Rights

1 Act of 1965 that has to be considered, the
2 exemptions for minorities, people who speak
3 different languages. That is not really your
4 fault. That is ours.

5 Theodore Roosevelt once said, in fact, he
6 said it more than once, I have no tolerance for
7 hyphenated Americanism. A man is an American
8 and he is nothing else, or he is no American at
9 all. Thank you for your time.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
11 I appreciate your comments. Evelyn Foxx with
12 the NAACP and then I think it is Kali or Kali
13 Blount, with the Housing Authority and then
14 John Martin.

15 Ms. Foxx, thank you for being here, and we
16 look forward to your testimony.

17 MS. FOXX: Thank you so much, Mr. Chair,
18 and members of this Committee. I welcome you
19 to Gainesville and Alachua County.

20 I am a little puzzled about this hearing
21 here tonight. I was present ten years ago when
22 we were at Key West and we had maps weeks
23 before the hearing.

24 Our state is made up of 16 percent
25 African-Americans, 22 percent Hispanics. My

1 challenge and my urge to you is to please be
2 fair, and then after hearing our Chair tonight
3 so abruptly cut off Dr. King's son, I don't
4 know if you could really be fair.

5 Anyway, please be fair and please do the
6 right thing. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much. I
8 am advised as a historical fact that the
9 earliest ever hearing that was held in
10 Gainesville at the last cycle in 2000, after
11 the 2000 census, was actually held in July.

12 So we are a little ahead of the game, but
13 thank you, Ms. Foxx, and Ms. Blunt, how do I --
14 Mr. Blunt, how do I pronounce your first name,
15 sir?

16 MR. BLOUNT: Kali.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Kali. Thank you for
18 being here, and you are recognized. John
19 Martin is next, and then after Mr. Martin, then
20 Peter Johnson.

21 MR. BLOUNT: I am Kali Blount, a
22 registered nurse and citizen planner. I live
23 and occasionally work here in Gainesville. I
24 work as an RN, so I can use my Master's in
25 planning according to its academic ideas

1 without distortion by pay checks from
2 politicals.

3 I have observed a lot as a Board member
4 for Public Housing and Workforce Development,
5 that is Florida Works in our areas and other
6 work in community funding and development,
7 poverty reduction, healthcare and affordable
8 housing. I am going to try to talk real fast
9 and say a whole lot.

10 So I appreciate the attention of all of
11 you who are not busy surfing the Internet right
12 now.

13 I have comments about the products of our
14 pattern of representation, but first I want to
15 Amen the call for speeding up the process, and
16 as the Chair has responded several times, any
17 member can offer a map or maps from the public
18 are on the website, that is a turkey shoot.

19 We want the institution, your committee
20 structure to produce faster, do your collective
21 job expeditiously.

22 Now, my story, your screen says, tell us
23 your story. So my story of experience and
24 representation has to do with being a member of
25 the Boards of both Housing Authorities locally

1 at different times.

2 We have an annual conference in D. C.
3 where people, Board members and residents and
4 Directors of Public Housing and Community
5 Development gather in D. C. every spring to do
6 a day on Capitol Hill.

7 We spend a month prior contacting our
8 people, so for Gainesville that means
9 contacting the Representatives of District 16
10 and 3 and then we go as a Florida delegation,
11 20 or 30 people sometimes to see each Senator
12 together.

13 Now, all, those four contacts for us
14 Gainesville folks have always yielded immediate
15 response, except for one Representative who
16 never answers us until the day before our
17 Capitol Hill visit, which means we are already
18 in D. C., practicing our talking points, and
19 then with different persons, sometimes we see
20 the esteemed person themselves, sometimes a
21 senior aid. This particular person, as I said,
22 never responds until the day before and we only
23 see a junior aid or student intern ever, and
24 that is the kind of responsiveness that I am
25 concerned about.

1 This same person also has closed their
2 local office in response to a visit by a local
3 group of persons on a particular issue where
4 they had stated their opinion and were not
5 willing to discuss it.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Mr. Blount, we are
7 getting a little far afield. If you could --

8 MR. BLOUNT: I am talking about the
9 results from a pattern --

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I am talking about
11 redistricting and we would like you to
12 conclude, please, because we have a whole bunch
13 of people behind you and not too many minutes
14 left.

15 MR. BLOUNT: Okay, so that the pattern of
16 districting that we have has brought us,
17 supposedly has created opportunities for
18 minority representation. So I am talking about
19 the topic, but it also gets us, gets us stuck
20 with some unresponsive chaf in the bundle, and
21 that is why I am describing that person.

22 Your thing said tell us your story. That
23 is my story. This pattern also gets us the
24 politics that re-enforces poverty and
25 therefore, stunts development of individuals,

1 development of the state economy.

2 The Workforce Development folks have told
3 you that we get objections from recruiting
4 industries about our poor education rankings.
5 We have existing state legislation that has
6 said, break up economically segregated housing.
7 That has been on the books since '85.

8 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I apologize, sir, we
9 really have a lot of people behind you, and if
10 you can't keep it to redistricting I will have
11 to thank you for your testimony.

12 MR. BLOUNT: Well, if fair districts can
13 evolve across Florida and much of this country,
14 maybe we can involve toward eight or 12 major
15 parties and even proportional representation
16 and coalitions and governments that function
17 and really respond to the people better than
18 what we are seeing here tonight.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you
20 very much. John Martin, you are next, and then
21 Peter Johnson, and following Peter Johnson,
22 Erin Murphy with the University of Florida
23 College of Democrats.

24 Mr. Martin, thank you for being here and
25 thanks for your patience. We look forward to

1 your testimony.

2 MR. MARTIN: Thank you, sir. I am from
3 Hawthorne, the City of Hawthorne where I served
4 as Mayor.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thanks for your service
6 as Mayor, sir.

7 MR. MARTIN: Currently I am not on the
8 Commission currently. I am in House District
9 -- I mean Congressional District 3, probably
10 the most gerrymandered one maybe in the
11 country.

12 I am in Senate District 14 and House
13 District 23. My concern is actually similar to
14 what Mayor Calderwood said earlier in Alachua,
15 that -- that especially we haven't talked much
16 about the Congressional Districts.

17 When you look at the Congressional
18 Districts and you are from a very small
19 community and I am not be-smurfing anyone who
20 serves in that district, but I remember the
21 first time I called their office and identified
22 myself as the Mayor of Hawthorne, they said,
23 well, we need to check to see what
24 Congressional District you are in.

25 And I said, well, I have already done

1 that, but anyway, I really believe that when
2 you look at and when you take into the small
3 communities, you need to look not only at the
4 geographic, but what is the natural fit for
5 those communities, and a place like Hawthorne,
6 I think that we deserve to be in with the rest
7 of Alachua County or the majority of Alachua
8 County and not Jacksonville and Orlando,
9 because that -- I mean, pick one of the two,
10 but trying to be between both of them is very
11 difficult.

12 The other thing I want to say and this is
13 kind of more on the light side, you know, be
14 careful, as much as I respect the voters of
15 Florida, I mean, I grew up following the
16 Legislature around from a young kid.

17 We all, we are not only about this latest
18 thing, but we voted to put pigs in the
19 Constitution as well. So sometimes there are
20 unintended consequences, and I will tell you as
21 with someone who has followed politics in this
22 part of the state since I can remember, that
23 one of the unintended consequences of term
24 limits has been that you don't have the
25 representation for the rural areas and those

1 types of things, not that the men and women
2 that are there now are not capable, but without
3 the seniority that they had, it becomes a
4 numbers game.

5 So all I am saying to that is that when
6 you look at the vote that was taken and I
7 respect the vote for the two Amendments, there
8 will be unintended consequences, okay.

9 There was a time when the Democrats were
10 running the state of Florida for the most part,
11 they did redistricting. I am sure that they
12 didn't mean to redistrict in such a way that a
13 majority of Republicans came in. They came in
14 probably under districts that Democrats had
15 drawn for the most part.

16 So all I am saying as citizens, let's not
17 panic. With term limits, the next time that
18 this happens, with all due respect to you, most
19 of you won't be sitting here.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: That is right.

21 MR. MARTIN: So things will change. Let's
22 take a deep breath, try to do what we think is
23 in the best interest of the citizens of the
24 state of Florida, and realize that they are,
25 all of those who are both for or opposed to

1 these Amendments, and I will close with this,
2 believe me, there will be consequences that are
3 unforeseen that you won't like if you supported
4 it or if you didn't support it, because
5 elections have consequences. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, we
7 appreciate it. Peter Johnson, you are next,
8 Peter Johnson? Is Peter Johnson here? How
9 about Erin Murphy with the College Democrats,
10 and then following Ms. Murphy, Reba, and I am
11 not going to take a shot at this, Reba, you are
12 going to have to help me. 1904 Northwest 11th
13 Road, and then Chris Ott is next. Ms. Murphy,
14 thank you for being here.

15 MS. MURPHY: Thank you. My name is Erin
16 Murphy and I am the President of the UF College
17 Democrats. Thank you all for being here this
18 evening.

19 As a UF student I go to campus every day
20 and go to class in one House District and that
21 is Representative Perry's, and then I go home
22 to my apartment in another House District,
23 which is Representative Chestnut's.

24 I am sure you are both wonderful
25 Representatives, but it can be confusing at

1 times because as a student and as someone who
2 is interested in politics, there are issues
3 that I would like to advocate on, especially as
4 a student at a university where I am facing
5 budget cuts to my university, hikes in tuition,
6 cuts to my Bright Future's funding, which is
7 the reason I am able to attend, able to attend
8 college.

9 And I think that it is difficult, because
10 sometimes I wonder who is really representing
11 me. The place I live or the place I go to
12 school. It can get, it is very confusing, and
13 so as a constituent, where should I turn, and
14 in going through all of this out of the blue
15 there came Fair Districts.

16 Amendments V and VI, they are going to be
17 on the ballot for 2010, and so, you know, I
18 advocated passionately for those Amendments in
19 the 2010 election, and I know that we worked
20 very hard on our campus to get students to
21 understand the issues and to vote and democracy
22 ran its course and Amendments V and VI were
23 adopted with 63 percent of the vote, and they
24 are now a part of the Florida Constitution.

25 And things that I find disheartening is

1 when I get the feeling that you as my elected
2 officials aren't really interested in enforcing
3 the will of the people. When I heard that
4 there is a \$30 million fund in the House and an
5 \$8 million fund in the Senate in preparation
6 for legal battles over this, which I understand
7 there are legal battles every time there is
8 redistricting, but I am pretty sure this is
9 more than the cost than it usually is, and it
10 is in anticipation of fighting Fair Districts,
11 I have to ask, please don't waste taxpayer
12 dollars in fighting something that the
13 taxpayers voted for.

14 And with that I would ask you to implement
15 Fair Districts Florida, as the people of
16 Florida have asked you to.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Murphy.
18 And Ms. Murphy, again, not to be argumentative,
19 but just because sometimes something gets in
20 the blood stream and it is hard to get it out,
21 ten years ago in the Senate and I wasn't in the
22 Senate ten years ago, but ten years ago in the
23 Senate the legal costs associated with
24 redistricting, and there were I think three
25 court challenges, were \$10 million.

1 The \$9 million that are budgeted for over
2 a two-year period are not to fight Fair
3 Districts, but rather to make sure that we are
4 able to present the redistricting plans to the
5 various courts that we have to present them to
6 and defend them in front of those courts as
7 well as the United States Justice Department.

8 I can tell you that in the Florida Senate
9 there is not one penny in any line item, in any
10 budget, to fight Fair Districts. That is just
11 not true.

12 But thank you very much, Ms. Murphy, for
13 your testimony. And Reba, can you help me out
14 with that last name?

15 MS. BANDYOPADHYAY: I did it once. It is
16 Bandyopadhyay.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Do it again?

18 MS. BANDYOPADHYAY: Bandyopadhyay.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Bandyopadhyay.

20 MS. BANDYOPADHYAY: Yes, don't look at it,
21 it is easier.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Okay, I will just,
23 Bandyopadhyay. Thank you so much for being
24 here, again.

25 MS. BANDYOPADHYAY: I would like to thank

1 you for coming to Gainesville and to Alachua
2 County to listen to us and giving us the
3 opportunity to speak.

4 I agree with many other previous speakers
5 that this would have been a much more useful
6 exercise if we had all had maps to look at
7 beforehand.

8 And as has been pointed out, although the
9 previous last time you had the meetings in
10 July, they also had maps in July for people to
11 look at. So it is a little bit of an exercise.

12 On the other hand, I can point to one
13 thing that concerns me, is that the legislative
14 line for the Congressional Districts, the U. S.
15 Congress, goes down more or less 13th Avenue,
16 except for it carved out my neighborhood to
17 stick it on the east side of town, even though
18 it is on the west side.

19 What that does, it means that we have two
20 Representatives in Congress, one of whom is
21 described as D-Jacksonville, and the other one
22 is described as R-Ocala. That is who has --
23 who Gainesville has representing them in the
24 Congress, and that is actually important
25 because that splits, as has been talked about,

1 it splits the community of the University of
2 Florida in two, which is actually relevant to
3 how we get funding, not just at the state
4 level, but also in the Federal level because we
5 look at funding that comes from Congress
6 regarding scientific, medical research that
7 comes to the University of Florida and there is
8 a big economic engine here and if we don't have
9 a Representative in Gainesville, which I don't
10 really think has been maybe explicitly
11 mentioned, then it is very difficult to get
12 those points across to our Legislators because
13 we have to go to Ocala or we have to go to
14 Jacksonville.

15 They have local offices but that is not
16 the same thing as having their primary seat
17 here in Gainesville. And so I would just like
18 to urge that when we look at those lines in
19 this upcoming redistricting, that it is
20 considered that Gainesville, itself, is a city,
21 is a community of interest, and although that
22 exact terminology is not in the Fair Districts
23 legislation, that we actually consider that as
24 being a primary continuous boundary that we
25 would like to see in one district and not in

1 two. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you,
3 Ms. Bandyopadhyay. Now we have Michael Bowie
4 from Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and then James
5 Ingle and then Ron Thornton.

6 I apologize, I didn't mean to skip you,
7 Chris Ott. I had you right on top. Thank you
8 for being here.

9 MR. OTT: Well, thank you for being here.
10 I want to thank you for taking, for giving up
11 your evening. I am sure you have families and
12 things, I know I have a son out at, from out of
13 town.

14 It looks like he is out having fun with
15 his friends and I am going to miss him because
16 he is leaving in the morning, but this is an
17 important event.

18 I was at the last redistricting when it
19 was at the Doyle Conner Center ten years ago.
20 At that point I wondered why it was called a
21 hearing, because there wasn't much listening
22 going on, there was people texting and talking
23 and chatting, and I appreciate that you have
24 run a fair meeting, Mr. Gaetz. I appreciate
25 that.

1 I think what we need our districts that
2 elect Representatives that we can access
3 readily and we can meet them. Some of the --
4 some of the 150-mile long districts and things
5 we got, I know, I live in Gainesville and I
6 work in Archer, and every election I see
7 Mr. Bemby out there putting out his signs at
8 the Davis Center, and, you know, I say hi and
9 then I see him in Tallahassee, also, but it is
10 pretty ridiculous what we got.

11 And I think just common sense, just
12 showing those maps, that is why 63 percent of
13 Floridians have spoken through the ballot to
14 change the way that we redistrict things.

15 The first time the Fair Districts tried to
16 put this on the ballot they actually didn't,
17 they wanted to remove the redistricting from
18 the Legislature. They wanted to have an
19 impartial body to do the job, but the Courts
20 threw that out because they said that it was
21 two issues, multiple issues on a ballot, you
22 can only have a specific one issue on a ballot.

23 You know, I am trying to look at that
24 bumper sticker that says More Wag and Less
25 Bark, but what I see is that as a consequence

1 of having Representatives that I don't feel
2 really represent me, and I think this is just
3 another gentleman put it pretty well.

4 When you draw things to favor incumbents,
5 incumbents know they can win so they can go to
6 Tallahassee or Washington and they can say what
7 they want to say, and it makes our country get
8 more and more polarized and we are now at the
9 place where, I don't know, I am kind of fearful
10 about, you know, our country driving off the
11 cliff, playing chicken with the debt crisis and
12 what-not, because we can't sit down and have a
13 discussion about issues.

14 What we are doing now is we are picking
15 sides, and I have neighbors and I am tired of
16 picking sides. We are all Americans here, and
17 I think if you watched the World Cup the other
18 day when the Brazilian girl just dropped in the
19 box to waste time, and the fans in the stands
20 saw it, nobody heard her, she was faking it,
21 and she got put on the stretcher, took up two
22 minutes of time, Abby Wambach back said, watch
23 the time, please, Referee. As soon as that
24 stretcher got off the field, that girl jumped
25 off, ran around, tried to get back in the game.

1 Floridians are watching what is going on.
2 We don't want to be duked. And they are
3 watching because they want this to be a fair
4 process.

5 Where are the maps? Got maps? We should
6 be discussing the particulars of how to make
7 things fair. One thing that I have gotten here
8 tonight is the folks in the rural county
9 wanting to have a fair shake.

10 The other thing I have heard is we are
11 going to have water issues here. We are going
12 to have, you know, there is the old story, I
13 got good news and bad news about water. Do you
14 want the good news, the good news is where --

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I apologize, Mr. Ott, you
16 are going to have to wind it up.

17 MR. OTT: I am wrapping it up. The good
18 news is we are going to be drinking sewage in
19 about 25 years. The bad news is there not
20 going to be enough to go around.

21 So we have some serious issues, we need to
22 start working on talking about the issues and
23 stop picking sides.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Ott, very
25 much. Michael Bowie, Michael Bowie here? How

1 about James Ingle, James Ingle, then Ron
2 Thornton and then Mark Werner with the
3 Democratic Party. Mr. Ingle, thank you for
4 coming tonight.

5 MR. INGLE: I appreciate it, sorry, I am
6 actually a little bit under dressed than
7 everybody else, I woke up about --

8 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are a citizen, we
9 work for you, you are not under dressed. We
10 welcome you.

11 MR. INGLE: Thank you. I woke up about
12 4:00 this morning, drove to Crystal River,
13 worked a ten-hour shift in a power plant, drove
14 back and came to this meeting, so it has been
15 kind of a full day.

16 I wanted to tell you guys how impressed
17 and how much I like this process. That is what
18 I wanted to do, it is not true. I feel like it
19 is lacking a lot.

20 You know, this seems entirely backwards to
21 me, like we are here discussing the districts
22 and what they need to look like without a map,
23 with a giant blank 30-foot screen behind you.

24 It seems very hard to have a legitimate
25 conversation about it without the information

1 being out.

2 You have mentioned several times that
3 there is nothing stopping the Legislators from
4 putting maps out today or yesterday or the day
5 before, but the fact that there is nothing
6 stopping them and no maps have come out from
7 the Legislators, it seems to make it seem to me
8 that it is not a particular priority for the
9 leadership in the Legislature.

10 You know, I don't want to stand up here
11 and attack all Legislators, you know, I have
12 been to Tallahassee, I have sat in Mr. Evers's
13 office and Mr. Oelrich and Mr. Chestnut and
14 they seem like decent people and they have
15 always been honest and straight up with me and
16 I don't want to -- what I say sound like I am
17 attacking every single person standing up
18 there, because I am certainly not.

19 I also know you are great people, but the
20 Legislature as a whole, I have just not been
21 very impressed with them on this issue.

22 You know, Florida is already kind of a
23 laughing stock around the country for politics
24 and now we are in a position of Florida is
25 suing itself about fair districts.

1 So we as taxpayers get to pay both sides
2 of a lawsuit, like we are just throwing money
3 at lawyers, and it just seems like in a state
4 where we talk so much about budget crisis, that
5 seems like a bad place to be spending money
6 right now.

7 You know, and during the last election the
8 voters spoke, you know, and whether you agree
9 with the Fair Districts or not, two out of
10 three Floridians came out and said that is how
11 they wanted their districts done, before we had
12 a map that looked like that, and there is only
13 one reason a map like that gets drawn. It gets
14 drawn for political power.

15 The party in power draws that map to make
16 sure it maintains power, and I realize that
17 nobody standing on this stage had anything to
18 do with drawing that map. That was before
19 everybody's time, but at the same time,
20 everybody on this stage has had -- been
21 affected by how that map was drawn.

22 So, I mean, this is all of our problem and
23 I think that the voters need to be listened to,
24 and I worry that several of the kind of veins
25 the Legislature went in seem to be against the

1 will of the people.

2 It seemed like voter rights were under
3 attack and it doesn't seem like as much as
4 being done as could be to move forward with the
5 Fair Districts, and as I said I would love to
6 come up here and tell you how impressed I am
7 with this process, and I wish the process was
8 in place so I could be impressed with. Thank
9 you.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, thank you very
11 much for taking the time to come tonight. Now,
12 here is where we are. We have by my clock
13 about 14 minutes left. I have about 30 people
14 who want to talk.

15 So we are not going to get to everybody,
16 so here is what we can do, if we don't get to
17 you tonight, obviously it is not because we
18 didn't want to, we have heard, by my count,
19 gosh, 71 speakers so far.

20 So if we didn't get to you, you can still
21 submit your comments, they will be given to
22 every single member of the committee and every
23 member of the committee will have the benefit
24 of your wisdom and there will be other hearings
25 and other opportunities as well to speak if you

1 would like, but we are going to go as far as we
2 can with the people who are here. We ask you
3 to please be as brief as you can.

4 Ron Thornton? Ron Thornton? Once, twice,
5 three times, Mike Werner, representing the
6 Democratic Party. And then, Kim, I think it is
7 Popejoy, and then Tommy Langford.

8 Thank you very much for being here
9 tonight, Mr. Werner.

10 MR. WERNER: Thank you for giving me the
11 opportunity to speak, and I would like to thank
12 you, the Chairman, for your -- your demeanor
13 and the respect you have given to all of the
14 speakers and how you have made this more of an
15 affable and non partisan type of atmosphere.

16 First of all, I would like to have a
17 question. I didn't know before I came here and
18 I am rather new to this redistricting process,
19 I didn't know that there was some legal move
20 afoot that was put into place by the
21 Legislature to contest the legality of the Fair
22 Districting Amendment, and I just wonder how
23 many people on the stage now voted in favor of
24 contesting that Amendment or whether, what is
25 the, you know, whether they were in favor of

1 it.

2 Is there anyone on the stage who was in
3 favor of legally contesting the Fair
4 Districting Amendment?

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I will tell you what we
6 can do. As opposed to giving everybody an
7 opportunity to explain their position, why
8 don't we give you, why don't we give you a
9 chance to talk afterwards with anybody you want
10 to talk to, but I think you will find that,
11 that there is a difference of opinion among
12 Senators, Representatives, Republicans,
13 Democrats. What else do you have for us
14 tonight?

15 MR. WERNER: Well, I would just like to
16 mention the main reason that I am here, and
17 that is because the gerrymandering process can,
18 by its very nature, dilute out whole sections
19 of the electorate and produce a result in which
20 there is, instead of which democracy instead of
21 being government by the majority, is government
22 by the minority.

23 And we have several examples of that in
24 recent and not so recent history, starting with
25 Samuel J. Tilden against Rutherford B. Hayes,

1 when Rutherford B. Hayes was named President,
2 even though he had a minority of the votes,
3 when Albert Gore got a majority of the votes of
4 the country and George Bush was proclaimed
5 President.

6 So I just want to make the point that you
7 have a very large responsibility in instituting
8 the fair districts to prevent this from
9 happening, because I am concerned that we are
10 moving more towards a democracy where there is
11 government by the minority instead of
12 government by the majority.

13 And lastly, I would like to echo the
14 sentiment about think globally but act locally,
15 and in that sense I think that there are, what
16 we do here has some bearing on really around
17 the world.

18 Right now in the Middle East there is a
19 tremendous upsurge of sentiment for democracy
20 and I think it is our responsibility to be a
21 beacon of democracy and be an example that
22 other people can follow and embrace.

23 And I think that is what we want to do and
24 that is what the voters of Florida wanted to do
25 with the Fair District Amendment, was to make

1 this a better democracy and that is why I would
2 urge you to go with the Amendment and the
3 spirit of the Amendment.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
5 Next, Kim, is it Popejoy, and then Tommy
6 Langford, and I hope we will have time for Ted
7 Yoho. Kim?

8 MS. POPEJOY: Kim Popejoy, citizen and for
9 those of you that are still able to listen,
10 thank you very much for being here to listen.

11 It has been said that if you have a varied
12 group of people it takes seven times and seven
13 different ways and I think that you have all
14 heard today that people want you to speed up
15 the process and I know you have heard that at
16 least seven times.

17 People want you to pay attention to the
18 county lines, you have heard that at least
19 seven times today. I think you have also heard
20 that people need you to try and keep rural
21 districts contiguous also, seven times.

22 So I urge you to take those particular
23 areas of concern back to your committees and
24 urge your staff to give us maps ASAP.

25 Secondly, I want to go to just very

1 briefly, the big picture, and it has been
2 mentioned a couple of times, that we are much
3 more of a polarized society today than we have
4 been in quite some time, and some of that may
5 be laid at the feet of how districting is done.

6 Without competitive districts, then we
7 have less opportunity for representing the
8 middle of the country, and if we go back to
9 1859 and 1860, we are a very polarized country.

10 I am sure that no one at that time thought
11 that it would explode in the way that it did.

12 I am sure that nobody thinks that the kind of
13 polarization that we have in the country today
14 is going to explode in anything kind of
15 similar, but I ask you to keep that in mind
16 that we want to make sure that we do not let
17 the polarization that is current in our country
18 continue to progress to the point where we are
19 actually at each other's throats as we were in
20 past.

21 And one of the ways that we can do that is
22 to create competitive districts, competitive
23 districts will give us middle of the road
24 candidates.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very, very much

1 for your comments. Next is Tommy Langford, and
2 then Ted Yoho and we are going to try to get to
3 D. J. Ferguson. Mr. Langford?

4 MR. LANGFORD: Thank you, sir, for the
5 honor to speak to you tonight. I appreciate
6 having the opportunity to be here.

7 Just a couple of words, I will be brief, I
8 am here to represent Gilchrist County. I want
9 to remind you and ask you to keep the rural
10 counties rural as much as you can, because our
11 wants and desires are a little bit different
12 than the urban areas and I am sure that you
13 understand that.

14 The other thing is, just make sure that we
15 try to keep it as fair as we can. I know ya'll
16 have been elected to go to Tallahassee. You
17 got the majority votes, that is the reason you
18 hold that seat. So I just ask that you do it
19 right, do it fair, abide by the law.

20 I appreciate your courage for being here
21 tonight. I know that you are in a situation
22 where you are going to hear good things, bad
23 things, everybody wants this, everybody wants
24 that, and you can't please them all, but do the
25 best you can with what you got and thank you,

1 sir.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
3 Ted Yoho and then D. J. Ferguson.

4 MR. YOHO: How are ya'll doing, appreciate
5 your time, Mr. Chairman, and the Honorable
6 Representatives.

7 I pretty much am going to defer to what
8 everybody said because they have covered all of
9 my points, but just a few things.

10 Especially in regards to Ms. Kidder,
11 especially in regards to a candidate, since I
12 am -- I am a candidate, and it is hard to
13 campaign without these lines drawn, and we have
14 been told it may be even up to November. It
15 just creates --

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Let me disabuse you of
17 that. That is simply not true.

18 MR. YOHO: Well, that is good, that makes
19 me feel better, but it causes a lot of
20 confusion on the voter's side, too.

21 My encouragement is to be fair, equitable,
22 expedient and use common sense as Mr. Boyetx
23 pointed out here in the town of Archer and all
24 of the different districts in that, and I know
25 you will be.

1 It is hard to give an opinion and people
2 have brought this up over and over again
3 without seeing a map. It is kind of like going
4 out on a blind date and your buddy said, well,
5 what is it like, and I said well, I will tell
6 you after we go out on the date.

7 You would expedite this or make it faster
8 if we had the maps where we could just say
9 these look good, and, you know, I know that is
10 a tough thing with the demographics.

11 And so I encourage you to make it as, the
12 maps available as soon as possible and to bring
13 the process to a quick and equitable conclusion
14 and I appreciate your time and your service.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much. D.
16 J. Ferguson, D. J. Ferguson? Okay, George
17 Tedford, George Tedford? Judith Etzler, Judith
18 Etzler, Judith Etzler. I -- is there -- are
19 you Ms. Etzler? Please come forward. You will
20 be our last speaker this evening.

21 First shall be last and the last shall be
22 first. We are delighted to have your
23 testimony.

24 MS. ETZLER: Thank you for holding this
25 meeting. I voted for Fair Districts, and I

1 really believe in one citizen, one vote. I am
2 getting pretty sinical about all of the ways
3 that I am being manipulated as a citizen, I am
4 just talking as one citizen.

5 I am a very serious citizen and I always
6 vote and I follow issues. I follow the news on
7 television, I follow local issues, I follow
8 Federal and I also try to pay attention to
9 national issues.

10 But I don't appreciate all of the
11 political games that are being played with me.
12 Word framing, not gerrymandering districts,
13 there are so many things that I don't
14 appreciate and I think it waste my time, it
15 waste your time and it also waste our citizens'
16 money.

17 Please, the last thing I will say is,
18 please treat us with respect. We need your
19 respect. We try to respect you, and also if
20 you would treat us as intelligent citizens.

21 I am very intelligent and I am tired of
22 being disregarded and I am tired of being, the
23 feeling of being sinical about my government.
24 I love my government. I am an American
25 citizen, I always vote.

1 I come from a long family of voters and I
2 was taught to love my country. So please allow
3 me to keep on doing that and keep on respecting
4 the people who make the laws and don't waste
5 our money, thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Etzler.
7 We have heard 70 -- by my reckoning, we have
8 called 79 names and I think we have heard 75
9 testifiers tonight.

10 We appreciate everyone's willingness to
11 come forward. There are maps available now on
12 the websites that have been submitted. There
13 are likely to be more maps submitted.

14 The one thing I would like to share with
15 you is that apparently there is some impression
16 that somehow this committee will -- will have a
17 map that springs fully grown from the Brow of
18 Suske (phonetic). That is simply not the case.

19 The fact is that there will be individual
20 maps generated by individual Legislators, just
21 like there are individual maps being generated
22 now by citizens and by interest groups.

23 The last time there was a public hearing
24 in Gainesville about this matter was in July,
25 in the last cycle. There were maps then, but I

1 will guarantee you that there will be maps long
2 before July, and, you know, unless the creek
3 rises, we will be long gone with this whole
4 issue long before July.

5 So we really appreciate your willingness
6 to come out tonight. We appreciate your
7 kindness to the individuals who spoke, whether
8 you agreed with them or whether you didn't
9 agree with them, and we are delighted to get
10 the kind of input that we could not have gotten
11 any other way or any other place than from
12 listening to the specifics about your
13 neighborhoods and your communities.

14 This is not your last time to have input.
15 This is your first time to have input, and
16 please continue to be involved in this
17 important process that defines our
18 representative government.

19 With that, Representative Precourt moves
20 we rise.

21 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
22 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 163 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 12th day of September, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2011

8:00 A.M.

COLONY COTTAGE RECREATION CENTER
THE VILLAGES, FLORIDA

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 CHAIRMAN PRECOURT: Representative
3 Precourt, the Joint Senate House Redistricting
4 hearing is hereby called to order. We are also
5 pleased to be joined today by a number of other
6 members here, Senators and Representatives
7 alike, but first I would like Senator Alan Hays
8 here to have an opportunity to welcome everyone
9 and let other members introduce themselves.

10 Before we do that I am Steve Precourt,
11 State Representative from House District 41,
12 which includes south Lake County, parts of
13 Orange and west Orange County, and I will be
14 chairing today's meeting, and the -- with me
15 today from the Chair of the Senate
16 Redistricting Committee is Senator Gaetz who
17 will be Co-Chairing the meeting, and with that
18 let me turn it over to Alan to go ahead and
19 welcome everyone.

20 SENATOR HAYS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
21 and it is my privilege to welcome all of the
22 members from across the state to Senate
23 District 20. You are right in the heart of
24 God's country, and you are in, you are in House
25 District 42, Representative Marlene O'Toole's

1 district and we certainly want to thank each of
2 you for coming this morning to participate in
3 democracy.

4 It is great to look out there and see
5 Speaker Larry Cretul and Senator Carey Baker
6 with us today also. Thank you for joining us,
7 guys, but it is my privilege to be the Senator
8 for this area and certainly enjoy welcoming
9 each of you to hear some real good input today.

10 A VOICE: Good morning, and it is a great
11 day in The Villages, is it not? I am happy to
12 see you all here. It is like church, no one is
13 up front, but we will pass the plate back there
14 just the same.

15 Thank you for being here, and I am just
16 going to turn right back -- is everyone speak,
17 and this is Representative Passidomo from the
18 Naples area.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Good morning,
20 Kathleen Passidomo, I am from Collier County, I
21 represent the City of Naples, Marco Island,
22 Everglades city and a lot of alligators.

23 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Good morning, I am
24 Jim Boyd. I am from Bradenton, which is
25 Manatee County, District 68, just south of

1 Tampa Bay on the other side of the, the other
2 part of the state over there. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: Good morning,
4 everyone, I am Ed Hooper from -- a
5 Representative from District 50, which is the
6 Clearwater area of Pinellas County, and I
7 purposely took my golf clubs out of the car
8 before I got here so I would make this meeting.

9 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good morning,
10 Representative Chuck Chestnut, House District
11 23, a portion of Alachua County and a portion
12 of Marion County.

13 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: Good morning,
14 Representative Tom Goodson, representing
15 Brevard County and Indian River County, House
16 Seat 29.

17 SENATOR MONTFORD: I am State Senator Bill
18 Montford, District 6. It is all or a part of
19 11 counties, all around Tallahassee, and we are
20 proud to say, well, I was proud to say that I
21 have a lot of relatives move down here but the
22 problem is they can't vote for me anymore, but
23 take good care of them.

24 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: State Representative
25 Peter Nehr from Pinellas County and Pasco

1 County, Palm Harbor and the East Lake area.

2 Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE KAIR: Hello, everybody, my
4 name is Martin Kair, I represent District 97 in
5 the Florida House of representatives, which is
6 located solely within Brevard County. Thank
7 you so much for coming today.

8 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Good morning,
9 Representative Matt Caldwell, District 73 down
10 in southwest Florida, Lee County.

11 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Good morning, I am
12 Representative Jim Frishe, I am the majority
13 whip of the Florida House. I represent
14 District 54, which is the west coast of
15 Pinellas County, all of the beaches.

16 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Hi, my name is
17 Janet Adkins, I represent House District 12,
18 which is in northeast Florida, Nassau, Baker,
19 Bradford, Clay, Union and Duval Counties.

20 REPRESENTATIVE STARGEL: Hi, my name is
21 Kelli Stargel, I am a State Representative for
22 District 64, which is north Polk County and my
23 grandfather actually was the Sheriff of Sumter
24 County back in the late 1800s, so I have roots
25 here.

1 SENATOR THRASHER: Hi, I am Senator John
2 Thrasher, Senate District 8, which includes
3 parts of Nassau County up in the north part of
4 Florida, Duval County, St. Johns County,
5 Flagler County and Volusia County, and honored
6 to be here today.

7 CHAIRMAN PRECOURT: Senator Evers.

8 SENATOR EVERS: And I am Senator Greg
9 Evers, I represent District 2 in the Senate,
10 which is up in the panhandle. It is north
11 Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton,
12 Washington, Holmes Counties, and it is a
13 pleasure to be here at The Villages.

14 CHAIRMAN PRECOURT: Okay, I think we got
15 everyone. Any other members? Terrific. So,
16 folks, you see that we have got members from
17 all over the state of Florida that are here.

18 The sole purpose is to hear you and to
19 hear your input from both parties as well,
20 there is Republicans and Democrats as well up
21 here.

22 We are trying to make this as open,
23 transparent and inclusive a process as
24 possible.

25 First I want to also say thanks to The

1 Villages, themselves, for allowing us to use
2 this beautiful facility. It is great to have
3 the opportunity to be in a place like this
4 where everybody can come and enjoy themselves
5 at meeting as well, and we want to thank you
6 all for being here.

7 You, the members of the public, you are
8 taking time out of your day to come and share
9 your comments and recommendations with us to
10 help us shape the Congressional Seats, State
11 Senate Seats, as well as the Representative
12 Seats.

13 Today's hearing is also being televised,
14 simulcast on Florida Channel over the Internet.

15 Once again, our sole purpose is to hear
16 from you about how you believe the legal
17 standards governing redistricting should be
18 applied in your community, as well as statewide
19 so that you are represented in Washington and
20 Tallahassee fairly, equitably and sensibly.

21 Now, our procedures today are very simple,
22 but they are going to be very important to
23 follow.

24 It is important that you sign in so we can
25 create an accurate public record of all of the

1 attendees and the speakers. You may also want
2 to as part of signing in, join our e-mail list
3 so that we can keep you informed about the
4 entirety of the redistricting process and all
5 of the developments along the way, whether it
6 be meetings, news or you get to see what other
7 people submit as far as maps and comments on
8 the redistricting process.

9 So if you are not signed in, please raise
10 your hand and one of our staff who are around
11 the room will give you an attendance card.

12 In addition, if you wish to speak today
13 and you have not filed out an attendance card,
14 make sure you do. They are like this. We need
15 these to make sure that we give you the
16 opportunity to speak.

17 Now, if you haven't filled one out and you
18 want to fill one out later on in the meeting,
19 because it comes to mind that you have
20 something more or different to say, you can do
21 that at any time as well by seeing one of our
22 staff and they will get those cards up to me
23 and get them in line.

24 Our job is going to be to sit here and
25 listen though, the folks up here on the dais,

1 but before we begin, I want to recognize
2 Senator Gaetz to explain how today's hearing
3 will fit into the overall redistricting
4 process. Senator Gaetz.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
6 Mr. Chairman, and it is good to be here. I am
7 Don Gaetz, I represent five coastal counties up
8 in northwest Florida, from Panama City to
9 Pensacola, and you stole my jeweler. Bill and
10 Suzie Houck came down here to live and they
11 closed their jewelry store and my wife's
12 birthdays haven't been the same since.

13 Every ten years the Legislature is
14 required by our Constitution to redistrict the
15 state based on increases, decreases and
16 movements of population. Because Florida has
17 grown more than other states in the last decade
18 we will move up, Florida will move up from 25
19 to 27 members of the U.S. House of
20 Representatives, and we get two more electoral
21 votes for President. So we are up to 29
22 electoral votes for President.

23 Now, because some parts of the state have
24 increased or decreased disproportionately in
25 population, many Senate and House Districts

1 will change either by adding or losing
2 population.

3 When redistricting is completed,
4 Congressional Districts have to be equal in
5 size. They have to be equal in population and
6 contain 696,345 people. That is a
7 Congressional District, no matter where it is
8 in America.

9 The 40 Senate Districts here in Florida
10 must also be nearly equal at about 44 hundred
11 and seventy thousand people and our 120 House
12 Districts must also be nearly equal at about
13 156,700 people.

14 Now, we have displays in the front of the
15 room here and in the back of the room as well
16 showing the current boundaries of districts in
17 this area of the state, and also the number of
18 persons who have to be added or subtracted from
19 current districts in order to achieve equal
20 representation.

21 So there are maps. We can use the current
22 maps as a take-off point for you to tell us
23 what is right, what is wrong, what should be
24 changed, what should be kept, and you will be
25 able to see how many additional people have to

1 be added or subtracted from every district.

2 But equality of representation is not the
3 only legal requirement redistricting plans must
4 meet. The laws and important court cases
5 governing redistricting are explained in detail
6 on the House and Senate websites.

7 Those websites are listed on the
8 Redistricting 2012 brochure that was available
9 when you came in. If you didn't get one of
10 those brochures you can get one during the
11 meeting, you can get one afterwards.

12 The brochure summarizes Federal and State
13 laws and outlines topics that we hope you will
14 discuss here at today's meeting. The brochure
15 also details what is on our websites. The
16 websites are packed with information about
17 redistricting in Florida, including an
18 explanation of laws and important court cases
19 governing this process.

20 The Legislature can't just draw lines the
21 way it wants to. We are obligated to follow
22 Federal laws, State laws, Constitutional
23 provisions, as well as be guided by important
24 court cases that have affected redistricting.

25 The websites also deliver to your

1 fingertips important demographics information
2 that will be used by us in drawing districts
3 and the exact same computer software that
4 Legislators and professional staff will use is
5 on the website.

6 As soon as we got the information from the
7 Bureau of the Census about Florida and the
8 descriptors about all of us as Floridians, we
9 put it on the website. we got our information
10 from the Census Bureau later than most states.

11 We put it on the website, and then also
12 the software that is used to draw the districts
13 is on the website so that anybody can take a
14 look at it, can draw districts that might be in
15 your area of the state, or if you want to, you
16 can draw the whole state.

17 Before, during and after this hearing
18 Senate and House staff are available to show
19 anybody the simple steps to getting on-line,
20 building districts and submitting a plan if you
21 want, now or in the weeks to come.

22 Recommendations from citizens or from
23 interest groups will be made publicly
24 available as soon as we get them. In other
25 words, as soon as you submit an idea for how

1 you think things ought to be changed we will
2 put it on the website so everybody can see it.

3 As soon as a Legislator submits a Bill or
4 a map, we will put it on the website so you can
5 see it and comment on it. In fact, some
6 submissions, some maps are already on the
7 website and available for you to look at.

8 The other day when we were in Jacksonville
9 literally during the hearing there were three
10 more maps that were placed on the website,
11 three more proposals that were submitted. So
12 there are some options to look at already.

13 The submission of proposed maps, whether
14 it is for your part of the state, whether it is
15 for your neighborhood, whether it is for the
16 whole state, submission of maps that makes
17 sense to you, to your community, is the single
18 most effective form of public participation in
19 the redistricting process.

20 Redistricting is also driven by a
21 schedule. The schedule we are operating under
22 is imposed by the State Constitution. We can't
23 change it without changing the Constitution and
24 we can't change the Constitution, only the
25 voters can do that.

1 The Constitution does not permit the
2 Legislature to act on state legislative maps
3 before the second year after the census. In
4 other words, before 2012.

5 Now, we have accelerated the process as
6 much as we could by moving up the 2012 session
7 of the Legislature from March, when it usually
8 starts, to January, and by beginning our
9 statewide hearings five months in advance of
10 the 2012 session.

11 Now, it has been suggested by some that
12 the Legislature ought to just draw the maps and
13 bring them here and say here they are and then
14 ask the public to comment and react to Feta
15 Compli.

16 We believe that puts the answer ahead of
17 the question. There should be no
18 preconceptions created by politicians, but
19 rather public testimony and your ideas should
20 be free and unrestricted. Believe me, there
21 will be plenty of time for all of the
22 politicians to make all of their speeches and
23 offer their observations, but first we want to
24 hear from you.

25 In fact, the author and Chair Person of

1 the Fair Districts Committee that put together
2 Amendments 5 and 6 that are now a part of our
3 Constitution testified before the House and
4 Senate and is on record as saying that new maps
5 could not be drawn.

6 She wouldn't even to try new maps without
7 public hearings first, without giving the
8 public an opportunity to comment. Our intent
9 is to use the recommendations made at these
10 hearings and through input from the Internet as
11 the basis for developing one or more options
12 for district maps.

13 We will discuss any option in open public
14 meetings before any votes are taken even in
15 committee. So this isn't your last time to
16 have input. This is your first time. Any maps
17 that come before the House or Senate
18 Redistricting Committees for votes will be
19 publicly available and publicly discussed and
20 the votes will all be taken in front of the
21 public so that if you have criticisms or
22 suggestions or observations you can offer them
23 to us by Snail Mail, by telephone, by hearings
24 such as this, or any other method of letting
25 your views be known.

1 And then whatever the Legislature passes
2 is submitted for judicial review to ensure that
3 the final plans meet every legal requirement.
4 Because our purpose today is to hear from you,
5 all of the time between now and noon, and we
6 will go all of the way to noon, if as long as
7 there is public testimony, all of the time will
8 be used to ensure that every member of the
9 public who is here and who wishes to speak will
10 have time to present testimony and be listened
11 to respectfully without interruption or
12 argument.

13 Now, after all of the citizens who are
14 here and want to speak have their say, if there
15 is time remaining before our scheduled
16 adjournment, then any member of the Committee
17 will have the opportunity to offer any
18 observations, answer any questions, ask any
19 questions, offer any proposals, react in any
20 way to anything that comes up in today's
21 meeting.

22 And, of course, any member of the
23 Legislature may today, or at any time, propose
24 a map or a plan and we will immediately make it
25 available to the public.

1 Mr. Chairman, I hope this description of
2 our schedule and our process helps set the
3 stage for a successful hearing.

4 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: I really think
5 so and thank you very much, Senator Gaetz, for
6 that great introduction.

7 We have staff all around the room, and
8 again, they are great staff, they provide us
9 notes to make sure we don't miss anything, so
10 we give you the important information that you
11 need so we can have a successful meeting here
12 in which you can participate.

13 So if you need anything, again, walk to
14 the back of the room during the meeting, feel
15 free to get up and mill around and talk to
16 them, they can help you out.

17 I want to reiterate, as Senator Gaetz
18 mentioned, we are going to adjourn promptly at
19 12:00, but we still have three hours. That
20 will be a good amount of time to get
21 everybody's comments in.

22 However, we have already got over 40 cards
23 and typically we pick up a few more in the
24 process of people that want to speak. So if
25 you do want it speak and if there is anybody

1 else that wants to speak as you walk in, raise
2 your hand, and ask for a card and our staff
3 will walk over to you and help you out with
4 that.

5 To ensure that everybody gets the
6 opportunity to speak we are going to divide the
7 time equally and limit each person's testimony
8 to three to five minutes as a courtesy to all
9 of those behind you that wish to speak.

10 Sometimes we have to, you know, be a
11 little bit more hard on the rules, but we are
12 going to be as flexible as possible to make
13 sure that you have the opportunity to say
14 everything that you want, but if there is a
15 great deal of additional detail, please submit
16 something in writing, because as the Senator
17 said, those written comments and maps in
18 particular, a picture paints a thousand words,
19 so that will help us interpret what you say
20 much better.

21 Our first speaker is going to be Mr. Dan
22 Hahnfeldt. I believe I pronounced that
23 correctly. If you would step up to the
24 microphone, and let me, before he starts, I am
25 going to mention who comes next and if ya'll

1 can start lining up so that you can be prepared
2 to speak as soon as the previous speaker is
3 done and I introduce you we can get right to it
4 and we don't have to wait for people to come to
5 the microphone.

6 After Mr. Hahnfeldt will be Gail Boetty.
7 Okay, thank you. Mr. Hahnfeldt, the floor is
8 yours.

9 MR. HAHNFELDT: Good morning, good
10 morning, Mr. Chairman, and Committee,
11 distinguished members, Representatives and
12 Senators that have come to hear us and take
13 public input at The Villages.

14 First of all, on behalf of the 84,000
15 Villagers and voters from District 42, State
16 House District, I am the President of the
17 Villages' Homeowners Association and want to
18 thank you for taking that public input before
19 putting pen to paper and drawing those lines.

20 It is very important to us for a number of
21 reasons. A couple of comments about The
22 Villages and one simple request. The Villages,
23 one of the reasons why we are redrawing these
24 numbers, ten years ago at the previous census
25 we were small relative to today, retirement

1 community of about 11,000 homes and 22,000 in
2 population.

3 Since that time and in the current census
4 you see the result of quadrupling those roof
5 tops and population to now 84,000 and we are
6 still growing. We are about 75 percent to
7 80 percent done. There will be another 25,000
8 added by the next census and we look forward to
9 meeting you again in another ten years when you
10 are going to have to redraw those lines again.

11 In that time The Villages has become the
12 world's largest retirement community and grown
13 to a size in population where it is today, but
14 not in area. The area has not changed
15 markedly.

16 The circumference of The Villages is about
17 32 square miles, 1.6 times the size of
18 Manhattan, but it crosses boundaries of three
19 counties, Lake, Marion and Sumter County, two
20 cities, two water management districts and 12
21 community development districts.

22 That poses a bit of a challenge to us from
23 time to time in managing all of these
24 governmental entities to serve the general
25 interest of the population, growing to a

1 maximum within The Villages of about 109,000 in
2 five years.

3 That growth rate is unique in this period,
4 and I point that out because it has been very
5 significant to and to the benefit of Florida,
6 increasing the tax base, bringing resources to
7 the community, to our school districts, to the
8 general economy.

9 In fact, the last year the worst year in
10 47 years in the United States in new home
11 sales, The Villages was down selling maybe only
12 about 2,500 new homes out of the 321,000 in the
13 entire United States.

14 Now, while that is less than one percent
15 of the entire new home sales in the entire
16 United States, it is about two percent of the
17 new homes in the south eastern 17 states and
18 generated eight percent of the building permits
19 in the entire state of Florida. So we are
20 still growing, we are still contributing
21 greatly to the economy.

22 My simple request. We work very hard as a
23 community in the surrounding counties and
24 Representatives of the governmental entities
25 that serve work hard in this complex

1 governmental organization to serve this
2 community of interest.

3 The request is that, as you redraw the
4 lines, you keep us as a community of interest
5 and not divide us up. We are best served as a
6 community of interest. Thank you very much for
7 taking input.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
9 much, Mr. Hahnfeldt, and in furtherance,
10 calculating purposes, that was perfect. Right
11 at three minutes, if everybody that we have
12 down takes three minutes, we are going to make
13 it. If everybody takes five minutes we are
14 going to not have the opportunity to hear a
15 couple of people.

16 So with that, Gail Boetty is up, followed
17 by Fran Grossi.

18 MS. BOETTY: Yes, it is Gail Boetty.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Boetty.

20 MS. BOETTY: I am looking at this as a
21 very good opportunity for all of you. You got
22 up this morning, you came out here and we thank
23 you for that. It is time to get it right this
24 time. No more spouting off a river off to the
25 right.

1 Lake County, when you look at District 8,
2 you got a beautiful square there and then all
3 of a sudden you got a line going here and a
4 river going there. Block it out, add a few
5 people, it is not rocket science, our children
6 are watching you.

7 We don't want games to be played with the
8 districts anymore. It is that simple. It is
9 not that scary to divide the state, and we just
10 would like you to show that to our children by
11 making it fair.

12 Show some integrity, no more running off
13 and grabbing certain areas that the votes look
14 good for certain people. We see what it looks
15 like. It is right there in the map in front of
16 you, and we thank you for doing justice this
17 time out. Okay.

18 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Well, thank you
19 very much, and thank you for keeping those
20 remarks focused on the redistricting process as
21 well. So we have got Fran Grossi, followed by
22 Leo Fallon.

23 MS. GROSSI: Thank you for giving us this
24 opportunity to come and talk with you today.
25 Ours is a government of the people. The

1 people's voice needs to be heard.

2 If you will look at our state, it is
3 divided up into different communities, okay,
4 different counties. I think we need to look at
5 those counties and try to keep them together as
6 possible, because the people of those counties
7 have issues that are different from maybe other
8 counties, and those voices need to be heard.

9 Okay, by dividing up those counties, by
10 shredding them into pieces, you are shredding
11 the voice of the people, and we are a
12 government of the people. We need to allow the
13 people's voices to be heard. Thank you for
14 this opportunity.

15 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
16 much for speaking. Leo Fallon, followed by
17 Patricia Sullivan.

18 MR. FALLON: Yes, thank you very much for
19 coming, Senators and Representatives. I am Lee
20 Fallon, a resident of The Villages for 11
21 years. I have a very easy request, please keep
22 The Villages as a complete contiguous voting
23 district and not split as up. We are CCD and
24 we should keep that. Thank you very much for
25 your time.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, now,
2 that is concise. Patricia Sullivan, followed
3 by Robert Carey.

4 MS. SULLIVAN: Good morning, my name is
5 Patricia Sullivan. I am from Lake County, I
6 live in Eustis. I am a mother of four and I
7 also teach them and so I appreciate the fact
8 that you haven't drawn maps ahead of schedule
9 for us to come in and criticize, because I
10 wouldn't do my children's school work for them.

11 I would give them the opportunity to take
12 personal responsibility in looking at the
13 fabulous website that you have created for us,
14 and then us taking the time as we should as it
15 is our duty as citizens to then draw maps.

16 And I have actually drawn a map, and it is
17 loading I am told, for all three districts.
18 And currently in Lake County, I believe that is
19 the Congressional map, Lake County is split
20 into four Congressional Districts.

21 As Fran eloquently stated, when we keep
22 our counties and our communities together, then
23 our voice is stronger and we bond together.

24 As you can see on that map, I have all of
25 Lake County in one district, which would be my

1 request, first off, and then I have Seminole
2 County basically because we have a lot of
3 similarities, but also in looking at projected
4 growth, Lake County is going -- is one of the
5 highest counties that will grow over the next
6 ten years. Seminole County is one of the
7 lower.

8 So to also keep it within the right
9 population that we desire to have in one
10 district, and then in the bottom of Seminole
11 County, I removed some of the voting districts
12 there simply because as the -- as we find here
13 in The Villages, it is one community, but it
14 crosses some political boundaries, and in that
15 area of Seminole County which I am familiar
16 with in the Winter Park, Maitland area, that
17 crosses two counties, but I took that out of
18 that district because there will be times when
19 we will expect you will have to cross political
20 boundaries in an effort to keep communities
21 together.

22 So the next map that I have that is going
23 to, I believe that is the House, Florida House
24 District. Again, Lake County in itself is
25 basically split into north Lake County and

1 south Lake County, and so the House District
2 there that I have chosen really just takes
3 north Lake County and its communities and keeps
4 them together in one district.

5 And then in the third map is the Senate,
6 and I just have Lake and I have Sumter County
7 together and there are areas in Orange County
8 around Mt. Plymouth and near Mt. Dora that are
9 a part of those communities, but I would not
10 object if you wanted to just then go north and
11 put The Villages, because -- and cross over
12 that political boundary and I will probably
13 redraw that map and takes parts of Orange
14 County out and include the parts of The
15 Villages to keep that together.

16 So again, I appreciate very much you
17 giving us the opportunity to speak. I
18 appreciate you giving us the opportunity to
19 draw our own maps before you do so, and thank
20 you for your time.

21 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
22 Ms. Sullivan, thank you very much for
23 submitting those maps. It is very clear what
24 your intent is there.

25 Next we have Robert Carey, followed by

1 Andy Dubois.

2 MR. CAREY: Distinguished ladies and
3 gentlemen, I want to thank you for offering a
4 chance for a true Representative to democracy.
5 Your computer program, I was cussing you
6 yesterday.

7 I sat down and like most men, I didn't
8 bother to read the directions. I saw the
9 pictures you made a presentation the other
10 night, and I thought, well, this will be easy,
11 you just click around here and things disappear
12 and, well, it didn't work that way.

13 So after about an hour and-a-half I
14 decided to read the directions, and once I got
15 into it, it was fun, it is almost like a game,
16 and it is very educational.

17 I realized that we have to keep various
18 minorities and races and everything
19 represented, and so I tried to do that. I came
20 up with a plan for a Congressional District.

21 First off, Lake County with four
22 Congressional Districts running through it is
23 ridiculous. Congressional District 3 is an
24 abomination, as is District 8. So I tried to
25 keep things together, and like I haven't gotten

1 to the House and Senate yet, but after a few
2 hours of playing around I came up with a
3 Congressional District plan that keeps Lake
4 County and Sumter County together, along with
5 Marion County.

6 Of course, The Villages is included in all
7 of that, everything in Marion County except the
8 far western part, and as I was playing around
9 with it, the -- an outline of George Washington
10 started appearing, and, on Interstate 75 is the
11 bridge of his nose.

12 However, I couldn't get rid of his chin.
13 I would get rid of that, but that would put me
14 under or over and I still couldn't come up with
15 it. So you have to use your imagination. But
16 my request is to keep the counties together
17 wherever possible. Let's do away with this
18 cancerous finger here, finger there.

19 You know, as one of the previous speakers
20 said, it is not rocket science. You know, and
21 I do compliment you for giving us a chance for
22 this input and for having it fun, and making it
23 a game. I would encourage everybody to get
24 involved with it.

25 I intend to go back and do the House and

1 Senate Districts and do some more. I came up
2 with a plan, I will give you a couple of
3 copies. Anyway, I do want to compliment you
4 and let's keep it fair as far as minorities go,
5 and let's keep it simple. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
7 much, and if one of our staff could grab that
8 input from you right beside you, thank you very
9 much.

10 Next we have Andy Dubois, I think I have
11 got that right, followed by Nancy Hurlbert.

12 MR. DUBOIS: Yes, you do, Representative
13 Precourt. My name is Andy Dubois, I want to
14 thank you for this opportunity to -- for
15 citizen input.

16 I am a resident of Lake County as well. I
17 live in Howie-in-the-Hills and my request is
18 that we keep the counties intact as much as
19 possible as opposed to the way it is now.

20 I am becoming familiar with the District
21 Builder Tool. I am also grateful for the
22 opportunity and the tools that you have made
23 available. I am looking forward to attending
24 other meetings as well, and I am just grateful
25 for the process that you have -- that you have

1 put forward in allowing us to have input rather
2 than just drawing the lines.

3 And I am hoping that we can end up with
4 some common sense in this and that we don't
5 lose, lose track of that in this process. I
6 want to thank you very much again for allowing
7 me to speak.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you for
9 being here, yes. Nancy Hurlbert followed by
10 Theodore Stratton.

11 MS. HURLBERT: Good morning, members of
12 the Legislature. Thank you for this
13 opportunity. My name is Nancy Hurlbert. I
14 live in Lake County and I want to talk just
15 briefly about two particular incidents in the
16 drawing of the districts.

17 Lake County, as you have heard several
18 times now, is represented by four members of
19 Congress. In one instance, in Corinne Brown's
20 district, which is House District, U. S. House
21 District 3, there is one precinct in Mt. Dora
22 that is in her district. All of the rest of
23 Mt. Dora is in Congressman Daniel Webster.

24 And the reason, I surmise, is that this
25 one precinct is in Corinne's district is that

1 it is a predominantly black district, and
2 predominantly Democrat.

3 So particularly partisan picked out to be
4 in that particular district. I would hope that
5 we do not split cities with this redrawing and
6 that we adhere to Amendments 5 and 6 that say
7 that cities and counties should be compact and
8 contiguous as much as possible.

9 In my -- I live in Leesburg, and as the
10 State House is represented, there are four
11 Representatives in Lake County, four. I live
12 in the east part of Leesburg, my Representative
13 is Larry Metz.

14 Friends of mine live in the gated
15 community of Plantation, which is also
16 Leesburg, and they have a different
17 Representative, and I have another friend that
18 lives in the city of Leesburg proper, and
19 another Representative.

20 So here we have Leesburg that is really
21 split up by three different Representatives.
22 That dilutes our representation and is really
23 unconscionable.

24 So again, adhering to Amendments 5 and 6,
25 and I really hope that you all take seriously

1 the voice of the people when they voted
2 63 percent for Amendments 5 and 6 that you
3 really look at these districts and you don't
4 split cities, you don't divide communities.

5 And when you are looking at areas like The
6 Villages that have three different counties,
7 even though they are in three different
8 counties, they are still a community of
9 interest, and as you heard from the homeowners
10 president, it is vital that communities of
11 interest also be kept together.

12 So in that particular case perhaps three
13 counties can be organized around The Villages,
14 but again, for Lake County that has less than
15 300,000 people, to have four U.S.
16 Representatives and four State Representatives
17 is just unconscionable, and I hope that you
18 seriously take into account compact and
19 contiguous when you look at the maps. Thank
20 you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you for
22 being here, Ms. Hurlbert. Theodore Stratton,
23 followed by John Wood.

24 MR. STRATTON: Yes, good morning. I have
25 tried to figure out what law governs how you

1 people decide. It, at the end of this thing,
2 it says that they should be geographic, where
3 possible they should follow existing political
4 and geographic boundaries.

5 But then you have agenda six -- Amendment
6 6 and 7, and are the census blocks the basic
7 building blocks for how you people design these
8 different boundaries? I can't figure out how
9 the law, which law applies to what, and I have
10 no axe to grind. You guys have my sympathy.
11 Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Mr. Chairman, he raises a
13 great point. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and just
14 for information purposes, let me, let me offer
15 a little explanation, and that is that there
16 appears to be to the normal person some
17 inconsistencies.

18 If you look at Amendments 5 and 6 and then
19 you look at the Federal Court cases, and then
20 you look at the applicable Federal and State
21 laws and then you listen to the interpretations
22 that individual citizens or even courts place
23 on terms, you would get the feeling that this
24 gentleman is exactly right.

25 And that is that there is no clear answer

1 to exactly what the building blocks should be.
2 Last night in Daytona Beach we had strong
3 testimony from a gentleman who said we need to
4 use rivers and power lines and railroads as the
5 lines that would determine where districts
6 would be.

7 We also heard testimony last night from
8 someone who said that we need to use economic
9 blocks. In other words, where people shop and
10 do their commerce, that that needs to be taken
11 into account as defining the boundaries.

12 And then, of course, you have the
13 testimony we have heard today where some people
14 say county lines and then someone else says,
15 well, except when it comes to The Villages,
16 then it is okay to cross county lines because
17 there is a community of interest.

18 That is why we have come here today,
19 because we are interested in finding out how
20 you believe these standards should be applied.

21 Now, however they are applied in the
22 development of maps, it is likely that somebody
23 will be unhappy and will challenge whatever
24 comes out the other end, but what we want to do
25 is make sure that any proposal that comes out

1 of the Legislature and does go to the courts is
2 defensible because we have listened to you and
3 we can hark to this hearing we had in The
4 Villages and we will be able to quote you,
5 because you have said keep The Villages
6 together or draw the lines this way or that
7 way.

8 But there is no definitive dispositive
9 building block, instead, there are
10 interpretations and those interpretations move
11 back and forth depending upon what court case
12 and what statute and what constitutional
13 provision you look at.

14 So thank you, you have put your finger
15 right on the problem that brings us here today.
16 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
18 Senator, and they did, in fact, when we got on
19 the Redistricting Committee, the first thing we
20 got was a textbook on reapportionment law, and
21 half of which is referenced to other books and
22 other law.

23 So there is a tremendous amount of
24 information out there and lots of experts on it
25 that we have to rely on as well. Mr. Wood,

1 followed by David VonGunten.

2 MR. WOOD: Yes, sir. I am John Wood from
3 Lake County, and I am going to just echo what
4 you heard so far. We would like you to keep
5 Lake County together as far as the
6 Congressional, Congressional District goes.

7 We want you to think about reducing Lake
8 County's representation from four
9 Representatives to two Representatives. We
10 feel like that would be much more beneficial to
11 Lake County, to the people of Lake County.

12 Also, what you heard about keeping The
13 Villages together, I echo that. That would be
14 separating a part from Lake County to keep The
15 Villages together, but it would also be within
16 the guidelines that you are supposed to be
17 following by keeping the city boundaries --
18 using city boundaries.

19 I understand you got a lot of boundaries
20 that you are thinking about that people are
21 talking about, but new district boundaries for
22 Lake County would require your reducing some of
23 the boundaries that go into Orange, Seminole,
24 Volusia and Marion County, to get our
25 population back to where we fit into the --

1 into the guidelines.

2 That is it. I did go on the computer and
3 try to draw up the maps three different times,
4 but I failed. So I hope next time like Bob
5 said, maybe I will follow the directions, get
6 the directions first. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Patricia, you need to
8 hold a class.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
10 Mr. Wood, and speaking of classes, in addition
11 to written directions, there is some great
12 U-Tube type videos on there about how to use
13 the system as well.

14 So there is tremendous resources, and if
15 you need it, these guys are available via phone
16 and here today to work with you on the system
17 if you want to get a personal tutorial. Again,
18 thank you, Mr. Wood.

19 Next we have got Mr. VonGuntten, and
20 followed by John Riedel. Please, if you need
21 to adjust the microphone, by the way, please
22 feel free to adjust the microphone and speak,
23 you know, loudly into it so that we can get
24 that on the record as well.

25 MR. VONGUNTEN: First I want to thank

1 everyone who is here on the stage. As I look
2 at the stage, I can tell that our input is
3 important. I expected kind of this morning to
4 come and find maybe Representative Precourt,
5 and he says, don't worry, I will pass along
6 everything you have to say. We don't have to
7 worry about that, because everyone is here to
8 hear what we have to say, and I thank you for
9 that.

10 You probably heard someone say that a
11 presentation was made by Patricia Sullivan and
12 if she can do it, we can do it, and that is
13 true. We have done a little bit of training.

14 I am going to take some advice from Bob as
15 well and go back and read the directions. I
16 have gone into the system and kind of made up a
17 map, and I am going to go back and redo it and
18 learn to fine tune to get those numbers exactly
19 where they need to be, and I think what is
20 important, if I am going to do that and if I am
21 going to encourage the folks that come to our
22 meetings to do that, that in fact that is just
23 not a paper exercise for us, but really that
24 our input is going to -- that you will look at
25 those.

1 And I understand the problems that you
2 face, and we all do, but if, and again, I am
3 not a youngster, so if I am going to do that, I
4 encourage everyone here to go in and learn that
5 system and have direct input and I just really
6 appreciate the fact that you are listening to
7 us and do encourage you to take a look at the
8 maps that we do submit. Thank you very much.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir,
10 John Riedel, followed by Mark, I think it is
11 Fisher.

12 MR. RIEDEL: Good morning, ladies and
13 gentlemen. Thank you for the opportunity to
14 address you all and to listen and the fact that
15 you are listening to our ideas.

16 Basically my name, I moved here from South
17 Florida in 1983, and I have yet to vote for a
18 U. S. Congressional candidate from Lake County.

19 I would appreciate and also would like to
20 reemphasize the fact that we would like to form
21 and vote with my neighbors and the people that
22 I correspond with on a daily basis.

23 Thank you once again for this opportunity
24 and I appreciate all of your efforts. Thank
25 you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
2 Mr. Riedel. Mr. Fisher, followed by William
3 Stomp.

4 MR. FISHER: Yes, good morning. My name
5 is Mark Fisher, I am from Mt. Dora, Florida. I
6 have a couple of observations and some
7 questions that I want you to leave here with.

8 First of all, during your introduction the
9 reference was made to the fact that there is
10 participation on the panel by Representatives
11 of the political parties, the Republicans and
12 the Democrats.

13 I point out that just recently it was
14 published that the number of Independents,
15 registered Independents in Florida have
16 increased since 1990 from 430,000 to 2.4
17 million.

18 The number of people who do not affiliate
19 by choice, thereby eliminating their
20 opportunity to participate in the primary
21 system, should be something of great importance
22 and of consideration by you.

23 That means there are a lot of voters out
24 there who are qualified voters who have
25 registered to vote, who do not choose to

1 affiliate with either of your political
2 parties. You should pursue that.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Sir, could I get
4 you to address your comment to the
5 redistricting process?

6 MR. FISHER: Sure.

7 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: And this might
8 do it, but I just want to remind everyone that
9 we are here to hear about redistricting. Thank
10 you.

11 MR. FISHER: That relates to it because I
12 think most of us are very concerned and the two
13 Amendments that were passed by the citizens of
14 the State of Florida related to the fact that
15 we want you to take politics and self interest
16 out of the redistricting process.

17 My questions are this. Who is going to
18 vet the proposed plans to assure that they are
19 legally sufficient? When and where is that
20 vetting processing going to be undertaken and
21 what public participation in that review is
22 going to be allowed?

23 What is the process or what measures are
24 in place to assure that viable legally
25 qualifying submissions, regardless of their

1 source, are all given equal consideration?

2 And finally, once all of those legally
3 sufficient plans have been determined, who is
4 going to grade or rank those proposed
5 districts?

6 If you get several thousand of them, it is
7 not very logical to assume that between
8 January 10th and March 9th of 2012, that the
9 House and Senate are going to be able to go
10 through all 1,000 of those plans and decide
11 which one is going to be the one that is
12 finally implemented and submitted for court
13 review.

14 I will close with this comment. John
15 Adams wrote, "There is nothing which I dread so
16 much as a division of the republic into two
17 great parties. Each arranged under its leader
18 and concerting measures in opposition to each
19 other."

20 This, in his humble apprehension, is to be
21 dreaded as the greatest political evil under
22 our Constitution. Leave politics out of this.
23 We don't need people in Mt. Dora voting for
24 somebody who ostensibly lives in Jacksonville,
25 Florida.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
2 Mr. Fisher, and again, ladies and gentlemen, we
3 are here primarily to listen to your input at
4 Senator Gaetz's discretion. I am going to
5 recognize him if he would like to address any
6 issues as we go through the meeting.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Sure, and again, not in
8 any way to do -- to be argumentative, but
9 rather just to provide some data in answer to
10 your questions which are excellent questions.

11 Who vets plans to make sure that they are
12 legal? The Supreme Court of the State of
13 Florida and the Justice Department of the
14 United States.

15 When and where are the vetting, does the
16 vetting occur? It occurs as soon as the plans
17 are presented. There are also public hearings
18 that occur along the way.

19 In other words, if any Legislator or any
20 special interest group or any individual
21 citizen presents a plan and then that plan
22 takes the form of a Bill that goes before a
23 committee, the vetting occurs in public with
24 public hearings on that Bill in Tallahassee.

25 Those hearings would be open to the

1 public. Any member of the public can testify,
2 but the hearings will also be available so that
3 individuals who maybe can't come to Tallahassee
4 can share their views.

5 But the legal vetting, in answer to your
6 question, occurs after the plans are voted on
7 by the Legislature and they occur by the
8 Supreme Court and the Justice Department.

9 Are all plans given equal consideration?
10 No. There are 3,000 Bills introduced in the
11 Legislature every year, and thank God, only
12 about 240 of them get passed because a lot of
13 them are pretty stupid ideas.

14 So we can't guarantee that just because
15 someone proposes something that it will be
16 given equal consideration. That is the purpose
17 of Representative government, to make sure that
18 by your contacting your Legislators, that you
19 can say, look, this plan as it pertains to our
20 part of the state ought to be given more than
21 equal consideration.

22 It ought to be given preferential
23 consideration because we here in this community
24 understand how we want the maps drawn to make
25 sense in our community, but it is the

1 legislative process with open public input that
2 creates the vetting process, and really
3 indicates what is given consideration.

4 And then who grades or ranks the
5 districts, and I think, sir, you make an
6 excellent point that if we are fortunate, we
7 will be getting a lot of input.

8 You are right, if we waited until all of
9 the input was in before we began looking at any
10 of it or considering it or sort of seeing how
11 it fit with the other input we are receiving in
12 other parts of the state, it would be very
13 difficult to get it done.

14 That is why we have professional staff who
15 are here. That is why we are recording these
16 hearings. It is why instantly when we get a
17 proposal we put it up on our website, not just
18 for the public to see, but it is the obligation
19 of these two committees, the House Committee
20 and the Senate Committee to work on these plans
21 and listen to this input as we go, so that it
22 is not -- we don't light ourselves on fire at
23 the very end.

24 Instead, we are working right along
25 evaluating plans, but the final grading of the

1 work that is done has to be done by the voters,
2 themselves.

3 The Constitution of Florida says that the
4 Legislature is responsible for developing these
5 plans. We have chosen to make it a much more
6 open process than just Senators and
7 Representatives sitting in a room listening to
8 each other's echos, but rather to get out and
9 listen to the people of Florida first.

10 But at the end of the day, you grade and
11 you rank our work because you determine which
12 of your Representatives gets reelected or which
13 ones don't.

14 I would also make one final point just as
15 a factual matter, and that is that hardly any
16 of us, maybe none of us on this stage drew the
17 maps that exist now.

18 In other words, I ran for a Senate
19 District that somebody else drew years ago. I
20 didn't draw a district and then run for it. I
21 didn't draw a district that I am in now. I ran
22 for a district that somebody else drew.

23 So there is no pride of authorship of what
24 is. We are really interested in making changes
25 that make sense, and Mr. Chairman, I hope that

1 provides just some factual information in
2 answer to the gentleman's excellent questions.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
4 much, Senator Gaetz. In addition, several
5 other Representatives have arrived today. Is
6 there anyone that wants to introduce themselves
7 that didn't get a chance to earlier? We will
8 take a short break from the agenda here.

9 REPRESENTATIVE JONES: Good morning, State
10 Representative Mia Jones from Jacksonville.

11 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE: Good morning,
12 state Representative Gwyndolen Clarke, District
13 92, Broward County, northeast quadrant.

14 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good morning,
15 State Representative Dwayne Taylor from House
16 District 27, that is Daytona Beach and Volusia
17 County.

18 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good morning, John
19 Patrick Julien, representing House District
20 104, which is in Miami Dade County, it is a
21 pleasure to be here.

22 REPRESENTATIVE METZ: Good morning, ladies
23 and gentlemen. I am Larry Metz, representing
24 House District 25, which comprises portions of
25 Lake, Seminole and Volusia counties. Thank

1 you.

2 SENATOR LYNN: Senator Evelyn Lynn, I
3 represent District 7 and that is parts of Clay,
4 Marion, Putnam and Volusia.

5 REPRESENTATIVE DRAKE: Brad Drake, Fifth
6 House District, panhandle of Florida.

7 SENATOR DEAN: Good morning, my name is
8 Charlie Dean. I am a Senator from District 3,
9 I am your neighbor to the west. I am from
10 Citrus County, I am also one of the Senators
11 that represents the southwestern portion Marion
12 County.

13 My Senatorial district goes from Baker
14 County, just outside of Jacksonville, all the
15 way to Monroe Street, the Capitol steps in Leon
16 County, and south to Citrus, Hernando County
17 line, 98 and 19.

18 Glad you are here this morning, and I
19 would like to say also that as Senator Gaetz
20 said a while ago, many of us serve in districts
21 we had nothing to do with about who drew those
22 lines. If they did, they certainly didn't
23 figure out I was going to be there.

24 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Hazelle Rogers,
25 good morning, representing eight cities in

1 Broward County, District 94, and of course,
2 Broward County, one of the most diverse
3 counties in the state of Florida with over 1.8
4 million residents. Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Hi, I am Dennis
6 Baxley. I represent Florida House District 24,
7 Ocala, Marion County, and I am one of the few
8 people up here that actually operates a
9 business in The Villages, Hiers Baxley Funeral
10 Service, and glad to be home.

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Was that a
12 pre-commercial?

13 REPRESENTATIVE LOGAN: Representative Ana
14 Rivas Logan, I represent parts of Miami Dade
15 County.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: So once again,
17 to reiterate what I mentioned earlier, we have
18 representation up here that is from all over
19 the state. We have men, women, minorities,
20 Republicans, Democrats, evening people and
21 morning people, and so we will get right back
22 to the agenda.

23 Mr. Stomp, followed by Robert Lewis.

24 MR. STOMP: Good morning, ladies and
25 gentlemen. Chairman, thank you very much for

1 this opportunity to speak. I have to really
2 compliment all of you Representatives and
3 Senators for coming here and just putting up
4 with what we have to say.

5 I have great confidence that you are going
6 to listen to people, and you are going to use
7 this input and I appreciate that very, very
8 much.

9 My comment, I want to focus my comment on
10 the fact that even though the Legislature, I
11 mean, the people have voted for these -- these
12 consolidated districts rather than the
13 gerrymandering things we have, there is one
14 exception that I see.

15 It is the gerrymandering that is set up
16 for the minority type districts. It is time we
17 move away from that, folks. If there is anyway
18 we can do that it would be wonderful if we
19 could just -- just become one nation again.
20 That just takes and splits everything all over
21 again.

22 If there is some way you can gently move
23 away from that, that method of dividing our
24 country, I would appreciate it very much.

25 Thank you very much.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you for
2 those comments. Robert Lewis, followed by
3 Thomas Edmonston.

4 MR. LEWIS: Good morning, thank you for
5 providing this opportunity for me to provide
6 some comments. Almost 63 percent of Floridians
7 who voted on the Constitutional Amendments
8 voted to affirm Amendments 5 and 6.

9 Fair minded Floridians of all political
10 persuasions want elections in which candidates
11 are honestly chosen and compete on even playing
12 fields.

13 It was time to put a stop to the practice
14 of gerrymandering. Legislative and conditional
15 Congressional Districts after each census. In
16 the past, the party in political power
17 brazenly redrew boundaries and laid out new
18 or changed boundaries to reflect population
19 changes in a manner primarily designed to best
20 assure it of victories in future elections.

21 The irregular and even illogical design of
22 some districts attest to this deliberate
23 manipulation which is contrary to the high
24 principles of our democracy.

25 I hope that your reports of these public

1 meetings will emphasize that Floridians want
2 the Amendments respected. We will be most
3 upset and disappointed if you fail to ensure
4 that the districts are compact, equal in
5 population, and make use of existing city,
6 county and geographical boundaries.

7 The Amendments prohibit drawing districts
8 to favor or disfavor an incumbent or political
9 party. It is your obligation to abide by the
10 Amendments even though there will be efforts by
11 some who try to thwart the Amendments by
12 claiming that adherence to the Amendments would
13 be unjust for various reasons. Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
15 much for those comments. And I might add, if
16 you have written comments that you want to
17 submit just to make sure that your comments are
18 accurately transcribed into the record, feel
19 free to leave those written comments with our
20 staff as well.

21 Mr. Edmonston, followed by Barbara Weese.

22 MR. STONE: I am Tom, I am also from Lake
23 County. A bunch of us, a whole of people here
24 from Lake County, obviously, and I am very
25 pleased to be here and be able to give a chance

1 to speak and I appreciate everything ya'll do,
2 and I know, having just recently gotten
3 involved in the political process, I don't want
4 to be up there with you.

5 But I have been known as a person of, not
6 known as a person of very few words, but I am
7 going to cut this real short because I am not
8 going to repeat everything that my fellow Tea
9 Party people have said, because everything is
10 true.

11 That picture on the screen right now looks
12 like the, one of mine, because it looks very
13 similar. Actually, I worked on the thing. The
14 Builder is real easy to use once you get to
15 using it, but the trouble is I did it the first
16 time on a laptop and I didn't have any programs
17 in the laptop in order to print it out or even
18 see the file, so it didn't work too well, and I
19 had to do it a second time.

20 And really what I did, just for that map,
21 I just start out with Lake County and took all
22 of Sumter County, and looked at what you had
23 left, and, you know, it had options of, when I
24 looked at Orange County, Orange County has
25 enough population that it has to have at least

1 three districts in it, because you could take
2 two full districts and then a partial one.

3 So I decided that I would use the old
4 lasso feature and I would lasso part of the top
5 of Orange County, and then when I got into the,
6 into the voting districts, I had a hard time
7 finding those until I found out that you have
8 to zoom in real quick and then they show up.

9 And so I intentionally over, over lassoed
10 and then I just started deleting districts and
11 I got it down to like 25, I still have 24 extra
12 people, but that is about it, but I really just
13 did it like everybody else has said, just to
14 keep communities together and keep everything
15 close-knit.

16 Everybody that pays taxes in Lake and
17 Sumter at least got the same voting district,
18 and sorry about Orange County, you have to be
19 split up a little bit. Thank you very much.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
21 Barbara Weese, followed by Dan Eaton.

22 MR. WEESE: Good morning. I would like to
23 say one thing and then I would like to defer to
24 Cathy Williamson, and that is when you are out
25 trying to help voters to find out where and

1 whom they vote for, it is very difficult if one
2 side of the street has one Representative. I
3 am talking U.S., now, and the other side of the
4 street has another one.

5 Most of our voters or many of them in
6 central Florida come from other states. They
7 are confused and new to the Florida process,
8 but it is even more confusing when you don't
9 know for whom you should vote or where you
10 should vote. So please keep that in mind when
11 you are redistricting.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, and
13 Ms. Williamson, if you could fill out a card if
14 you don't, and I will put it in line, but
15 everybody has gotten in line, I am going to
16 take them as they come. Okay, thanks. Don
17 Eaton, followed by Sam Green.

18 MR. EATON: Yes, Don Eaton. Thank you for
19 being here today. We really appreciate this.
20 I am caught sort of flatfooted. My wife put my
21 name down, but, thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are not the first
23 guy, you are not the first guy.

24 MR. EATON: I am in good company then.
25 Yes, we, we in The Villages really appreciate

1 you coming here, and as you gain age, you will
2 see our really great facilities and we hope
3 that you consider moving here, and I echo the
4 words from our homeowners' association
5 president.

6 He very eloquently told about The
7 Villages, and we, I am here for the
8 Conservative Liberty Alliance, also. We are a
9 group that, we are a conservative group that
10 will be out campaigning for candidates this
11 year, and we hope that we will be in
12 Tallahassee to see each one of you. Thank you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
14 Appreciate that, Mr. Sam Green, followed by
15 Ellen Green.

16 MR. GREEN: Good morning. Thank you very
17 much for the opportunity to have my input on
18 this today. Sixty-three percent of the voters
19 in this state voted for this, that is almost
20 two for one, and I feel that just about at
21 every point along the way the leaders of the
22 State House, Senate and also the Governor have
23 fought this process, tried to delay it, tried
24 to stop it in any way possible.

25 And that is very upsetting to me, because

1 of that, I don't really have confidence that
2 this is going to be a nonpartisan thing, and I
3 think it is extremely important that politics
4 is taken out of it totally, completely, and I
5 hope, I hope you all prove me wrong, totally.
6 I hope, I hope I am dead wrong about it not
7 being nonpartisan.

8 I think that it should be -- districts
9 should be drawn up considering city, county and
10 natural boundaries and again, totally
11 nonpartisan. Thank you very much.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir,
13 Ellen Green followed by Suzanne Jantz.

14 MS. GREEN: Thank you. I am very proud
15 that my husband filled in a form for me so that
16 I could be here today. I agree with a lot of
17 what I have heard. I would think it is very
18 important that the districts be contiguous so
19 that we can talk to voters and help them with
20 voting.

21 I have lived in the Golden Triangle area.
22 I live in Eustis, sort of in Eustis the Golden
23 Triangle area is Eustis, Mt. Dora and Tavares.

24 We function as a community very much as
25 The Villages do, and it is important that we

1 all have as much as possible the same
2 representation and we do not.

3 We do have District 57, which is Corinne
4 Brown's district, but there are a lot of other
5 things that divide up. Even within our city,
6 people vote for different Congressmen or
7 different State legislators, and it just
8 doesn't make any sense.

9 You talk to your friends about a certain
10 candidate and they will say, I have never heard
11 of him or he doesn't represent me, I have this
12 other person that I never see because this
13 person lives so far from us, and it must be
14 very hard for you.

15 Like Mr. Metz, for example, he has to
16 represent a big chunk of our Golden Triangle
17 area, but not all of it, and then he has to go
18 over to neighboring counties, drive through the
19 woods to get there.

20 So it doesn't benefit the voter or the
21 candidate, either one. So please keep it
22 contiguous and fair. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
24 ma'am. Suzanne Jantz, followed by Joanne Coen.

25 MS. JANTZ: Hello, hi, I live in Mt. Dora,

1 Lake County, and I want to thank you for
2 participating in this process, and I especially
3 want to thank anyone in this room who was part
4 of the countless volunteers who worked for
5 years to get Fair Districts on the ballot.

6 This was democracy at its best. I
7 appreciate Mr. Fisher's comments because I am
8 afraid this process will serve as a delay
9 tactic for special interests opposed to change,
10 where it is death by 1,000 cuts with endless
11 maps submitted by people without the subject
12 matter expertise, without the understanding of
13 the litigation, and then the state taxpayers
14 will be forced to defend litigation and spend
15 badly needed taxpayer money on litigation that
16 is pointless and groundless.

17 Will there be a deadline? Will there be a
18 process like this where a certain number of
19 proposed maps are then brought out to community
20 meetings like this before something gets
21 written in stone in Tallahassee?

22 I object to any idea that Tallahassee
23 could make these decisions without public input
24 of this nature, that this would have been a
25 waste of taxpayer money to have all of you here

1 traveling throughout the state on this
2 initiative and then drop the ball later when
3 maps are being finalized and there is a select
4 number of proposed maps that meet the criteria
5 for meeting the legal issues and so on.

6 So please tell me that there is a
7 deadline, that we will be seeing the results of
8 this, that you will be good stewards of the
9 taxpayer money at a time when we are being told
10 that the state has so little money that it
11 can't provide nursing home care to the frail
12 elderly on Medicaid and children's health needs
13 and other needs like unemployment being cut.

14 I want the taxpayer's money respected, but
15 I do want to see maps and have an opportunity
16 for input later instead of now. Thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
18 ma'am. Joanne Coen, followed by Richard Coen.

19 MS. COEN: Good morning. On behalf of the
20 League of Women Voters of The Villages
21 tri-county area, which is a nonpartisan
22 organization, I want to thank the Committee for
23 an opportunity to speak to you.

24 I am a Sumter County resident of The
25 Villages. During the last election cycle, the

1 League actively supported Amendments 5 and 6
2 which were passed by 63 percent of the voters
3 in the November 2010, election.

4 Today voter registration shows that
5 Florida is a politically balanced state, but
6 the current representation in Tallahassee does
7 not reflect the balance.

8 In the past during every reapportionment,
9 majority party politicians in both parties have
10 taken advantage of the opportunity to pack
11 minority party voters into very few districts,
12 thus reducing their influence in government.

13 Florida's population has grown and our
14 congressional representation will increase.
15 Drawing new political boundaries to offset
16 population growth is a complicated process.

17 You must balance a myriad of demands from
18 Federal laws to prevent minority voting
19 disenfranchisement to individual ambitions of
20 your fellow lawmakers seeking higher office.

21 As a result I recognize that your job is
22 not easy, that the process is long and arduous
23 and there will likely be legal challenges no
24 matter the outcome.

25 The census data has been completed. The

1 information has been delivered to the Governor
2 and leaders of the Legislature. Many states
3 have already completed or almost completed the
4 redistricting process, yet in Florida no
5 proposed or draft maps have been drawn, thereby
6 precluding the public from making any meaning
7 full comments on what our Congressional
8 Legislative Districts will look like other than
9 our own suggestions.

10 As a result, and as I am doing today, I
11 can only appeal to your better nature and speak
12 in generalities. The maps referenced by Senate
13 Gaetz in his opening comments should be made
14 available going forward at all of the proposed
15 hearings that are on the schedule. Thank you
16 very much.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you for
18 those comments. And once again, if you would,
19 we have prepared written comments like that, if
20 you would submit it to the staff so that we can
21 accurately get them into the record, I would
22 appreciate that.

23 Richard Coen, followed by Linda or John
24 and Linda Stene.

25 MR. COEN: Good morning, my name is

1 Richard Coen, and as in most points of life I
2 follow my wife. I am Vice-President of the
3 League of Women Voters of The Villages
4 tri-county area. Thank you, I appreciate that.

5 Gentlemen and ladies, your own time table
6 which is posted on the Redistricting 2012
7 Florida Senate website shows that rather than
8 passing district maps at the beginning of the
9 legislative session in January 2012, district
10 maps are slated to be passed at the end of the
11 session on March 9th.

12 Even in the unlikely event that there is
13 no litigation over the newly drawn maps, final
14 rulings on the constitutionality of the new
15 districts will not occur until shortly before
16 the June 2012, qualifying deadline.

17 This delayed time table will only lead to
18 voter confusion. Some potential candidates may
19 not know their district boundaries in time to
20 decide whether to mount a campaign.

21 It is my understanding that Bills were
22 filed at the last session requiring the maps be
23 drawn earlier and that these bills did not even
24 get a hearing. Why was that?

25 You have told us that you will follow the

1 letter of the law and the will of the people on
2 redistricting, but you say that even as the
3 Legislature is joined in a lawsuit to fight
4 Florida Constitutional Amendment requiring new
5 boundaries be drawn with competition in mind,
6 not your own job security.

7 So, yes, you have created a situation
8 where the state is both the plaintiff and the
9 defendant, and so, yes, at a time when lower
10 revenues have been received and budgets have
11 been reduced, the state is spending taxpayer
12 money on both sides of the same question.

13 The Legislature should stop avoiding the
14 voters' decision and remember its obligation to
15 follow the Florida Constitution and support the
16 new fair district standards and apply the
17 dictate of those amendments when preparing
18 redrawn districts as the voters wanted. I
19 thank you for the time that you have given me
20 to speak to you today.

21 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you again.
22 We appreciate those comments, Mr. Coen, and
23 once again, when you have written prepared
24 remarks like that, if you would please submit
25 them into the record so they can accurately be

1 reflected, I would appreciate it. John and
2 Linda Stene, followed by Roz Odell.

3 MR. STENE: I am John Stene, and my wife
4 has said she doesn't want to speak. Anyway,
5 thanks for the opportunity, and we have been in
6 The Villages for eight years.

7 Our main concern is that we have a
8 contiguous unit, you know, for our voting
9 block. And my mother once said years ago, the
10 mind can only stand what the rear end can
11 endure, so I will get down.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Excellent
13 comments. Roz Odell, followed by Patricia
14 Hanley.

15 MS. ODELL: Hello, I am Roz Odell from
16 Citrus County. I was beginning to think we
17 weren't represented here, but Mr. Dean came in.

18 As you heard, when he described District
19 5, the size and direction is rather unruly, and
20 also, as you have heard, at the moment the
21 public perception is that our districts are
22 drawn with careers in mind, not the good of the
23 people, and I would like to ask that this not
24 happen.

25 Please remember that you are representing

1 a large group of people, both Democrat and
2 Republican. Please make it easy for people to
3 vote. Don't have one precinct in another
4 district.

5 We need to be able to talk amongst ourself
6 to decide who to vote for, and to do it where
7 we know where we can go and not one person on
8 one side of the street goes five miles away and
9 the other person on the other side of the
10 street goes 10 miles in the opposite direction.
11 Thank you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
13 ma'am. Patricia Hanley, followed by Mike
14 Fahey.

15 MS. HANLEY: I would like to thank you for
16 being here and Senator Dean for being here as
17 well. He represents an entirely wide and long
18 district. It is very hard to campaign in his
19 district.

20 I don't necessarily support anybody that
21 is up there right now, but I do want to say
22 that it has got to be, you have got to use some
23 common sense in drawing these districts.

24 When we are in Citrus County in the middle
25 of the state, in our district, our Senatorial

1 District goes all of the way up to the Georgia
2 border, and all of the way over to Tallahassee,
3 that is ridiculous, especially if you are
4 paying for gasoline and you are trying to
5 campaign in an area that large.

6 I know you are bound by population, but I
7 am sure you can make some of these districts
8 more compact and that is all I want to say.
9 Let's be fair about things.

10 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
11 much. Mike Fahey, followed by Kathleen Weaver.

12 MR. FAHEY: Hello. My name is Mike Fahey
13 and I am from Citrus County. I would just like
14 to thank you for having this hearing, and also
15 I would like to thank everyone else in this
16 room for taking their duty as citizens and
17 becoming well-informed people acting
18 responsibly.

19 Actually, I would like to see more people
20 in this room, but I have been on the website
21 and I know that operating this computer
22 applications and reading and writing and trying
23 to find solutions to complex problems, these
24 all point to a well-educated citizenry, and I
25 would encourage you not to balance the budget

1 on the backs of our students and our teachers.

2 But the -- my point today that I would
3 like to make about Citrus County, in looking at
4 the map, is the Congressional District, and our
5 Congressional District, the Fifth District, is
6 35 percent over population, and just to be
7 really simple, I would suggest that you just
8 cut Citrus County loose from the Fifth
9 District, because our geographically, we are
10 more in with Marion County and the north
11 central part of the state, and the marketing is
12 incorrect.

13 In lumping us in with Tampa Bay, I never
14 go to Tampa. I go to Marion County to do
15 shopping and to work and so on and so forth,
16 and that is my point. Thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
18 Kathleen Weaver followed Brian Corley, and once
19 again, I know it is tempting to get off topic,
20 but please keep your comments focused on
21 redistricting, thank you. Ms. Weaver.

22 MS. WEAVER: Thank you for coming here
23 today. We all appreciate it, I am sure. I
24 just will reiterate the same thing that other
25 people have said.

1 We would like the Legislature to please
2 drop the lawsuit against the Amendments that we
3 passed. It is a waste of our money. We would
4 also definitely like a nonpartisan group to be
5 choosing these, and please give us some maps
6 that we will be able to choose from before it
7 goes to the Legislature in Tallahassee.

8 Many of us will not be able to go to
9 Tallahassee to present our issues at that time.
10 Thank you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

12 MR. CORLEY: Good morning, Mr. Chairman
13 and members, my name is Brian Corley. I am the
14 Supervisor of Elections for Pasco County. You
15 are probably asking yourself, what am I doing
16 here.

17 My children are with my grandparents over
18 at the pool right now. I am taking time from
19 vacation to be here with you all this morning.

20 I also serve on the Executive Committee
21 for the Florida State Association of
22 Supervisors of Elections.

23 I want to thank you all first for the
24 opportunity to provide input on the front end
25 of this very important topic, and I sincerely

1 applaud all of you for the unprecedented level
2 of transparency of this process.

3 I don't envy your task ahead.
4 Redistricting is not going to be fun, and for
5 many of my colleagues, including myself, this
6 is our first go around and my colleague sitting
7 next to me, Dee Brown, I asked her how many she
8 has been with, she is from Marion County, she
9 has been through four. Pretty impressive,
10 isn't it, and I am concerned about the stress,
11 because I can't lose much more hair going
12 through this.

13 I don't know if I am going to gain weight
14 or where we are going here, but I will say
15 this, ladies and gentlemen, I am confident that
16 when it is all said and done, we as elections
17 officials will continue to make Florida shine
18 with regards to elections in 2012 and beyond.

19 I want to slightly, obviously, deviate
20 from the topic today. I want to focus on two
21 issues that are important to elections
22 officials. Time and district lines.

23 Number one, time. To conduct successful
24 elections in 2012, we as elections officials
25 need time to complete required tasks. To

1 conduct our elections efficiently and
2 accurately, we need time to adjust precinct
3 lines to new districts, gain approval of those
4 precincts by our Board of County Commissioners,
5 and notify all voters well in advance of
6 election day.

7 And as you are well aware, we can't
8 re-precinct our counties until your work is
9 done. I realize that the Florida Constitution
10 specifies that reapportionment occur during the
11 2012 regular session.

12 However, as was stated earlier, the
13 earlier in the session the better. That will
14 give us more time to do what we need to do. It
15 is also my understanding that if the
16 legislature, Attorney General, Supreme Court
17 and Justice Department all complete their work
18 on schedule, the Supervisor of Elections will
19 have less than two weeks to adjust the records
20 of Florida's 11 million voters and nearly
21 300,000 in my county alone.

22 This is before the first absentee ballots
23 must be mailed to our military and overseas
24 voters, and this, of course, excludes any
25 litigation.

1 Also, the calendar provided by the
2 legislative staff indicates that final Justice
3 Department review of new districts will likely
4 be completed after a candidate qualifying.
5 This has the potential of confusing candidates
6 and delaying ballot printing.

7 The second issue I want to briefly touch
8 upon is we ask that you represent, excuse me,
9 in regards to district lines, that you respect
10 communities when you draw district lines.

11 I want to thank the legislative staff for
12 working with us in providing voting tabulation
13 districts, which, as you all know, take into
14 consideration intact communities, traffic
15 patterns and physical barriers, and we would
16 ask that you adhere to these lines wherever
17 possible.

18 Again, thank you for the opportunity to
19 provide some input on this important process,
20 as the Supervisor of Elections, I speak for my
21 colleagues when I say it is very much
22 appreciated. Thank you very, very much.

23 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
24 Next we have Al Butler, followed by Mary
25 O'Hanlon.

1 MR. BUTLER: Thank you very much. I want
2 to welcome all of the Legislators to The
3 Villages. My name is Al Butler. I am a
4 resident of The Villages and Chairman of the
5 Sumter County REC.

6 I want to reiterate a message that you
7 have heard from others today, and it would make
8 our political processes so much more effective
9 if you recognize The Villages as one entity,
10 and although we are unique and cross three
11 counties, I hope that you will take that into
12 consideration when you do the realignment.
13 Thank you very much.

14 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
15 Mary O'Hanlon, followed by Nancy Bell.

16 MS. O'HANLON: My name is Mary O'Hanlon
17 and I live in Clermont in District 5. I would
18 like to tell you something about several years
19 ago I arranged a meet the candidate event and
20 the then Representative for District 5, three
21 different people in his office told me that he
22 was not our Representative, but he was, and
23 that -- so that is no representation.

24 I would like to suggest that you follow
25 the kiss principle, and keep it simple.

1 Districts should not cross county lines,
2 Representatives should live within the counties
3 that they represent. They should not cover
4 three different counties that are so big that
5 they don't even know the parts of the counties
6 they represent.

7 And I really wonder why there even has to
8 be these meetings. I think it is great. The
9 people have an opportunity to speak. However,
10 I think they spoke loud and clear last November
11 about what we wanted in districts.

12 It is no secret that gerrymandering was
13 started 200 years ago, and the benefit of it,
14 of course, has always been to stack the
15 districts to suit the party in office, both
16 parties, and I think that is what really has to
17 be focused on and eliminated.

18 We need to have districts that are
19 contiguous and that are small enough that the
20 people can know their Representative and
21 vice-versa, and they should have the
22 opportunity to go to the polls feeling that
23 their vote is going to count.

24 I have spoken to many Democrats who don't
25 bother voting because they feel it is a waste

1 of their time, that they can't win and
2 certainly the last election proved that
3 statement.

4 So my request would be, keep it simple,
5 keep it compact and keep it fair. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you. Next
7 we have Nancy Bell, followed by Charlene
8 Walker. Ms. Bell.

9 MS. BELL: Good morning, ladies and
10 gentlemen. Thank you for coming to our area to
11 listen to us, and I think you have done that.
12 It is worth repeating, I think, that in
13 November of 2010, 63 percent of Florida voters
14 approved the Constitutional Amendments for fair
15 districting.

16 On a personal note, if you had been
17 elected by 63 percent, I think you would be
18 pretty happy. I think you would feel like you
19 had a mandate, and that is what the voters in
20 Florida feel.

21 We feel that we have a mandate for fair
22 districts, and you wouldn't try to challenge or
23 change the vote because the voters' votes are
24 the wishes of the people and that is the way we
25 feel about the Fair Districts Amendment.

1 We expect you to follow the wishes of the
2 people on the issue of fair districts and we
3 certainly do not expect you to spend taxpayer
4 money to fight the fair districts.

5 The State Constitution requires that no
6 apportionment plan or district shall be drawn
7 with the intent to favor or disfavor a
8 political party or an incumbent.

9 Gerrymandering, as it has already been
10 said, is wrong, whether it is done by
11 Republicans or Democrats or Independents or
12 whoever, it is wrong, and it is time for the
13 voters to be able to choose their
14 Representatives rather than elected officials
15 choosing their voters.

16 We talked a lot about maps this morning.
17 One map I have seen is the one done by Columbia
18 University law student and Juris Doctorate
19 candidate, Nicholas Ortez (phonetic), working
20 under the direction of Columbia University law
21 professor, Nate Persily, who is a redistricting
22 expert the courts relied on to redraw lines in
23 four states following the 2000 census.

24 His map is very interesting and it is fair
25 with districts that are contiguous, compact and

1 with equal population, which follows
2 traditional redistricting principles.

3 If you attempt to redistrict based on
4 favoring one party or, in fact, if you do that,
5 we will be a whisper away from fascism.
6 Defined in the dictionary, as a system of
7 government characterized by a rigid one party
8 dictatorship and forcible suppression of the
9 opposition.

10 The people in our democratic republic and
11 the people of Florida will not stand for
12 fascism. Now, I beg you to do the right thing.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Ma'am, I am
14 going to ask you keep the rhetorics --

15 MS. BELL: For the right reasons when you
16 draw the new districts.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: -- to a little
18 bit more higher standard. And once again,
19 ma'am, if you could, when you have written
20 prepared remarks like that, if you could submit
21 them to our staff so we can accurately reflect
22 them in the record, I would appreciate it.

23 Next we have Charlene Walker, and she will
24 be followed by Evelyn Arthur. Ms. Walker.
25 There she is.

1 MS. WALKER: I can't follow that. I
2 really, really just want to say and ask you to
3 please follow the requirements listed in the
4 Amendments, and if you do that I think we will
5 have a fair redistricting process, and that is
6 the important thing, especially Lake County.

7 I live in Lady Lake, Lake County and Lake
8 County is an absolute disaster, and that has
9 been discussed. So if we can correct those
10 kinds of things I would appreciate it. Thank
11 you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
13 Ms. Walker, Evelyn Arthur followed by Albert
14 Exner.

15 MS. ARTHUR: Good morning, everyone, and
16 thank you for being here. In November 3.1
17 million Floridians voted and passed the
18 redistricting standard. The fact that the
19 Legislature has a suit or set aside money
20 basically is saying that we are suing
21 ourselves.

22 Sixty-three percent of us voted. We want
23 the districts to be fair, as a lot of people
24 have said, and I am just about convinced that
25 it should be done by a computer.

1 It should be done by a program that has
2 been proven before in various states. I just
3 think that the job is just really, really, just
4 too tremendous to be done in the time frame
5 that is necessary for the proper folks that
6 want to represent us be able to come forth and
7 know who they are representing.

8 Like a lot of others, I think we just need
9 to feel that it is going to be done fairly, and
10 I am not sure that individuals can do that. I
11 think a proper computer program by the person
12 that Ms. Bell said, talked about, would be the
13 proper way to go. Thank you for coming, and I
14 appreciate this opportunity.

15 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
16 ma'am. Albert Exner, followed by Mike Archer.

17 MR. EXNER: I would like to start by
18 thanking the folks on the stage being here
19 today to listen to what the public has to say.

20 The most important thing I think that I,
21 it occurred to me was that the likelihood of
22 having every county and every community having
23 just the representation that belongs to it and
24 not sharing a legislative assistance by
25 devoting the -- the -- the -- the various

1 opportunities to gerrymander, there is no
2 possibility that these gentlemen on the stage
3 can possibly arrange to have every county only
4 represented by the folks within that county,
5 and the -- the -- not just the county, but the
6 individual localities.

7 I think that we all have to be realistic
8 that that can't happen, but we can certainly
9 work to approximate this by having, say, for
10 example, I am from Marion County, and in Marion
11 County we have three, I think four different
12 Senatorial districts representing us, and by
13 this, it occurs that there is a lack of
14 concentrated effort, concentrated knowledge,
15 concentrated work on the part of the folks
16 doing the job in the Senate.

17 With this in mind I would like to suggest
18 that we all get behind them and continue to
19 submit ideas and I thank you very much.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
21 Mike Archer is next, followed by Linda Hobbs.

22 MR. ARCHER: Good morning. How are you
23 doing? Here we are 11 years later after what
24 many people believe, whether we agree or not,
25 many people believe was one of the most corrupt

1 elections in modern American history, took
2 place right here in Florida.

3 We developed widespread voter mistrust
4 following that, year after year after year.
5 Now, the process of redistricting is very
6 healthy, because it allows us to try to rebuild
7 some credibility into the political process in
8 Florida.

9 So it is something we all want to do, but
10 what I would like you to consider is this.
11 Your stated goal that you said several times
12 today is to remove politics from the process,
13 yet as many speakers have pointed out, the
14 Legislature, itself, is fighting the process.

15 That is just not helpful at all, fighting
16 those Amendments is not going to build
17 credibility.

18 Secondly, to remove politics from the
19 process, are you legally forbidden, I mean
20 legally forbidden from getting the services of
21 a politically neutral redistricting expert to
22 manage this process and see it through, through
23 all of the vetting and all of the Supreme Court
24 work so that the public has a full chance to
25 see every piece of this process, as many people

1 have mentioned.

2 I want to know and I would like an answer
3 from both a Democrat and a Republican, I would
4 like to know, are you legally forbidden from
5 doing that? Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir,
7 and after the meeting, everyone here will be
8 available to meet with you at your convenience.

9 We are going to have people address issues
10 at that time. Again, thank you for your
11 comments.

12 MR. ARCHER: May I have an answer, please?

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: We are at the
14 end of the meeting we are going to answer a
15 whole long laundry list of comments and we are
16 going to do it in that format.

17 MR. ARCHER: Okay, so you will answer that
18 question later, thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you for
20 your time, sir. Linda Hobbs is up next,
21 followed by Sandy Trusso.

22 MS. HOBBS: Good morning.

23 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Good morning.

24 MS. HOBBS: My name is Linda Hobbs and I
25 live in Sumter county and I would like to thank

1 each of you for coming here this morning. You
2 probably got up earlier than I did. A number
3 of you probably had to drive quite a distance.

4 This issue is one of one nation or not,
5 divided or not. I would, for those of us who
6 have seen the present map districting, some
7 people have referred to it as having fingers.

8 For sure it is a strange map, and I
9 acknowledge that you -- that you did not draw
10 the map, but I also am aware that you may have
11 benefited from that map, and so, and what did
12 that strange map say?

13 And the question is, can redistricting be
14 used for voter suppression, and that is what we
15 are actually talking about today. And what did
16 the vote of the 63 percent of Floridians say
17 they wanted?

18 They want voter expression, not voter
19 suppression. They want every vote to count,
20 and they want every voter included. This is an
21 incredible opportunity that each of you have
22 now, and it is to right a wrong and it is to
23 say that you represent all of the people in
24 your district, not just some of them.

25 So I ask each of you to let the desire for

1 citizen representation and voter expression be
2 the guide for this new redistricting. Our
3 people, our country has been divided enough.
4 We are looking to you to bring us together.
5 Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
7 much for those comments. Sandy Trusso,
8 followed by Marguerite Cavanaugh.

9 MS. TRUSSO: Thank you for allowing our
10 input on this redistricting process. In my
11 opinion we need to draw the lines in compact
12 districts that are most convenient to local
13 voters and in districts that best serve the
14 needs of the majority of the communities in
15 each county.

16 This way it is much easier to know your
17 Legislators and they, in turn, are more
18 attentive to individual and community needs.
19 When you spread these geographic districts out
20 so far, it is almost impossible for a
21 Legislator to cover the territory so as to
22 really understand the needs of his or her
23 constituency.

24 Marion County is one of the largest of the
25 smaller Florida counties, and we should not be

1 so chopped up so as to render us insignificant.

2 For example, currently in Marion County we
3 have four Senators, each of whom slices off a
4 small piece of our county, and then in each of
5 these small pieces, each of them is thrown into
6 a mix of other counties, who's cultures are so
7 varied, everything from a portion of our State
8 Capitol, Senator Dean, college towns, to rural
9 farm land, to ocean life styles, none of which
10 is representative of the type of values,
11 culture and growth that is unique to Marion
12 County.

13 We need for our State Senators to
14 understand and represent the needs of Marion
15 County as their top priority.

16 Another example, one of our Congressmen is
17 mainly in Orange County, Orlando, an area so
18 far away and so culturally different, so as to
19 have very little in common with our needs. We
20 need for our Congressman to be geographically
21 more personally assessable which also enables
22 more accountability, especially within the
23 Federal government.

24 People already feel that the U.S. Senate
25 and Congress are so far away that they are out

1 of reach. Although we appreciate town
2 meetings, it is nearly impossible to explain a
3 specific problem in depth. While there are
4 Congressional District offices, most of the
5 time we have to drive to Orlando to meet with
6 our Congressman.

7 No matter how responsive our Congressman
8 tries to be, in a district this size, it is
9 extremely difficult to meet with many of his
10 constituents from further and smaller counties.

11 Therefore, it is essential to have a
12 smaller Congressional District, exclusive to
13 Marion County, which may or may not incorporate
14 small pieces of other bordering communities
15 who's communities are closer to our needs.

16 One other thing I would like to mention, I
17 wasn't going to mention it, but since it has
18 been brought up. Unless there is a massive
19 education program, we know by the pregnant pig
20 amendment that most of the voters here have not
21 been fully informed on a lot of the ballots and
22 so a lot of times they vote a straight yes.

23 Okay, so we aren't really sure that they
24 have agreed with Amendments 5 and 6, and
25 another thing is that the organization who

1 wants to define what is fair, despite the fact
2 that they claim nonpartisan, are very much in
3 line with a particular party, and I think that
4 this causes discrimination against the rest of
5 the races and the ethnicities.

6 So again, I would ask that you do it by
7 community need and compact, compactness. Thank
8 you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
10 Ms. Trusso. Next we have Marguerite Cavanaugh,
11 followed by Marsha Shearer. Ms. Cavanaugh?
12 Has she left? Okay. Great. Marsha Shearer is
13 next, followed by Anne Schalet.

14 MS. SHEARER: Good morning, voters,
15 indeed, knew what they were voting for when
16 they voted for these two referenda. How many
17 times do we actually do it? How many times
18 does it take?

19 The Chair indicated that building blocks
20 were needed to look at the various issues
21 involved in coming up with these districts.

22 It seems to me that the major building
23 blocks are already there. First of all, common
24 sense, and secondly, the very specific
25 directions that were specified in the two

1 referenda. I frankly am very disappointed we
2 don't have a map to comment on today.

3 I -- perhaps if the Legislature had not
4 been so busy trying to avoid the
5 implementation, perhaps we would have one.

6 There is a concern I do have, now that I
7 got that out of my system, and that is the
8 timeline. This has been talked about before,
9 but there is an issue that does relate to
10 fairness, and that is that by the time these
11 districts are redrawn and comments are made and
12 then the districts are redrawn again, by the
13 time the election comes around, the candidates,
14 particularly those who are not incumbents of
15 either party, are going to have one heck of a
16 time getting their views known to the public.

17 So the timeline here that the way this is
18 going on is set right now in favor of
19 incumbents, regardless of party, and that I
20 feel is against the very issue that the
21 referenda tried to address. Thank you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
23 much for those comments. Ann Schalet, followed
24 by Sam McConnell.

25 MS. SCHALET: I only came to Florida 18

1 months ago. I feel totally incompetent to say
2 anything more than I am in total culture shock
3 that 63 percent of the voters could vote for
4 something that is now being sued by the
5 Legislature. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you. Sam
7 McConnell followed by Alan Wichman.

8 MR. MCCONNELL: Sam McConnell from Marion
9 County. I want to thank The Villages for
10 hosting us. We don't get our own community of
11 interest meeting, so I thank you for having us
12 as guests.

13 That is part of why I wanted to talk to
14 you. You know, I had a choice to go to
15 Daytona, a choice to come down to The Villages
16 and a choice to go up to Gainesville, so
17 therein lies part of the challenge.

18 We are so splintered, we are not a
19 community of interest in Marion County, we are
20 a community of pot pie. We just flat out do
21 not have that singleness of representation that
22 we need to have to show that we are a community
23 of interest.

24 Marion County I don't think has had a
25 State Senate probably since the '80s, that

1 lived there. You know, I was raised with a
2 statement that home is where the heart is.

3 I think in this redistricting it might be,
4 the heart is where the home is, and I am really
5 concerned that we haven't taken into effect
6 that Marion County has got four State Senators,
7 and they are all great State Senators, I
8 appreciate what they have done for our county,
9 and this is by no means a reflection upon the
10 current elected officials, but what I am saying
11 is that we need somebody that can stand up for
12 Marion County and can represent Marion County
13 and can put forth our wishes and concerns as a
14 community of interest.

15 You know, whether you are running for
16 political office or running the political
17 office or running from the political office,
18 you need to have a community of interest to
19 stand for.

20 We don't, we don't -- our elected
21 officials are so splintered that when we have
22 community activities it is hard for a State
23 Senator or a state Representative to be at some
24 of our community activities because they are so
25 from away.

1 It took me 48 minutes to drive here from
2 my house and I am an aggressive driver.
3 Daytona, if I would have went to that meeting
4 it would have took me 75 minutes to an hour
5 and-a-half to drive over there to that meeting.
6 If I go up to Gainesville, it is almost an
7 hour.

8 We are a community of interest in Marion
9 County, ladies and gentlemen. We do represent
10 a strong body of voters, and for you to have us
11 splintered the way we are is not fair to Marion
12 County.

13 I totally respect the State legislators
14 and the State Senators that have tried to
15 represent us, but it is time for a change and a
16 redistricting of Marion County, and I thank The
17 Villages in Lake County and Sumter County for
18 having us here.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
20 And those were great comments, and, you know,
21 the home is where the heart is, is a great way
22 it look at it, and those comments truly came
23 from your heart, I could tell. Thank you.
24 Alan Wichman, followed by Joyce Hamilton Henry.

25 MR. WICHMAN: My name is Al Wichman, I

1 live in Grand Island, which is in Lake County,
2 and my wife and I are members of the League of
3 Women Voters and we certainly agree with the
4 comments that have been made by Mrs. and
5 Mr. Coen of the Lake County board.

6 The item of time seems to be mentioned by
7 most people. I was reading an article about
8 the number of states that have already adopted
9 their own redistricting, and we are falling by
10 the wayside.

11 Somehow as I watch television I see
12 candidates are now identifying that they wish
13 to run for particular offices. How do they
14 know what office they are running for? We
15 haven't identified what the districts are.

16 So this is the biggest situation that
17 faces people like yourselves to find out what
18 kind of representation you are going to have to
19 work with if you are elected.

20 Now, in addition to the 63 percent figure
21 which most people have been applauding all
22 meeting we see that our tax money is being
23 spent to fight what we want, and I think
24 63 percent majority of people that really
25 studied, really studied these Amendments back

1 in November, the League of Women Voters, one
2 agency that has worked diligently to get the
3 word out to the people.

4 So the comment that people didn't know
5 what they were voting for doesn't take any kind
6 of credence at all. We want fairness. We want
7 our tax money spent wisely. We want good
8 representative districts, not the
9 gerrymandering that we see when we look at our
10 present map which is an absolute disgrace.
11 Thank you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
13 Next we have Joyce Henry, followed by Marsha
14 Solms. Joyce, are you here? Thank you.

15 MS. HENRY: Good morning. My name is
16 Joyce Hamilton Henry, and I am the Director of
17 the Mid Florida Regional Office of the ACLU
18 which is based in Tampa, and I am here to speak
19 on behalf of the ACLU.

20 You have two mandates to uphold. The 1965
21 Voting Rights Act and the mandate from the
22 63 percent of Floridians who voted for
23 Amendments 5 and 6.

24 They both require that you draw the maps
25 for the new House Senate and Congressional

1 Districts that are compact, contiguous and
2 reflect the needs of communities of interest,
3 specifically, more specifically,
4 African-Americans and Latinos.

5 We want fair nonpartisan districts. It
6 should not favor or disfavor any political
7 party. We want a process that is truly, truly
8 transparent. We believe that lawmakers should
9 not be able to draw their own individual
10 districts.

11 That is the essence of insider and back
12 room deal and you also heard gerrymandering.
13 We are deeply troubled by this very slow and
14 what will amount to be a very expensive
15 process.

16 You have had the data, census data for
17 months. Our question to you is, where are the
18 maps? We have the technology, the software,
19 and we clearly have the intellectual capital to
20 draw the maps. This is not rocket science.

21 Where are the maps and why is it taking so
22 long? We are being asked to come in on a
23 process, but we are not given the opportunity,
24 the real opportunity to comment.

25 Citizen participation is at the heart of a

1 healthy democracy. On the surface, these
2 hearings may seem to engage people in a
3 democratic process, but in reality, without the
4 maps, it is a sham, a farce, a waste of
5 everyone's time and the taxpayer's dollar.

6 Floridians want to see the map. We want
7 to know who our Representatives will be.
8 Potential candidates want to know which
9 district they should run for and we just heard
10 from one Supervisor that Supervisor of
11 Elections need to know also so that they could
12 do their jobs.

13 If you are truly committed to making our
14 democracy work fairly, vibrantly and
15 inclusively, you need to make the map, present
16 it to the public, tell us why you draw the
17 districts and then invite our comments.

18 Only then can we have a real conversation,
19 unless the goal is to keep us in the dark,
20 confused and further delay the process. I hate
21 to resort to a colloquial kind of term, but I
22 will. Read our lips. Show us the maps. Thank
23 you.

24 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you. Next
25 we have Ms. Marsha Solms, followed by Gary

1 Davis.

2 MS. SOLMS: My name is Marsha Solms, I
3 live in The Villages in Sumter County. I just
4 have two brief comments.

5 I am in District 42, and I would like to
6 urge that The Villages remain, remain in one
7 State House District.

8 My Congressional District, which is
9 District Number 5, I would like all of The
10 Villages to be, I would urge you to vote for
11 all of The Villages to be represented by one
12 Representative.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
14 ma'am. Next we have Gary Davis, followed by
15 Cheryl Borkowski.

16 MR. DAVIS: Good morning, everyone, thank
17 you for being here. I appreciate the
18 opportunity to be part of a public forum. I am
19 a unique Villager, I live in Sumter County here
20 in The Villages. I came here seven years ago,
21 moved north to come to The Villages, and I
22 didn't come here to retire, I came here to open
23 a business.

24 My business partner sent me up here to
25 establish this office. So over the last seven

1 years in building this office I have talked to
2 literally thousands of people, not only through
3 business, but my Rotary Club, my political
4 party affiliation and activity, as a
5 representative of one of our districts here in
6 The Villages, my church and other activities.

7 We are a unique community. We have a
8 common culture, we have common interest. We
9 came here for the lifestyle and what this
10 community represents, but being spread over
11 three counties and two municipalities makes it
12 a challenge.

13 So I would ask you to give serious
14 consideration that when you are looking at what
15 The Villages represents, now 83,000 and
16 growing, expected to peak out at around 105,000
17 residents, that you look at The Villages as one
18 voting block, for Legislative, Congressional
19 and Senatorial Districts.

20 And Mr. Baxley, like you, I share a target
21 rich environment here. Thank you very much.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Cheryl
23 Borkowski, followed by Roger Kass.

24 MS. BORKOWSKI: I am Cheryl Borkowski from
25 Sumter County. I don't speak very well in

1 public. In fact, I am shaking, and I just --

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are doing great,
3 ma'am, but could you speak directly into the
4 mike, because I know all of these friends and
5 neighbors here --

6 MS. BORKOWSKI: Okay, I don't want to
7 sound too loud.

8 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: No, that is all right,
9 that is all right.

10 MS. BORKIWSKI: I am just very
11 disappointed that our Representatives have been
12 dragging their feet. I want fair
13 representation in the redistricting, and I have
14 been very disappointed in public officers and
15 people that have participated in running our
16 government in Florida.

17 I don't feel you have to be a Harvard
18 graduate to do what is right for the American
19 people, and on this small little redistricting
20 thing, I expect you people to do the right
21 thing, and you know you can do it by computer
22 and it is probably going to be the fairest way.
23 Thank you.

24 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you. Next
25 we have Roger Kass, and I don't have any other

1 cards. So if anybody else wants to speak if
2 would you get with staff and fill out a card
3 and get it up with me, you still have that
4 opportunity. Mr. Kass.

5 MR. KASS: Good morning, and thank you for
6 the opportunity. My name is Roger Kass, and I
7 am the previous President, past, immediate past
8 President of The Villages Homeowners'
9 Association.

10 I happen to live in Marion County, but
11 when I was the Homeowners' President I
12 represented all of The Villages, and all of the
13 residents of The Villages.

14 As has been said, we are a unique
15 community, a community of common interest. Our
16 interests are similar and I believe it is
17 important that our representation reflect that.

18 I would ask that you consider the fact
19 that we are a community of common interest and
20 establish The Villages as part of a single
21 congressional legislative and represented
22 district, regardless of what county we live in,
23 because we do live in three counties, and we do
24 have -- and in two municipalities, and I thank
25 you for your consideration and time. Thank

1 you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
3 Now, I did have one lady who was not here when
4 I called her name earlier. Has Marguerite
5 Cavanaugh come back, last call? Okay. And
6 then I have Catherine Williamson, would you
7 like to speak, please step up to the -- thank
8 you.

9 MS. WILLIAMSON: Thank you, and thank you
10 all for coming here. The topic that this
11 reminds me of is one of the things that we see
12 all around the country, and that is the erosion
13 of our population's faith and trust in their
14 government and you guys probably experience it
15 all of the time, but many times people become
16 involved with government and their first
17 involvement is from a negative point of view,
18 because they basically have a very low level of
19 trust.

20 And I think this is a great opportunity
21 for you all, there is maybe in your daily work
22 you can only feel like you can make slight very
23 small steps towards improving that.

24 This is a big step you can make towards
25 improving our population's faith and trust in

1 government. Anybody who looks at a current map
2 has a -- an immediate sense that something
3 doesn't make sense here.

4 So, of course, the first thing that
5 everybody is looking for in redistricting is
6 districts that make sense. I think that it is
7 easy to understand that The Villages are a
8 community of interest and that it makes sense
9 that they are kept together in redistricting.

10 For the rest of us who live in Lake
11 County, it makes -- it would make more sense to
12 us if we were not represented by four different
13 U.S. Congress people, four different
14 Representatives, that if there were -- if it
15 was more along county lines, that would make
16 more sense to us.

17 The timeline is another area where you can
18 effect what people's perception of what you are
19 doing is. If this drags out to the point
20 where it becomes clear that the votes and the
21 late vote in the Legislature puts this in a
22 time frame where this gets finished up the day
23 or a week before ballots need to be put
24 together, this will be viewed as a general
25 public as a way that you could be -- that you

1 have caused difficulty for them, that you have
2 not enabled them to be positively involved with
3 government, but have made it more difficult.

4 The other thing that you can do is, it is
5 good to see so many people from different areas
6 up here. One of the things that I hope that
7 people from other parts of the state are here
8 for, is that we would like to see the people
9 from other parts of our state be involved with
10 drawing the lines in our state so that there is
11 no perception at all that any of you are
12 individually involved in drawing the districts
13 that you represent.

14 It needs to be something that is clearly
15 fair in how you do that. You are doing your
16 meetings in an open way. You need to keep that
17 going so that everything looks transparent.
18 This is a great opportunity. We hope that you
19 really follow through on that. Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
21 much for those kind words. I have got one
22 additional card here from Bud Mangels, and
23 again, anyone else that wants to speak, please
24 see our staff. They are handing me another
25 card right now and we will give you that

1 opportunity. Mr. Mangels.

2 MR. MANGELS: Yes, the name is Mangels.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Mangels, I
4 mangled it, sorry.

5 MR. MANGELS: That is a grand old German
6 name and I am proud to be a first generation
7 American, and one of the things that I find
8 lacking in this discussion is we are talking
9 about Republicans, Democrats, Independents,
10 ethnic groups, but I haven't heard anybody
11 talking about we are all Americans.

12 Secondly, I think we talk about a republic
13 that is based upon a representative form of
14 government, and we need neighborhoods, I heard
15 the word compact made several times, but we
16 need to have an opportunity to be in contact
17 with our representatives because frankly, what
18 you think isn't very important.

19 What is important is that you know what we
20 think, so that when you have cast a ballot, so
21 that when you cast a ballot, whether it is in
22 the Federal government or the State government,
23 it is really responding to the basis of this
24 republic, and that is that we have somebody
25 that is going to represent us.

1 You don't have a job. You have an
2 assignment. You have a calling, and that
3 calling is to represent a group of American
4 people in a very wonderful form of government
5 and that is one that is based upon
6 representation of all of the people.

7 I neglected to say thank you for being
8 here. I appreciate you willing to serve as
9 part of that government process, and all of the
10 people that I sit with out here today, I am
11 thankful that they are taking part in this very
12 precious thing that we have. Thank you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.
14 Now I have a card from Ms. Sandra Mott.
15 Ms. Mott. Followed by Harriet Heywood. Thank
16 you, ma'am.

17 MS. MOTT: Good morning, and thank you all
18 for being here and for offering us the
19 opportunity to tell you what we think, because
20 come next election, we are going to tell you
21 again what we think.

22 The things that seem to be important in
23 what I have heard here today about
24 redistricting are that we do need our -- keep
25 our communities of interest intact. We need to

1 keep our districts compact so that we can have
2 ready access to our Representatives, because it
3 is important.

4 I know you all think it is or you wouldn't
5 be here, to know what we think. The American
6 people are beginning to wake up and the next
7 ten years are going to be very critical years
8 in the future of our nation, so thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
10 ma'am, I appreciate those comments. Next we
11 have Harriet Heywood, followed by Dave O'Neill.

12 MS. HEYWOOD: Thank you very much. You
13 will excuse me for being a skeptic about the
14 redistricting process. What I have seen is the
15 Governor and the Legislature fight it at every
16 turn.

17 Unfortunately, when you have districts
18 that are drawn by Representatives, you have
19 unrepresented citizens and that is what we have
20 in Florida today.

21 Sixty-three percent of the voters of this
22 state voted for fair districts, and what we
23 want to see is our wishes carried out, and what
24 we really are upset about is our tax dollars.

25 My tax dollars being used to fight a law

1 that I voted into effect. Ideally what we
2 would like to have is a nonpartisan commission
3 that is going to be voting on the maps.

4 At the very least, a computer program
5 which is not being gerrymandered by one party
6 or the other. I hope, I really hope that you
7 are not going to use my tax dollars to fight a
8 law that I voted, and I also want to add that
9 the people of Florida are going to be watching
10 you, and the people of the country are watching
11 us also. So please do the right thing. Thank
12 you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
14 ma'am. Dave O'Neill. Mr. O'Neill. And again,
15 this is my final card that I have. So if you
16 want to speak, please see one of our staff
17 quickly. Mr. O'Neill.

18 MR. O'NEILL: Okay, glad to be here,
19 folks, and I have listened to the meetings that
20 I have been watching on TV every day, and a
21 point came out here that some of you people
22 have voted to tax or to spend our taxes against
23 the Amendments that were passed by 63 percent
24 of the vote.

25 Now, I wonder if you, Senator Hays, since

1 I am in your district, did you vote?

2 SENATOR HAYS: Did I vote on what?

3 MR. O'NEILL: On these taxes being paid
4 for the suit against --

5 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Okay, Senator
6 Hays, sir, I would like you to have that
7 conversation after the meeting here. We are
8 here to listen to your comments though, but we
9 are not going to engage in a debate from here.

10 MR. O'NEILL: I am asking you people a
11 question and I want to know. Did you --

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: No, Alan, I am
13 not going to recognize you.

14 MR. O'NEILL: No, I will go on to the next
15 statement.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Okay, thank you.

17 MR. O'NEILL: But at least I let you know
18 I am here.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Okay.

20 MR. O'NEILL: Okay. So now it comes down
21 to everyone up there with a big smile on their
22 face, and I see it in meetings, where was it,
23 Panama City or up there in Pensacola, and
24 Jacksonville and that, and it looks like you
25 are laughing down at us.

1 You are really making us look like jerks
2 for coming up here to even have the audacity to
3 ask you super white folks, the super majority,
4 but you are not a majority, you are a minority,
5 and that is what this whole thing is about.

6 How could we -- how could a party that has
7 got half the population of the Democrats which
8 happens to be Republicans, why, how could they
9 possibly control both Houses?

10 So it turns out that it turns out that
11 over in Pensacola about, what was it, eight,
12 ten years ago when they had the redistricting,
13 they moved a black neighborhood out with 3,000
14 votes and the guy up there won by 400, and he
15 happened to be a Republican. And I thank you,
16 folks.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
18 much for your comments, sir. Okay. That was
19 the -- that was the last speaker card that we
20 had. That concludes our list of those who have
21 asked to speak. Aha, I have got some more
22 coming up, and then what we are going to do
23 after we get to the end of the speakers, is we,
24 if we don't have any written remarks that have
25 been submitted over social media and the like,

1 we are going to then proceed to having some of
2 our members up here answer some of the
3 questions that have been raised today and that
4 have been raised regularly over time, and once
5 I get to that we are going to start with
6 Senator Gaetz and then I have several others
7 who have already indicated that they wish to
8 speak. So, Heather Rabinowitz.

9 MS. RABINOWITZ: Thank you very much. I
10 am pleased to be here. I would like to give my
11 opinion about the fair districting. My
12 understanding of the Constitution is that
13 everyone in the country that is a citizen has
14 the opportunity and the right to vote.

15 And in order to do so they need candidates
16 of their choice, and districting is an
17 important element of this function. If the
18 maps for the districts are not presented early
19 enough in the process of elections, then
20 candidates do not have the opportunity to stand
21 forth and get support from the people in the
22 district that they hope to represent.

23 So my contention is that the maps for the
24 projected districts should be issued on the
25 early side rather than on the later side, so

1 that this American ideal can be fulfilled.

2 Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
4 much. Okay, that was the final card that I
5 have in my hand. Anyone else, raise your hand?
6 Okay, well, then we will go ahead and move to
7 the members of the panel that would like to
8 comment at this point in time.

9 First, thank you very much for being here.
10 We really appreciate all of the constructive
11 input that we have gotten and I was really
12 personally impressed with a lot of the maps
13 that we got. Representation Frishe, you are
14 recognized.

15 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Thank you,
16 Mr. Chairman. First of all, thank you all for
17 coming out. I am a firm believer in that we
18 have a participatory system of government and
19 it doesn't work if you don't participate. So
20 thank you very much for participating.

21 There were a couple of questions raised
22 earlier today about whether the public could
23 intelligently submit maps and really start the
24 process.

25 Obviously, from the maps that have been

1 submitted today and over the last couple of
2 days, and also from everywhere from Tallahassee
3 to Pensacola to northeast Florida, and now The
4 Villages, obviously you have the intelligence
5 to do it. So those of you who don't think you
6 can, give it a shot.

7 We are, we are here to listen to what you
8 have to say because, as Mr. Mangels said, it is
9 not so important what we think coming out of
10 the box, it is important that we know what you
11 think locally, and I think that is very
12 important.

13 I am Vice Chairman of the House
14 Redistricting Committee. I live in Pinellas
15 County. I have to tell you, I have learned an
16 immense amount about the concerns of the
17 panhandle, of the northeast and now this area
18 in central Florida.

19 The Villages in particular are going to
20 have a problem because all of ya'll who
21 supported Amendment 5 and think it is wonderful
22 and it will solve your problems, you may have
23 just subdivided The Villages, because the use
24 of geographic and political boundaries were
25 feasible according to Amendment 5 is more

1 important than the preservations of communities
2 of interest.

3 But we are very glad to hear your input
4 there and we are going to try to do our very
5 best to accommodate those, but that is, you
6 know, the way Amendment 5 is worded, we may
7 have a problem there. So I hope you will help
8 us and give us some suggestions on how to
9 overcome that.

10 I thank you again for being here, freedom
11 is a heavy lift. It takes a lot of hands to
12 keep a country free, and I appreciate you
13 helping do some of the lifting. Thank you for
14 being here.

15 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
16 Representative. Next we will go to
17 Representative Nehr. You are recognized.

18 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Thank you. I
19 appreciate that. My name is Representative
20 Nehr, and as Chairman of the Senate
21 Redistricting Committee in Tallahassee, I took
22 a few notes and I just want to make sure I
23 share some of that with you.

24 And I wanted to offer some clarification
25 regarding the redistricting timeline, because

1 there was some mention made of that a couple of
2 times.

3 Now, what you see on the websites as far
4 as the timeline, when action can occur is not
5 meant to suggest that the maps will definitely
6 pass on one day or another day or on a specific
7 day.

8 It is simply a range of dates that final
9 action by the Legislature, the courts and the
10 Department of Justice can occur. As long as it
11 is not in 2011, because our Constitution says
12 it cannot be acted on until 2012.

13 What that means is that after committee
14 meetings that started September, and go through
15 December, we will be discussing that, we will
16 be discussing the maps. We will have community
17 meetings where there will be public input at
18 all times for any votes are taken, that
19 everyone is allowed to do that.

20 If we get our work done early, we can
21 actually vote on the maps as early as the first
22 day of session, or if there is too many actions
23 that we need to do, if there is too many
24 questions by the public, we can wait until
25 later on, but that is not a definitive

1 timeline. It is just a timeline when they can
2 occur since we have certain laws that we have
3 to follow. So I just wanted to mention that to
4 everyone to clarify that situation. Thank you,
5 Mr. Chairman.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
7 Representative. Next on the list, I have
8 Representative Baxley. You are recognized.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thank you,
10 Mr. Chairman. I first want to thank our
11 Chairman for conducting these kind of meetings
12 that have been conducted with a proper decorum
13 and proper respect for many different opinions.

14 As you can hear, a lot of different
15 opinions are out there. I am very proud to
16 have all of these members in my area of the
17 state, you know, we do have different issues
18 here in north central Florida, and The Villages
19 is an incredibly unique event in the
20 demographics of Florida, and I think it is
21 absolutely necessary that they come and see
22 what is happening here before these maps are
23 drawn.

24 And so I am delighted that we were able to
25 get this tour of meetings. If we came here

1 with pre-drawn maps and telling you what we
2 plan to do, I don't think that would have been
3 proper.

4 You know, there is a time to listen and
5 there is a time to speak. Please remember,
6 this is the beginning of a process. This is
7 the beginning of a process that you can be part
8 of all of the way through.

9 I was one of the few people, I was a brand
10 new freshman when we did draw the maps in 2000,
11 and I can tell you, this has been the most
12 transparent experience of any state that I have
13 observed, especially knowing that we get our
14 information from the Census much, much later
15 than many of the states that are already
16 drawing maps.

17 How presumptuous of us to come here and
18 tell you, this is going to be your map. We
19 should come and listen to you first before we
20 draw maps, and that is exactly what is
21 happening.

22 I want to thank you for contributing to
23 that process and the things that you have
24 contributed. And also knowing, and Senator
25 Gaetz, I hope that you will explain the rules,

1 you know, when we can do what, and what our
2 Constitution requires.

3 We all swore to keep that Constitution and
4 I think you give the best explanation of why we
5 are doing what we are doing in this process,
6 but I am very proud of this participation.

7 I am very proud that these comments will
8 be on the record and part of the decision,
9 rather than already made the decision and just
10 informing you of something.

11 So I, having been through this process
12 before, I can tell you, this is a far more
13 transparent way to conduct this process and
14 this is only the beginning.

15 There will be open meetings at every venue
16 for you to come and participate and comment on
17 as we go through this process, and it is,
18 redistricting is very important. It has to do
19 the way, resources get allocated. It has to do
20 with so many things, and term limits, look,
21 most of us won't even run on these new maps.

22 Most of us, many of these people are
23 already term limited out. They won't even be
24 here. So in the case of Florida, eight years
25 is all you have, so you don't even run on those

1 maps.

2 Most of us run on maps that someone else
3 drew. You heard that, a point earlier. Term
4 limits has done that for Florida and it will
5 make this a more open process, because we are
6 not just preserving our own territory, because
7 most of us are going to go out of office.

8 So thank you for understanding that, and I
9 appreciate the Chairman for conducting these
10 meetings. This is a tremendous amount of
11 effort to have this many colleagues. You see,
12 I am the only one from Marion County and all of
13 these folks are people that we have to have a
14 discussion with.

15 Thankfully we have had great
16 representation in our delegation and I thank
17 them for their work, but I am excited about you
18 continuing to be a part of this process and
19 nothing will be passed that you won't have a
20 chance to comment to. Thank you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
22 Representative Baxley. Senator Hays, you are
23 recognized.

24 SENATOR HAYS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
25 want to thank each one of you for being here.

1 This is what democracy is all about, it is
2 called citizen participation.

3 I am very encouraged by the crowds that we
4 have gotten all across the state. Believe me,
5 this is not what we call a vacation at all. So
6 don't think the taxpayers are funding us a
7 great vacation.

8 We were in Jacksonville on Monday, we left
9 Jacksonville Monday night and drove to St.
10 Augustine, and we were at a meeting at 8:00
11 yesterday morning in St. Augustine. We left
12 Daytona Beach last night at 9:00 to come over
13 here for 8:00.

14 We will be in Gainesville this evening and
15 then we are through with this particular
16 circuit. So folks, it is not a glory tour at
17 all.

18 Believe you me, every one of us up here
19 just are thirsty for compact districts. My
20 particular Senate District in which we are
21 sitting right now is 85 miles east and west,
22 and I feel embarrassed to be commenting on it,
23 it is not complaining, but to be commenting on
24 it in the presence of Senator Dean who's
25 district goes all of the way to the Georgia

1 line, and he told you about that earlier.

2 But, you know, there are so many pine
3 trees out there and so few people out there
4 that we have to have that large area to meet
5 the numbers.

6 This whole process is numbers driven. The
7 founders of this country over 200 years ago
8 knew, I personally I believe it was with divine
9 wisdom that was given to those men that they
10 designed the reapportionment process the way
11 they did, so that every person would have equal
12 representation and they knew it had to be
13 adjusted periodically. That is what we are
14 going through.

15 We want the compact districts. Every one
16 of us up here have sworn to uphold the
17 Constitution of this state, and we are going to
18 honor Amendments 5 and 6.

19 To answer specifically that question of
20 the gentlemen a while ago, no, I did not vote
21 to spend money to fight that lawsuit. The
22 disappointing part of this whole thing, folks,
23 is the misinformation that is out there.

24 The Florida Legislature has not filed a
25 lawsuit to fight Amendments 5 and 6. The

1 Amendment 6 lawsuit was filed by one Republican
2 Congressman and one Democratic Congresswoman.
3 The Florida House chose to go, what is the
4 term, an intervenor. In seeking clarification,
5 the Florida House intervened, but your tax
6 dollars are not being used to sue you the
7 people who voted the 63 percent.

8 Believe me, I don't know where you got
9 your information, but it is incorrect. So, no,
10 I did not vote to waste that money.

11 One thing I would like to address is the
12 splintered counties. I can, I can understand
13 that, but consider this. When you have only
14 one Senator or only one Representative, that is
15 only one voice that you have advocating for you
16 in Tallahassee or in Washington.

17 I live in Lake County. We have six voices
18 in Tallahassee for Lake County, two Senators
19 and four members of the House represent parts
20 of Lake County.

21 That is a far better situation for the
22 people of Lake County than if we had only one,
23 because if that one gets cross-wise with the
24 leadership in Tallahassee, then Lake County's
25 interests are not going to be well represented,

1 and, you know, it is just better when you have
2 six people advocating for your position than it
3 is if you have only one person.

4 So it is not something that we do
5 intentionally. The media have led you to
6 believe that we are up here looking out for our
7 own self interest, and I would invite you to go
8 to the website and try to design the districts.
9 You will see that it is some what like handling
10 a water balloon. If you squeeze it here, it is
11 going to bulge out over there and back and
12 forth like that.

13 So we are dedicated to try to get the
14 districts as compact as we can. We appreciate
15 ya'll being here, and we did not file a
16 lawsuit.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Senator Gaetz,
18 you are recognized.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
20 Mr. Chairman, and someone at some point during
21 this hearing made some comment about how the
22 hearing had no value.

23 Well, I can tell you, I have taken page
24 after page after page after page of notes about
25 local issues of concern that have to do with

1 how your district lines could be or should be
2 drawn or shouldn't be drawn.

3 Information that I as somebody who lives
4 way up in the panhandle of Florida, never could
5 have gotten if we were just sitting in
6 Tallahassee with Legislators talking to each
7 other in an echo chamber.

8 So the fact that you were here today and
9 provided this information makes this hearing
10 extraordinarily valuable to me as one person
11 who will vote on proposals that will come
12 before the Senate Reapportionment Committee.

13 The several folks who said this process
14 ought to be nonpartisan and, in fact, one
15 gentleman asked if we could please answer the
16 question, are we legally forbidden to have a
17 politically neutral person manage the
18 redistricting process and he wanted to hear
19 from a Republican and a Democrat.

20 I am a Republican and I would yield to any
21 of my Democratic colleagues. First of all, I
22 am 63 years old, and I am still looking for the
23 first politically neutral person.

24 I haven't found anybody who is without
25 opinions and without a point of view, but

1 secondly, the Florida Constitution requires
2 that the Legislature, made up of elected
3 individuals, people you can elect and un-elect,
4 actually manage and draw, manage the
5 redistricting process and draw the lines.

6 So I am not sure where we find these
7 political neutrals, if they are on an island
8 somewhere, they get no newspapers, they have no
9 opinions, I haven't found them yet, but if we
10 could find them we would have to I think amend
11 the Florida Constitution because it says now
12 that the Florida Legislature is the one that
13 must draw these lines.

14 Now, can we rely on experts to give us
15 advice and information? Absolutely, and we
16 are. We have I think someone mentioned it
17 earlier, we have had input from -- from folks
18 at Columbia University, and even though they
19 are Floridians by -- by citizenship, they
20 probably don't have too many dogs in the fight
21 here. They are looking at this as an academic
22 exercise.

23 We have had other universities express
24 interest and even offer maps for part of the
25 state or for just Senate Districts or just

1 Congressional Districts, and also there are
2 individuals who are political scientists and
3 they do have points of view, but they are
4 offering expert advice to us, to others, to the
5 Fair Districts group.

6 There is all kinds of advice that we can
7 get from people who have studied redistricting
8 and who are experts on redistricting in this
9 state and in other states, but it is a
10 constitutional requirement that we draw the
11 maps.

12 Now, if the Fair Districts folks felt that
13 was a bad idea, then they could have and still
14 can offer an amendment to the Constitution that
15 would establish some other group other than
16 people you elect to do this job.

17 There, I think, are one or two states that
18 use an unelected group that you don't really
19 have any accountability from or to that at
20 least put together plans or draw districts, and
21 if the Fair Districts folks meant to do that,
22 they didn't, but they certainly still could.

23 But right now, sir, the laws are that we
24 have to draw the districts and we certainly can
25 ask for expert advice from people who do this

1 as individuals who study redistricting across
2 the country.

3 And then someone also asked, a couple of
4 folks said, well, gosh, in fact, I wrote the
5 quote down, we shouldn't have quote, maps
6 submitted by people without subject area
7 expertise, as though we would have the subject
8 area expertise and I want to submit the only
9 people that would be submitting maps and that
10 folks sitting in the chairs here today don't
11 have that subject area expertise.

12 I think that was the implication of the
13 comment. I couldn't disagree more. We have
14 seen maps submitted today by people who have on
15 the ground expertise who know where communities
16 of interest are, who know where people go to
17 church, go to school, go to Synagogue, where
18 their commerce and industry is concentrated,
19 and where they have communities of interest.

20 And by the way, the most often repeated
21 phrase in this hearing today for describing how
22 districts ought to be drawn is the term,
23 communities of interest, the most often
24 repeated phrase.

25 And as another member of the committee has

1 pointed out, sadly, sadly, the term communities
2 of interest is not included in Amendments 5 and
3 6.

4 There was actually an effort made by
5 another group to have the term communities of
6 interest included in the Constitution, but the
7 Supreme Court of Florida said no, that that
8 amendment to the, or proposed amendment didn't
9 meet the ballot test.

10 And so we have contiguity, we have
11 political boundaries, we have natural
12 boundaries, those are all in Amendments 5 and
13 6, but communities of interest isn't there. So
14 there is a tension here, there is a need here
15 to sort of sort out what will work best for
16 you, and you have been extraordinarily helpful
17 in telling us how to sort it out.

18 You have told us, for example, that as to
19 The Villages, it is less important to pay
20 attention to county lines and more important to
21 pay attention to this community.

22 Sadly, Amendments 5 and 6 didn't take that
23 into account, and so, you know, we do have some
24 issues there to work through. Then there has
25 been a great deal of conversation about the

1 timeline, and believe me, it is an issue that
2 we share as well.

3 Let's see if, if we go back and look at
4 the facts and just maybe if I could provide you
5 with some data. The Bureau of the Census does
6 not release census information to all states
7 all at once.

8 The Bureau of the Census releases census
9 information in tranches or groups, and we
10 weren't the last state to receive census
11 information, but we were one of the last, and
12 we could not legally begin the process of
13 redistricting until we knew where Floridians
14 lived, because we have all moved around a lot.

15 In the last ten years a number of you
16 moved here, and a lot more people have moved
17 into Florida. There has been ebbs and flows of
18 population. So we had to have that
19 information.

20 Now, as soon as we got it, as soon as we
21 could convert it to something that could be
22 seen and understood, and believe me, our folks
23 worked around the clock, they worked at night
24 to do it, we immediately put all of that
25 demographic information from the Bureau of the

1 Census on the House and Senate websites, and
2 lots and lots and lots and lots of people have
3 viewed that data and used it as the basis for
4 their own comments or criticisms or suggestions
5 or proposals.

6 So the census data was provided as quickly
7 as we possibly could provide it, and then we
8 have overlaid on the census data the software,
9 a couple of folks talked about computer
10 programs.

11 We overlaid the computer program that is
12 used in redistricting on the census data and a
13 number of you have testified today that you are
14 using that computer program to make your own
15 proposals.

16 Now, there is a thing about computer
17 programs. They get programmed by people. The
18 programs get programmed by people. So again,
19 there is -- there is always a human element in
20 any kind of computer program, but the program
21 that we have provided you is the one that is
22 being used by the courts, it would be used by
23 the courts, it would be used by policymakers,
24 it would be used by Legislators, and it is the
25 same computer program that you can use.

1 So to the extent to which a computer
2 program would be useful and it is, it is on the
3 website, we are going to use it, there it is,
4 and you can use it as well.

5 I think that Senator Hays commented on the
6 lawsuits. Let me just say this. You know,
7 when a rumor, I don't know how it is in The
8 Villages, I can tell you in Niceville, Florida
9 where I live, down at Doris' Cafe, if somebody
10 saw something in the morning, no matter how
11 outrageous it is, it gets embroidered about
12 eight times during the day and by supper time
13 at Doris' Cafe, we got a heck of a rumor going.

14 If I could get a quarter for every rumor
15 that we had in Tallahassee about redistricting,
16 we wouldn't have had a \$3.8 billion budget
17 deficit. We could have funded it.

18 The fact is, as Senator Hays indicated,
19 that the lawsuit that has been filed wasn't
20 filed by the Legislature. Somebody put that in
21 the blood stream and I guess it is in some
22 scripts that people get sent so that they talk
23 about it at these hearings, but the hard fact
24 is that a Democratic member of Congress and a
25 Republican member of Congress filed a lawsuit,

1 but the lawsuit is not related to state
2 redistricting.

3 So the comment that was made that the
4 Legislature is funding lawsuits to quote, keep
5 our seats, is empirically wrong. The lawsuit
6 that was filed by two members of Congress has
7 only to do with the Federal districts. It has
8 nothing to do with Legislators' seats.

9 Now, the Senate is not in an intervenor in
10 that lawsuit. The House is, but the House
11 intervened because there is an apparent
12 conflict or at least some ambiguity between how
13 the Voting Rights Act might be interpreted in
14 terms of minority regression in districts, and
15 Amendments 5 and 6.

16 Now, that is not a bad thing. It is just
17 that Amendments 5 and 6 are brand new, folks,
18 no state has ever seen a template like this,
19 and so therefore, there is going to be some
20 interpretation by the courts as to how our
21 Federal and our State laws intersect.

22 That is not a bad thing. That is an
23 inevitable thing, but the lawsuit, per se, was
24 brought by two members of Congress.

25 Then I think the final comment that I

1 would make is back to a comment that someone
2 made earlier who said, you know, gosh, we have
3 got a state here where the Republicans have
4 barely half the voters in the state classify
5 themselves as Republicans, but how in the world
6 do the Republicans control both Houses of the
7 Legislature?

8 Well, let me just talk about the Senate,
9 because I am a Senator. There are 40 Senators,
10 28 of them are Republican. How could that be?
11 It must be gerrymandering. But wait, did you
12 realize, did you know, and I found out, I, you
13 know, was kind of interesting to me, that in 20
14 of those 40 Senate Districts, in other words,
15 including eight where there are Republican
16 Senators, Barrack Obama carried those Senate
17 Districts.

18 So what we had was, we had the phenomena
19 that we are seeing more and more in Florida,
20 that is, there are people who will vote for a
21 Democrat for one office, a Republican for
22 another office, and we have a growing number of
23 people who are Independents who don't have a
24 party loyalty and they largely pick the person,
25 not the party, and even among us Republicans,

1 and I defer to my Democratic colleagues for any
2 comments they make, it is occasionally the case
3 that Republicans will vote for a Democrat.

4 Many Republicans voted for Barack Obama
5 for President, and it is occasionally the case
6 that some Democrats will vote for a Republican,
7 Republican candidates have carried in
8 democratic areas.

9 Senator Charlie Dean is here. In Senator
10 Dean's district, first the largest number of
11 people of voters by far are Democrats. The
12 second largest number are people with no party
13 affiliation or Independents, and third are
14 Republicans.

15 So how does Charlie Dean, a Republican,
16 get elected? Well, he gets elected because he
17 was a dog-gone good Sheriff, he does a good job
18 as a Senator and so Democrats vote for Charlie
19 Dean, not because he is a Republican, but in
20 spite of the fact that he is a Republican.
21 They vote for him because they want to.

22 So, friends, there is no way to create a
23 redistricting scenario that guarantees that
24 Democrats will vote for Democrats and
25 Republicans will vote for Republicans and that

1 Independents will do what we tell them to.

2 There is no way to do that.

3 Instead, we have a secret ballot and no
4 matter how you district or redistrict, people
5 will still have the opportunity to choose their
6 own candidates.

7 This has been an extraordinary meeting
8 today. We have gotten a large amount of input.
9 I want to thank you for coming out. I want to
10 thank you for staying with the process, but
11 remember this, this is not the end of your
12 input. It is the beginning of your input.

13 Here is what will happen. After we do
14 these hearings we will go back to Tallahassee
15 and instead of starting in March, we will start
16 as early as the Constitution allows us to, and
17 that is in January.

18 We will start committee meetings months
19 before we typically would. We are going to
20 start them in September, and we can begin to
21 consider in September, in the Senate and House
22 Redistricting Committees, not only your ideas,
23 but the ideas we get from other public hearings
24 around the state.

25 We already have a number of plans that

1 have been submitted, and it is not like there
2 is some magic plan that will suddenly emerge.
3 Any member of this committee, Republican or
4 Democrat, can submit a plan today.

5 Any member can submit a map today. Any
6 member of the Legislature who is not on this
7 committee can submit a plan or a map today or
8 in September, but no vote will be taken in any
9 committee beginning in September, which is way
10 early in the process, that is not done publicly
11 with the opportunity for public input.

12 And there may be more than one plan that
13 advances to the House floor or the Senate floor
14 and gets debated and discussed in public
15 openly, and then if and after we pass a plan,
16 we don't have to wait until March. It would
17 drive the Supervisors of Elections crazy if we
18 waited until the end, but if, as soon as we can
19 get plans to the floor and debate them and vote
20 on them in public, then we can submit those
21 plans for a legal clearance.

22 Now, what I hope you will do, is I hope
23 you will put the pressure not just on us to do
24 our job thought fully but with all due speed,
25 but also let's not, you know, the Attorney

1 General doesn't have to take every day that is
2 allowed in statute.

3 She can move a little faster if it is
4 possible for her to do so. She has to submit
5 the plans for clearance to the Supreme Court.
6 The Supreme Court doesn't have to take every
7 single day that they are allowed. They can
8 take your advice and they can move a little bit
9 faster, and the Federal Justice Department in
10 Washington or the Federal courts don't have to
11 take every day that they are allowed. Instead,
12 they, you know, they can move a little bit
13 faster.

14 So it is my goal as Chairman of the Senate
15 Reapportionment Committee that we would have
16 proposals and maps to show you before any votes
17 are taken as soon as we possibly can, and as we
18 get input in these hearings, believe me,
19 members of the House, members of the Senate,
20 Democrats and Republicans, are studying this
21 input.

22 I was up last night until 2:00 in the
23 morning going through my notes from yesterday.
24 We are not waiting until the end to begin to
25 analyze the information that we are getting.

1 So thanks for participating. Democracy,
2 Representative, as you said, is a bit of a
3 heavy lift, particularly when it is a
4 representative republic.

5 Thank you for being part of this messy
6 process, and please, stay engaged and involved
7 all of the way through the end. I am sorry for
8 such a long set of comments, but the questions
9 you asked were very, very good questions.
10 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
12 Senator. And -- hold that out. I have got a
13 few more housekeeping comments to make just to
14 finish up business here, but since Senate
15 Dean's name was used in vein there, we are
16 going to give him one last opportunity to
17 comment on today's meeting. Senator Dean.

18 SENATOR DEAN: Thank you. Thank you,
19 Chairman Gaetz, for the kind comments. You
20 know, one of the things we have heard today
21 about a community base of interest, and I think
22 there is no way you can get away of the fact
23 that charity begins at home.

24 We are concerned most about those that are
25 closest to us. That is why it makes you want

1 to have your Representative close to you when
2 you go to vote for him where you can talk to
3 him and understand what is happening.

4 One of those things I want to clearly say
5 that this meeting today is the closest to my
6 home. I am from Citrus County, right across
7 the county line. I am also a Senator up in
8 Marion County, but I heard the same message
9 where I am a Senate in Leon County that I heard
10 the same message in Baker County when we were
11 in Duval County.

12 We do not want the people of Florida do
13 not want gerrymandering, period. I want to say
14 that I share with four Congressmen, five
15 Senators and ten House members if I counted
16 correctly in my district.

17 So I want to assure you again, we are
18 going to do the conscious thing, the right
19 thing to do about doing this district plan and
20 drawing the maps.

21 I appreciate you being here. I normally
22 stand up and speak up and shut up and it is my
23 time to shut up. Thank you for being here.

24 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
25 Senator Dean. I appreciate that. And I want

1 to reiterate that I know that we -- there are
2 other opportunities to submit comments. We are
3 about done with the meeting and we are through
4 the public testimony process, but we are always
5 on a continuous basis taking information,
6 whether it is in writing, via e-mail, via
7 Twitter and all of these other uses that are
8 out there right now. So I strongly encourage
9 you, anyone else that wants to say more, even
10 if you stood up and spoke before, get with our
11 staff and get something in to us, preferably in
12 writing. It has so much additional impact that
13 way.

14 One clarification that staff has asked me
15 to address, and it is, because it is a
16 relatively significant issue, is the matter of
17 the lawsuit the House is an intervenor on.

18 The conflict that is trying to be resolved
19 there is a conflict between Amendment 6 and the
20 U.S. Constitution as opposed to the Voting
21 Rights Act.

22 The, and so now I will get to my closing
23 comments. Thank you, everyone, for your
24 contributions today. This was a great day here
25 in The Villages. This is the kind of thing

1 that is necessary for making a democracy,
2 representative democracy work in our state.

3 Again, you have the opportunity to provide
4 written comments, as well as written extensions
5 of your current comments to us, and we will
6 post it on-line.

7 If you didn't speak now, send an e-mail,
8 Snail Mail, to those addresses that are listed
9 on the website. They are in the brochures that
10 are in the back. You can pick up if you are
11 not an electronic person.

12 All of the records from today's meeting,
13 the video, pod-cast and transcripts will be
14 available in the next few days, via both the
15 Senate and the House Redistricting websites.

16 In particular, someone asked for maps to
17 look at today. They are on our website, so if
18 you can visit www.floridaredistricting.org, and
19 it is spelled the same way as the words sound,
20 Florida Redistricting, dot org, click on the
21 Plan Explorer and look at the maps that the
22 public have submitted.

23 It is a growing list of maps at this
24 point, as you saw today, and you have the
25 opportunity there to look at them, to comment

1 on them, to use them, to tweak up and submit
2 your own maps to share with others and the
3 like.

4 If you are not an electronic person,
5 again, talk to our staff. We will get you this
6 information in hard copy.

7 Please, I ask you to please stay engaged
8 in this process, because it is developing as we
9 go along, as you can see. Continue to follow
10 and participate as we get ready to draw those
11 lines that are going to define how your
12 community is going to be represented, not only
13 in Tallahassee, but in Washington.

14 Thanks again for being here. Some of us
15 as well as staff are going to be staying around
16 to answer any additional questions on the side.
17 That issue came up several times, that are,
18 whether they deal with redistricting or those
19 other peripheral issues or completely unrelated
20 if you would like, and with that we stand
21 adjourned.

22 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
23 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 141 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 22nd day of September, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

MONDAY, JULY 25, 2011

2:00 A.M.

POLK STATE COLLEGE

LAKELAND, FLORIDA

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 SENATOR GAETZ: If Committee members will
3 please find their seats, and those of you who
4 would like to testify or participate or just
5 observe, if you will find a place to sit down,
6 we will begin.

7 The Joint House/Senate Redistricting
8 Hearing is called to order. We are pleased to
9 be joined today by so many of you from the Polk
10 County area and from areas beyond Polk County.

11 Thanks to Polk State College and USF
12 Polytechnic for allowing us to use this
13 facility. We are very grateful to them.

14 Thank you all for being here, especially
15 members of the public who have come to share
16 your comments and recommendations to help shape
17 Congressional Senate and House districts for
18 the next decade.

19 My name is Don Gaetz, I am a member of the
20 Senate, and along with my House colleague, the
21 Speaker Designate of the Florida House,
22 Representative Will Weatherford, who is right
23 here, we will be chairing today's meeting,
24 which is being webcast statewide by the Florida
25 Channel over the Internet.

1 So that you will know who is here and
2 where they are from -- and we have actually had
3 a request, you know, everybody can make
4 requests, we have had a request that when
5 members introduce themselves and indicate what
6 part of the state they are from, if they would
7 indicate their party affiliation.

8 Typically we don't do that in legislative
9 hearings, because 90 percent of the votes we
10 take in the Legislature are bipartisan, but in
11 response to the request we have had, I happen
12 to be a Republican.

13 And, Senator, why don't we start with you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Good afternoon,
15 my name is Alan Williams, State Representative
16 from Tallahassee, Florida. I represent Leon
17 and Gadsden Counties. I am a proud Democrat,
18 and I am also proud to have my daughter,
19 Adriana Williams, who is here with me as well.

20 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: My name is Mike
21 Horner, I represent State House District 79. I
22 live in Kissimmee, but I represent Osceola,
23 Orange, Okeechobee and Polk County.

24 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: My name is Peter
25 Nehr. I am a State Representative in north

1 Pinellas County, District 48. Thank you. And
2 I am a Republican, thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: Good afternoon,
4 my name Tom Goodson, I represent Brevard
5 County, Indian River County, House State
6 District 29, I am a Republican.

7 REPRESENTATIVE ROUSON: Darryl Rouson. I
8 represent House District 55, which is Pinellas,
9 Manatee, Sarasota and Hillsborough Counties in
10 the House, and I am a Democrat.

11 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: John Legg, I
12 represent west Pasco, and I am a Republican.

13 SENATOR JOYNER: Arthenia Joyner, I am a
14 Democrat from Tampa. I represent Hillsborough,
15 Pinellas and Manatee, but I was born in Polk
16 County.

17 REPRESENTATIVE CRUZ: Good afternoon.
18 Thank you all for taking your time coming here
19 today. My name is Janet Cruz. I am a State
20 Representative for District 58, which is the
21 central part of Tampa.

22 I was actually born in Betty Reed's
23 district, which is Ybor City, most of you
24 probably know that district, and I am happy to
25 be here. Thank you.

1 SENATOR SIPLIN: Good afternoon, State
2 Senator Gary Siplin, Orlando, Florida. I
3 represent both Osceola County and Orange
4 County, and I am a Democrat.

5 REPRESENTATIVE CRISAFULLI: Good
6 afternoon, Steve Crisafulli, representing House
7 District 32, which is Brevard and east Orange
8 County, and I am a Republican.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BURGIN: Good afternoon,
10 State Representative Rachel Burgin. I
11 represent District 56, which is eastern
12 Hillsborough County and the City of Tampa, and
13 I am a Republican.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Ritch Workman,
15 represent District 30, all in Brevard County,
16 thanks. I am a Republican.

17 REPRESENTATIVE DORWORTH: I am Chris
18 Dorworth, I am in the State House, representing
19 District 34 from Seminole and Orange Counties.
20 I am a Republican.

21 REPRESENTATIVE EISNAUGLE: I am Eric
22 Eisnaugle, I represent House District 40 in
23 Orlando. It is -- the district is all in
24 Orange County, and I am a Republican.

25 REPRESENTATIVE GRIMSLEY: Good afternoon,

1 I am Denise Grimsley, I represent House
2 District 77, which is Highlands, Hendry, Glades
3 and Collier County. I am a Republican and I'm
4 a proud graduate of Polk State College.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PLAKON: Scott Plakon,
6 State House District 37, Orange and Seminole
7 Counties. I am a Republican and the proud
8 father of Jamison Plakon, who is here today.

9 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good afternoon,
10 Chuck Chestnut, House District 23, a portion of
11 Alachua County and a portion of Marion County,
12 Democrat.

13 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Hi, I am Dennis
14 Baxley, Florida House, District 24, Ocala,
15 Marion County, Republican. I am on the north
16 side of the green swamp.

17 REPRESENTATIVE MCKEEL: And I am Seth
18 McKeel from Lakeland, District 63 here, and I
19 am not on the Committee, but I have a keen
20 interest in what you are saying. So thanks for
21 -- thanks for taking your time to be here.
22 Excuse me, I am a Republican.

23 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good afternoon,
24 State Representative Mack Bernard, Democrat
25 from West Palm Beach, Florida, and former

1 resident of Lakeland, Florida.

2 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: John Patrick
3 Julien, good afternoon. I am a Democrat,
4 representing House District 104, which is in
5 Miami-Dade County, and it is a pleasure to be
6 here.

7 REPRESENTATIVE KIAR: Hello, everybody,
8 thank you so much for coming out. My name is
9 Martin Kiar, and I represent District 97 in the
10 Florida House of Representatives, which is
11 located solely within Broward County, and I am
12 a Democrat. Thank you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good
14 afternoon, and thank you for being here. My
15 name is Betty Reed. I represent District 59,
16 which is the eastern part of Tampa/Hillsborough
17 County, and I am a proud Democrat.

18 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good afternoon, I
19 am Hazelle Rogers from Broward County, one of
20 the most diverse counties in the state of
21 Florida, representing over 1.8 million voters,
22 residents in Florida, I'm District 94, eight
23 cities in central Broward County. It is good
24 to be here, and I am a Democrat.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: But not a proud Democrat?

1 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: A very proud
2 Democrat.

3 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: I am State
4 Representative Jim Frishe. I represent the
5 western edge of Pinellas County, all the
6 beaches. It is a tough duty, I've worn out
7 seven pairs of flip-flops. I am a Republican
8 and I was raised in Winter Haven.

9 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: Good afternoon, my
10 name is Ed Hooper, I am a Representative from
11 District 50, which is about one-fourth of
12 Pinellas County, and I am a Republican.

13 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good
14 afternoon, I am State Representative Gwyndolen
15 Clarke-Reed, representing House District 92,
16 northeast part of Broward County.

17 REPRESENTATIVE BRODEUR: Jason Brodeur,
18 representing District 33, which is parts of
19 Volusia, Seminole and Orange Counties, and I am
20 a Republican.

21 REPRESENTATIVE JENNE: Evan Jenne,
22 District 100, that is entirely within southeast
23 Broward County, and I am a Democrat.

24 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good afternoon, I
25 am Dwayne Taylor, serving in the House of

1 Representatives in House District 27, which is
2 Volusia County, I serve six cities in Volusia
3 County, and I am a fiscal conservative
4 Democrat, proudly. Thank you.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Did we miss anybody?

6 REPRESENTATIVE STARGEL: Good afternoon, I
7 am State Representative Kelli Stargel. I
8 represent north Polk County and a lot of the
9 City of Lakeland, and I am a Republican.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Have we gotten everybody?

11 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Good afternoon,
12 everyone, Daphne Campbell, District 108,
13 Democrats.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay. Thank you very
15 much. Anybody else? Okay. Just in time for
16 your introduction. No. When you are done, we
17 are done.

18 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Hi, I am
19 Representative Passidomo from District 76,
20 which is Collier County. I represent Naples,
21 Marco Island, Everglades City and a bunch of
22 alligators. Thank you. I am a Republican.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay. Now you know who we
24 are, and our sole purpose today is to hear from
25 you, to hear from the public about how you

1 believe the legal standards governing
2 redistricting should be applied in your
3 community and this community, so that you are
4 represented in Washington and in Tallahassee
5 fairly, equitably and sensibly.

6 Our procedures today are simple, but they
7 are important. It is important that you sign
8 in so that we can create an accurate public
9 record of all attendees and of all speakers.

10 Also, you may decide to join, if you wish,
11 our e-mail lists so we can keep you informed
12 about how the redistricting process is working.

13 If you have not signed in, please raise
14 your hand, and we will give you an attendance
15 card. If you wish to speak today and you
16 haven't signed in, we want to hear from you.

17 So if you've not filled out an attendance
18 card and you want to speak, please raise your
19 hand, we will get you one of these cards and we
20 would be delighted to hear from you. We don't
21 want to miss your testimony.

22 It is the same card whether you wish to
23 just attend and observe or whether you want to
24 speak.

25 Before we begin, I would like to call on

1 the Speaker Designate, Representative
2 Weatherford, to explain how today's hearing
3 fits into the redistricting schedule and
4 process and laws. Mr. Speaker.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
6 very much, Mr. Chairman. It is an honor to be
7 here. Again, my name is Will Weatherford, and
8 I didn't get a chance, I am from Pasco County.
9 My district is Pasco and Hillsborough County,
10 District 61, and very proud to be here today
11 with my good friends from Polk County.

12 I am going to try to set the table,
13 Mr. Chairman, if I could, for today's hearing,
14 and give everyone a perspective as to what we
15 are here to do.

16 I think you hit it in the very beginning,
17 which is our job here is to listen today. But
18 to give everyone a little baseline, every ten
19 years, the Legislature is required by the
20 Constitution to redistrict the state based off
21 of increases, decreases and movements in our
22 population.

23 Because Florida has grown so significantly
24 over the last ten years, we will move from
25 having 25 Congressional Seats in Florida to 27

1 Congressional Seats. Because parts of our
2 state have increased and decreased
3 disproportionately in population, many Senate
4 and House districts will change, either adding
5 or losing in population.

6 When redistricting is concluded,
7 congressional districts must be equal in
8 population and contain 696,345 people, 40
9 Senate districts must also be nearly equal at
10 about 470,000, and each one of our 120 House
11 districts must be also nearly equal at 156,700
12 people.

13 We have displays at the front of the room
14 showing the current boundaries of districts in
15 the area of the state and the number of persons
16 which must be added or subtracted from the
17 current districts to achieve that equal
18 representation.

19 Equality of representation is not the only
20 legal requirement that redistricting plans must
21 meet. The laws are important, and court cases
22 governing redistricting are explained in detail
23 in both the House and the Senate websites.

24 Those websites are listed on the
25 "Redistricting 2012" brochure that was

1 available to you when you came in. Our
2 "Redistricting 2012" brochure summarizes
3 federal and state laws, and outlines the topics
4 that you will hear today that we hope you
5 discuss.

6 If you did not get a copy when you came
7 in, they are available on the tables outside of
8 the meeting, and our staff would be happy to
9 get you a copy if you would just raise your
10 hand.

11 The brochure also lists House and Senate
12 websites. The websites are packed with
13 information about redistricting in Florida,
14 including explanations of laws and important
15 court cases governing redistricting. The two
16 websites are complementary and are updated
17 frequently.

18 If you visit both and check back often, it
19 is a great way to stay current about what is
20 happening in your congressional, Senate and
21 House maps.

22 The websites also deliver at your
23 fingertips all of the demographic information
24 that will be used in drawing districts over the
25 next six to nine months. The exact same

1 computer programs that Legislators and
2 professional staff use, you will have at your
3 fingertips.

4 Any number -- any member of the public can
5 participate in building plans or seeing maps
6 submitted to Legislators and to this body.

7 And, in fact, I would like to point, there are
8 six maps in the very back of the room.

9 If you look back there, you will actually
10 see different maps that have been drawn by
11 citizens all over the state just in the last
12 few weeks that have been submitted to us.

13 There are Congressional maps, Senate maps
14 and House maps, and we hope that before you
15 leave today, you will take time to see those.

16 Before and after this hearing, Senate and
17 House professional staff are available to show
18 anyone the simple steps of getting on-line,
19 building districts and submitting a plan in the
20 next few weeks.

21 Recommendations from citizens and groups
22 will be made publicly available, and, in fact,
23 many of them already are on our Web, as you
24 know. The submission of proposed maps that
25 makes sense for your community is the single

1 most effective way that you can communicate
2 with this body.

3 The redistricting schedule under which we
4 are operating is imposed by our State
5 Constitution. The Constitution does not permit
6 the Legislature to act on state legislative
7 maps before the second year after the census;
8 in other words, ladies and gentlemen, before
9 2012.

10 We have accelerated this process as much
11 as we possibly can by moving the session up
12 from what is normally in March, all the way up
13 into January in 2012.

14 It has been suggested that the Legislature
15 should draw maps first and then ask the public
16 for comment. We believe that puts the answer
17 ahead of the question.

18 There should be no preconceptions created
19 by politicians, but, rather, public testimony
20 should be free and unrestricted. And, in fact,
21 a member -- a principal author of Florida's
22 redistricting standards and Chairperson of the
23 Fairdistricts.org group, when they came and
24 spoke before a hearing actually spoke directly
25 to the fact that they thought in order for us

1 to draw good maps, we would have to seek public
2 input first, and we plan to follow that
3 recommendation.

4 Our intent is to use these 26 public
5 hearings and our Internet sites and all the
6 basis which we get information from you to come
7 up with good maps in the future that will move
8 through the committee process.

9 Throughout the process, we will continue
10 to solicit your public comment so that the
11 proposed maps can mature with the public
12 involved all before we take any final vote.

13 Whatever the Legislature passes, it is
14 then submitted for judicial review to ensure
15 that the final plans meet each and every single
16 legal requirement.

17 Because our purpose today is to hear from
18 you, between now and 5:00 we will use the
19 remainder of the time for the public who is
20 here who wishes to speak.

21 If after every citizen has had his or her
22 say, Mr. Chairman, and there is time before our
23 scheduled adjournment, any member of this
24 Committee may make any statement or any
25 observation.

1 Of course, any member of the Legislature
2 may today or at any time propose a map, a plan
3 or anything else, and we will make sure it is
4 available to you and the rest of the public.

5 Mr. Chairman, thank you for allowing me to
6 have a few moments. I hope this description of
7 our schedule and our process helps set the
8 stage for a successful hearing.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
10 Mr. Speaker. Those are kind of the ground
11 rules today and a little bit of upfront
12 information.

13 I would like to point out that two members
14 of this Committee who are Senators are not able
15 to be here today. Senator Jack Latvala is
16 recovering from orthopedic surgery. I spoke to
17 him this morning. He is recovering well, but
18 is in a great deal of pain, and his doctor
19 wouldn't let him get up on his hip. I think he
20 is about five days post-op.

21 Then Senator Evelyn Lynn, who is a member
22 of this Committee, was called yesterday to a
23 funeral in the Netherlands, a very important
24 member of her family, somebody she cares about
25 a great deal has died, and so Senator Lynn was

1 not able to be with us today.

2 Now, we are going to try to make it
3 possible for everybody who wants to speak, to
4 have a chance to speak, and if you don't get in
5 all the things you wanted to say, or if later
6 you think of something else that you wanted to
7 say, you can send that information to us.

8 It will be made available to every member
9 of the Committee. You can either e-mail it to
10 us or you can send it to us by U.S. Postal
11 Service. You can go on our website and you can
12 provide additional comments there as well.

13 Now, we have well over 30 people who have
14 already signed up to speak, and Karen Landers
15 is number 34, and so far she is the last
16 person.

17 I am an advocate for Karen Landers. I
18 want to make sure she gets a chance to speak.
19 So I would ask that you keep her in mind as you
20 speak so that we can make sure to get to her,
21 because I am sure she has good testimony for us
22 today.

23 We will impose a three to four-minute rule
24 on speakers so that we can be sure that we are
25 fair to everybody who is behind you.

1 So if you -- if you can abide by that
2 rule, then we can, I think, give everybody a
3 fair chance.

4 We are going to call people in threes. So
5 our first speaker will be Margaret Kara,
6 representing the Solivita Democratic Club, but
7 behind Margaret is Joyce Hamilton Henry
8 representing the American Civil Liberties Union
9 and Mary Jo Jarrett representing the League of
10 Women Voters.

11 So if Ms. Kara would come first and the
12 other two be on deck and ready to follow her,
13 then we can make best use of time.

14 Ma'am, you are recognized, and we are
15 delighted to have you here today.

16 MS. KARA: Thank you, sir, and thank you,
17 everyone, for allowing us to speak. And I live
18 in Solivita, which is a 55-and-over adult
19 active community in Poinciana.

20 We are very kind of isolated in Polk
21 County, because we are in a very one small area
22 and far away from everything.

23 With all due respect, you all know the
24 amendment that was voted for by 63 percent of
25 the people, and you don't really -- in my

1 opinion, you don't need the public to draw maps
2 for you.

3 The process seems as though it could go
4 more quickly if you would present the proposed
5 maps for discussion at this time. I understand
6 that, as you have said, that you can't vote on
7 anything until 2012. With that understood,
8 could it not still be debated?

9 What I am concerned about is taking up
10 precious time and money drawing maps according
11 to the law and then just make them available to
12 the public for comment then, and you can't
13 debate them this fall, but you can debate them
14 the very first thing in the new session.

15 The process seems to need to be completed
16 earlier, and my concern is for the Supervisor
17 of Elections and the timeline that they are
18 going to have, also for our candidates that are
19 going to be running for office, they won't know
20 their districts until so late that they won't
21 have the same advantage that the incumbents
22 have of making their names known to the public.

23 Please consider the fact that more time on
24 this -- on this step and less time is for the
25 Supervisor of Elections.

1 Since you are coming to the public for
2 answers, we would like to be able to interact
3 with you and get answers to our questions also.
4 As we are only allowed to talk, we may be
5 operating under false premises if you don't
6 reply to us.

7 Progress is made when ideas are exchanged
8 in conversation as instead of lecture. Thank
9 you very much.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Kara, I apologize,
11 perhaps you weren't here when the Speaker
12 Designate indicated that after all members of
13 the public speak.

14 If you have any questions that you would
15 like to indicate now, we will make sure that
16 any member, Democrat or Republican, Senate or
17 House, can respond to any of your questions.
18 Did you have any?

19 Okay. Thank you very much. Thanks for
20 your testimony.

21 Joyce Hamilton Henry of the American Civil
22 Liberties Union, followed by Mary Jo Jarrett
23 with the League of Women Voters, followed by
24 Paula Mims from the League of Women Voters.

25 Ms. Henry, thank you for being here. We

1 look forward to your testimony.

2 MS. HENRY: Good afternoon. I am here, as
3 indicated, on behalf of the ACLU. I am with
4 the Mid-Florida Regional Office of the ACLU,
5 which is based in Tampa.

6 That office covers 20 counties, starting
7 with Marion, extending all of the way through
8 to Brevard and down to Hardee Counties, and I
9 will be attending all of the hearings in my
10 region.

11 And our position remains unchanged. We
12 are very concerned and troubled about this
13 process. I have indicated before that on the
14 surface, it allows for input, but real input
15 can be provided once we have the opportunity to
16 see the map, to be able to comment on it.

17 We are also concerned about the timeline
18 in which this is being done. We know that you
19 have the data since March of this year. You
20 have opened up processes to be able to provide
21 input, but we are also concerned that you will
22 not be able to really get information from the
23 general public to be able to incorporate in the
24 maps.

25 What has been provided to us so far are

1 maps drawn by individuals. We want the maps
2 drawn by you, the Legislators, and the
3 consultants that you hire to assist you in that
4 process.

5 We are also concerned about the time --
6 the cost in this process, the cost to this
7 process and cost to taxpayers that you are
8 engaging in. You have a mandate from
9 63 percent of Floridians, and the mandate is
10 that the maps should be drawn, that they should
11 be compact and contiguous and look out for the
12 interest of ethnic minorities, communities of
13 interest.

14 We want to make sure -- we want to make
15 sure that this process is fair and is
16 transparent.

17 And we are also concerned, and you have
18 heard it expressed and you will hear it
19 expressed by others, we are also concerned
20 about those of us who want to know who our
21 representatives will be, those who are running
22 for office who want to know what district they
23 will be running for, and you have heard and
24 will hear from Supervisors of Elections who
25 want to know the information as well so that

1 they can do their job.

2 So we implore you to please draw the maps,
3 make that available to us and do what
4 Floridians -- the 63 percent of Floridians have
5 mandated you to do, to make sure that the
6 process is fair, inclusive and also
7 transparent.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am, very
9 much.

10 Next, Mary Jo Jarrett with the League of
11 Women Voters, then Paula Mims from the League
12 of Women Voters and then Jerry Weeks from the
13 League of Women Voters. I hope there's
14 somebody back at the office today.

15 MS. JARRETT: Welcome to imperial Polk
16 County, all of you, today.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

18 MS. JARRETT: I am Mary Jo Jarrett. I am
19 the co-President of the Polk County League of
20 Women Voters.

21 The League of Women Voters is a
22 non-partisan organization. We are a political
23 organization that encourages informal and
24 active participation in government. We work to
25 increase understanding of public policy issues

1 through education and advocacy.

2 We are puzzled and we question why won't
3 the Legislature prepare the maps earlier,
4 debate them in the fall and pass them during
5 the first week of session.

6 The problem with the present Legislature's
7 timeline is that it is unfair to Florida
8 voters. Florida's maps will end up being
9 approved later than most every state in the
10 Union.

11 As districts may not be finalized until
12 August, the Legislature's own lawyer says this
13 will cause massive voter confusion. We do not
14 want to see Florida's election process become
15 the target of late-night comedy again.

16 The problem that needs to be solved has
17 been defined by the Legislators. The
18 Legislators plan to wait to finalize district
19 maps until at least the end of the session in
20 March 2012.

21 By law, the courts and the Department of
22 Justice have more than 90 days after passage to
23 review the maps.

24 The Legislators are saying they can do
25 nothing on redistricting until January, as the

1 Constitution requires them to draw the
2 districts during the 2012 regular session.

3 If the Legislature waits to finalize the
4 maps until the end of the session in March
5 2012, it is highly unlikely that districts will
6 be finalized and approved before the June 8,
7 2012, deadline for candidates to file their
8 paperwork.

9 The redistricting processing will include
10 not only the drawing of new district maps based
11 on the 2010 ten-year sentence, but
12 implementation of Section 20 and Section 21 of
13 the Florida Constitution, which contains
14 standards to be followed in the process.

15 The League believes that without violating
16 the Florida Constitution, the Legislature can
17 do the preparatory work to speed up the
18 process. In fact, Bills were filed last
19 session requiring that maps be drawn earlier
20 that didn't even get hearings.

21 The League proposes an open, transparent
22 work flow using another timeline. We propose
23 that the Legislature hold interim Committee
24 meetings from September through December and
25 use that time to present maps, allow for public

1 comment and prepare final plans to submit to
2 the full House and Senate before the
3 Legislature convenes in January.

4 We further propose that the Legislature
5 could bring the maps to the floor as a first
6 order of business, voting on them by the end of
7 the session's first week in early January.

8 This would create a real possibility that
9 the maps could be finalized and approved before
10 candidate-qualifying, and allow election
11 officials ample time to prepare by allowing
12 double the time for review by the courts and
13 the Department of Justice.

14 This would solve the problems created by
15 the proposed legislative timeline of a cold
16 start in January 2012. This would allow due
17 process procedurally to ensure all who have the
18 vote can participate substantially in the
19 elections of the redrawn districts.

20 This will improve greatly the timeline for
21 those the Legislature depends on to implement
22 and carry out the election process, the
23 Supervisors of Elections and their staff, and
24 those expected to participate in the process,
25 the registered voters and the candidates.

1 The League strongly believes that this is
2 a viable plan for implementing redistricting in
3 the Sunshine State. Thank you.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. Very
5 useful suggestions, Ms. Jarrett.

6 Next, Paula Mims from the League of Women
7 Voters, then Jerry Weeks from the League of
8 Women Voters and then Lynn Dell.

9 Ms. Mims, thank you for being here. We
10 sure appreciate your testimony.

11 MS. MIMS: Well, thank you so much, and
12 good afternoon. My name is Paula Mims, and I
13 am co-President of the League of Women Voters
14 of Polk County.

15 We certainly welcome you and are glad to
16 see so many faces here. We do hope you will
17 stop and spend a little money while you are
18 here before you head back to your various parts
19 of the state.

20 As you are well aware, our organization is
21 entirely nonpartisan, yet vigorously political
22 in defending what is now our constitutional
23 right as citizens of Florida.

24 And I ask, where are these sample maps? I
25 did have some time to speak with Jason outside,

1 and got a nice perspective, not that I come
2 with any ignorance to this hearing, but we
3 would really like to see some sample maps
4 produced by the Legislature so that we are able
5 to comment on those maps.

6 And I was listening as well to your
7 opening comments, and I do understand that any
8 Legislature -- Legislator can produce a map or
9 a plan to be considered, and we really have
10 seen none from the Legislature, to my
11 knowledge.

12 On the one hand, who better to set these
13 districts than those respected Legislators
14 running our state government who are keenly
15 aware of the nuances of your own districts, the
16 surrounding ones, as well as potential pitfalls
17 of dividing certain constituencies.

18 On the other hand, it really is a little
19 like the fox guarding the hen-house, is it not?
20 No offense, of course. But we hope that the
21 foxes are keen and wise and transparent.

22 We hope that the fact that the Legislature
23 and the Governor's Office are fully controlled
24 by one party will put an even greater
25 responsibility on you, the golden

1 cartographers.

2 You must rise above the clear conflict of
3 interest you have in this job, and it is clear,
4 you must rise above the clear vested interest
5 you have in protecting your own districts, your
6 own reelection, your job and your potential
7 primary opponents.

8 Where are the maps? I have to say it is a
9 little naive to believe that none exist when
10 there are clearly staff and equipment on hand
11 dedicated to this process, and none of you have
12 seen and worked on the maps that you can't
13 produce for anyone to comment on.

14 We beseech the Legislature to provide at
15 least some sample maps for public comment prior
16 to the end of the statewide public hearing
17 tour.

18 Some time ago I was involved in the
19 reworking of attendant zones with regard to
20 elementary schools here in Polk County. Talk
21 about a volatile issue, not sure if you have
22 done that before.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Yeah. No, we've got
24 former School Board members here.

25 MS. MIMS: Yes, in doing so --

1 SENATOR GAETZ: That is serious stuff.

2 MS. MIMS: It is serious, very serious.

3 In doing so, we met with School Board
4 members and district employees with computer
5 tools to help navigate the complicated task of
6 moving neighborhoods, addressing transportation
7 issues, and balancing racial legal
8 requirements.

9 We had to start with the map provided by
10 the district. We had to have a starting point
11 drawn from their perspective and their wisdom
12 from which to make comments, suggestions and
13 give practical input to a job that could have
14 just been done by a computer.

15 You are charged with making fair
16 districts. It is not just a phrase. It is an
17 imperative constitutional part, a new part of
18 your job description, and you are
19 constitutionally bound to draw districts,
20 implying the need to produce maps and get
21 input, which you are clearly doing, and we are
22 impressed by the number of people coming from
23 your committees.

24 It is not impossible. For example,
25 California got its census data within two weeks

1 of Florida, has held input hearings, drawn
2 sample maps, is holding more hearings and will
3 have final maps, we believe, in August.

4 We are asking you today, as we have every
5 day since the census data was generated, to
6 give us a map or maps that have been produced
7 by the Redistricting Committee and to let us
8 work from there for the citizens.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: And, ma'am, just because
10 of all the people behind you, could I ask if
11 you could bring it in for a landing?

12 MS. MIMS: Absolutely. I have some
13 perspective on this job that you have before
14 you, because my husband was in the Legislature
15 during the 1990 redistricting. It is a big
16 job, and you now have a constitutional
17 amendment requiring the equality of
18 representation.

19 And I will also before I say my closing
20 remarks, you all have been doing this for some
21 time, so you are probably somewhat bored by the
22 repetitive comments that you will hear today.

23 But I must say to you, it is as important
24 that each citizen in this room gets to say
25 their three minutes, and I'm sorry that you are

1 going to have to listen to it over and over
2 again, but that is why it is a public hearing.

3 So I would ask that you are just as
4 interested in every single person who comes up
5 here, because we do not travel the state to say
6 these things to you.

7 And we ask that you at the very best -- at
8 the very least produce the maps by October,
9 which will give you ample time to take all of
10 the information that you have garnered, analyze
11 it and produce maps to allow citizens to
12 comment and work on providing the best possible
13 opportunity for the drawing of truly fair
14 districting. Thank you so much.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for your
16 testimony.

17 And now Jerry Weeks from the League of
18 Women Voters, and then Lynn Dell, please, and
19 then Bill Landes.

20 Mr. Weeks, thank you for coming, and we
21 are delighted to have your testimony today.

22 MR. WEEKS: And, don't worry, I won't ask
23 you where the maps are.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, they are right back
25 there. They are right over there.

1 MR. WEEKS: My name is Jerry Weeks. I am
2 a proud member of the League of Women Voters of
3 Polk County, a nonpartisan organization that
4 has been fighting for fair districts for over
5 70 years.

6 We have had Republicans on our side, we
7 have had Democrats on our side, but never at
8 the same time.

9 I commend you for what you have done so
10 far. The website is very easy to deal with, it
11 is very informative. The hearings have been
12 open and transparent so far. I have followed
13 most of the hearings on the Internet, and think
14 you are getting pretty good input on local
15 issues.

16 You do have a public perception problem,
17 however. Much of the testimony throughout all
18 your meetings so far has reflected deep
19 distress and lack of faith that the process
20 will follow the intent of the new standards.

21 Part of that distrust is because the
22 Legislature has fought these standards in the
23 past and continues to fight them now.

24 My question is, why is the Legislature
25 continuing to spend money to oppose the will of

1 their constituents as expressed when 63 percent
2 voted for the Fair Districts standards?

3 In 2008, the Legislature fought approval
4 of the amendments for the ballot. The Supreme
5 Court ruled for the Fair Districts. In 2010,
6 the Legislature again tried in court. The
7 Supreme Court rejected that argument. Then the
8 Legislature tried to confuse voters by placing
9 Amendment 7 on the ballot. The Supreme Court
10 rejected that as misleading.

11 And this year, in 2011, the Florida House
12 joined a lawsuit filed by two Representatives
13 asking the court to strike down the Fair
14 District position, Amendment 6 and Florida
15 Constitution. Secretary of State Kurt Browning
16 is the Defendant in that case.

17 So Florida taxpayers are now both paying
18 to sue and to defend the same lawsuit. Members
19 deny they are spending money to avoid having to
20 follow the Fair Districts reforms.

21 They say they didn't bring the lawsuit,
22 they only joined it to seek clarification.
23 They say there is no \$30 million pot of money
24 for lawsuits.

25 Well, I did some fact-checking to find out

1 what reality is. PolitiFacts rates these
2 denials as false. *The Orlando Sentinel* rates
3 them as major malarkey. I have a handout that
4 I will provide to everyone up on the Committee
5 to find reference to those.

6 In summary, I am asking you and the
7 Legislature first to work to uphold the
8 constitutional provisions placed there by
9 63 percent of the voters, and not to spend our
10 tax money fighting it.

11 And secondly, to stop trying to get out of
12 following the Fair Districts standards and
13 apply them as the voters intended. Please
14 withdraw from the lawsuit. Thank you for your
15 efforts in these hearings and good luck.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.
17 Thank you, Mr. Weeks. Earlier today,
18 Mr. Weeks, I was up in the area of The
19 Villages, and someone came out of a building
20 and said that the Suntrust Bank had just been
21 robbed, and I am sure *The Orlando Sentinel*
22 headline tomorrow will be "Republicans Arrive
23 and Bank Robbed."

24 Lynn Dell, you are next, and following
25 Lynn, Bill Landes and then Danette May.

1 Ms. Dell, thank you for coming, and we are
2 very grateful you took time to give us your
3 testimony today.

4 MS. DELL: Okay. Thank you for letting me
5 speak.

6 I do agree with everything that has been
7 said before. I think that 2012 is much too
8 late for districts to be redrawn and for the
9 Election Supervisors to do what they have to
10 do.

11 I think it will wind up in massive
12 confusion. And to be perfectly honest with
13 you, I can't help but wonder if this is what
14 you want, because I really don't have much
15 faith in what is happening in the Legislature.

16 I feel I have no representation,
17 especially when you are spending taxpayers'
18 money to defeat what the voters wanted. And
19 between this and all I have seen you do with
20 the changes to the voter requirements, which
21 will also create confusion in another way,
22 possibly decreasing the number of people that
23 vote --

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Dell, could we keep it
25 to redistricting today just because we have so

1 many people --

2 MS. DELL: Okay, to redistricting. I want
3 compact districts. And because of the way you
4 are fighting and have been fighting the
5 redistricting, I really have great difficulty
6 believing that you are sincerely going to get
7 the job done.

8 And I really would like to see the
9 suggestions made by the League of Women Voters
10 done, because they are very, very good. It is
11 very important that this be done way before
12 2012.

13 We should have maps for the voters to see,
14 and then you get our input, because you have
15 much more familiarity with the districts and
16 everything else than we do.

17 I would like to see maps. Then I would
18 provide additional comment. Thank you.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
20 ma'am. I appreciate your comments.

21 And we have been joined in the hearing by
22 Senator Ronda Storms, and Senator, we asked
23 each member of the Committee to introduce
24 themselves and also indicate the area of the
25 state that they represent, and there was a

1 request for an indication of party affiliation.

2 So, Senator, we will stop and defer to you.

3 SENATOR STORMS: I am Senator Storms, I
4 represent District 10, I am a Republican.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: And District 10 is, for
6 the record?

7 SENATOR STORMS: Hillsborough County, a
8 little bit of Polk County, near Wabash, if you
9 are familiar with it, and then a little bit of
10 Pasco County where Zephyrhills is. What's a
11 zephyr?

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Senator Storms. Did we have somebody else?

14 REPRESENTATIVE THURSTON: Thank you. I am
15 State Representative Perry Thurston from Ft.
16 Lauderdale, Broward County, and I am a
17 Democrat.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
19 Representative.

20 Bill Landes, you are up, and then -- oh,
21 somebody else. We've got them pouring in late
22 here.

23 REPRESENTATIVE DIAZ: Yes, I am State
24 Representative Jose Diaz from District 115 in
25 Miami, and I am a Republican.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Anybody else? Going once,
2 twice. Because we want to hear from Bill
3 Landes, and behind Mr. Landes is Danette May
4 and then John Myrick, who says he represents
5 the AARP.

6 Mr. Landes, thank you for coming today.

7 MR. LANDES: I want to thank you for the
8 record. My name is Bill Landes. I live in
9 Lake Wales. I am a member of the Florida
10 Alliance Group.

11 First of all, I don't have a long speech.
12 I have nothing wrote down. I come here to say
13 thank you all for taking on this task. I know
14 that y'all with deep hearts will do your best
15 to make it ultimately fair to everyone.

16 We as a group throughout the state of
17 Florida and citizens really want it to be fair.

18 My question is, is this based on the count
19 of the census, and if so, how? Florida is
20 unique in so many ways. We are a state of many
21 opportunities and big in tourism, and with
22 tourists buying houses here, coming here and
23 buying summer houses and things like that from
24 Canada, UK, Australia, South America and all
25 that, are they counted in our census as voters?

1 Would somebody answer me that question,
2 because I am being told that the census is the
3 base of the redistricting?

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Representative Weatherford
5 and any other members of the Committee, we are
6 making a list of questions.

7 What we would like to do is see if we
8 can -- because now we are up way over 40 people
9 who want to testify. We will make a list of
10 questions and get to them at the end. We just
11 don't want to stand in the way of other people.

12 MR. LANDES: That is fine. I am cutting
13 it short anyhow, because I -- I just wanted to
14 get up here and say thank you all. I know the
15 job at hand is hard and y'all will be diligent
16 in it. Thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and we will get
18 to your question.

19 Next is Danette May. Danette May? And
20 following Ms. May, John Myrick with the AARP
21 and then Esther Kirk.

22 Ms. May, we really are grateful you took
23 time from your day, and thanks for your
24 testimony.

25 MS. MAY: Well, thank you very much for

1 this opportunity to speak. I am going to speak
2 in terms of just general decision-making and
3 the quality of the decisions that are being
4 made and the ethics of the decisions that are
5 being made in terms of the redistricting
6 process.

7 Gaining power, wealth or any advantage by
8 any means possible regardless of direct injury
9 or collateral damage to others appears no
10 longer to be shameless behavior. Attempting to
11 do end runs around or circumvent the will of
12 Florida citizens as clearly defined and
13 expressed at the polls is shameless behavior.
14 This is not what we have endeavored to be as
15 Americans. It is not in keeping with the
16 Christian beliefs that so many of you ardently
17 profess to hold. Gaining advantage by any
18 means possible is not what most of us were
19 taught by our parents, nor is it what we, I
20 will go out on a limb to say, want to teach our
21 children.

22 The Florida Legislature is on probation.
23 Many citizens who are members of the majority
24 party are not happy with the product thus far.
25 It is not clear which spark will set the

1 citizens of this state ablaze. So as you move
2 forward with the redistricting process, know
3 that you have already run many red flags up the
4 flag pole with the 2011 legislative session.

5 Please think, if you can, in terms of the
6 larger impact that your behavior and
7 decision-making will have on our society, our
8 state and the process of government that we
9 hold dear in our country.

10 Thank you for your good services, and I am
11 going to leave you with this question: Will
12 your objectives and strategies be shameless, or
13 will they be of unquestionable integrity?

14 Again, I thank you for this opportunity to
15 speak. Thank you for being here.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. May. I
17 appreciate it very much.

18 John Myrick is next from the AARP, and
19 then Esther Kirk, and following Ms. Kirk,
20 Maureen Siebold, if you will be on deck,
21 please.

22 Mr. Myrick, glad to have you here today.

23 MR. MYRICK: Thank you, sir. I am John
24 Myrick, a life-long Polk County resident, a
25 volunteer and representing AARP, and we would

1 like to ask that as you move through this
2 process, that you focus on a lot of things, but
3 specifically three things: One, ensure
4 transparency of the legislative redistricting
5 process every single step of the way. This is
6 a good start today. Second, ensure timeliness,
7 and we know that is going to be difficult, of
8 the redistricting process and ensure public
9 input. And, finally, take steps to insulate
10 the redistricting process from the appearance
11 of any conflict of information.

12 We are excited about what you are doing.
13 My granddaddy use to say, "You don't have to be
14 Alexander Graham Bell to know when the
15 telephone is ringing." Ladies and gentlemen,
16 the telephone is ringing, and we are excited as
17 can be to hear what your answer is going to be.
18 Thank you.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
20 We appreciate your being here.

21 Esther Kirk is next, and Ms. Kirk,
22 following your testimony, we will hear from
23 Maureen Siebold and then Sylvia
24 Blackmon-Roberts with the Alpha Kappa Alpha
25 Sorority.

1 Ms. Kirk, thank you for coming today and
2 taking time from your busy schedule to be with
3 us.

4 MS. KIRK: I am retired, but, yes, I am
5 busy.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, retired people have
7 the busiest schedules.

8 MS. KIRK: I don't represent any
9 particular group. I represent me. And I am
10 just here because when I look at some of the
11 districts, I am appalled. I live in Riverview,
12 and my Congressional Representative is this
13 fellow, Mr. Ross, over here, and I don't think
14 he knows anything about my area over in
15 Riverview, you know. You can see the map, and
16 I am over here, a little bit of his district is
17 here and then it kind of comes here and then
18 here is the major portion of it. I don't want
19 to see anymore of those. I want to see
20 logical, compact districts so that the people
21 who represent me know me, know my area. I know
22 Senator Storms represents me, and I have seen
23 her at meetings and so forth, so she does know
24 something about our area. I want everybody
25 that represents me to know me and my area.

1 Thank you.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
3 Ms. Kirk.

4 And next, Maureen Siebold, if you will
5 give us your testimony, then
6 Ms. Blackmon-Roberts and then Karen Welzel.

7 Ms. Siebold, thank you for coming today.

8 MS. SIEBOLD: I want to thank each and
9 every one of you for taking the opportunity to
10 come and hear we, the people. We live in a
11 republic, and we, the people of Florida, are
12 speaking.

13 I am representing the Florida Alliance,
14 the Tea Party network, and I am also the
15 founder of the Lakeland Tea Party and 9-12
16 project, of which we have 386 members, most of
17 whom work and were unable to come today. So I
18 would like for you to take that into account
19 when you hear what I have to say.

20 I will be using Henry Kelley's maps that
21 have been drawn based solely on population.
22 You have 47 whole counties out of 67, which
23 means that 70 percent of Florida's counties can
24 be represented by one Representative.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am, I don't mean to

1 stop your flow, but the maps that you are
2 referring to I believe are maps that are in the
3 back --

4 MS. SIEBOLD: Yes, they are posted in the
5 back.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: -- proposed by Mr. Kelley,
7 who is with the Tea Party?

8 MS. SIEBOLD: Yes, he is with -- yes, with
9 the Tea Party Network.

10 Seven counties are too large to do that
11 due to population. So drawing as tightly as
12 possible leaves 80 percent of the state
13 represented by a minimum of Representatives.

14 On the existing map, the map that we are
15 using now, only 40 counties are whole, or
16 59 percent of the state is whole, and add in
17 the other seven counties leaves 47 out of 67
18 whole, or only 70 percent of the state as being
19 compact.

20 The rest of the state is gerrymandered,
21 gerrymandered to take into consideration
22 parties, races. We are all -- we are all
23 Americans. I don't care if we are green with
24 yellow polka dots, we are all Americans first.
25 We belong to the United States of America. And

1 using these -- I'm sorry, that was a soap box
2 moment.

3 Using -- using Henry's maps, it would --
4 using District 3 -- U.S. District 3 standards,
5 we actually decrease the number of Democratic
6 districts in the state of Florida the way we
7 are doing it now. However, using only the
8 population for our basis, the Democrats
9 actually benefit. You increase the number of
10 the Democratic majority or Democratic leaning
11 districts, thereby reducing the number of
12 Republican districts.

13 The way the Polk County is drawn on
14 Mr. Henry's maps is it takes in a small portion
15 of Hillsborough County, which is Plant City.
16 Polk County and that Plant City therefore
17 become one congressional district. Polk County
18 is an agricultural county. Plant City, you
19 know, Plant City, is agricultural. Therefore,
20 all of our needs and all of our interests are
21 the same. So you would lump us all in as a --
22 you know, the -- with the same interests and
23 needs. And so using population seems to be the
24 fairest way to do this.

25 My main question to the committee is, does

1 the federal court have the right to affect the
2 lives of approximately eight to ten million
3 Floridians by something that is happening in
4 Jacksonville? And, finally, it oversteps the
5 bounds of the Tenth Amendment, which reserves
6 the rights not appointed to the federal
7 government, to the states. And since when are
8 we, the people of Florida, ruled by the Supreme
9 Court of the United States instead of the
10 Constitution of the United States and the
11 Constitution of Florida? Thank you very much.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. And,
13 Ms. Siebold, if there are people who are
14 interested in the maps that have been
15 submitted, Ms. Siebold, could you stay
16 afterwards and talk with folks if they are
17 interested in the map that you described?
18 Thank you.

19 Next we have Sylvia Blackmon-Roberts with
20 the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, then Karen
21 Welzel, I believe, and then Donna Kinsey.

22 Ms. Blackmon-Roberts, thank you for being
23 here, and you are recognized.

24 MS. BLACKMON-ROBERTS: Thank you very
25 much. Let me say Alpha Kappa Alpha is a

1 nonpartisan service organization. Our concerns
2 were with the process maps, as well as the
3 timeline, and that -- those concerns have been
4 expressed so well by some of the other speakers
5 that I will yield my time to hopefully at the
6 end hear the feedback.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
8 ma'am. Eloquent testimony.

9 Karen -- in politics, we have a saying
10 that says we have reached the point of the
11 meeting where everything has been said, but not
12 by everybody. We say that about ourselves, not
13 about you.

14 Karen Welzel, then Donna Kinsey and then
15 Lori Edwards, the Polk County Supervisor of
16 Elections.

17 Thank you very much, ma'am, for being
18 here, and we look forward to what you have to
19 say with us.

20 MS. WELZEL: Thank you for allowing us
21 this time.

22 My name is Karen Welzel. I am the
23 Chairman of the Democratic Polk County Party,
24 and I live in the southeast side of Polk County
25 in Winter Haven. For me, it is partisan.

1 Polk County covers approximately 2,000
2 square miles. It is a large county
3 geographically with over 600,000 residents.
4 Residents here in Polk County are represented
5 by three Congressional districts. On the north
6 and east side, there is a small strip of the
7 county that falls under Congressional District
8 15. On the northwest side of Polk, a small
9 group of residents are in CD 5. And the
10 remainder of the county is in Congressional
11 District 12.

12 There are five House seats representing
13 the citizens of Polk County, two of whom are
14 not here tonight -- today. Winter Haven alone
15 is divided into two districts. That simply
16 should not be. Cities should not be split. It
17 does not provide a fair representation of the
18 residents in our area. Districts should be
19 compact and contiguous.

20 Additionally, I am very concerned with the
21 timeline for drawing the new districts. This
22 timeline is unfair to the voters who passed
23 Amendments 5 and 6 by 63 percent of the vote,
24 and is deliberately being drawn out to favor
25 the incumbents. If you take until March 2012

1 to have the maps drawn, that means that
2 Florida's maps will be approved later than
3 almost every other state in the nation. That
4 only gives three months for court approval.
5 Review by the Department of Justice will take
6 much more than three months. If this timeline
7 is followed, maps will not be finalized before
8 qualifying for the 2012 election closes on
9 June 8th. That will create massive voter
10 confusion. People who want to run for office
11 will not know which district they will be
12 running for. They will have little time to
13 start their campaign, and the voters will have
14 even less time to make an informed decision for
15 whom they will vote. Bills were introduced in
16 the last session to require that the maps be
17 drawn earlier, but those bills didn't even get
18 scheduled for hearings. Why is that?

19 And then there is the money. This
20 Legislature has spent over a million dollars of
21 taxpayer money to hire lawyers to fight the
22 very amendments that the citizens voted for.
23 This Legislature has been fighting this since
24 2008 before the amendments were even on the
25 ballot. They have already acknowledged that

1 there is over \$30 million ready to be spent to
2 continue the fight against Fair Districts.
3 They are using a lawyer from Speaker Cannon's
4 former law firm who bills at over \$300 an hour
5 to fight these amendments. They tried to place
6 a misleading and misworded Amendment 7 on the
7 ballot, but the Supreme Court said it was wrong
8 and had it removed.

9 The Florida House has joined a lawsuit
10 attempting to have the amendments declared
11 unconstitutional. The Legislature is using,
12 again, taxpayer money to attack and invalidate
13 the very provision that we approved.

14 In addition, the Secretary of State has
15 been named a defendant in that case. That is
16 the same Secretary of State who headed up the
17 opposition to Fair Districts during the
18 campaign. So now we, the taxpayers, are again
19 paying to sue and defend the same lawsuit. All
20 of this money is being spent while teachers are
21 being fired, social services for the poor and
22 the indigent are being cut, and not a
23 significant job has been created.

24 With all due respect, people have thanked
25 you for allowing them to express their opinions

1 about redistricting, and that is all well and
2 good, but I will say this: This hearing --
3 these hearings have no purpose other than to
4 make it appear that you are listening to the
5 people. If you really wanted to know what we
6 thought, you would have brought the maps with
7 you and moved this process along in a timely
8 manner that would benefit the citizens you
9 purport to represent. This is a waste of time
10 and money. Thank you.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for wasting your
12 time and money in coming here, we appreciate
13 it.

14 Donna Kinsey is next, then Lori Edwards,
15 the Polk County Supervisor of Elections, and
16 then Diana Sen with LatinoJustice.

17 Ms. Kinsey, thank you for coming.

18 MS. KINSEY: Yes. I don't represent
19 anybody but myself.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Good for you.

21 MS. KINSEY: And I am here mainly to
22 express a degree of frustration that I have in
23 not even being able to find out who my
24 Representatives are locally.

25 Three years ago, I moved down here from

1 the state of Maryland where, you know, I was
2 able to know who represented me, I was able to
3 contact them, and when I came here, I don't
4 even know where Bartow fits in the picture, I
5 guess we don't count, at least that is how I
6 feel about it. And it looks like it is about
7 to happen again because of the timeline,
8 because I did not realize until coming to this
9 meeting how little time there is. I had the
10 impression that -- you know, that the maps were
11 going to be finalized long before they
12 apparently are, and I find that very
13 disturbing. Thank you.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. And
15 I hope, Ms. Kinsey, that you can stay to the
16 end of the hearing, because everybody -- this
17 is one of the great things about this country,
18 everybody is entitled to their opinion, but
19 everybody is not entitled to their own set of
20 facts. So we will hear some -- hopefully some
21 information at the end of this hearing that
22 will help disabuse you of maybe some of the
23 things put in the bloodstream by, you know,
24 folks who just have a different opinion.

25 Lori Edwards, the Polk County Supervisor

1 of Elections, thank you for your service to
2 Polk County, and we are honored to have you
3 here today, ma'am.

4 MS. EDWARDS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is
5 a pleasure.

6 As you mentioned, I am the Supervisor of
7 Elections for Polk County. I am also the
8 Reapportionment Chair for the Florida
9 Association of Supervisors of Elections, and as
10 a result, I am also representing them.

11 The first point that I would like to
12 address is time. To conduct successful
13 elections in 2012, election officials need time
14 to complete tasks that are required by state
15 law. Election officials need time to adjust
16 the precinct lines once we get the new district
17 lines, and then gain approval of those new
18 precincts from the Board of County
19 Commissioners.

20 Now, if the Legislature, the Attorney
21 General, the Supreme Court and the Justice
22 Department all complete their work on time,
23 election administrators will have less than two
24 weeks to adjust the records of Florida's
25 11 million voters. Then first absentees need

1 to be mailed.

2 The calendar that was provided by your
3 legislative staff indicates that the final
4 Justice Department review of new districts is
5 likely to be complete after, after qualifying,
6 and that, as has been mentioned a couple of
7 times, has the potential for confusing
8 candidates, in addition, of course, to voters.

9 I have just a list of the statutorily
10 created tasks that we must complete during that
11 two-week period in between when we get the
12 final and the first ballots need to be mailed.
13 We need to change all district lines in the
14 state on 67 different maps. We need to align
15 the precincts to the new districts. We then
16 need to submit those proposed precinct changes
17 to the Board of County Commissioners in 67
18 counties and have them approve those new
19 precincts. We then need to re-code every
20 voter's address with new district information
21 for Congressional districts, for state House
22 districts and state Senate districts. We need
23 to check and double-check that new voter data,
24 because computers do much of it, but they don't
25 do all of it. Then we need to issue new voter

1 registration cards, get those mailed, notify
2 voters of the precinct changes, order the
3 ballots and mail the absentee ballots all
4 within 15 or 16 days, best-case scenario.

5 The other point I wanted to address was
6 district lines. Please respect communities
7 when you draw those district lines. I think
8 you are probably well aware that your
9 legislative staff worked with election
10 officials, as well as the census, over the last
11 couple of years to establish for the first time
12 here in Florida voting tabulation districts.
13 They take into consideration intact
14 communities, traffic patterns, even physical
15 barriers that people working in an office in
16 Tallahassee probably wouldn't be aware of. So
17 please adhere to these lines whenever possible.
18 The truth is the best place to draw any of your
19 lines is along a county line. So please divide
20 districts along county lines whenever possible.

21 And, you know, there has been much
22 attention, not just during your public hearings
23 this go-round, but for years to Florida's
24 meandering districts. But there's many, many
25 more examples of small cities being separated

1 into three or four districts, small, little
2 cities get split apart into three or four
3 little districts, or gated communities have
4 state Senate lines running through the middle
5 of them. So although meandering is something
6 to worry about, the opposite of that can cause
7 just as clear of a problem to all concerned.
8 The way to avoid that, there is a way to avoid
9 that, that is what those voting tabulation
10 districts are about. So when you start
11 reviewing the maps that you are serious about,
12 please ask the question, are these aligning
13 with voting tabulation districts, that is all I
14 ask you to ask, are the lines on county lines
15 or are they aligning with voting tabulation
16 districts.

17 I do have a question for your list, and my
18 question to the committee is: If, as we
19 expect, the lines will be finalized around
20 June 16th, how do candidates, as well as party
21 precinct Committee people, qualify during the
22 qualifying period that your Legislature created
23 between the fourth and the eighth? If the
24 districts don't exist, how do they qualify for
25 a district? And I am just curious, I need an

1 answer to that at some point.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, Ms. Edwards, I hope
3 you will stay, because I think, again, maybe
4 that somebody purposefully offered a little
5 confusing information or maybe there was
6 confusion coming out of some source somewhere
7 else, but there is no requirement that
8 best-case scenario maps are drawn in March or
9 that the process ends in June, but Speaker
10 Weatherford, I think, can explain that in more
11 detail.

12 But I have a favor for you. Ms. Kinsey,
13 who spoke just ahead of you, didn't know who
14 her State Representatives are and what voter
15 district she lived in. Would you mind talking
16 with her and helping her understand that,
17 please, ma'am?

18 MS. EDWARDS: I would be happy to. I do
19 want to remind you that the State Supreme Court
20 has 30 days to review the plans --

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes.

22 MS. EDWARDS: -- the Attorney General has
23 15 days, so that is 45 days, and then there's
24 60 days for the U.S. Justice Department. So I
25 think that the calendar does come out that way.

1 I have learned this, of course, from your
2 Mr. Guthrie.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, all I would suggest
4 to you, and I don't mean to be argumentative,
5 is that there is -- ma'am, I don't mean to be
6 argumentative, but those -- some of those time
7 lines can run concurrently, and just as you
8 encourage us, rightly so, to move as quickly as
9 possible, we certainly would encourage those
10 review processes to move as quickly as
11 possible. We will count on you to contact them
12 with the same encouragement. And if you would
13 help Ms. Kinsey, we would be grateful.

14 MS. EDWARDS: Thank you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thanks for your testimony.

16 MS. EDWARDS: Pleasure to be here.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Sure. Diana Sen, with
18 LatinoJustice, and following Ms. Sen, Rita
19 Wings and then Tim, I think it's Heberlein.
20 And we have had a number of other people, and
21 we are delighted, sign up to testify, so we are
22 going to hold pretty tight to the three-minute
23 rule.

24 So you are recognized. Thank you for
25 being here.

1 MS. SEN: Thank you. Good afternoon. My
2 name is Diana Sen, and I am senior counsel to
3 LatinoJustice PRLDEF, formerly known as the
4 Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund.

5 LatinoJustice is a national,
6 not-for-profit, nonpartisan civil rights
7 organization that has conducted legal
8 education, advocacy and impact litigation since
9 1972.

10 We are promoting community participation
11 and monitoring compliance with the federal
12 Voting Rights Act throughout legislative and
13 Congressional redistricting in Florida. As you
14 know, we have brought numerous lawsuits
15 enforcing the Voting Rights Act. Most
16 recently, we sued Volusia County in 2008 for
17 not providing ballots in Spanish in violation
18 of federal law. That lawsuit was settled in
19 2010, with the county providing bilingual
20 ballots and additional language assistance.

21 We also in 2005 represented Hispanic
22 Kissimmee residents in a federal class action
23 lawsuit against the Kissimmee Board of City
24 Commissioners because their at-large election
25 process diluted the voting strength of

1 Hispanics.

2 These lawsuits are in addition to three
3 lawsuits filed by the Department of Justice in
4 central Florida, one against Orange County for
5 not having proper Spanish language assistance,
6 and two against Osceola County, one for hostile
7 treatment against Latinos, and another for
8 their at-large election process.

9 In addition to these lawsuits, you have
10 all heard from the community loud and clear
11 that Latinos need fair representation in
12 redistricting. The Voting Rights Act requires
13 Florida to protect minority voters from a
14 dilution of their voting rights.

15 While recent interpretations of the VRA
16 question the viability of minority districts
17 that are less than a majority, Florida is
18 required to provide opportunities to elect
19 districts to VRA-protected classes like
20 Hispanics.

21 Under Section 2, the Supreme Court has
22 said that minority dilution occurs if it is
23 shown by, one, large and geographically compact
24 majority districts; two, a politically cohesive
25 group; three, racially polarized voting. And

1 once those three jingles, preconditions, are
2 met, a totality of circumstances is viewed by
3 the court to see if minorities' voting strength
4 is being diluted.

5 In addition, there is Section 5 that
6 creates federal oversight of changes to
7 redistricting plans in parts of the country
8 with a history of discrimination.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Sen, if I could
10 ask you to summarize just in fairness of all
11 the people who have signed up behind you.

12 MS. SEN: Florida's Latino communities
13 must have fair electoral opportunity. Their
14 rights and their ability to vote should not be
15 silenced.

16 Proportionality is a key factor in
17 redistricting, and the United States Supreme
18 Court in DeGrande has stated that
19 proportionality is important in redistricting,
20 because it links the number of
21 majority-minority voting districts to minority
22 members' share of the relevant population. We
23 urge that the state's legislative redistricting
24 maps be drawn that -- such that a proportionate
25 percentage of the total districts can be drawn

1 for majority-minority Latino districts.

2 LatinoJustice is working with Latinos
3 throughout the state. We are supporting the
4 creation of a Latino-anchored, central
5 Florida-anchored congressional district, and
6 are proud to unveil our plan this Wednesday in
7 Orlando.

8 We look forward to working with you all to
9 ensure that the Voting Rights Act is followed
10 and that Latinos are able to elect the
11 candidate of their choice. Thank you.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Ms.
13 Sen.

14 And next we will hear from Rita Wings and
15 then Tim, I think it is Heberlein, or
16 Herberlein, I apologize, and then Sidney
17 Rosen- -- and I'm sorry, it is my eyes, not
18 your writing, Sidney, with the Democratic Club
19 in Poinciana.

20 Ms. Wings.

21 MS. WINGS: Hi. My name is Rita Wings,
22 and I represent myself and my website,
23 coffeestraightup.com. I am here not only to
24 reiterate what other people said about how
25 there should have been maps for us to look at.

1 Forgive me if my assumption after watching you
2 fight our will in court, if my assumption is
3 that you will go out and take public testimony,
4 then do exactly what you please come next year
5 when there is no time to fix it. I make those
6 assumptions because one person, one vote, is
7 not just a Democratic ideal, it has
8 traditionally been a Republican ideal. The
9 Republican party should be hanging its head in
10 shame about what it has allowed the Tea Party,
11 which is controlled by huge corporate
12 interests --

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am --

14 MS. WINGS: -- to do to it --

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am, let's -- let's be
16 civil. Let's not -- let's not cast aspersions
17 on other people who speak. Why don't you keep
18 it to your opinion about redistricting. We
19 really want --

20 MS. WINGS: This is my opinion about
21 redistricting.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, we don't want to
23 hear your opinion about other people, except
24 you can give your opinion about us. But we
25 would very much like you to talk about

1 specifically where you believe redistricting
2 laws and how they should be applied in this
3 particular case in this part of the state. You
4 are recognized for that purpose solely, ma'am.

5 MS. WINGS: And in your arrogance, you
6 will tell us at the end where we are all wrong
7 and put your spin on it as a fact.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for your
9 testimony, ma'am. And now --

10 MS. WINGS: And I will continue by saying
11 and summing up that it is extremely important
12 that these laws that you are trying to make --
13 this adds to our skepticism as well, that the
14 laws you are trying to make right now will
15 address a nonexistent problem of voter fraud by
16 limiting --

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Now, ma'am --

18 MS. WINGS: -- people's right to vote.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am, I am going to ask
20 you --

21 MS. WINGS: You are not --

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am --

23 MS. WINGS: -- standing up for Republican
24 ideals, nor for one person, one vote --

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am --

1 MS. WINGS: -- which is inherent in --

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am, we want to thank
3 you -- we want to thank you for your testimony.

4 MS. WINGS: I will finish.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am --

6 MS. WINGS: That is inherent in the one
7 person, one vote ideal.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
9 ma'am, for your testimony.

10 Tim Heberlein is next. And Tim, if I have
11 mispronounced your name, it is because of my
12 bad eyesight, not your handwriting. And then
13 Sidney Rosenblatt, I think, or Rosenbent, and
14 then following Sidney, Debbie Hannifan.

15 Tim, you are recognized. Thank you for
16 being here.

17 MR. HEBERLEIN: Absolutely. It is
18 Heberlein, actually, it happens all the time.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: It is what, please, sir?

20 MR. HEBERLEIN: Heberlein. It is probably
21 my handwriting, but --

22 SENATOR GAETZ: No, no, it is my eyesight.

23 MR. HEBERLEIN: -- it's as German as it
24 gets.

25 Well, I would like to thank you all for

1 being here. This is a very important part of
2 the political process, especially
3 redistricting. Unfortunately, it is a very
4 politicized process as well.

5 I represent, and I apologize, I omitted it
6 on the form, but the Florida Consumer Action
7 Network, which is a bipartisan -- can you hear
8 me?

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Maybe, sir, if you could
10 speak right into the microphone, because there
11 are a lot of folks here, and they would --
12 everybody would like to hear your testimony.

13 MR. HEBERLEIN: How is this? Sound check.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Much better.

15 MR. HEBERLEIN: All right.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Much better.

17 MR. HEBERLEIN: I represent the Florida
18 Consumer Action Network, which is a nonpartisan
19 organization which protects the rights of
20 consumers, and we also do voter registration,
21 so we are very interested in this particular
22 process.

23 But I applaud the efforts of putting
24 together the software, the My District Builder,
25 you are allocating a lot of resources to these

1 public hearings, but you haven't done the
2 constitutional duty of drawing these maps. And
3 I can't emphasize how important that is to the
4 political process when it comes to public
5 participation is they -- a lot of times, I
6 personally don't even know what it is I am
7 supposed to make public comment on. I
8 appreciate that I think Kelley -- the
9 gentleman, Kelley, has produced these maps --

10 SENATOR GAETZ: He's produced one of them.
11 There are actually 12 maps that have been
12 produced over there, and then you have the
13 existing maps here, and you can speak to any
14 one of them or make any specific proposal of
15 your own, or any member of this committee can.

16 MR. HEBERLEIN: I propose that --
17 actually, I propose that the Legislature
18 produce the maps that is what I propose. It is
19 not Kelley's job. It is not my job to write
20 the software. Don't get me wrong, it is a
21 great software, you are doing a great job, but
22 it is not our job. You are asking for our
23 public input. My public input came last year
24 with Amendments 5 and 6. I actually went up to
25 Tallahassee -- thank you.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Let's let him speak. You
2 are eating up his three minutes, sir.

3 MR. HEBERLEIN: I actually went to
4 Tallahassee because I opposed Amendment 7,
5 which was specifically put by the Legislature
6 to confuse voters and to basically negate
7 Amendments 5 and 6, and that was
8 unfortunately -- unfortunate part of this
9 politicized process.

10 So I encourage you to, again, I think
11 another speaker had mentioned it before, but
12 consider the fact of the -- the implications of
13 what you are doing with this process. And I
14 hope that, you know, come whenever these maps
15 are produced, hopefully it is not five months
16 before the 2012 election, that the headlines
17 read, you know, this was a fair process, this
18 was done appropriately. I would love to see
19 that. And I would please beg you to do
20 everything in your power to make sure that is
21 what the headline reads as soon as you afford
22 the -- produce these maps and vote on them and
23 make it official.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: I think it will be
25 "Republicans Arrived and Bank Robbed," but go

1 ahead.

2 MR. HEBERLEIN: Thank you.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much for your
4 testimony.

5 And, Sidney, I've got to beg your
6 forgiveness.

7 MR. ROSENBERG: My name is Sidney
8 Rosenberg.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Rosenberg, I could have
10 read that if I had been good.

11 MR. ROSENBERG: I live in Polk County.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Go ahead.

13 MR. ROSENBERG: I represent the Democratic
14 Club in Solivita, Florida.

15 Most of the people in this room have come
16 up -- and I am not going to belabor the fact or
17 repeat the requests -- the requests of the
18 people of this state.

19 Sixty-three percent of the people wanted
20 change. They want these maps drawn correctly.
21 We have to have them drawn at a logical time so
22 that I can go out and say "I have a candidate"
23 or "I want to be a candidate." I don't see
24 this here. I don't see a time frame that is
25 logical, how a voter is going to know who to

1 vote for. And I am going to leave it at that,
2 there are other people that want to speak,
3 there is no sense in laboring over things.

4 But I am asking you, ladies and gentlemen,
5 please stop trying to fight the amendment. The
6 amendment was passed by the people. Thank you.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Next we will
8 hear from Debbie Hannifan, then John Wing,
9 representing the Bahai faith, and then Ronald
10 Johnson.

11 Is it Ms. Hannifan, is that right?

12 MS. HANNIFAN: Yes, it is, thank you.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: You are recognized, and
14 thanks for coming today.

15 MS. HANNIFAN: Thank you very much. Thank
16 you to all of you for coming. I really
17 appreciate that. I am born and raised here in
18 Lakeland, Florida, and welcome to our city.

19 I want to, first of all, commend the
20 Committee for the use of technology. I've
21 recently heard on the news that we are among
22 the leaders in the country for the technology,
23 the website and the things that you are doing,
24 so thank you for that and allowing the
25 transparent process.

1 The other thing I would like to say is I
2 train advocates across the state, grass roots
3 organizing and coalition training for
4 individuals who are interested in becoming
5 engaged in the legislative process. So some of
6 you are familiar, and thank you for your help
7 along the years.

8 What I would like to say is we need to
9 make sure that we keep our eye on what this is
10 all about. It is very important that our
11 individual citizens have the opportunity to get
12 to know their Legislators, that they will be
13 able to become engaged when they have
14 individual issues, and some of the districts
15 have made it very difficult for your average
16 citizen to become engaged in that relationship,
17 because they do not live anywhere near their
18 districts, the constituency is not necessarily
19 close to the elected official. So we would
20 just ask that you would consider that when you
21 are drawing your lines, and try to keep to -- I
22 am not going to use the terms that we have
23 heard previously, but some -- you know, to
24 county districts, if at all possible, so that
25 people are not having to travel great lengths

1 to get to their legislator and that they will
2 be able to engage in that process a little bit
3 easier.

4 Also, people who are elderly, people who
5 have disabilities, who rely on public
6 transportation to get to their Representative's
7 office, should be fairly easy for that person
8 to do before work, after work, on their lunch
9 break, not necessarily having to take four
10 hours out of their day to travel a good two
11 hours, three hours, to get to an appointment.
12 So we would ask that, too.

13 The other thing is the financial impact of
14 that. Our Legislators or elected officials are
15 having to travel great deals to get to maybe
16 the areas where their constituency reside. So
17 that is a financial consideration as well.

18 And I think that is about it. I would ask
19 that you would consider maybe the common
20 threads that we have heard today, not
21 necessarily the drastic differences, but the
22 commonality. We are still asking for you to
23 make it a fairly swift process, to put them out
24 so that we are able to give input, and then if
25 there's a big variety of people who are not

1 able to come to the Committee meetings, please
2 consider our comments during your Committee
3 dialogue and discussion, because there are many
4 people across the state that will not be able
5 to come to Tallahassee in September to
6 readdress these issues with you again. Okay,
7 thank you.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you very
9 much.

10 Next we will hear from John Wing.
11 Mr. Wing, are you still here? Very good. And
12 after Mr. Wing, Ronald Johnson and then Warner
13 Squire with the Polk Democratic Party.

14 Mr. Wing.

15 MR. WING: Good afternoon. A couple of
16 Sundays ago, our congregation was discussing an
17 issue that some of the members wanted to
18 contact their Congressman, and not everyone
19 knew who their Congressman was, which is
20 understandable, considering if they live a
21 dozen or so miles one way, they were in a
22 second district, if they lived a dozen or so
23 miles the other way, they were in a third
24 district, and I says, "Well, okay, I will check
25 into it and let you know." Turned out to be

1 quite a bit of research, and at the end, I gave
2 information about the three Congressmen, and I
3 said, "As far as the lines are concerned, you
4 are going to have to either call one of them or
5 go on-line and find out who your Congressman
6 really is." And I know that the state
7 districts are more or less as convoluted as
8 that, and it makes it difficult to know who our
9 Representative is, and for our Representatives
10 to understand who he is representing. So I ask
11 you to draw the lines in reasonable fashion to
12 assure that y'all represent us rather than make
13 sure that you get reelected.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, thank you. And,
15 again, it is one of those inconvenient facts.
16 None of us up here drew these lines. We ran in
17 districts that somebody else drew.

18 Ronald Johnson is next, and following
19 Mr. Johnson, Warner Squire with the Polk DEC
20 and then Dena DeCamp.

21 Mr. Johnson, thank you for coming, and you
22 recognized, sir.

23 MR. JOHNSON: Good afternoon, and thanks
24 for coming, and thanks to all the people in the
25 audience, we appreciate all of you guys being

1 here, too.

2 My concern is this: We want you guys to
3 be honest and we want you guys to put forth the
4 maps and do it the right way. The people have
5 already spoken, 63 percent. So go about your
6 business, create the maps, don't be so
7 concerned about your reelection. You are going
8 to get reelected if the people are behind you.
9 If they want to support you, they will. Don't
10 cut out the districts through the
11 gerrymandering process. You know, you heard
12 the word "contiguous," you have heard the word
13 "gerrymandering," we all know what those words
14 mean.

15 And, historically, I want to bring up Tom
16 DeLay. Remember what happened in Texas years
17 ago, what happened to Mr. Tom DeLay in his
18 redistricting thing. Don't let that happen to
19 you guys. Do it the right way. Represent all
20 of us. Remember what Ms. Lori Edwards said,
21 she gave you a lot of statistics, you know
22 those things. Do it the right way. You guys
23 are honorable, you guys are officials. Do it
24 the right way. Present the maps. Have
25 continuous, contiguous districts that looks

1 real, not a piece here, a piece there, don't
2 worry about the demographics, about who -- who
3 is here, who is there, Democrat, Republicans,
4 do it the right way. Be honorable. Do the
5 right thing for the people, and we appreciate
6 it.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

8 Warner Squire with the Polk Democratic
9 Executive Committee, and then Dena DeCamp, and
10 then Janell, I think it is Hedrin, although I
11 apologize if I have mispronounced.

12 Mr. Squire, thank you for coming, and you
13 are recognized before the Committee.

14 MR. SQUIRE: Okay. I just want to say
15 that -- it's like I've got to come down here,
16 adjust it, I don't want to take up my time. I
17 am new to this whole process.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: I think the mike will come
19 out there if you would like. There you go.

20 MR. SQUIRE: Okay. So, anyway, I am new
21 to the whole process, and I think that this is
22 very exciting, but at the same time, I think
23 that the concern that I had in reading about
24 this, following it in the paper, and a lot of
25 people have expressed today is fairness.

1 People want to feel like the Representatives
2 are treating the situation fairly, and at the
3 same time, we have to recognize that we send
4 you all to Tallahassee to win, or your
5 campaigns, the people who back you, we want you
6 to win. And so it is funny how at one point we
7 are saying be fair, but to our own
8 Representatives we are saying, stick it to
9 them, so to say. So I am asking you to kind of
10 hear that, but kind of let cooler heads
11 prevail, as they are saying on TV these days,
12 and not listen to the people who are saying use
13 your advantage against the people who were
14 against you. Do you follow what I am saying?
15 Just, you know, make it fair and win in a fair
16 way. And I am just thinking about how, you
17 know, back when I was growing up and the Tyson
18 fights were going on and everyone would get so
19 excited for the Tyson fight, and it would be
20 over in a minute or less. So I ask that, you
21 know, when you win, just win fairly and show
22 good sportsmanship. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Chairman,
25 I think what he meant to say is don't bite your

1 opponent's ear.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: We will add that to the
3 record. No ear biting.

4 Ms. DeCamp, and then following Ms. DeCamp,
5 Janell, I apologize, Hendreu or Hedrin, and
6 then Nancy Sweeney.

7 Ms. DeCamp, thank you for coming, and you
8 are recognized.

9 MS. DeCAMP: Thank you so much. My name
10 is Dena DeCamp, and I am President of the
11 Republican Women's Club of Lakeland, and I
12 serve on the Board of Directors for the Florida
13 Federation of Republican Women. And I want to
14 say, first of all, thank you all very much for
15 being here. It says a lot for how important
16 redistricting is to see a bipartisan panel
17 sitting in front of us, and it means a lot to
18 all of us that you are all here. Thank you so
19 much.

20 We heard a lot today about how we haven't
21 got any maps. I do want to make one comment
22 about that. If they had brought maps, people
23 would be standing in this microphone saying you
24 already had your minds made up and you didn't
25 give us a chance to give input. So I am going

1 to tell you thank you for not bringing the
2 maps, and we can live with the other.

3 One of the things that has been brought up
4 before and I want to reinforce is the county
5 line rule seems to be a good one. In Polk
6 County, a number of the members of my club have
7 an issue with us because Senator Storms is over
8 on the west side of the county, a little
9 sliver, and we have Congressman Rich Nugent up
10 on the north side of Polk County in a little
11 bitty sliver, and we almost never get to see
12 them, not that we don't invite them, but we
13 tend to kind of forget about them because they
14 have such a tiny little sliver of Polk County,
15 and the people in their districts feel a little
16 left out because we invite in the people that
17 have the biggest portion of those districts.
18 And so it would be better for these people who
19 don't know who their Congressmen or
20 Representatives are if we had a more defined
21 line and it wasn't chopping up counties. The
22 cities, I know, would be difficult, but the
23 counties, I think, would be an important way to
24 try and keep -- keep it easier for the
25 constituency to know who you are. I know who

1 all my elected officials are, but then I am in
2 politics to a certain extent and I made a point
3 of it. But if you voted on somebody, you
4 should know who that person is. So, you know,
5 I just think that that is a matter of the
6 person finding out who they are. You guys are
7 in your constituencies, you are out in your
8 districts all the time, even though you are
9 part-time Legislators, and we thank you for
10 that, we know you have another life other than
11 those months you spend in Tallahassee, we know
12 that the rest of the year you are out there and
13 you are trying to meet as many people as you
14 can, and we thank you for that. Thank you
15 again for being here. Y'all are doing a great
16 job.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
18 Ms. DeCamp.

19 And Janell, I apologize to you, what's
20 your last name, ma'am?

21 MS. HENDREN: Hendren.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Hendren, I had it right,
23 by golly.

24 And then following Ms. Hendren, Nancy
25 Sweeney and then Graham Moore.

1 Ms. Hendren, we are delighted you are
2 here, and you are recognized.

3 MS. HENDREN: Thank you, Senator. My name
4 is Janell Hendren, I am a resident of downtown
5 Lakeland, and I first want to thank everyone
6 that has come so far. I know you are from up
7 in the -- up in the Panhandle area, and you are
8 part-time Legislators, many people do not
9 realize that. The Representatives get paid
10 \$29,000 a year, that is it, they are part-time.
11 Some other people have mentioned other states
12 that have more advanced timelines on what they
13 do. They are full-time Legislators that -- by
14 the way, California pays their people over
15 \$100,000 a year, so you want to talk about a
16 waste of money.

17 Now, I want to say thank you for coming to
18 us --

19 SENATOR GAETZ: We are not worth that.

20 MS. HENDREN: I want to say thank you very
21 much for coming to us before you draw the maps,
22 because we all know how the human mind works,
23 and once your minds are made up, once the lines
24 are drawn, it becomes very difficult to say,
25 "No, we didn't really like this whole area,

1 let's redo this whole area." I would much
2 rather you have a blank slate to work from and
3 take our suggestions so that when you first
4 draw the maps, when you first set your minds to
5 how you want things to look, they are with our
6 opinions in mind, and I appreciate that.

7 I think I am going to be unique and give
8 the actual first suggestion that is Polk
9 County-specific and say please be careful when
10 you draw up Polk County. We have competing
11 economic interests between south Polk County
12 that is agriculture, east and west. And I feel
13 sometimes that the way that these districts are
14 currently drawn, that can be exacerbated, some
15 people feel a viable rate between Lakeland and
16 Winter Haven, and I would ask that the new
17 districts not make that situation worse with
18 the way that the districts are drawn. That is
19 all I have to say. Thank you for your time.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

21 Nancy Sweeney is next. Ms. Sweeney, we
22 very much are -- appreciate your taking time to
23 come today, then Graham Moore, and following
24 Mr. Moore, Dr. Lydia Medrano.

25 Ms. Sweeney, you are recognized.

1 MS. SWEEZY: First of all, my name is
2 Nancy Sweezy.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Sweezy.

4 MS. SWEEZY: S-w-e-e-z-y.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

6 MS. SWEEZY: That is okay. You are not
7 the first person that's called me something
8 else.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: I have been called a lot
10 of things.

11 MS. SWEEZY: I have, too. I usually come,
12 whatever you call me.

13 I want to thank you all for coming. I was
14 surprised when I came here, this is the first
15 one I have been, but every year I have been
16 angry after the redistricting has been done,
17 and I wanted to come and have my say.

18 I am tired of the strange districts we see
19 through, and I would really like to see the
20 county not tore up as bad as sometime. I once
21 believed Polk County was divided into five
22 districts, so -- and it was split all over the
23 place like you wouldn't believe it. I know
24 that sometimes you can't put our county in a
25 district, you have to split places up, and I

1 understand that, but I would like you to really
2 consider trying to keep as much of the
3 population in an area together, because we do
4 -- each county has their own special problems,
5 and we would like you to, you know, consider
6 that if we have one legislator, he can listen
7 to us and our problems better than five people
8 who are only listening to a couple thousand
9 people in one corner, and five or six, because
10 they are worried more about the most of the
11 people than they are the small amounts, and I
12 understand that, too, but I would really like
13 to see a plan go together that the districts
14 are tried to be drawn as fairly as you can,
15 keeping the people together.

16 Somebody was saying that you didn't draw
17 the districts. I have voted in districts here
18 in Polk County that were Democrats and we put
19 Republicans in, and I voted in districts that
20 were Republicans, we put Democrats in, so I
21 don't find this that -- I have known this to be
22 a Democratic district, and I have seen
23 Republicans go sit right in there and take the
24 district out from underneath them, so I don't
25 find this, you know, is anything. I have seen

1 people of different races go into areas where
2 nobody said they would not elect a person of
3 that race, that color, that creed, that
4 religion, they go in there, they make an
5 impression on the people, the people vote for
6 them. All we want is a fair chance to vote for
7 our people who know us. And I thank you for
8 all that you are doing in these matters.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Sweezy.
10 Graham Moore? Mr. Moore, and then
11 Dr. Lydia Medrano and then Delma Rodriguez.

12 Mr. Moore, thank you for coming today.

13 MR. MOORE: Thank you. I would like to
14 first say thank you to all of you. I look
15 around this room and I see nothing but a
16 collection of citizens and activists who care
17 about issues that affect this state. I see our
18 Representatives sitting both up before me and
19 sprinkled throughout the rest of the room,
20 citizen activists, organizers, all who care
21 about this -- these issues, all who care about
22 what is represented by the two flags that are
23 behind you all, and I see that the parties,
24 mixed up amongst everybody and how we can all
25 sit together today. But that is today.

1 Next year when this issue is brought
2 forward into the State Legislature, when you
3 will be discussing this, it won't be the only
4 thing that will be discussed. Next year we
5 find ourselves in an election year when
6 early-on members of the Lincoln's party will be
7 battling amongst themselves to see who will
8 represent themselves in the great presidential
9 election. Next year when we see our current
10 President fight to put forward another
11 four-year vision for America, next year when we
12 see races amongst our -- for our U.S. Senate
13 seat, for our House seats, all battling, should
14 we really infuse the idea of redistricting in
15 that time period? Should we really battle a
16 bear when we are fighting a lion already? And
17 that is all I have to say.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
19 Mr. Moore.

20 And now Dr. Lydia Medrano, and then
21 following Dr. Medrano, Delma Rodriguez and then
22 Norma Reno, please.

23 Dr. Medrano, thank you for coming and
24 giving your time today to this process.

25 DR. MEDRANO: Thank you. My name is Lydia

1 Medrano. I am a District Director of the
2 League of United Latin American Citizens, also
3 known as LULAC, and LULAC is the national civil
4 rights organization, it is the oldest Hispanic
5 civil rights organization. My district covers
6 Polk County and Hillsborough County. And I
7 want to thank all of you for being here and
8 listening to what people have to say. I want
9 to believe that people's feedback is taken into
10 account. But to tell you the truth, we are
11 kind of frustrated with the county
12 redistricting, because the community is saying
13 one thing, and the commissioners are doing the
14 opposite, you know.

15 But, anyways, I don't want to repeat what
16 many people already said, but I would just want
17 to say that in Tampa Bay, we have developed a
18 coalition of Hispanic organizations and are
19 determined to participate in the redistricting
20 processes. We are receiving advice from
21 several organizations like the LatinoJustice,
22 New York-based civil rights organization from
23 New York, LULAC and some local attorneys.

24 Latinos have significantly contributed to
25 the growth of the population in the state, and

1 because of that, we have -- we are getting two
2 new -- two additional seats. And Hillsborough
3 County, Polk County, Pasco, Pinellas, have the
4 combined Hispanic populations of almost
5 541,000, and because of that, as I said before,
6 Florida is getting two additional seats. And
7 the reason why I am here is that we expect that
8 at least one of those seats is going to be here
9 in central Florida. Thank you.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Doctor.

11 And next, Delma Rodriguez, also with
12 LULAC, and then Norma Reno, also with LULAC,
13 and then Paul Anderson from the Sierra Club.

14 Ms. Rodriguez, thank you for coming.

15 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you very much. I am
16 a native Floridian. I was born and raised in
17 Tampa, Florida. And to be very honest with
18 you, I am very proud of the state of Florida.
19 One of my responsibilities is voting, and I
20 have done that, I won't speak to that.

21 The other responsibility I think I have as
22 a citizen is to come here and to speak to you
23 about what is important to me, to LULAC, to the
24 council that I am President of, which is
25 Council 7069, and that is that you seriously

1 consider one of the two Congressional
2 districts, the new districts, that it be part
3 of central Florida, to include Hillsborough,
4 Pinellas, Polk, Manatee and the other one that
5 I can't remember at this time, but you get the
6 picture. We feel it is very important. We
7 have the count, we have the numbers and we ask
8 that you give us the district. Thank you.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
10 Ms. Rodriguez.

11 And next, Norma Reno with LULAC and then
12 Paul Anderson with the Sierra Club and then C.
13 L. Ergle.

14 MS. RENO: Good afternoon. My name is
15 Norma Reno, and I represent LULAC and I am the
16 Vice-President of Human Rights of Hillsborough
17 County and also the Director of Education for
18 the Hispanic Alliance of Tampa Bay.

19 I am here today to ask you to please
20 enforce the criteria of redistricting, which is
21 creating compact and contiguous districts,
22 trying to keep political units and community
23 within a single district and avoiding the
24 drawing of boundaries for purposes of partisan
25 advantage. It is the only way to avoid

1 manipulation of political boundaries,
2 gerrymandering and discrimination against
3 voters whose population has grown far more than
4 others.

5 The I-4 corridor represents the largest
6 growth of Latinos in the entire state. We
7 would like to have a more equitable
8 representation in the Florida Legislature.
9 Thank you very much.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
11 ma'am.

12 And now Paul Anderson from the Sierra
13 Club. Mr. Anderson? Thank you, Mr. Anderson,
14 thank you for being here today. And then next
15 C. L. -- is it Ergle? Mr. Ergle, if I
16 mispronounced your name, I beg your pardon,
17 sir.

18 MR. ERGLE: That is correct. A lot of
19 people have a problem with that name. I am a
20 member of the REC, the Republican Executive
21 Committee, and I am here to get more organized
22 as to what my duties are going to be as a
23 district Committeeman in my -- and
24 incidentally, I am 83 years old now, and I have
25 been around in Florida all my life, so I know a

1 lot about what's been going on in this state.

2 One of the things that concerns me at this
3 point is our government is going away from the
4 Constitution, and that is one of the reasons
5 why I am here is to reinvigorate our
6 Constitution here in the state and the United
7 States. So it is very important to me as to
8 what my duties are going to be and how this
9 redistricting is going to come to me in doing
10 my job. So thank you for hearing me and --
11 very much.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

13 Next is Ray Dimbrath and then Karen
14 Landers and then Jerry -- I think it is Jerry
15 Showers.

16 Mr. Dimbrath, thank you very much for
17 being here today, and if you will come down
18 front, we would love to hear your testimony,
19 because it says you represent yourself, and
20 that is fantastic.

21 MR. DIMBATH: That is correct. I have
22 noticed -- this has been a very interesting
23 experience, because one thing, it seems like we
24 have a lot of what I would call special
25 interest groups that have been speaking and a

1 lot of -- a lot of pressure groups maybe, but I
2 just want to take the moment to thank all those
3 who came, those that are sitting out here and
4 those at the table up there.

5 I grew up in Miami. In 1964, I was 21,
6 and that is when you first were able to vote,
7 but I have always followed these things as much
8 as possible, and I think this has been one of
9 the most interesting and open discussions of
10 reapportionment I have ever seen in this state,
11 so I thank you for that.

12 Also, some people say it is hard to know
13 who their Congressman is. Mine used to be Adam
14 Putnam here in Polk County. Now we have Dennis
15 Ross, so I don't think that is so hard to know.

16 And, finally, I just -- I am a registered
17 Republican, but I wanted to thank Lori Edwards
18 here, who is our elections supervisor in Polk
19 County, she is Democrat, but she has done a
20 very good job, and a few years ago, I was a
21 poll worker -- I was a poll worker for one of
22 the elections, and I appreciate comments like
23 hers that were made, which I thought were very
24 well thought up and really addressed some of
25 the issues that are very important here. And I

1 can't help but say it seemed to contrast her
2 and then the other person who gets up and just
3 makes all these personal attacks on people they
4 don't like and disagree with. So, anyhow, I am
5 publicly thanking Lori Edwards for her job here
6 in Polk County.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir.
8 Appreciate it very much.

9 Ms. Landers, you are up, and Jerry Showers
10 and then Steve Hall.

11 Ms. Landers, we appreciate your taking
12 your time to come before the Committee, and you
13 are recognized.

14 MS. LANDERS: Thank you. This issue I
15 have worked on since 2004, so it has been
16 longer than just what was on the ballot. It
17 has been a long, long process. We are thankful
18 to the voters of Florida for passing it with
19 63 percent of the vote. It was a heavy lift
20 that we didn't really, frankly, think we could
21 pull off, but it was done.

22 Now, I beg you to stop humiliating us
23 nationwide, late-night TV. Give us fair,
24 compact, contiguous districts, please.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

1 Is it Gary or Jerry, sir?

2 MR. SHOWERS: It is Gary.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Gary Showers, then Steve
4 Hall and then Casey Welch with Florida Citrus
5 Mutual.

6 Mr. Showers, thank you for coming.

7 MR. SHOWERS: And certainly, I live in the
8 City of Bartow, Florida.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Would you hold the
10 microphone up so -- I know everybody would want
11 you to hear you.

12 MR. SHOWERS: I am a citizen of Bartow,
13 Florida. My Representative is Seth McKeel, and
14 certainly he is not a part of this
15 redistricting committee or the process now.
16 And I think the overwhelming consensus of
17 the -- most of the majority of the people here
18 in the audience tonight is to go ahead and
19 formulate the maps.

20 At the end of the day, certainly we can
21 have input from the citizens, but at the end of
22 the day, the Legislature is responsible for
23 drawing those maps, and in order to have any
24 intelligent input into the way those maps are
25 drawn, then we would need to see those maps.

1 So we are going to ask that the process be
2 expedited and give every other agency the
3 opportunity to debate that process and to give
4 it a rubber stamp, and that would be my
5 comments today.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
7 Mr. Showers.

8 And next we are privileged to hear from
9 Steve Hall, then Casey Welch, and then if
10 Victor Story will be ready to speak.

11 Mr. Hall, we are grateful that you took
12 time to come today.

13 MR. HALL: Thank you. I appreciate the
14 time, and I also appreciate you all coming to
15 hear the public input about the redistricting.

16 But a lot of folks think that the
17 redistricting, in fact, is over, because they
18 voted for Amendment 5 and 6, and so a lot of us
19 are here today to just tell you all do what the
20 amendment said to do. That is why 63 percent
21 of the voters voted for it.

22 My concern is that the districts as they
23 stand today obviously are skewed. I remember
24 Dave Aronberg's district down in south Florida
25 goes all of the way from the east coast to the

1 west coast, with a lake in between. And it is
2 unreasonable to think that the constituents of
3 that district can go from one side of the state
4 to the other to actually talk to their
5 Representative without having to drive all the
6 way up to Tallahassee. So they need to be more
7 compact.

8 I supported Amendment 5 and 6, obviously,
9 and I have seen other states where they are
10 like that. It makes more sense. Our
11 districts, as they stand right now, don't even
12 make any sense.

13 But I am here today because one of my
14 biggest concerns is this \$30 million that was
15 appropriated to fight the districts that
16 everyone actually voted for. And then, of
17 course, on the other side, the State has an
18 obligation to defend the fight against
19 Amendment 5 and 6, but we passed the amendment
20 by 63 percent, that is more than most people
21 got in the last election, so obviously the
22 majority of the people want it done, and I
23 think that they've elected you all to do what
24 they want done and I think they have spoken
25 very loudly and we need to move on with it.

1 I disagree with anyone who doesn't think
2 that we should have example maps here today to
3 look at. I think that you could have brought
4 the maps so that we could look at what the
5 suggestion currently is in case there's any
6 problems, or would we have any problems with
7 the way any of the districts were drawn, then
8 we might could say, "Oh, well, maybe this one
9 shouldn't be that way, maybe the line should be
10 on the county line or on the ZIP code line or
11 some other line other than what you all may
12 have drawn the lines as," and then you could go
13 back and adjust them according to the input the
14 people give here in these hearings today and
15 throughout the state.

16 I applaud you for going around the state
17 and getting input, but it is hard for us to
18 look at the districts as we -- we feel they
19 should have been drawn the way we voted, as
20 opposed to just giving some input on something
21 that is not even there and just saying make
22 them simple. That is too easy. We would like
23 to look at the districts and have input as to
24 exactly how they are drawn.

25 But, again, I thank you all for coming. I

1 look forward to seeing you all again when you
2 get to Orlando, because I will be at theirs --
3 those too. Thank you.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Mr. Hall, I hope you
5 can stay to the end of the hearing, because I
6 think some of the questions that you raised we
7 will be able to give some factual information
8 about that might help you.

9 MR. HALL: Okay, thank you.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much.

11 Next, Casey Welch with Florida Citrus
12 Mutual, followed by Victor Story with Florida
13 Citrus Mutual, followed by Carl J. Strang, Jr.

14 Mr. Welch, thank you for coming.

15 MR. STORY: You are going to catch a
16 break. Mr. Welch has yielded to me. I am
17 Victor Story, and I am President of Florida
18 Citrus Mutual.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Glad to have you here,
20 sir.

21 MR. STORY: Okay, sir. So I am here -- I
22 am here today, I am a citrus grower from
23 primarily the southeast part of the county. I
24 am, as I said, President of Florida Citrus
25 Mutual, I am also past President of the Polk

1 County Farm Bureau, and I have also served in
2 some other elected positions in Polk County in
3 appointed positions, and I would just like to
4 represent the interest of the agricultural
5 community here in the county.

6 You know, we've got a rather diverse
7 county. We've got two population centers in
8 Lakeland and Winter Haven, and then we also
9 have an emerging population center to the
10 northeast part of the county, and then the rest
11 of the county is relatively rural, dominated by
12 agriculture, and I would just like to encourage
13 you as you make your deliberations that we are
14 well-represented, I think we are
15 well-represented now, we have five members of
16 the House, we have three members of the Florida
17 Senate and we have three members of the
18 Florida -- I mean, excuse me, of Congress in
19 Polk County, and I would encourage you not to
20 dilute that representation, because we are
21 large and diverse. And I would encourage you
22 to keep the Winter Haven area, the Lakeland
23 area and perhaps the northeast area that has
24 emerged as a population center as distinct
25 areas, and then the northwest side of the

1 county and the south side of our county are
2 rural and agricultural, and I would encourage
3 you not to dilute those by including them in
4 other population centers.

5 Okay. I would encourage you -- as you
6 well know, during this last recession, the ag
7 community has kind of held the state of Florida
8 together. We have provided jobs, we have
9 provided economic activity, and I would
10 encourage you very much not to dilute our
11 influence in the State Legislature and in the
12 United States Congress. Thank you very much.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Story.

14 Carl Strang is next, and then following
15 Mr. Strang is Andy, I think it is Crossfield,
16 and I apologize if I mispronounce that, and
17 then Rex Blenz.

18 Mr. Strang, thank you very much for coming
19 today. You are recognized.

20 MR. STRANG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and
21 thank you and your colleagues for your patience
22 and your good humor in tolerating all of this.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: That is why we get paid
24 the big bucks.

25 MR. STRANG: The reason I am here is that

1 if I let you all perpetuate or carry on the
2 present ridiculous, egregious districting that
3 we've got now, then I would kick myself for
4 another ten years if I didn't at least stand up
5 here today.

6 I am really impressed by the great number
7 of people who are here today. I think it is
8 wonderful that this many people care about
9 government. It also scares me a little bit
10 that there are that many people who are very
11 unhappy with the ruling class.

12 I urge you mainly to produce a districting
13 map that is compact and that is fair and
14 balanced and that does not take into account
15 ethnicity or race or any other consideration.
16 We want to comply with the Civil Rights Act
17 of -- the Voters Rights Act of 1965, but be
18 fair.

19 I want to urge you to rise above your own
20 personal interest, rise above the interest of
21 political parties, rise above the rights of the
22 claims of the incumbents and give us a product
23 that is -- that is fair and equitable and
24 passes. The state of Iowa, I understand, has
25 done a wonderful job in their redistricting

1 efforts, and if Iowa can do it, then Florida
2 can do it.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: And they grow good corn
4 there, too.

5 MR. STRANG: That's right.

6 And, in closing, I would like to echo and
7 parrot what Lori Edwards says: Please be
8 mindful of the boundaries of existing political
9 bodies here, because what -- the status quo or
10 districting without regard to existing
11 political boundaries certainly confounds and
12 requires Herculean work by the elections
13 supervisors, but it makes things -- it confuses
14 the voters in an awful lot of cases, and I urge
15 you please to keep that in mind. And here
16 endeth the lesson, thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. I
18 wish all epistles -- all epistle lessons were
19 that good.

20 And next -- is it Andy Crossfield? Did I
21 get that right, sir? Crossfield. And then Rex
22 Blenz and then Noah Bolin.

23 Mr. Crossfield, thank you for coming.

24 MR. CROSSFIELD: Thank you for coming. I
25 really appreciate the great turnout from the

1 elected officials in Tallahassee.

2 I am Andy Crossfield, I am the President
3 of the Lakeland Democratic Club, and I would
4 like to take issue a little bit with the
5 gentleman from Citrus Mutual. We do not have
6 good representation here in Polk County. There
7 are more registered Democrats here in Polk
8 County than Republicans, yet we have no
9 Democratic representation at all, have not for
10 years. Well, she is an elected official, but
11 not in Tallahassee, pardon me, from you guys
12 who make the laws up there.

13 My point though would be especially to
14 that, because you have seen how many people are
15 here?

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Could we have order?
17 Let's listen to Mr. Crossfield. He has
18 something he would like to say. Let's listen
19 to him.

20 MR. CROSSFIELD: You see how many people
21 are here? I hope that the rest of the meetings
22 that you have around the state are as well
23 attended, because this is a very important
24 issue. And the reason it is important -- and
25 let me illustrate how important this is,

1 because there are still more Democrats
2 registered in the state of Florida than
3 Republicans, and yet Democrats only make up
4 41 percent of the state houses, the House and
5 the Senate, and the all-important Chairs of
6 committees, Democrats are only five percent.
7 Now, this is wrong. We have to have more
8 representation. We have to have more
9 representation by party, we have to have more
10 equality in representation by race and we have
11 to have more representation in policy, because
12 there are people who live on the coast that
13 have separate understandings and issues than
14 the people who live in the center of the state,
15 as is to the insurance companies -- is it
16 Citizens Mutual or Citizens what -- there is no
17 reason that the people in the center of the
18 state should subsidize their insurance policies
19 to the people who live on the coast. We are
20 talking about -- we are talking about
21 representation.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Andy, Andy, Andy, we would
23 love to hear your views about insurance, but
24 let's keep it to redistricting right now.

25 MR. CROSSFIELD: It all boils down to

1 representation. And if this is a fair and
2 transparent process, then we will all -- I hope
3 that everyone here recognizes how important
4 this is, and I will count this a success if the
5 results from the Legislature mirror the results
6 of the people who live in the state.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
8 Mr. Crossfield. We appreciate it.

9 And next is Rex Blenz, and following Mr.
10 Blenz is Noah Bolin and then Wayne Guest.

11 Mr. Blenz, thank you for taking time to
12 come here today. You are recognized, sir.

13 MR. BIENZ: It is Bienz, B-i-e-n-z.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Bienz, yes, sir.

15 MR. BIENZ: You got the L in there.

16 First let's forget about politics. I
17 would like to address the subject of the
18 census. The census identifies populations by
19 population -- by census blocks, which you can
20 use then to count the people. But it also
21 identifies living units. Living units may or
22 may not have people in them. You need to count
23 those. You are working for ten years ahead.
24 Those living units, which now say vacant,
25 reposessed, for sale, will have people in

1 them. They need to be counted or at least
2 considered when you draw your lines, because
3 those are people of the future that will be
4 there for the ten years that we are talking
5 about.

6 I tried to follow the three Bs of public
7 speaking: Be brief, be sincere, be seated.
8 Thank you.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you,
10 Mr. Bienz.

11 Noah Bolin. Mr. Bolin, and then Wayne
12 Guest with the Ft. Meade Historical Society,
13 and then Carol Ann Sargeant.

14 Mr. Bolin, it says here you represent the
15 redneck party.

16 MR. BOLIN: Yes, sir, that is correct.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Let's see your neck. You
18 are recognized. Thank you for being here.

19 MR. BOLIN: Okay. Thank you very much.

20 First of all, I would like to take a
21 little time to remind the Legislature of one of
22 its most important duties. That is constituent
23 service. That means serving your electorate,
24 not the other way around. Asking us to draw
25 the lines and to do your jobs is a slap in the

1 face to Florida voters. I would like to ask
2 the Legislature, rhetorically, of course, why
3 is it that you ask us to do your jobs and to
4 hear our voices now when you have been
5 reluctant to do so in the past such as the cry
6 of teachers and students when you passed the
7 merit-pay bill.

8 Furthermore, I ask the Legislature to step
9 up to the plate, provide us with sample maps,
10 maps, I would like to add, that elaborate -- or
11 maps, I would like to add, that are fair to the
12 people of Florida, and to stop using taxpayer
13 money to fight the will of the people for your
14 own interests, and to move the process forward
15 in a timely manner as it should. Thank you.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Bolin.

17 Wayne Guest with the Ft. Meade Historical
18 Society, then Carol Ann Sargeant and then
19 Concepcion Scharan, I think, I'm sorry if I
20 mispronounced the last name.

21 Mr. Guest, thank you for coming, and we
22 are grateful for your testimony today.

23 MR. GUEST: Thank you, Senator. I need
24 more than three minutes, because I cannot
25 introduce myself in three minutes.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, you got three, so
2 take your best shot.

3 MR. GUEST: My best shot is on
4 redistricting is to look at the districts and
5 look at the communities and look at the county
6 lines, all right. If you look at the
7 population of Polk County, for example, we've
8 got how many people now, approaching 600,000.
9 In this county, we've got 70,000 vets. If you
10 look at that population alone in this county,
11 we have a large group that's related to the
12 military, which our closest place is MacDill
13 Air Force Base. But if you look at the
14 districts and the way they should be drawn, and
15 the comments have been made earlier that if you
16 live in Ft. Myers, you got to go slap to the
17 east coast to see your Representative. If you
18 look at some areas of this county where it goes
19 from -- the state where it goes to Orlando to
20 Jacksonville, if you look at Polk County again,
21 how big this county is and the population and
22 the way we should be served by the folks we
23 send to Tallahassee, that is not happening,
24 period.

25 All I ask for is, number one, we have Fair

1 Districts. Those districts serve the
2 communities and the cities, and if you look at
3 Lakeland, Winter Haven, Haines City area
4 alone -- I am not going south in Polk County
5 where the agriculture is, because I was born
6 there. My grandfather was born down there in
7 1885, so I've got some roots here, I know
8 something about it.

9 What I see happening now at these hearings
10 and the way it is going, and I will sum up by
11 this, come next year, late spring, we are going
12 to be the same way in Tallahassee that we are
13 in Washington, DC, right now, very
14 dysfunctional. Look what's happened to our
15 national debt, what we're trying to do there,
16 and all of a sudden, we are going to
17 Tallahassee next spring, and redistricting is
18 going to be the same way because you won't do
19 it fair, and, therefore, I am going to send
20 money to somebody to take it to court to make
21 sure it is fair. It's got to be fair so that
22 we, the people -- if you notice my shirt with
23 the American flag on it, it says "United we
24 stand," I mean that. I have been shot at in a
25 foxhole more than once, and I believe we've got

1 to be together to do it, and right now we are
2 not. And if y'all do the redistricting wrong,
3 look at my shirt, we will not be united. Thank
4 you for your time.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for your
6 service. Thank you for service to our country,
7 Mr. Guest.

8 Next, Carol Ann Sargeant, and then
9 Concepcion, and I apologize to -- to her for
10 mispronouncing her last name. I think it is
11 Scharan or Shawn.

12 Ms. Sargeant, thank you for coming today.

13 MS. SARGEANT: Thank you. I just briefly
14 would like to say please -- everyone else has
15 said it -- be fair, be fast, let's not wait
16 around on this.

17 I would love to see the lawsuit dropped.
18 I think it is ridiculous when the people have
19 voted one way for the state to -- people in the
20 state to try to change that. I think the
21 people have spoken, and people need to listen
22 to what has been said.

23 I was born in this county and have lived
24 on the west side of the county growing up and
25 back here now, but in the meantime, I spent 35

1 years on the east side of the county. I have
2 also been involved in many political campaigns
3 and some independent forums for all candidates,
4 and it has been so frustrating when you see
5 people, I mean, all the way to the east coast,
6 all the way to the west coast. Again, it is
7 not fair to the people who are campaigning to
8 have such drawn-out districts, it is not fair
9 to the people who are being represented who
10 cannot contact easily their Representative on
11 particular issues if they want to go see them.

12 Again, I would urge all of you, it's been
13 urged before, to not go with your own little
14 agendas, but to look at what the people of the
15 state are asking you to do, to be fair, to be
16 contiguous and to do it soon. Thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
18 ma'am. Very helpful testimony.

19 And now I am going to make my apologies.
20 Concepcion, will you help me with your last
21 name, ma'am? I feel so badly that I can't read
22 it. It is my eyes.

23 MS. SCHARAR: It is a German name, and I
24 am from Cuba, so my pronunciation is Scharar.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Scharar?

1 MS. SCHARAR: Yes, sir.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, you are recognized,
3 and thank you very much for staying with us
4 during this hearing. We're delighted to hear
5 what you have to say.

6 MS. SCHARAR: Well, I really don't have
7 that much to say about the subject, but I do
8 have -- I do want to say, you know, I come from
9 Cuba, I was born in Cuba, I am an American
10 citizen, and I do not expect you or anybody
11 else to give me any special areas or any
12 special anything. All I want to do is to be a
13 citizen and to vote as a citizen of the United
14 States for people that are going to represent
15 them, represent me, who don't necessarily have
16 to be from Cuba, you know, because if they have
17 the same values and the same beliefs that I
18 have, that is all that I need. So when people
19 talk about all these civil rights and all those
20 things, I don't know what they are talking
21 about. As long as I have my right to vote, and
22 I have -- and I have -- I have always been
23 treated fairly in this country, and I don't --
24 I don't think you should have any special
25 districts going on race or national origin or

1 anything like that. Thank you.

2 And, by the way, to Andy, you know, who
3 was complaining that enough Democrats are in
4 the House and the Senate, maybe the Democrats
5 in this state are voting Republican.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much for
7 your testimony.

8 We have reached the place in our hearing
9 where everyone who has signed up to speak has
10 had the opportunity to speak. Is there anyone
11 who would like to speak who's not -- who did
12 not sign up, but now that you have heard
13 others, you would like an opportunity to speak?
14 This is not an opportunity for second chances
15 if you have already spoken.

16 Would a member of the Sergeant's office or
17 the Reapportionment Committee give this young
18 lady a card, please? Please come forward,
19 ma'am. You can fill the card out later. We
20 just want to know who you are. Thank you for
21 sitting through the hearing and thank you for
22 taking time to come with us today and talk
23 about this issue.

24 MS. BAILEY: Thank you, Senator. I would
25 like to say that I, too, am from Polk County,

1 and I would like to see a district that
2 reflects all the people in the county.

3 I am Doris Moore Bailey. I am the Chair
4 of the National Congress of Black Women, so I
5 speak for this organization. We just started
6 in February with more than 110 plus members,
7 and so today I stand because we will work with
8 the coalition to make sure the lines are decent
9 and the lines will represent all of us.

10 Civil rights is important to us, and I
11 think each of you know that as well it's
12 important to all of us, and so we can't
13 disregard that, as was stated before, because
14 we have had people to die for their rights.

15 So we appreciate you being here today,
16 thank each of you for listening, and God speed
17 to do the right thing.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am. Thank
19 you.

20 Is there anyone else who would like to
21 speak who hasn't had the opportunity? Ma'am,
22 would you come forward, and would a member of
23 our staff please give this lady a card so that
24 she may fill it out? And would you identify
25 yourself, please, ma'am, for the Committee?

1 MS. STANLEY: I'm Zita Stanley, and I
2 represent the computer illiterate.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: A large -- a large and
4 influential constituency.

5 MS. STANLEY: I can send an e-mail, I can
6 check out a book from the library, but that is
7 it. But it seems to me that there should be
8 computer programs that could generate on the
9 basis of county lines and population, and
10 relieve you of the responsibility of
11 accusations of slander, you know, of being
12 unfair. And I was just wondering if you have
13 started with a computer program.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, since you are the
15 last speaker -- is there anybody else who
16 wanted to speak? That might be a good place
17 for answers to some of the questions that have
18 been raised. The fact is that there are
19 computer programs, and they -- a member of our
20 staff -- believe me, I am pretty techno-stupid,
21 and they got me in 15 minutes to a place where
22 I could use the computer program to do exactly
23 what you are talking about. But our
24 Constitution says that at the end of the day
25 our elected representatives have to draw the

1 maps, but they can use computer programs.
2 Those programs are available, and if a member
3 of our staff would please talk with this lady
4 and show her -- do the 15 minutes if you have
5 the time, and you, too, can draw those maps
6 using the very ingredients you just described.

7 MS. STANLEY: Thank you.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

9 Let's go now to the part of our hearing
10 where we are able to have some feedback on some
11 of the questions or questions of fact that have
12 been raised, and let me first turn to any
13 members of the House of Representatives who are
14 with us today, any comments that you might wish
15 to make, any articulation of issues, any
16 proposals you might wish to make to this group.
17 Yes, sir, Representative Nehr.

18 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Thank you,
19 Mr. Chairman, and thank everybody for being
20 here today. I know there's lots of things you
21 could have been doing.

22 There have been some comments during the
23 meeting on questions about other states already
24 completing their redistricting plans, and the
25 question was why maybe -- why hasn't Florida

1 done the same thing, and I would like to
2 address those comments, if I could.

3 You are right, a handful of states have
4 already completed their redistricting, because
5 some of them have had odd-year elections, and
6 we have even-year elections, and that makes a
7 big difference. Or they also have very early
8 primaries, earlier than us, and they are
9 required, not because of expedient -- not
10 because they wanted to, just because they had
11 to do it out of necessity. And sometimes, I
12 just want to explain, that it wasn't always the
13 most open and transparent thing that was done.
14 States like Illinois, for example, where the
15 majority party went into a back room for a
16 couple of days, came out with some maps and
17 said, "Here's the maps, take them or leave
18 them," that was not very transparent at all,
19 did not allow any public input at all. You
20 know, Florida has one of the most public and
21 transparent process for redistricting in the
22 entire United States.

23 A VOICE: (Inaudible).

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am, now, we allowed you
25 to speak. Now, you have asked for feedback,

1 you have asked for questions to be answered.
2 We would appreciate your kindness in showing
3 the same respect the Committee showed to you.
4 Ma'am, ma'am, we would like to ask you to be
5 quiet for a moment, let the Representative
6 speak. We will let Representatives of both
7 parties speak, and then we will conclude our
8 hearing.

9 Representative Nehr, you are recognized.

10 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Thank you. The
11 Committee meeting has decided that we will have
12 what is called a listening tour to make sure
13 that everybody has an opportunity to let us
14 know how they feel that the districts should be
15 drawn. We are going to start our committee
16 meetings the first week in September, and as
17 one of the Chairmen of the Senate Redistricting
18 Committee, I can assure you that we will try to
19 get the maps done as quickly as possible to
20 give everybody an opportunity, not only the
21 Legislators, but also the public, to comment on
22 that, and we will also try to get the maps done
23 as quickly as possible so that we can vote on
24 them as soon as possible in the Legislature,
25 once it starts.

1 As it has been said before, and I just
2 want to reiterate, our Constitution does not
3 allow us to vote or act on the maps before
4 2012, and that is what we will do as soon as
5 possible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Representative
7 Nehr.

8 Representative Legg, you are recognized.

9 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: Thank you, Senator,
10 Mr. Chairman. First I just want to say thank
11 you for letting us start this process by
12 listening.

13 I come from west Pasco, and to be very up
14 front, I know very little about the
15 demographics of Polk County, you know, and I
16 have learned a lot today. I am hearing
17 especially individuals about how the county is
18 unique and from the north and the east and
19 west, how there's different populations, you
20 know.

21 I want to say thank you for letting us
22 start by listening first, listening, because I
23 feel as someone from west Pasco, I need to
24 listen to the people here in Polk County before
25 I produce or even look at anything on a map,

1 you know, before this Committee even started,
2 listening to people from Frostproof and Lake
3 Wales about how their community is a little bit
4 different than folks maybe from Bartow or from
5 Winter Haven or Auburndale. I greatly
6 appreciate the process of not forcing us to
7 come with a preconceived -- some hick from west
8 Pasco writing a map for someone in Polk County
9 without even listening to anyone here first. I
10 enjoy listening to the folks, and the first
11 time I ever heard that Polk County has some
12 unique communities that I've never heard of
13 before, and as I am learning this from this
14 community here, when I go back to Tallahassee
15 and as I start to put pen to paper, I have
16 learned a lot about how this community is
17 different and how they have some unique
18 representation that I didn't know before here
19 today. So thank you for letting us listen to
20 folks before we come with some preconceived
21 ideas.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Representative
23 Legg.

24 Other comments from members of the House
25 of Representatives?

1 Comments from members of the Senate who
2 are here? Senator Storms.

3 SENATOR STORMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and
4 can I say thank you for your unflappability.
5 You are pretty unflappable and unfeelingly
6 polite, and I appreciate that about you.

7 I would just like to say that even this
8 very morning, I took the opportunity to work on
9 drawing the maps, and I -- and I listened to
10 some of the comments that folks have made, and
11 it seems that some -- maybe because you are not
12 familiar with the process, that you are kind of
13 cavalier about "Just go draw the maps, how hard
14 is it and be fair about it." Let me just tell
15 you, it is very difficult. The reason why we
16 are asking you to go draw the map, at least
17 from Senator Storm's perspective, the reason
18 why I am asking you to go draw the map is so
19 that you will know the difficulty of the job
20 that you have tasked us to do.

21 It isn't as easy as you say. For
22 instance, I was -- just, for instance, right.
23 So if you draw a congressional district, it has
24 to be -- we are trying to get it within plus or
25 minus one, one person, one person, one vote.

1 So in order to do that, you can't just pick up
2 a county. I mean, this morning when I was
3 doing it, you can't point at the county and put
4 that into District 1, point at the next county,
5 put it into District 2, point at the next
6 county, because next thing you know, you have
7 6,000 extra people in that district. So now I
8 got to lose 6,000 extra people. Well, how do I
9 do that? Now I've got to go down, I can't go
10 down to the county, I've got to change the
11 program and go down to what are called the
12 VTDs. Those are the voter tabulation
13 districts. They are bigger than census blocks.
14 So then I might be able to lose 600 people from
15 my VTD. So I pick up two of them, but wait a
16 minute, it took me out of a city, it took out
17 part of a road of a city. So now we don't want
18 to do that, because you want to keep your
19 cities together, isn't that right? Isn't that
20 what you have asked? And you want it to be
21 compact. So now I go back and I say, okay,
22 well, now, let me go down by census block. I
23 will leave that VTD alone, because census block
24 is drilling down even smaller, so I am going to
25 try and put in the census block into it, and

1 now that is what I am trying to do. And then I
2 find out that now that I am 200 short. Now
3 I've got to add people back in.

4 When I finish this whole thing with this
5 district, now I -- now since I have been in
6 this small, little -- I have magnified it,
7 right? Now I have to come back and take the
8 zoom view and see what the thing looks like.
9 Because why? You are going to look at it and
10 say it is not compact, because I've had to draw
11 it according to how the people are, right, to
12 get the population. Now I look at it, and I go
13 well, it's got this funky little squiggly thing
14 over here. How do I square it up? And so I
15 say to my staff, "Let's square that up, let's
16 lose this little squiggly thing, get that out
17 and make it square," and now I have to go back.

18 That doesn't even include the things that
19 you are asking me to do about minority
20 population districts. As I understand, 5 and
21 6, the primary consideration is you want
22 compactness and communities of interest. Is
23 that about the size of it, or have I
24 misunderstood what you have asked? Is that
25 about the size of it? Just nod your heads or

1 shake them no. Okay. So that means that I am
2 not starting with minority access issues. I
3 didn't look at race, I didn't look at it, I
4 just looked at pure population. And in order
5 to do this with my state, I said, okay, what do
6 I do, do I start in the middle, pick a county
7 in the middle and go out that way with my
8 districts? Or is it better to swap out, do one
9 from the top of the state, one from the bottom,
10 one from the top of the state, one from the
11 bottom? That way I will meet in the middle,
12 and the likelihood is less that I will have a
13 district with 32 people in it and I've got to
14 change the whole thing all over again. Do you
15 understand?

16 I am telling you all this only to say that
17 I am not coming here, you know, I am not -- I
18 am working hard to do the thing that you have
19 asked me to do. Nobody here is working with
20 me. I am not working on some secret plan to
21 overthrow the government. I haven't even
22 looked at my own district. I have started in
23 another part of the state, and it -- let the
24 chips fall where they may. But as I understand
25 it, what you are about to do is put yourself in

1 contravention to people in -- particularly in
2 the minority communities who are very concerned
3 about not just whether they have a voting
4 right, not just whether or not they can vote
5 the person that they choose to, but whether or
6 not it matters if they have enough Senators
7 that look like them, that speak like them. And
8 in my district, I represent Beesville.
9 Beesville was settled by emancipated slaves
10 when Lincoln signed the Emancipation
11 Proclamation. It matters to them. If they
12 have -- if they can point to their sons and
13 say, "There is Senator Gary Siplin, and he is a
14 black man, and you can be a Senator, too, he
15 looks like you," and if that does not matter to
16 you, I am just here to tell you that people
17 that I represent, it does matter to some of
18 them. But I am doing what the voters asked me
19 in 5 and 6, and I just -- you may not trust me,
20 you may not vote for me for dog catcher, I
21 don't know. But I will just tell you, I am
22 here to say to you I am working as hard as I
23 can to do what you asked me to do, and I am not
24 trying to, you know, do anything bad here. I
25 am just trying to do my job.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: We have made a list --
2 Speaker Designate Weatherford has made a list
3 of the other comments that were made so that we
4 can at least provide some factual information.
5 Sometimes things get put in the bloodstream.
6 And I come from a little town called Niceville,
7 Florida. It really is. We've got Doris' Cafe
8 in Niceville, and if you start a rumor in
9 Doris' Cafe, if you say something is true at
10 breakfast time, by the end of the day,
11 everybody in Niceville will swear to God that
12 it is true, even if we have said that we are
13 going to move Niceville out in the middle of
14 the Gulf of Mexico. So sometimes things get
15 put in the bloodstream, somebody gets an e-mail
16 that says, "Go to the hearing and say these
17 things," sometimes it is true, but sometimes it
18 is not. But, Mr. Speaker, you are recognized
19 to provide any concluding comments.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
21 very much, Mr. Chairman. I just -- I want to
22 echo a little bit of what's been said, which is
23 the value of the feedback we've gotten today.
24 I also am another person who did not have a
25 great understanding of the difference of the

1 dynamics of Polk County, and I think today we
2 have learned that, and you have a beautiful
3 county here, it is a wonderful place and I've
4 got some close friends here and it has been a
5 real pleasure to learn more about it.

6 Mr. Chairman, I do want to take just a
7 moment to walk through a few things and clear
8 up a few inconsistencies that have come up
9 throughout this process.

10 And I also want to say there may be people
11 here who had a question that they didn't ask,
12 maybe you were too shy and you didn't want to
13 speak, or maybe a question has come up since
14 the hearing has gotten towards the close. If
15 you have a question that you have not had an
16 opportunity to ask, please, on your way out,
17 find a staff person, find me, find someone who
18 is here, and we will try to answer that for
19 you. You can also e-mail us. There's a
20 tremendous amount of ways to get in touch with
21 us. As individuals and our Committee staff, we
22 want to make sure that is available to you.

23 So, first of all, I want to thank our
24 Supervisor of Elections, Ms. Edwards, thank you
25 for being here. You had some tremendous input.

1 Really, it was very helpful. Thank you.

2 We are extremely sensitive to the
3 challenge that you talked about in regard to
4 the timeline. We are extremely sensitive to
5 that. One thing I would point out, and I will
6 make sure our staff get with you as well so you
7 can talk very directly with them, but one thing
8 is that on-line, when they talk about the dates
9 of when we have to pass maps, those are
10 deadlines, but not necessarily our goals.
11 Obviously we want to pass them in a very
12 meaningful time frame so that we do make sure
13 that we are not putting ourselves in a
14 situation where we are past qualifying and
15 putting our Supervisors of Elections in a
16 position where you can't do your job. We want
17 you to look good, we want to give you the
18 resources and the ability to do your job, and
19 everyone on this Committee is focused on doing
20 that. And so thank you for bringing that issue
21 up, it is a real issue, we are sensitive to it,
22 we are doing everything we can to make sure
23 that does not happen.

24 Also, in regard to the timeline in
25 general, I thought -- Representative Nehr, you

1 touched on it very briefly, but there are other
2 states who have done this faster than we have,
3 but the reason they have done it faster and
4 voted faster is because they didn't take the
5 time to listen to the people. They didn't take
6 the time to hear from the citizens of their
7 state about what they thought in regard to how
8 the maps should look.

9 As it was stated at the very beginning
10 when I gave my opening comments, maps cannot be
11 voted on, two of the three maps, the
12 legislative maps, cannot be voted on until
13 January of 2012, and that is with us moving
14 session up quickly. But, again, very important
15 for everyone to understand, we are not trying
16 to drag this out, we are not trying to make
17 this a long process. But what we are trying to
18 do is take the summer to go around the state.
19 We have a diverse state, it is a geographically
20 unique state, and we are trying to travel the
21 state all the way from starting in Pensacola,
22 which we were there about a month and a half
23 ago, finishing in the Keys, we are going to hit
24 every pocket to hear from citizens who have
25 different ideas, different views, and want an

1 opportunity to explain to us the dynamics of
2 their county just like you have done for us
3 today.

4 There's been a lot of discussion about the
5 chicken versus the egg debate about the maps,
6 right? Should the chicken come first or should
7 the egg come first or vice-versa? Well, I want
8 to give everyone a little bit of insight on
9 that.

10 The first is I believe that it is always
11 better to give the citizens of Florida the
12 opportunity to start the conversation, as
13 opposed to politicians. We start a lot of
14 conversations first and we ask you to comment
15 later, if at all, but this is one rare instance
16 where we are asking you to start it for us.
17 And I think that is a noble cause, and we are
18 going to hold firm to that. But, also, we have
19 some people who agree with us and who are some
20 advocates, and in 2009, one of the principal
21 authors of Amendments 5 and 6, which every
22 person up here has sworn to uphold and defend,
23 a gentleman by the name of John Mills, a former
24 Speaker of the House, wrote that the intent of
25 the new redistricting standards is for the

1 public to have the opportunity to comment
2 before and after the Legislature draws initial
3 maps. That is coming from one of the -- one of
4 the directors and originators of Amendments 5
5 and 6. In 2010, the Chairperson for
6 Floridafairdistricts.org, a Ms. Ellen Freidin,
7 told a Joint Legislative Committee that it
8 would be impossible, ladies and gentlemen,
9 impossible to draw compliant or appropriate
10 maps until after the Legislature had first
11 heard from the public. Ladies and gentlemen,
12 these are the very people who created
13 Amendments 5 and 6, which 63 percent of my
14 county and our state voted for, and they agree
15 with us in regard to listening to you first.

16 There was a question, a very good
17 question, about the census, and I want to be
18 very clear about this. The census is taken,
19 obviously, every ten years, and the way it
20 works is every ten years, or this year -- it
21 was in 2010, it was April 2nd -- if you resided
22 in Florida on April 2nd, you were counted. It
23 didn't matter if you were legal, illegal,
24 hanging out for three or four months, if you
25 lived here on April the 2nd, you were counted.

1 That is the way -- that is a federal law about
2 how census is done. The states don't have
3 autonomy when they do that. So that is the way
4 it works. Someone brought up the case about if
5 there's a vacant home, can we count vacant
6 homes, because people will be living there one
7 day. I'm sorry, sir, but we can't do that.
8 Federal law does not allow us to do that. We
9 only count living people who are here on the
10 day of April the 2nd. So that is very -- I
11 wanted to make sure I clear that up.

12 There's been some comments about
13 litigation and lawsuits, and all I am going to
14 say about that is this: There's always
15 litigation, there's always lawsuits. Our job,
16 and, Mr. Chairman, I believe our creed as this
17 Committee is not to pay attention to litigation
18 or lawsuits, but to make sure that we uphold
19 the law. And every single person on this
20 Committee raises their right hand every two
21 years to promise to protect and to defend the
22 Constitution of the United States and of the
23 State of Florida. Amendments 5 and 6 are on
24 the Constitution of the State of Florida. We
25 will protect them, we will continue to serve

1 them and we will make sure that as they are the
2 law, we will treat them like the law and we
3 will follow them. And I want to be very clear
4 about that, Mr. Chairman as well.

5 Lastly, I want to say there's always going
6 to be people who say that the process isn't
7 open enough, that it is not transparent enough.
8 Well, ladies and gentlemen, 26 public hearings
9 at a minimum, e-mail participation, Facebook
10 participation, which we are getting a
11 tremendous amount of feedback on, maps that
12 have already been proposed to the Legislature,
13 I think we have had three or four times the
14 amount of maps proposed to the Legislature just
15 this session already, more than we had ten
16 years ago in its entirety, we are getting
17 participation, we are getting people giving us
18 feedback, and the back-end product that we come
19 up with is going to be better because of that.
20 At any point in time, any member of this
21 Committee, any member of the Legislature can
22 propose a map. There is nothing or no one
23 stopping them from doing that. And if any
24 member of this Committee wants to do that, they
25 have the ability to do so, and any member of

1 our Legislature, Republican and Democrat, can
2 do so as well.

3 But I just want to thank you for giving us
4 the opportunity to be here to listen to you, to
5 listen to your story, and Mr. Chairman, thank
6 you for running a great hearing. I think
7 everyone on this Committee knows more about
8 central Florida, having been a part of it. So
9 thank you very much.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

11 One final comment, and that is there was a
12 gentleman who spoke very eloquently about the
13 fact that 42 percent -- I think he said
14 42 percent of the population were Republicans,
15 a larger percentage were Democrats. I would
16 just go on and add, the fastest-growing group
17 of voters in Florida have no party affiliation
18 or classify themselves as Independents. So
19 then that eloquent gentlemen, I think he was
20 Chairman of the Democratic party, said -- well,
21 was he not? Okay, he identified himself as an
22 officer with the Democratic party. Perhaps he
23 misidentified himself. In any case, he was
24 eloquent. And what he said was -- what he said
25 was that he wouldn't be satisfied until the

1 same proportion of Representatives and Senators
2 were Democrats as the proportion of the
3 population.

4 Let me just offer a fact for your
5 consideration. There are 40 Senate districts,
6 40 Senate districts, 28 of them are held by
7 Republicans. So how in the world could that
8 have happened? Well, Barack Obama in 2008
9 carried 20 Senate districts. He carried eight
10 districts that elected Republican Senators.
11 Now, you can look at that through the looking
12 glass either way. You can say maybe it was
13 that President Obama had a better, more
14 persuasive campaign, maybe he messaged better,
15 because he was able to get eight districts that
16 otherwise elect Republican Senators to vote for
17 him for President. Or you could look at it the
18 other way, you could say there are eight
19 districts where a majority of the people voted
20 for Barack Obama, but then they crossed party
21 lines and voted for Republican Senators. Here
22 is the message that I get out of it, and that
23 is this: We will never be able to draw a map
24 that forces Republicans to vote for Republicans
25 and Democrats to vote for Democrats. And God

1 knows we will never be able to tell the
2 Independents what to do.

3 So I think -- I think that we are back to
4 the secret ballot. There are Democrats who
5 will vote for Republicans, there are
6 Republicans who will vote for Democrats,
7 because we vote often for the person and not
8 the party, and that is the way it ought to be.
9 So I don't know that we will be able to satisfy
10 that eloquent gentleman's template, but we will
11 satisfy the requirement that we come here, we
12 listen to your views. And this is not your
13 last chance to participate in this process.
14 This is only one of your early chances. As the
15 Speaker Designate indicated, you can continue
16 to comment on-line, you can continue to contact
17 your Representative or Senator, and if you
18 don't know who that is, Supervisor of Elections
19 is here, and she can sure tell you.

20 And the other thing is that when there are
21 maps proposed, and there are already 12
22 proposed, some of them are in the back, when
23 there are maps proposed, you can see them, you
24 can evaluate them and you can offer your
25 comments. And as the Speaker Designate

1 indicated, when we get to Tallahassee in
2 September, preparing to vote as soon as we
3 can -- and the first time we could vote would
4 be January by our Constitution -- you will have
5 the opportunity there as well to have input.
6 And, frankly, if I have my way, we will be able
7 to get as much public input as possible before
8 we cast any vote in -- even at the Committee
9 level. Every vote that is cast in any
10 Committee will be done publicly. It will be
11 done after there is an opportunity for people
12 to come forward and testify either by mail, by
13 e-mail, by phone call, by letter or in person.
14 And that is very different than having a group
15 of unelected people go in a back room and close
16 the door, that is what they do in courts, and
17 then come out and tell you what the results
18 are.

19 So we thank you for your time, for your
20 patriotism, for your concern, and
21 Representative Weatherford moves we rise.

22 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
23 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 140 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 10th day of November, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, JULY 26, 2011

8:00 A.M.

HARDEE COUNTY CIVIC CENTER

WAUCHULA, FLORIDA

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 SENATOR GAETZ: Good morning, everyone.

3 If you are here for the redistricting hearing,
4 if you could find a place, looks like we have
5 enough chairs for everybody and all of your
6 friends who stayed home, and also if our
7 members will be seated, please.

8 And before we begin our hearing this
9 morning, I wanted to, with Speaker Designate
10 Weatherford's permission, yield to
11 Representative Grimsley, whose hometown we are
12 in and who is well-known to many people here,
13 and ask her if she would make any opening
14 remarks. Representative.

15 REPRESENTATIVE GRIMSLEY: Thank you,
16 Senator Gaetz, and welcome to the redistricting
17 hearing.

18 Ten years ago we sat in this room, and I
19 remember it was full, but it wasn't at 8:00
20 a.m., so that may make a difference. My mom
21 called me on the way down and she said, "Where
22 is the meeting," and I told her, and she said
23 "Well, your dad didn't know where it was," and
24 I said, "I guess that means he is going to be
25 late." So he is retired, he says he can't get

1 anywhere at 8:00 a.m.

2 But thank you very much for coming out
3 this morning and participating in this event,
4 it is so important. And if you will recall,
5 ten years ago we sat in this room, and I heard
6 resident after resident come up and testify
7 about at the time Hardee County was paired with
8 the coast, and Highlands County was paired more
9 with Polk County, and everyone here was not
10 happy with that, and at the time, the
11 Legislature listened. I was out in the
12 audience with you at the time, and the
13 Legislature listened and made those changes,
14 and I believe we will probably hear some of the
15 same today.

16 We have already a contiguous, compact
17 district here in both the House and the Senate,
18 and I would appreciate all of you who are here,
19 if you would please be so kind as to give your
20 remarks to the panel.

21 And with that, I would like to welcome all
22 of the members to Hardee County. On behalf of
23 Representative Albritton, who couldn't be here
24 today because his grandfather is ill, he would
25 like to extend his welcome to Hardee County,

1 and we are glad that you guys are here and I
2 hope you spend a little money while you are
3 here, there's a lot of good restaurants and a
4 lot of good shopping, so please feel free to
5 contribute to our economy, and thank you again.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Chair
7 Grimsley. We appreciate being in your
8 hometown.

9 Ladies and gentlemen, we are pleased to be
10 here this morning, and I appreciate the Hardee
11 County Board of County Commissioners for
12 allowing us to use this facility. We want to
13 thank those who were able to come here. We are
14 having meetings in the morning, late in the
15 morning, in the early afternoon, late in the
16 afternoon and in the evening, all over Florida.
17 It happened that we have an early morning
18 meeting here this morning, but we really
19 appreciate those brave souls who came out and
20 have chosen to give us their opinions to help
21 shape congressional, Senate and House districts
22 for the next decade.

23 My name is Don Gaetz, I am a State Senator
24 from the Panhandle, from the central time zone.
25 I represent a district that stretches between

1 Pensacola and Panama City, and I appreciate the
2 chance to learn about concerns and specifics
3 about this part of Florida, very detailed
4 information that we have been getting in other
5 hearings that there is no way that we could
6 have gotten in an echo chamber in Tallahassee.
7 And along with my colleague, Speaker Designate
8 of the House of Representatives, Will
9 Weatherford, who is to my right, I will be
10 chairing today's hearing, which is being
11 webcast statewide by The Florida Channel over
12 the Internet.

13 And what we would like to do now so that
14 you know who you are chatting with today, we
15 would like to invite the members of the panel,
16 if they would please introduce themselves and
17 indicate what part of the state they represent.

18 Representative Nehr, can we start with
19 you, please, sir?

20 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Good morning, my
21 name is Representative Peter Nehr, and I
22 represent District 48, which is in Pinellas
23 County on the west coast.

24 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good morning, I am
25 Hazelle Rogers, State Representative for

1 District 94, representing eight cities in a
2 county that boasts approximately 1.8 million
3 residents, and the most diverse county in all
4 of the state of Florida. Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: That is
6 Broward County.

7 Good morning. I am State Representative
8 Gwyndolen Clarke-Reed, representing House
9 District 92 in the northeast part of Broward
10 County, representing seven cities.

11 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good morning,
12 State Representative Mack Bernard, District 84,
13 West Palm Beach.

14 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: Good morning,
15 Representative Tom Goodson, House Seat 29,
16 Brevard County, Indian River County.

17 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Good morning,
18 Representative Matt Caldwell, District 73,
19 which is Lee County, Lehigh Acres and Ft.
20 Myers.

21 REPRESENTATIVE ROBERSON: Good morning,
22 State Representative Ken Roberson. I represent
23 parts of Charlotte, Sarasota and Lee Counties.

24 REPRESENTATIVE STARGEL: Good morning,
25 State Representative Kelli Stargel from Polk

1 County. I represent Lakeland, Kathleen, Polk
2 City, a little bit of Davenport.

3 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Mike Horner, House
4 District 79, representing Osceola, Okeechobee,
5 Orange and Polk.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Kathleen
7 Passidomo, State Representative, District 76 in
8 Collier County. I represent the cities of
9 Naples, Marco Island, Everglades City.

10 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good morning,
11 Chuck Chestnut, House District 23, a portion of
12 Alachua County and a portion of Marion County.

13 REPRESENTATIVE EISNAUGLE: Good morning,
14 Eric Eisnaugle, represent House District 40 in
15 Orlando.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: How are you
17 doing, Ritch Workman from Brevard County,
18 District 30.

19 REPRESENTATIVE BRODEUR: Good morning,
20 Jason Brodeur, I represent parts of Volusia,
21 Orange and Seminole County, House District 33.

22 REPRESENTATIVE CRISAFULLI: Good morning,
23 Steve Crisafulli, House District 32, which is
24 east Orange and Brevard County.

25 REPRESENTATIVE PLAKON: Good morning,

1 Scott Plakon, House District 37, Orange and
2 Seminole Counties.

3 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: Good morning, John
4 Legg, represent west Pasco.

5 REPRESENTATIVE JENNE: Representative Evan
6 Jenne from District 100 -- I'm sorry, ma'am, I
7 will speak louder. Representative Evan Jenne,
8 District 100, from southeast Broward County.

9 REPRESENTATIVE ROUSON: Good morning,
10 Darryl Rouson, I represent District 55, which
11 is south Pinellas, north Manatee, north
12 Sarasota and southern Hillsborough Counties,
13 and we didn't say it today, we gave our party
14 affiliations yesterday, I am a member of the
15 party of humankind.

16 REPRESENTATIVE DIAZ: I am Jose Diaz,
17 representing District 115 in Miami, Florida.

18 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: This is Daphne
19 Campbell, District 108, Miami, Florida.

20 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good morning, I am
21 Betty Reed. I represent the eastern part of
22 Hillsborough County, which is in Tampa.

23 REPRESENTATIVE GRIMSLEY: And I am Denise
24 Grimsley, I represent District 77 in the House,
25 which is Highlands, Hendry, Glades and Collier

1 Counties.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you all. This looks
3 like, so far, the smallest hearing that we have
4 had. This is hearing, I think, number 11. We
5 are having 26 hearings around the state.
6 Sometimes the room is packed, and sometimes the
7 room is not packed. Today is a small hearing,
8 but we have committed ourselves to being
9 accessible throughout the state of Florida, so
10 we are going to small towns, we are going large
11 cities, we are going to urban areas, we are
12 going to suburban areas, we are going to areas
13 that sometimes don't get the opportunity to
14 have citizens share their views with
15 legislators at least in this large a group. So
16 notwithstanding the fact that we don't have a
17 huge crowd today, we still will value the input
18 that you have given us.

19 Our sole purpose today is to hear from the
20 public about how you believe the legal
21 standards governing redistricting should be
22 applied in your community. We are all aware
23 that Amendments 5 and 6 passed. The question
24 is, given some of the apparent areas that
25 require clarification and that require

1 conformance with other parts of the law, we are
2 very interested in knowing how you believe
3 these standards should be sorted out and
4 applied in your community so that you are
5 represented in Washington and in Tallahassee
6 fairly, equitably and sensibly.

7 And our procedures today are simple, but
8 they are very important. First, it is
9 important that you sign in. If you haven't
10 signed in, would you please raise your hand,
11 and one of our folks will get to you with a
12 card. That way, we can keep track of who is
13 here, and also it gives you an opportunity to
14 sign up for our e-mail list so that you can
15 keep track of the redistricting process as it
16 moves forward. And, also, the cards that you
17 would sign in with are cards that, if you wish,
18 you can fill out, same card, so that you would
19 have the opportunity to speak. So is there
20 anybody here who has not filled out one of
21 these cards, either just to participate by
22 observing or because you want to speak? Young
23 lady up in the front on the right. Anybody
24 else? Anybody else need to fill out one of
25 these cards?

1 We don't want to miss your testimony, so
2 if during the hearing this morning you become
3 inspired to speak, maybe somebody said
4 something that inspires you to share your views
5 or to explain some particular part of your
6 community that you think ought to be in this
7 congressional district or that Senate district,
8 or that the House district ought to be drawn in
9 a certain way in this community, if you are
10 inspired to speak, then -- hello? Would you
11 just raise your hand at that point, and we will
12 get you a card and we can add you to the
13 speaker list.

14 Before we begin, the Chair would like to
15 recognize the Speaker Designate of the Florida
16 House of Representatives, Representative Will
17 Weatherford, and Representative Weatherford
18 will explain how today's hearing fits into our
19 schedule and into the legal processes that we
20 are obliged to follow. Mr. Speaker.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
22 very much, Mr. Chairman. Ladies and gentlemen,
23 it is a pleasure to be here today. Again, my
24 name is Will Weatherford, and the district I
25 represent is District 61, which is

1 predominantly Pasco County, but also has
2 Hillsborough County in it, and I have the
3 pleasure to co-Chair this joint committee with
4 our chairman here, Mr. Gaetz. Thank you for
5 being here.

6 I wanted to, if I could just for a few
7 minutes, walk everybody through what we are
8 here to do today, and Mr. Chairman, if I may,
9 give every one a perspective as to why we are
10 here today. I think that is -- it is very
11 important to kind of step back for just a
12 moment. So if you will give me a few minutes,
13 I will walk through it with you.

14 The first is every ten years, the
15 Legislature is forced -- I say forced --
16 required to come by our Constitution and
17 redistrict the state based on increases and
18 decreases in movements that are in population.
19 Because Florida has grown dramatically over the
20 last ten years, we are adding two new
21 congressional seats, going from 25
22 congressional seats to 27.

23 When redistricting is completed,
24 congressional districts must equal in
25 population and contain 696,345 people. The 40

1 Senate districts must also be nearly equal at
2 470,000 per district, and then the 120 House
3 districts, they must be also nearly equal at
4 156,700 people.

5 As you know, we have displays at the back
6 of the room showing the current boundaries of
7 the districts in the area and the number of
8 persons which must be added or subtracted from
9 the current districts to achieve that equal
10 representation. You can see that in the back
11 of the room.

12 Equality of representation is not the only
13 legal requirement take we must follow in order
14 to make legal plans. The laws are important,
15 and the court cases that governing
16 redistricting are explained in detail in the
17 House and Senate websites. Those websites are
18 listed on the 2012 brochure, redistricting
19 brochure, that was available to you when you
20 came in. Our "Redistricting 2012" brochure
21 summarizes both federal and state laws, and it
22 outlines the topics that we hope you will be
23 discussing today at today's hearing.

24 Speaking of federal law, by the way, I do
25 think it is very important to point out this

1 morning, Mr. Chairman, that this is the first
2 meeting of five where we will be in a county
3 covered by the Section 5 of the Voting Rights
4 Act, those counties being Hardee, Hendry,
5 Collier, Hillsborough and Monroe.

6 Ladies and gentlemen, if you did not get a
7 copy of the brochure I was talking about a
8 minute ago when you came in, they are available
9 on the tables outside the meeting, and our
10 staff would be more than willing to bring you a
11 copy of that if you will just raise your hand.

12 The brochure also lists the House and
13 Senate websites. The websites are packed with
14 information about redistricting in Florida,
15 including explanations of laws and important
16 court cases governing redistricting. The two
17 websites are complementary and are updated
18 frequently. You can visit them both often, and
19 you can check back as we are adding new and
20 more relevant information of both the
21 congressional, Senate and House Districts as
22 they -- and you can watch them take shape.

23 The websites also deliver to your
24 fingertips all of the demographic information
25 that will be used in drawing districts and the

1 exact same computer programming that
2 legislators and professional staff will utilize
3 to actually draw the maps. Any member of the
4 public may participate in building plans or
5 seeing maps submitted by legislators or other
6 citizens.

7 Before, during and after this hearing,
8 Senate and House professional staff are
9 available to you or anyone to allow them to
10 show you how to utilize the simple steps of
11 going on-line, building districts and
12 submitting a plan in the weeks to come.

13 Recommendations from citizens and groups
14 of citizens will be made public -- will be
15 immediately made public. In fact, 14 public
16 submissions of partial or complete maps, and
17 about 70 written ideas for maps are available
18 on the Web today. The submission of proposed
19 maps that makes sense for your community is the
20 single most important way that you can have
21 public participation in the redistricting
22 process.

23 The redistricting schedule under which we
24 are operating is also imposed by the State
25 Constitution. The Constitution does not allow

1 us to act on state legislative maps before the
2 second year after the census. Ladies and
3 gentlemen, in other words, that means in 2012.
4 We have accelerated that process as much as we
5 possibly can by moving the 2012 session from
6 what normally starts in March up until January
7 so that we can do this as quickly as possible.

8 It has been suggested that the Legislature
9 should draw the maps first and then ask for
10 public comment. Ladies and gentlemen, we
11 believe that that puts the answer ahead of the
12 question. There should be no preconceptions
13 created by politicians or staff, but, rather,
14 public testimony should be free and
15 unrestricted. In fact, the principal author of
16 Florida's new redistricting standards and the
17 Chairperson for Fair Districts campaign are
18 both on record in agreement that the notion
19 that new maps should not be drawn before
20 getting hearings and hearing directly from the
21 public.

22 Our intent is to use the recommendations
23 made at these 26 public hearings and through
24 our Internet sites as the basis for developing
25 one or more options for district maps. We will

1 discuss those options in public meetings before
2 any single vote is taken, even in committee.
3 In other words, what we are literally saying is
4 if you look at those maps in the back of the
5 room, and they are all back there, the ones
6 that have actually been submitted to us
7 already, those are the maps that are starting
8 this process. Those are the maps and the
9 suggestions that are helping us start the
10 deliberations about what the state of Florida
11 should look like. And it is with those public
12 submissions and testimony from these meetings
13 and other public input that is throughout this
14 process that will help us and guide us to our
15 final destination.

16 So throughout this process, we hope that
17 you will continue to give us public comment, we
18 hope that you will continue to be involved and
19 we are very grateful that you are here today.

20 Mr. Chairman, I hope that this description
21 brings a little bit more clarity on the
22 schedule and the process here today, and we
23 look forward to a successful hearing. Thank
24 you.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,

1 Representative Weatherford.

2 Our purpose today is now to hear from you
3 between now and the scheduled time that our
4 hearing would end, which is, I believe eleven
5 o'clock, and we will take public testimony as
6 long as there is anyone who wishes to share
7 public testimony with us.

8 If there is time remaining, and it looks
9 like there will be this morning, we will do
10 what we do at every hearing, and that is we
11 will ask any member of this panel, Democrat or
12 Republican, House member or Senator, to comment
13 on any of the issues that they wish to comment
14 on that were raised during the hearing, to
15 answer any questions that might have been
16 posed, and then after that is concluded, then I
17 will ask Speaker Designate Weatherford to go
18 back through any questions that arose, any
19 factual issues that came up, so that we can
20 make sure we have given you the best and most
21 up-to-date information as we conclude the
22 hearing.

23 We have a number of folks have already
24 signed up, and what I would like to do, if it
25 is -- unless there is objection, is I would

1 like to call people in twos; in other words,
2 Maureen McKenna is our first speaker this
3 morning, but Rick Haberman with the Highlands
4 County Democratic Party is our second speaker,
5 so, Mr. Haberman, if you will be on deck and be
6 ready, we will start with Ms. McKenna.

7 And, Ms. McKenna, you are recognized. We
8 would love to hear your testimony this morning.
9 Thank you for taking the time to come.

10 DR. MCKENNA: Thank you very much. Is the
11 microphone working?

12 SENATOR GAETZ: It is, indeed. Everybody
13 can hear you.

14 DR. MCKENNA: Thank you. Okay, thank you.

15 I am Dr. Maureen McKenna, and I am
16 President of the Democratic Women's Club of
17 Highlands County, and we have nine people here
18 today from Highlands County and Denise
19 Grimsley. So it's nice to see a familiar face
20 in the center.

21 I am here today to read a five-stanza
22 poem: On November 2nd, 2010, we took a big
23 vote to end all the sin. So gerrymander you
24 may do no more, though it will frighten you to
25 your very core. The voters have spoken, on

1 this they were clear. Now you do what is fair,
2 or your reputation you smear. You went to
3 Tally with a strong direction, to draw the maps
4 without thought to your next election. But
5 instead of complying, you wait and wait to
6 further delay the inevitable date, to draw the
7 maps, the missing maps, which might well exist,
8 but are kept under wraps. So on this merry
9 quest we go from hearing to hearing in hopes
10 they will show, but, alas, there are no maps to
11 see, so I guess the joke is on the voters like
12 me. But maybe I am wrong, so I will give one
13 last shout to find the darn maps and remove all
14 the doubt that these hearings are phony and for
15 show dog and pony. By denying our viewing of
16 maps you create, you disc Florida voters whose
17 anger won't abate. So where are the maps, both
18 compact and fair? I cannot find them here or
19 there. I cannot find them near or far, I
20 cannot find them in the car. I cannot find
21 them at the beach, I cannot find them, so to
22 you I beseech, where are the maps?"

23 Thank you.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Henry Wadsworth

25 Longfellow, eat your heart out.

1 And now we will hear from Rick Haberman
2 with the -- also with the Highlands County
3 Democratic Party. And after Mr. Haberman, if
4 Joe Campbell, who is the Highlands County
5 Supervisor of Elections, Mr. Campbell, we thank
6 you for being here, and please be on deck, if
7 you can.

8 Mr. Haberman, thank you for coming this
9 morning. Do you have a poem?

10 MR. HABERMAN: I don't have a poem.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Then please sit down. No.
12 We are delighted to here from you.

13 MR. HABERMAN: My only question for the
14 panel is, Amendments 5 and 6 were passed by an
15 overwhelming majority of people of the state of
16 Florida, we want to know why this Legislature
17 is fighting the amendments, why so much money
18 has been spent on lawsuits against it and is
19 going to be spent fighting it. The people want
20 it, and why don't you?

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, and
22 we will make a list of those questions, and
23 after the public has had a chance to speak,
24 then we will try to get back to any points that
25 anyone has made.

1 Mr. Campbell, are you here, sir? Thank
2 you for your service to the people of this
3 county, and we are delighted to see you here
4 this morning, you are recognized.

5 MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you. Can you hear
6 me?

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, sir. And behind
8 Mr. Campbell, and I apologize if I mispronounce
9 this name, John Drezinski. John Drezinski
10 after Mr. Campbell.

11 Mr. Campbell, you are recognized.

12 MR. CAMPBELL: Thank you. Joe Campbell,
13 Supervisor of Elections of Highlands County,
14 and what I am going to say -- first I want to
15 say I appreciate what y'all are doing to
16 letting us come and speak to you about
17 redistricting. I have been through two
18 redistricting cycles before in the election
19 office, and I can tell you horror stories, but
20 we don't want to go there. We want to go with
21 the current and future.

22 And I want to tell you first off, John
23 Guthrie needs a raise. He is doing a great
24 job. We've worked with him for years and
25 years. John is doing a great job.

1 But we want to talk to you -- and I am
2 sure what I am going to say you have heard from
3 other supervisors throughout the state in
4 previous meetings and you are going to hear it
5 again. I want to talk to you about time and I
6 want to talk to you about Voting Tabulation
7 Districts.

8 Time-wise, from what we have been told, if
9 everybody, all the powers that be that actually
10 decide on the finalization of these lines, if
11 they simply meet their deadline, then we as
12 Supervisor of Elections are only going to have
13 two weeks to get those first ballots in the
14 mail to the overseas voters. Two weeks in
15 country terms ain't a lot of time. We are
16 going to -- you know, we've got to design the
17 ballot, get the ballot to the printer, get it
18 back, make sure that everybody is in the right
19 precincts, adjust our lines to go along with
20 the new legislative lines, so it is a lot to
21 do, and I know that you know that we've got a
22 big job.

23 So what we are asking is simply this:
24 Whenever you can, please speed the process up.
25 Whenever you can, please speed the process up.

1 That is all we want.

2 Plus, I want to talk about just the Voting
3 Tabulation Districts. I think that is a great
4 idea. Did you come up with that, John? Census
5 Bureau came up with it, okay, I wanted to give
6 you the credit for it. But Voting Tabulation
7 Districts, for those -- I am sure y'all know
8 what they are, the public probably don't know,
9 but those lines that we have drawn as local
10 administrators, we know where the growth is
11 going to be probably in our county in the
12 future, we know what is there now, we know
13 where -- if you are going to split us, and I
14 would like to say please keep Highlands County
15 in one congressional, one State Senate, one
16 State House, that would be great, I would love
17 y'all for that, but if you are going to split
18 me, please go along the Voting Tabulation
19 District lines.

20 And that is all we as supervisors
21 throughout the state are wanting is just to
22 remember the timelines, push the process up
23 whenever you can, give us preliminary lines,
24 anything we can work with ahead of the game and
25 go along the Voting Tabulation District lines.

1 No questions? That's all I got to say.

2 Thank you.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
4 Mr. Campbell, and let me just say that we have
5 heard this message from supervisors, and John
6 Guthrie is working with, as you probably know,
7 the state Supervisors of Elections
8 organization, and there is no intent to have
9 everybody, including the courts, play it out to
10 the last day. I think Representative
11 Weatherford or others may speak to that at the
12 end, but it is not as bad as some people may
13 have led you to believe.

14 And now we will hear from John Drezinski,
15 and I apologize if I mispronounce that name,
16 and following John, Jerry Kingsbury, if you
17 will be on deck.

18 Mr. Drezinski, how badly did I mess up
19 your name?

20 MR. DREZINSKI: Senator, you could have
21 from Warsaw, Poland. You hit it right on the
22 button.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: All right.

24 MR. DREZINSKI: First of all, I would like
25 to thank Joe Campbell. In my opinion, he is

1 probably the hardest-working Supervisor of
2 Elections I have ever come across. And he
3 stole my thunder. I agree with what he said.
4 Keep it, you know, the way it is, one, one,
5 one, you know. I see nothing wrong with our
6 districts, you know. It should just stay the
7 way it is, and that is from a Republican, and I
8 believe Highlands County is weighted slightly
9 in favor of the Democrats, but, you know, I
10 still say keep it the way we are.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
12 And next, Jerry Kingsbury, and following
13 Mr. Kingsbury, Robert Gillmore, please.

14 Mr. Kingsbury, we are delighted you are
15 here, and thanks for taking time. You are
16 recognized.

17 MR. KINGSBURY: You're welcome, and I
18 thank you for having this meeting and inviting
19 the population to come in and offer our
20 opinions.

21 I am from Lake Placid in Highlands County,
22 and I would like to just add my support to
23 maintaining our current District 77 as it is.
24 It is my opinion that the current boundaries
25 serve the needs of our local population quite

1 well. Thank you.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

3 Robert Gillmore is our next speaker, and

4 following Mr. Gillmore, Charles Grimsley.

5 Mr. Gillmore, thank you for coming, and

6 you are recognized.

7 MR. GILLMORE: Good morning, ladies and

8 gentlemen. Thank you for letting me speak

9 today.

10 I have lived in Avon Park now for 11

11 years, and I believe the current district we

12 have has suited our needs very well and should

13 be maintained as is. Thank you.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. Not

15 only is this a small hearing, but we've got

16 people who are succinct and get right to the

17 point. I appreciate that.

18 Next -- so we heard -- that was

19 Mr. Gillmore. You are Mr. Gillmore.

20 MR. GRIMSLEY: Grimsley.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Grimsley. Now, the

22 first thing I have to ask, Mr. Grimsley, is

23 there any connection between you and

24 Representative Grimsley? Because we heard that

25 there was a Grimsley who wanted to make sure

1 that he came here and, you know, might say
2 something that his daughter might agree with or
3 disagree with, but is that you, sir?

4 MR. GRIMSLEY: Yes, sir.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: It is?

6 MR. GRIMSLEY: That is me, yes.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, I may have to let
8 your daughter speak after you.

9 MR. GRIMSLEY: Well, that is okay, too.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Grimsley, it is great
11 to have you here, and I know you've got to be
12 very, very proud of Denise. She does a great
13 job in Tallahassee.

14 MR. GRIMSLEY: I am very proud of her,
15 and, no, we don't always agree, but we agree to
16 disagree sometimes. But she is my daughter,
17 and I am very proud of what she is doing.

18 Ladies and gentlemen, let me say to you
19 this morning that I am a life-long resident in
20 Hardee County, and this is the most
21 representation from Tallahassee that we have
22 ever had in Hardee County, I do believe, and we
23 welcome you to here this morning. This is a
24 promised land. This is the nearest thing you
25 will ever get to the promised land. So you are

1 welcome to come back and move here if you want
2 to and help us with our endeavors here.

3 But what I would like to say this morning,
4 though, Chairman, is in the years past, Hardee
5 County has been connected with coastal
6 counties, and our representation has not been
7 the best in the world. What I would like to
8 urge this committee to consider doing today in
9 your redistricting is to leave us with the
10 inland counties such as Polk, Highlands,
11 DeSoto, Glades, Hendry, those counties. Most
12 of those counties are agriculture based. And
13 our concerns doesn't always go with what the
14 coastal counties' concerns are.

15 And when it comes down to voting, when we
16 was with Manatee County, if our whole county
17 had voted for one person, we would have not had
18 any -- we would have not affected that election
19 whatsoever. In other words, we do not have the
20 population to vote head-to-head with any
21 coastal county. Their concerns is not our
22 concerns. And I would just like to urge this
23 morning that in your process, that you consider
24 keeping our counties with the agriculture
25 counties in the heartland, in the interior part

1 of the state.

2 And I will agree with the gentleman that
3 spoke earlier, if we can keep it by boundary
4 lines, by county boundary lines, it would be a
5 whole lot better than having two
6 Representatives for one small county. You
7 just -- you don't get much bang for your buck
8 that way.

9 So in your consideration, that is my
10 request this morning, that you keep us with the
11 agriculture based counties on the interior part
12 of the state. Thank you.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
14 Mr. Grimsley.

15 Our next speaker is Russell Graylin Smith,
16 who is a Wauchula City Commissioner. He is the
17 last person who has signed up to speak this
18 morning, so if there's anyone else who would
19 like to speak who may have been inspired by
20 what someone said or made a decision late that
21 you would like to share your views with the
22 House and Senate committees, please raise your
23 hand, and we will get you one of these speaker
24 sheets and you will have a chance to speak.

25 Mr. Smith, Commissioner Smith, thank you

1 very much for the warm hospitality that your
2 community has showed to the House and Senate
3 members, and thank you for your service to this
4 community, sir.

5 COMMISSIONER SMITH: Well, it is certainly
6 a pleasure to have all these people down here.
7 Mr. Charles Grimsley beat us to the punch, but
8 I would like to reiterate what he just said.

9 For a long, Hardee County has been
10 under-represented because we have been paired
11 with Sarasota and Manatee Counties in the
12 congressional districts, and oftentimes even in
13 the State House we were at one time paired with
14 those two counties.

15 Polk County, there's two sides to it, and,
16 of course, we are happy to have Mr. Ben
17 Albritton as our Representative, and he
18 represents south Polk County, which is far
19 different than the northern half of Polk
20 County. But Hardee, Highlands, DeSoto, are
21 similar in population, similar in economy,
22 similar in many other ways, and if you could
23 take that into consideration when drawing your
24 new district lines on all districts, we would
25 greatly appreciate it. Thank your, sir.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. Let
2 me make another call for anybody who would like
3 to share their views who did not sign up to
4 speak yet. That young lady right over there,
5 would you please come forward, ma'am, and we
6 will get a slip from you so that we know who
7 you are? And was there somebody over here as
8 well?

9 Ma'am, if you would state your name, we
10 are delighted to have you here this morning and
11 look forward to your testimony.

12 MS. MILLION: Thank you. I hope you will
13 when I get through.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Now, do you have a poem,
15 because you came from the poetry corner over
16 there?

17 MS. MILLION: That is right. I am Elli
18 Million, and I am Second Vice-President of the
19 Democratic Women's Club. And you notice the
20 word, "women's club."

21 Now, as we are dealing with our census, we
22 -- in our records right here this morning,
23 there's not ever a mention about consideration
24 of women in redistricting. Now, I know when we
25 work with Joe Campbell, he gives us figures

1 about the women and the breakdown in Highlands
2 County, but I just am posing the question, why
3 is that never considered in your redistricting?
4 Perhaps it is because Florida has not passed
5 the Equal Rights Amendment. Maybe we are
6 somehow or other -- you know, we don't have the
7 force that we are supposed to have with the
8 redistricting now and the Legislature. And I
9 feel that somehow or other that fact has been
10 left out in your figures. I am not certain how
11 it would affect redistricting, but in my mind,
12 it does. And I would hope that the Legislature
13 or someone who is in charge of reporting
14 statistics would consider the fact that we
15 should have a breakdown of women, especially
16 since we feel this year that we really had many
17 strikes against us through the Legislature. So
18 I bring that to your consideration, and thank
19 you.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 ma'am. And John Guthrie is the gentleman over
22 there, and Mr. Guthrie, can -- if you have a
23 couple of minutes, he can show you how we do
24 have data from the Census Bureau by gender, so
25 that that data is available for you to look at,

1 and it is certainly available for us to use,
2 but John can show you how to get to that data.
3 But it is available.

4 Sue Birge is a member of the county
5 commission in our county here, and we welcome
6 you, we thank you for your service and
7 appreciate your testimony.

8 COMMISSIONER BIRGE: Thank you. I
9 don't --

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Excuse me, Commissioner.
11 I believe there was a gentleman sitting right
12 behind Senator Neal, and he would like to
13 speak. Is that right, sir? Okay, you are
14 next.

15 COMMISSIONER BIRGE: Thank you, Chairman.
16 I didn't have anything to add to your agenda
17 necessarily, but I just wanted to thank you for
18 coming to Hardee County. I haven't seen this
19 many Representatives since I was in
20 Tallahassee, and thank you for coming to our
21 county. It is a small county, but like
22 Mr. Grimsley, it is God's country here. So
23 thank you for coming.

24 I realize this is a small representation
25 of us, and maybe the people do not necessarily

1 understand what is going on here, but I do want
2 to thank you for coming, and we do want to be
3 -- we do want to participate, we want to be
4 involved in what is going on and wish you the
5 best in redistricting.

6 I agree, I think it is fine just like it
7 is. If we can help you in any way, let us
8 know. Thank you.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
10 Commissioner. And, sir, if you would come
11 forward and identify yourself, we would be
12 delighted to here from you, and we thank you
13 for taking time to come today.

14 MR. PETRO: My name is Thomas Petro, I am
15 a private citizen here in Hardee County. My
16 wife and family farm citrus and cattle.

17 My question is, reading the information
18 here that it's -- the redistricting is based on
19 the latest census and the population, here in
20 Hardee County, I am sure as far as Polk and
21 Hendry and some of the other counties that are
22 involved in agriculture, we have a shifting
23 population. Every couple of months, as migrant
24 farm labor comes in and works, and then they
25 leave, and they come in and then they leave.

1 And that shift in population can number a
2 couple of thousands to a couple of hundreds.
3 Sometimes they become a majority in the county,
4 and then they come back to being a minority.
5 And at the time of the census, they could have
6 been a majority of the population here in
7 Hardee County or Collier or Glades as they come
8 in for the farming season and then they leave
9 for the season.

10 Does the legislation going to account for
11 that, that the inner counties, the central
12 counties of Hardee, Polk, Glades, Manatee, have
13 this shifting population of minorities, they
14 come and they go, when they determine the
15 redistricting?

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Representative Weatherford
17 will remark to that. We get that question more
18 often than you might think, and we do have an
19 answer for that, sir.

20 MR. PETRO: Thank you very much.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for your
22 testimony.

23 Anybody else? Any shy souls would like to
24 come forward? Well, if not, then we have
25 reached the point in the hearing where,

1 Chairman Weatherford, with your permission, I
2 would like to turn to any House members who
3 would like to offer any comments, any
4 specifics, any proposals that they might wish
5 to make. Any members of the House wish to
6 speak? Yes, sir, Mr. Speaker, Speaker Baxley.
7 We call him Speaker because he was Speaker Pro
8 Tem team of the Florida House in a previous
9 life, and he has come back again and now he is
10 a Representative, but I still call him Speaker.

11 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thank you,
12 Chairman, and I appreciate your leadership
13 again on this good day. Both of our Chairmen
14 have been incredibly gracious.

15 First of all, I just wanted to introduce
16 myself since I got in the building a little
17 late. Dennis Baxley, I am from Ocala, Marion
18 County, Florida House District 24. But I
19 wanted to connect with you that I have some
20 previous history. I lived here as a young
21 child. My father was pastor of one of the
22 community churches out here nearby, and
23 Representative Grimsley's parents were -- when
24 they were married, my father officiated that
25 ceremony. So it's been a great experience to

1 come back and reconnect and see the progress,
2 the activities that have gone on here.

3 I, too, live in an area that is more
4 rural. Ocala, Marion County, has that mix of
5 change, and I understand the dimension of
6 dealing with those different issues.

7 I wanted to thank you for the time that
8 you have spent in preparing for this meeting
9 and coming and contribute. We always hear some
10 things that we have heard a lot of other
11 places, but we also hear something unique every
12 place that we go. And so I wanted to just
13 express my appreciation to the community and to
14 the leadership for bringing me back to these
15 fond memories. Thank you.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Representative Horner.

17 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Thank you very
18 much. I just wanted to comment, I really
19 appreciated the nice lady's poem, and I would
20 encourage everyone in the audience, the best
21 way to communicate with us is to submit maps.
22 If you haven't gone on the website yet and seen
23 the software they have put together, it is very
24 easy to use. Get on mydistrictbuilder.com and
25 put together maps.

1 What we are going to start with when we
2 begin the process is the maps that the public
3 submits. So when you ask, "Where are the
4 maps," they are basically in your hands. What
5 you create is what the Legislature is going to
6 start with. So I would really encourage you
7 after coming today, if you have caught the bug
8 at all, to go back home, spend a little time,
9 create some maps, and I can assure you that
10 will be where we start and that will certainly
11 be where I start in the process. Thank you.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Any other members, any
13 other House members? Any Senators, anybody who
14 would like from the panel to offer any
15 comments? I'm sorry? We have another speaker.
16 The last shall be first, and the first shall be
17 last.

18 Casey Welch is with Florida Citrus Mutual,
19 and thanks, Casey, for bringing up the rear.
20 We're anxious to --

21 MR. WELCH: Thanks. I apologize for being
22 late. I'm coming down from Lakeland. I should
23 have caravaned with y'all.

24 I just want to say good morning, welcome
25 to Hardee County, the home of former Governor

1 Doyle Carlton. I just want to say thank you
2 very much for doing this road show.

3 I hope that you have seen, starting out in
4 the Panhandle and Pensacola and as you make
5 your way through the heartland here and been
6 through the coast and the population centers
7 and as you go down through south Florida and
8 hopefully, I guess, you're going to end up in
9 the Keys, right, you will see the different
10 communities of interest through this state.
11 And I think this morning as you saw driving
12 south through 17, I hope you saw that once you
13 left Lakeland and the Highland City area and
14 moved your way south through 17, that basically
15 from Bartow on through, and if you continue
16 from Wauchula here on down through Arcadia and
17 make your way on -- all to Punta Gorda, the
18 agricultural community of interest was the
19 same. You saw cattle, citrus and phosphate
20 mining. And those are the three main interests
21 of this area, and Wauchula is the center of all
22 of that. So if you step back from a map and
23 just look, as you drive down 17, all of those
24 communities of interest basically -- I will
25 just go through the city names, Bartow,

1 Wauchula, Arcadia and all the surrounding
2 areas, so eastern Hillsborough, eastern
3 Manatee, extreme eastern Sarasota and some
4 portion of the Charlotte County area before you
5 get into that metropolitan area, and the
6 surrounding counties, that is an agricultural
7 community of interest. And representing Citrus
8 Mutual here today, we just want to make sure
9 that the committee understands that it is
10 vitally important to our industry that we have
11 representation to recognize that, that while we
12 understand in the past it has been important to
13 be tied to the coast in regards to having some
14 political say, but we also want to make sure
15 that that is not diluted from having a say as
16 being a part of an agricultural community that
17 is central Florida. So that is just one thing
18 that I wanted to iterate for you this morning.

19 And, again, thank you for coming all the
20 way down to Wauchula and taking the time to go
21 all across the state and see first-hand these
22 communities of interest, because I think
23 getting away from the maps and getting away
24 from the -- looking on the -- on the computer
25 screens, and actually seeing these places

1 first-hand, you really get a feel of all these
2 communities, and I just want to thank you very
3 much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
5 Mr. Welch, and we would hope that you would
6 have a look at some of the -- some or all of
7 the 15 maps that have already been submitted to
8 see if any of them meet the requirements that
9 you described, and then get your input
10 specifically related to the maps that are
11 available to look at.

12 Are there any other -- John has another
13 taker. Somebody else from the poetry corner.
14 Would you like to come forward, ma'am? We
15 would love to hear from you. And if you will
16 fill out a card, that way we can have your
17 name.

18 MS. OLDHAM: I have already filled out a
19 card. He is looking for it.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay.

21 MS. OLDHAM: I am Alice Oldham from
22 Highlands County. I just wanted to beseech the
23 last speaker and for all you to realize that
24 Highlands County is also in this agricultural,
25 and we do not want to be disassociated from

1 Hardee and the other coun- -- we still have
2 more cattle in Highlands County than we have
3 people. So we are definitely agriculture. We
4 have a growing blueberry crop in our county
5 too, so were are very definitely agriculture.

6 But if I may add one more comment to the
7 census. Are you -- Representative Weatherford,
8 are you going to respond to that census
9 question? Okay, because I was privileged to
10 work on both parts of the census, and it is
11 very easily answered. If you are going to be
12 answering that, I won't bother.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, ma'am, if you have a
14 comment that you would like to make --

15 MS. OLDHAM: Okay. Well, I was just going
16 to say that since 1780, by the Constitution,
17 the census is run according to the April 1st
18 population only. That is the only population
19 we could deal with, so what is in place on that
20 date is what sets the census and the
21 redistricting.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, ma'am. Thank you
23 very much for that information and your
24 testimony.

25 During the hearing, Representative Ronda

1 -- or Senator Ronda Storms came in in the back,
2 and, Senator, I don't know if you wanted to say
3 anything, but if -- she is the young lady in
4 the blue in the back, and Senator Storms is a
5 member of this committee, came in during the
6 hearing, but she did have a chance to hear many
7 of your testimonies.

8 Anything else that anybody would like to
9 share with us, members of the committee? Then
10 I will turn to our Speaker Designate, Will
11 Weatherford, and ask him to respond to any of
12 the factual issues that came up so that we can
13 all leave here with the same set of facts.
14 Mr. Speaker.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
16 very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank again
17 the members of the public who took the time,
18 not just to be here, but also to offer up your
19 suggestions. I can assure you they are being
20 heard and they will be utilized as we go
21 forward and actually draw maps.

22 I think every member of this committee
23 would share my sentiments that I learned a lot
24 about this part of the world. I don't make it
25 down 17 all too often. I do know several of

1 the Representatives who represent this part of
2 the world. It is a beautiful, beautiful part
3 of Florida.

4 But some of the things I heard about, you
5 know, preserving the core of the existing
6 districts and keeping those certain agriculture
7 communities together and making sure those
8 communities of interest were protected, and,
9 frankly, hearing from you about the difference
10 in the coastal counties versus your counties,
11 the differences in the communities of interest,
12 those are the types of suggestions that really
13 give us guidance and help us make decisions as
14 we are going forward in this process. I just
15 want to thank you for making sure we understood
16 that, and I think everybody here gets that.

17 Ms. Alice, you -- Ms. Oldham, you stole my
18 thunder. You were absolutely correct in regard
19 to the census. We are not able to look at
20 trends. Sir, you talked about the census.
21 Basically, we are not able to -- we take a
22 snapshot, and it is not perfect. Of course,
23 the census is done only once every ten years.
24 It is not a perfect process, but the way that
25 they've found to do it is to take one snapshot

1 of one day, and wherever people are, no matter
2 what part of the trend you are in, whether it
3 is people coming in or leaving, those are the
4 numbers we have to utilize, and so it is not
5 perfect, but when you are counting 380 million
6 people, it is probably the best we can do right
7 now with the technology we have.

8 I just wanted to touch on a couple of
9 other things. Mr. Campbell, our Supervisor of
10 Elections, thank you for being here, sir. We
11 are very sensitive, and I said this yesterday
12 to Ms. Lori Edwards who spoke in Polk County,
13 your colleague there, we are very sensitive to
14 the timeline and we recognize the fact that it
15 is tight.

16 One thing that I would point out to you is
17 a lot of the dates that are being talked about,
18 particularly on websites and -- those are the
19 deadlines, they are not necessarily the target
20 date we are looking for. So our goal is to go
21 through this process, get a lot of public
22 testimony, work it through committee, have a
23 tremendous amount of input, and then have maps
24 that are drafted and signed and sealed and
25 passed with plenty of time to get through

1 qualifying. And so that is our goal, but,
2 again, there are deadlines that exist, and we
3 recognize the timeline is tight, and we are
4 going to be very careful as we go forward to
5 make sure that we do that right.

6 Also, your information on VTDs, the Voting
7 Tabulation Districts, we are very sensitive to
8 that as well. A lot of hard work went into
9 that to make sure that we factor that into the
10 census. We are sensitive to it. We will make
11 sure that we utilize that to the greatest
12 extent that we can.

13 There were some comments that were brought
14 up, and we hear this everywhere we go, about
15 both the timeline and the maps. There are some
16 folks -- there's kind of a chicken and the egg
17 debate taking place about the maps. Is it the
18 Legislature's responsibility to produce maps
19 first and tell you "Here's what we got," or is
20 it our responsibility to come to you and ask
21 for your guidance and your counsel and then go
22 and draw maps based on that? And I think that
23 this committee and the Legislature has made the
24 decision that, for once, the Legislature is
25 going to aim first and listen and hear from the

1 public first before we fire, and we want to
2 hear from you, and there's a couple of reasons
3 for that. But one of the biggest reasons is,
4 if you go back to 2009, the principal author of
5 Amendments 5 and 6, a gentleman by the name of
6 John Mills, former Speaker of the House,
7 specifically said, and I am going to read his
8 words, but he wrote that "The intent of the new
9 redistricting standards is for the public to
10 have the opportunity to comment before and
11 after the Legislature draws the maps." And in
12 2010, the Chairperson of
13 Floridafairdistricts.org, Ellen Freidin, told a
14 joint committee, this body, that it would be
15 impossible to draw compliant or appropriate
16 maps until after the Legislature had first
17 heard from the public. And so, ladies and
18 gentlemen, what we would tell you is that for
19 those who are still having the chicken and the
20 egg debate, to us it is very clear. Not only
21 do we feel like it is important to hear from
22 the public first before we draw maps, but the
23 drafters of Amendments 5 and 6, which passed
24 with 63 percent of the vote, also stated that.

25 And in regard to Amendments 5 and 6, I

1 want to also be clear that the Legislature has
2 every intention of upholding the Constitution,
3 both the Federal Constitution and the Voting
4 Rights Act, the State Constitution and the new
5 standards that were put on in Amendments 5 and
6 6, and all the laws and case law that exists.
7 There is a lot of it, but my co-Chairman and I
8 are committed to making sure that we follow the
9 law.

10 This is one of the most, if not the most
11 transparent redistricting process in the
12 country. We are proud of that. There are
13 other states, like Illinois and others, who
14 have already passed their maps and they are
15 already done, and they did it with almost
16 relatively no public input at all, and we just
17 don't think that is right.

18 So we appreciate your time today. We
19 appreciate your patience. We appreciate your
20 input. I look forward to working with you in
21 the future and the members of this committee.
22 And, Mr. Chairman, I hope that we were able to
23 clear up a few things, and we just encourage
24 you to work with us going forward to help us
25 make the product on the back end, which is the

1 actual maps that come out that we vote on, the
2 best that they can possibly be. Thank you very
3 much.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

5 This may have been for some of you your
6 first opportunity to have input into this
7 process, but it won't be your last. As the
8 Speaker indicated, we will continue to take
9 public input over the next few weeks. That
10 doesn't mean that members of this committee
11 aren't thinking about, "Well, gee, based on
12 what I heard in Hardee County, I wonder, maybe
13 this approach or that approach might be best as
14 we draw maps." I think there are people who
15 are on the committee who are learning a great
16 deal. I certainly am. I have gotten page
17 after page after page of notes that I wouldn't
18 have otherwise gotten if I would have just been
19 in a Tallahassee echo chamber.

20 You will have opportunities to observe
21 this process and participate if you want.
22 Before my votes are taken on any proposed maps
23 in any committee, the public will have an
24 opportunity to speak. All of those meetings
25 will be held in the public, and the public will

1 be invited to give its input. And before any
2 maps are considered on the floor of the Senate
3 or the House, the public will see those maps,
4 they will be on the Internet. There may not be
5 one map, there may be two or three or four or
6 five options, and when we get to the floor,
7 there may be amendments that create additional
8 options, and all of that will be done in the
9 public.

10 So we hope that you will stay engaged in
11 the process. We hope that those of you who
12 say, "Where are the maps," will look at the
13 maps that there are. Already we've gotten 15
14 maps that have been proposed that are now part
15 of the legislative process. One was proposed
16 yesterday during the hearing that we had in
17 Polk County. My guess is that by the end of
18 today, we will have more maps proposed. And
19 any member of this committee, Democrat or
20 Republican, House member or Senator, may
21 propose any map at any time and make comment on
22 any maps that have been proposed.

23 If there are no other questions, no other
24 comments from any members of the committee or
25 the public, Representative Weatherford moves we

1 rise.

2 (Whereupon, the proceedings were

3 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 52 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 20th day of November, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, JULY 26, 2011

6:00 P.M.

WIREGRASS RANCH HIGH SCHOOL

WESLEY CHAPEL, FLORIDA

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: If we could
3 get everybody to find a seat, we are going to
4 start momentarily. If we could get everyone to
5 find their seat, please. If we could get
6 everyone to grab their seat, please, we are
7 ready to start. Please find a seat.

8 Okay. Ladies and gentlemen, if we could
9 please get everyone's attention, we are going
10 to go ahead and get started. My name is Will
11 Weatherford, and I would like to welcome
12 everyone to the Joint Senate/House
13 Redistricting Hearing, and it is now called to
14 order.

15 First of all, I want to thank everyone for
16 taking the time to come out tonight in
17 beautiful Wesley Chapel, and Pasco County is
18 doing us proud tonight, and as you can see, we
19 have brought a lot of friends from the
20 Legislature to meet you and to hear from you,
21 and we really appreciate your participation, so
22 thank you for being here. We also want to
23 thank Wiregrass High School for allowing us to
24 use this wonderful facility.

25 And I also want you to know that I, along

1 with my colleague and co-Chairman, Senator Don
2 Gaetz, will be chairing today's hearing. It
3 will also be webcast live by the Florida
4 Channel over the Internet.

5 Before we get started and start going into
6 the public testimony, I would like to give
7 every member of the committee a chance to very
8 briefly introduce themselves and let you all
9 know who they are and where they are from. We
10 have a very diverse group here from both
11 parties and from all over the state that have
12 come to listen to you and to listen to the
13 concerns of Pasco County, and so we would like
14 to give them an opportunity.

15 But before we do that, I would like to
16 allow Representative John Legg, who is also a
17 Representative of Pasco County and one of the
18 co-Chairs of our congressional committee, to
19 speak and welcome everyone. So if you would,
20 please, everyone recognize Representative John
21 Legg.

22 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: Thank you, Speaker
23 Designate, Representative Weatherford. I just
24 want to say welcome, everyone, to Pasco County.
25 I am a little biased to this area. I think it

1 is one of the greatest places on earth. But
2 the thing that is even better about this place
3 is its people, and I think tonight that members
4 of this committee will see some very passionate
5 people who really care deeply about this state
6 and this country who have a variety of views
7 about the lines on how they should be drawn,
8 and I just want to welcome members of the
9 State, the legislative -- all over the state to
10 this area, and also the people of this county,
11 and you do us proud, you work hard, we all have
12 various views and I am very proud -- proud of
13 this group and I look forward to hearing from
14 you guys tonight.

15 And for those of you who don't know me, my
16 name is John Legg. I represent the west side
17 of the county.

18 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good evening,
19 I am State Representative Gwyndolen
20 Clarke-Reed, and I represent House District 92,
21 which is the northeast portion of Broward
22 County.

23 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Hazelle Rogers,
24 State Representative, District 94 in Broward
25 County that boasts 1.8 million residents, one

1 of the most diverse counties in the state of
2 Florida. It is good to be here.

3 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good evening, I am
4 Betty Reed. I represent District 59 in
5 Hillsborough County, which is Tampa.

6 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Good evening,
7 Representative Daphne Campbell, District 108
8 from Miami.

9 REPRESENTATIVE JENNE: State
10 Representative Evan Jenne, District 100 in
11 southeast Broward, and thank you all for having
12 us here.

13 REPRESENTATIVE CORCORAN: Representative
14 Richard Corcoran from District 45, which is
15 Pasco and Pinellas Counties. Thank you for
16 being here.

17 REPRESENTATIVE STARGEL: Good evening, I
18 am Representative Kelli Stargel from Polk
19 County, District 64, and I love Pasco County, I
20 actually graduated from Land O' Lakes High
21 School.

22 REPRESENTATIVE ROUSON: Good afternoon,
23 Darryl Rouson. I represent District 55, which
24 is south Pinellas County, north Manatee, north
25 Sarasota and one little precinct in

1 Hillsborough County.

2 SENATOR JOYNER: Good evening, my name is
3 Arthenia Joyner, I am State Senator, District
4 18, representing portions of Hillsborough,
5 Pinellas and Manatee Counties.

6 SENATOR NORMAN: Hello, I am Senator Jim
7 Norman, representing Senate District 12, and
8 members that are all here today, welcome to
9 God's country. This is my district, and thank
10 you all for coming out, what an absolutely
11 wonderful turn-out, and this is the kind of
12 leadership that we told everybody that attended
13 tonight that would be representing Pasco
14 County, and thank you all for being here
15 tonight.

16 SENATOR SIPLIN: Jim, they like you.
17 State Senator Gary Siplin, Orlando,
18 Florida, District 19, Democrat.

19 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: My name is Peter
20 Nehr. I am a State Representative from
21 District 48, which encompasses north Pinellas
22 County and south Pasco.

23 REPRESENTATIVE PLAKON: Good evening, I am
24 Scott Plakon, Florida House District 37, Orange
25 and Seminole Counties.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Kathleen
2 Passidomo, Representative, District 76, from
3 Collier County. I represent Naples, Marco
4 Island, Everglades City, and I just want you to
5 know I spent a good deal of money in your
6 wonderful mall here, so I helped your -- thank
7 you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: Good evening,
9 Representative Tom Goodson. I represent House
10 District 29, Brevard County and Indian River
11 County.

12 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Good evening,
13 Representative Matt Caldwell, District 73,
14 which is Lee County, Ft. Myers, Lehigh Acres.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BURGIN: Good evening,
16 Representative Rachel Burgin from the city of
17 Tampa and eastern Hillsborough County, District
18 56.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Hello, Ritch
20 Workman, District 30, it is Brevard County, the
21 Space Coast.

22 REPRESENTATIVE BRODEUR: Good evening, my
23 name is Jason Brodeur, State Representative
24 from District 33, which I am proud to represent
25 parts of Volusia County, Seminole County and

1 Orange County. Thank you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Steve Precourt,
3 House District 41, from the heart of central
4 Florida, basically Disney World and that
5 environment.

6 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: I am Ed Hooper,
7 House District 50, which is central Pinellas
8 County.

9 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: I am
10 Representative Jim Frishe, and I represent the
11 western edge of Pinellas County, all the
12 beaches. It is a tough duty.

13 REPRESENTATIVE EISNAUGLE: Good evening,
14 Eric Eisnaugle from Orlando, representing
15 District 40, which is -- takes in a portion of
16 Orange County.

17 REPRESENTATIVE DIAZ: Good evening, Jose
18 Diaz. I am from Miami, Florida, and I
19 represent District 115.

20 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good evening, John
21 Patrick Julien, representing House District
22 104, Miami-Dade County. It is a pleasure to be
23 here.

24 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good evening,
25 State Representative Mack Bernard, District 84,

1 West Palm Beach, Florida.

2 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good evening,
3 Chuck Chestnut, House District 23, a portion of
4 Marion County and a portion of Alachua County.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Good evening,
6 Dennis Baxley, Florida House District 24,
7 Ocala, Marion County.

8 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Ocala fans.

9 Mike Horner, District 79, Osceola,
10 Okeechobee, Orange and Polk County.

11 REPRESENTATIVE CRISAFULLI: Good evening,
12 Steve Crisafulli, House District 32, which is
13 Brevard and east Orange County.

14 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good evening,
15 everyone. My name is Dwayne Taylor. I
16 represent House District 27, which is in
17 Volusia County, I represent six cities there,
18 and I am glad to be here tonight with you in
19 Weatherford Chapel -- I mean Wesley Chapel.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right.
21 Thank you very much, members. And ladies and
22 gentlemen, if we could, please, give a round of
23 applause. We have a lot of members came a long
24 way to hear you speak tonight. Thank you all
25 for being here. We are going to get moving

1 here, there's a lot to achieve and a lot of
2 people to hear from.

3 First I want folks to know that our sole
4 purpose here is to hear from the public about
5 how you believe the legal standards governing
6 redistricting should be applied in our
7 community here so that you are represented
8 properly both in Washington, DC, and in
9 Tallahassee. That is fairly, equitably and
10 sensibly, I might add.

11 Our procedures today are simple, but they
12 are very important. It is important that you
13 sign in so that we can create an accurate
14 public record of all the attendees and the
15 speakers. Also, you may opt to join our e-mail
16 lists so that we can keep you informed of how
17 the redistricting process is working
18 throughout. If you have not signed in, please
19 raise your hand, and a staff member will give
20 you an attendance card. If you wish to speak
21 today and you have not filled out an attendance
22 card, please raise your hand, and we will get
23 you a card and so we can make sure not to miss
24 your testimony.

25 Before we begin, for a few minutes I would

1 like to recognize my co-Chair, Senator Don
2 Gaetz, to explain today's hearing and how it
3 fits into the redistricting process. Senator
4 Gaetz.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
6 Mr. Chairman, and let me take a point of
7 personal privilege. I am from the Panhandle of
8 Florida. I represent five counties in coastal
9 northwest Florida. I am from the other
10 chamber, I am from the Senate, so I don't have
11 a dog in the fight down here, but let me say
12 this: You are extraordinarily fortunate to
13 have in your legislative delegation the next
14 Speaker of the House of the State of Florida,
15 the Honorable Will Weatherford.

16 Every ten years, the Legislature is
17 required by the Constitution to redistrict the
18 state based on increases, decreases and
19 movements of population. Now, because Florida
20 has grown more than other states in the last
21 ten years, we will move up from 25 members of
22 the U.S. House of Representatives representing
23 Florida to 27 members, and we get two more
24 electoral votes in the presidential election.
25 Because some parts of our state have increased

1 or decreased disproportionately in population,
2 many Senate and House districts will change
3 their boundaries, either adding or losing
4 population, or being changed in configuration
5 altogether.

6 When redistricting is completed,
7 congressional districts by federal law must be
8 equal in population, equal in population, and
9 contain 696,345 people. That is for one
10 congressional district, not more, not less.
11 The 40 Senate districts, the state Senate
12 districts, must be nearly equal at about
13 470,000 people, and the 120 House districts
14 must be nearly equal at about 156,700 people.

15 Now, there are displays at the front of
16 the room -- or the back of the room here when
17 you came in showing maps that have the current
18 boundaries of districts in this area of the
19 state, and also you can see over there a chart
20 showing the number of persons that have to be
21 added to or subtracted from current districts
22 to achieve equal representation. And this is a
23 part of the state that has grown substantially
24 in population in the last ten years.

25 But equality of representation is not the

1 only legal requirement that redistricting plans
2 have to meet. The laws and the important court
3 cases governing redistricting are explained in
4 detail on the House and the Senate websites.
5 Those websites are listed in the "Redistricting
6 2012" brochure that was available to all of
7 you -- I see many of you have it in your
8 hands -- it was available when you came in.
9 Now, this "Redistricting 2012" brochure
10 summarizes federal and state laws and outlines
11 topics which we really need to hear from you
12 about at today's hearing. If you did not get a
13 copy when you came in, you can certainly get a
14 copy on the way out, or our staff will be happy
15 to give you a copy while you are sitting here.

16 The brochure lists the House and Senate
17 websites, and these websites are really good,
18 they are packed with information about
19 redistricting in Florida, including an
20 explanation of the laws and important court
21 cases we have to follow governing
22 redistricting. The two websites are
23 complementary, they are updated frequently.
24 Visit both, check them out often. It is a
25 great way to stay current about how your new

1 congressional Senate and House districts are
2 taking shape.

3 The websites also deliver to your
4 fingertips all of the demographic information
5 that we received from the U.S. Bureau of the
6 Census, demographic information that will be
7 used in drawing districts, and the exact same
8 computer programs that legislators and
9 professional staff will use.

10 Any member of the public can participate
11 in building plans or in seeing plans that have
12 already been submitted -- submitted by
13 legislators or by citizens or interest groups.
14 Before, during and after this hearing, House
15 and Senate staff are available to show anybody
16 the simple steps to getting on-line, building
17 districts, observing the districts that are
18 already there that you can see, and if you
19 wish, submitting a plan of your own for this
20 area of the state or the whole state now and in
21 the weeks to come. And I can tell you that I
22 am techno stupid, and it took them 15 minutes
23 to get me familiar with these websites and how
24 to use them, so I know you will be able to do a
25 lot better.

1 Recommendations from citizens and groups
2 of citizens will be made publicly available as
3 soon as we get your input. In fact, there are
4 already 16 maps which have been submitted. So
5 if somebody says, "Show me the maps," there are
6 16 maps on the website. Most of them are also
7 depicted in charts and maps on that side of the
8 room as you came in. I saw many of you looking
9 at them. You can look at them as you go out as
10 well. And we have received already about 70
11 written ideas for maps that are available on
12 the Web. So we have gotten -- there are 16
13 maps already produced and available for you,
14 and about 70 written submissions that say,
15 "Here is how we think our community or our
16 districts ought to be drawn." The submission
17 of proposed maps that makes sense for this
18 community is the single most effective form of
19 public participation in the redistricting
20 process.

21 Now, the redistricting schedule under
22 which we are operating, the timeline is imposed
23 by the State Constitution. We can't change the
24 timeline. The Constitution does not permit the
25 Legislature to vote on state legislative maps

1 before the second year after the census.
2 Census was taken in 2010, so our Constitution
3 says we can't vote before 2012. But we have
4 accelerated the process, we have speeded it up
5 as much as legally possible by moving up our
6 2012 legislative session from March, when it
7 usually begins, to January, which is the first
8 time we can legally vote, and by beginning our
9 statewide hearings five months in advance of
10 the 2012 session, and beginning committee
11 meetings in September instead of December so
12 that we can move as quickly as we get maps
13 submitted by legislators, by interest groups or
14 by individual citizens.

15 Now, it's been suggested that the
16 Legislature itself should draw maps first, and
17 then ask the public for comment; in other
18 words, not to ask you for your opinions, just
19 to give you maps. We believe that puts the
20 answer ahead of the question. We think there
21 ought to be no preconceptions created by
22 politicians, but, rather, public testimony
23 should be free and unrestricted. If we came to
24 you tonight and said, "Here are the maps that
25 have already been put together by legislators,"

1 there would be people who would stand up and
2 say, "How dare you not listen to the people of
3 Florida before you picked up the pen." So
4 Chair Weatherford and the Democrats and
5 Republicans on the Senate and House committees
6 have decided to listen before we draw. In
7 fact, a principal author of Florida's new
8 redistricting standards and the Chairperson for
9 the Fair Districts campaign are on record with
10 an agreement that new maps should not be drawn
11 until after the public has an opportunity to
12 comment.

13 Our intent is to use the recommendations
14 made at the 26 public hearings and through our
15 Internet sites as the basis for developing one
16 or more options for district maps. We will
17 discuss those options in open public meetings
18 before any votes are taken even in committee.
19 In other words, what we are literally saying
20 is, if you look at the maps in the back of the
21 room and if you go on the websites and look at
22 the maps that are there now, those maps
23 actually submitted to the Legislature by
24 Florida citizens are the maps that we will
25 begin with and begin the legislative process

1 with. We will solicit other suggestions from
2 the public, but we think we ought to start with
3 what communities believe themselves makes
4 sense, and then we can improve on them, if we
5 can. So if you want to know where we will
6 begin our deliberations, it is with those
7 public submissions and testimony from these
8 meetings and other input that you will give us.
9 Throughout the process, we will solicit
10 additional public comment so that proposed maps
11 can mature with the public involved, all before
12 the Legislature approves final maps.

13 Whatever the Legislature passes is then
14 submitted for judicial review. So we don't get
15 to decide what we want to do all by ourselves.
16 First we listen to you. Then we take your
17 input, we develop maps, then we vote on them
18 after we have had public hearings at which
19 people can comment. And then our maps are
20 submitted for judicial review to ensure that
21 any plan that is approved by the Legislature
22 meets constitutional requirements at the state
23 level and meets legal requirements at the
24 federal level.

25 Because, Mr. Chairman, our purpose today

1 is to hear from those who come here in your
2 hometown to share their views, all the time
3 between now and adjournment would be used to
4 ensure that every member of the public who is
5 here and wishes to speak will have some time to
6 present testimony. If after every citizen has
7 had his or her say, if there is time remaining,
8 and we hope there will be, before our scheduled
9 adjournment, then any member of the committee
10 may make any statement, answer or ask any
11 question, make any proposal. Any member of the
12 Legislature, Democrat or Republican, House
13 member or Senator, may today or at any time
14 either propose a map or associate themselves
15 with maps that have already been proposed, and
16 we will make any map that any legislator
17 proposes immediately available to the public
18 just as you have the maps in the back of the
19 room.

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

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much, Chairman Gaetz, for that thorough
25 explanation, and ladies and gentlemen, we are

1 going to go ahead and get started. We are
2 going to try to adjourn right at nine o'clock,
3 so there's over 60 individuals who signed up to
4 speak, and what we would ask is that you be
5 judicious with your time. We want to give
6 everyone the opportunity to say what they have
7 to say, but we try to ask everybody to hold it
8 to about three minutes, if possible.

9 I am going to call out two names at a
10 time, the speaker and then the person who is on
11 deck.

12 Our first speaker tonight is Mr. Cliff
13 McDuffie. Mr. McDuffie is Mayor of
14 Zephyrhills. Mayor, you are recognized here to
15 speak before the committee.

16 After Mr. McDuffie, we will have Mr. Wil
17 Nickerson.

18 You are recognized, sir.

19 MAYOR McDUFFIE: Thank you, I am not used
20 to being first.

21 My name is Cliff McDuffie. I am the Mayor
22 of Zephyrhills, and I have lived in Pasco
23 County for 14 years now. I came up from
24 Hillsborough County, so I am familiar with the
25 area.

1 I have a number of things. First I would
2 like to say I do not envy you at all at what
3 you are doing. I spent most of the day looking
4 at districts on the computer, and my eyes are
5 kind of blurry, but --

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: If you could,
7 Mayor, I'm sorry, just speak up a little bit.
8 It is kind of hard to hear.

9 MAYOR McDUFFIE: Do I need to get right on
10 top of it? Okay.

11 I don't think that the current districts,
12 in my opinion, adequately represent the people
13 that y'all are supposed to serve, and I
14 understand you do this by the numbers, so my
15 biggest problem there is the fact that
16 Zephyrhills is thrown in with Hillsborough and
17 Polk County on the Senate side, the only place
18 in Pasco County that's done that.

19 Currently we have some six House
20 Representatives who represent Pasco as well as
21 other counties. I don't think that they can do
22 that adequately. The old saying is you can't
23 serve two masters.

24 I would prefer that Pasco County be more
25 strongly represented, and I know that we do

1 this by the numbers, but I think that we have
2 the numbers in Pasco County now that we can
3 hopefully, as far as the House goes anyway, cut
4 that up so that we can have our own
5 Representatives and not somebody else's.

6 And I hope that this particular trial
7 doesn't morph into what we see in Washington
8 right now. I hope that our elected legislators
9 can put this together in an ethic way -- an
10 ethical way, and I hope that the partisanship
11 is not going to be an issue here and that
12 personal politics is not going to be an issue
13 here. But, again, I appreciate what y'all are
14 doing and I hope that we get it done right, if
15 that -- if you can ever do that. Thank you
16 very much, and I thank you all for representing
17 the State of Florida. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
19 Mayor, we appreciate your comments, sir.

20 Next up we have Mr. Wil Nickerson, and if
21 we could, I know there is some chatter in the
22 back, if we could take all the chatter kind of
23 outside the room. It is already hard to hear
24 in here, and we want to make sure that the
25 committee and all the members of the public can

1 hear our speakers.

2 Mr. Nickerson, you are recognized.

3 MR. NICKERSON: Well, thank you very much.

4 I would like to thank all the esteemed
5 legislators for coming out and hearing us, and
6 with that, I will get right into it.

7 I will have to agree somewhat with the
8 last speaker, we do have quite an abundance of
9 legislators in our county, but we also have a
10 very diverse county, and with that, I think we
11 have a good checks and balances with the
12 people.

13 We have extreme dense population on our
14 west side, we have farm, rural and industrial
15 on our east side, and right up the middle on
16 the 41 corridor we got quite a mixture. So we
17 are very diverse and we need diversity in our
18 legislators.

19 We also -- the one little corner, the
20 southeast corner, mostly Crystal Springs, parts
21 of Zephyrhills that Mayor just spoke to, we do
22 have two Representatives in that area, which
23 probably confuse the issue a little -- sorry,
24 Ronda -- but, you know, it is a very miniscule
25 in numbers compared to some of the other areas

1 of Pasco.

2 To get into some of the things on the --
3 the, yeah, minority groups, and Pasco also is
4 very diversified in that, instead of what I
5 have read in a lot of the redistricting, there
6 are needed areas that need -- minorities need
7 representation. In Pasco County, and I have
8 been here through in real estate back in the
9 '80s when the minority representation was under
10 .5 percent, now the Hispanic and blacks are
11 representing approximately 15 percent, if I am
12 correct on that figure. But it is a very
13 diverse representation, again, from the east to
14 the west, to the Wesley Chapel area, and we
15 need to keep that diversity so that we have
16 people looking for what they need from their
17 representation.

18 I understand the one person, one vote
19 premise of the whole thing of redistricting,
20 but when you look at the last elections in
21 Pasco County, and if I am going to read my crib
22 sheets here, the -- 19 percent came out in the
23 primary, 64 percent in the general, and in
24 2000, going back the ten years that we are
25 looking at redistricting, those numbers didn't

1 change a whole heck of a lot. A lot more
2 people came out for the primary and --

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr.
4 Nickerson, you know I love you, buddy, but you
5 are going to have to help me out, keep it under
6 three minutes. So if you could kind of put a
7 bow on it for me.

8 MR. NICKERSON: Okay. You know me, I
9 can't help myself.

10 But all things considered, I think we are
11 doing a good job here in Pasco, we got good
12 representation. We just need to watch that we
13 don't ruin the balance that we do have.

14 So thank you very much. Have a great
15 evening.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much.

18 And I apologize, I didn't give this next
19 person a heads-up, that was my fault, but
20 Anthony Lister, Tony Lister, is next as our
21 speaker. Mr. Lister, you are recognized, sir,
22 and after Mr. Lister we are going to have
23 Mr. Ed Blommel.

24 Tony, thank you for being here, buddy.

25 MR. LISTER: I will try to hurry up. I

1 got my notes on my little iPad thing here,
2 sorry.

3 Good evening, my name is Anthony Lister.
4 I am a former city commissioner and Mayor of
5 the City of San Antonio, Florida. I want to
6 thank you all for being here this evening. I
7 know your job is very difficult, and with that,
8 I will get right to it.

9 I would like to speak to the differences
10 between east and west Pasco, not disrespecting
11 west or east Pasco, but just to draw some
12 differences between the two. I believe, you
13 know, in my times on the city commission that
14 east -- east Pasco is a very rural, very
15 agricultural type of community, and west Pasco
16 has just really exploded, and I think we have
17 -- because of that, we have a bunch of
18 differences that maybe the representation, you
19 know, should be like there are -- in east
20 Pasco, we have a lot of, again, rural and
21 agricultural, we have a lot of farms, we have a
22 lot of citrus -- citrus farms, we have
23 businesses that are not necessarily made and
24 bought and sold, but, rather, handed down from
25 generation to generation. And working with

1 these people, you know, on the city commission,
2 it is just a different type of lifestyle. It
3 is very wonderful, it is very laid back, it is
4 very refreshed, and in an attempt to try to get
5 like representation, the other speakers and
6 speakers, I think, will probably, you know,
7 outline those differences as well.

8 Another note is it is very difficult,
9 because Pasco County is so fragmented, to be
10 elected to, you know, Congress and -- you know,
11 and to have representation, you know, a strong
12 representation here in Pasco County, it is, I
13 think, very important, and east Pasco, just
14 trying to draw those differences.

15 So I don't know if I filled my three
16 minutes, but I do appreciate you all coming
17 down this evening. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
19 very much, Mr. Lister. We appreciate your
20 comments.

21 Next up we have Mr. Ed Blommel. Followed
22 by that, we have Steve Grossenbacher. Steve,
23 if you could get ready to go.

24 Ed, thank you for being here, you are
25 recognized.

1 MR. BLOMMEL: Thank you. I want to
2 appreciate -- tell you how much I appreciate
3 what y'all are doing, it is an awesome task
4 that you have.

5 But I want to go back just a little bit in
6 history. Ten years ago when we went through
7 redistricting, afterwards it made no sense when
8 you looked at it on paper. And I do want to
9 say that my comments are not politically
10 motivated. So I have friends who are in all
11 the parties from municipalities all the way
12 through Congress. But I am the fourth speaker,
13 and I am already hearing a pattern being
14 developed over the difference in the east and
15 west of Pasco County, and even if you look at
16 Hernando and Sumter County, and if you take
17 into consideration communities of interest, you
18 can see some definitely difference in those
19 areas between east and west.

20 In the past, in dealing with a lot of
21 folks, you would ask them who their
22 Representative was, who their Senator was, who
23 their congressional representative was, they
24 weren't sure, and maybe part of that is because
25 they didn't get involved. But if you look at

1 the maps, it was really difficult to figure out
2 who is serving who.

3 I would encourage you to take into
4 consideration some geographical boundaries.
5 Look at something like either the Interstate or
6 the Suncoast Parkway, look at the counties that
7 I mentioned, Pasco, Hernando and Sumter, look
8 at the difference between what we see on the
9 east and west side and take into consideration
10 your communities of interest. I think it will
11 mean a lot if you do that, and I -- once again,
12 I want to thank you and I appreciate your time
13 and what you are doing. Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much, Mr. Blommel.

16 Mr. Grossenbacher, good to see you, sir,
17 you are up, and after that we have Ms. Jocelyn
18 Dickman. You are recognized, sir.

19 MR. GROSSENBACHER: Hi, my name is --

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Please speak
21 very close to the mike. We want to make sure
22 everybody can hear you.

23 MR. GROSSENBACHER: It kind of rattles
24 around.

25 My name is Steve Grossenbacher, and I live

1 at 26511 Whirlaway Terrace in Wesley Chapel,
2 beautiful downtown Wesley Chapel, I might add,
3 and I am a life-long Florida boy. I grew up in
4 Hillsborough County. I left there in some
5 dismay after a lot of things that I don't like
6 politically in Hillsborough County, and I'm
7 sorry, I had to say that, and I came to Pasco
8 County in 1990. And my discussion and my
9 comments are going to be very brief.

10 My wife asked me to speak on her behalf.
11 She is very capable, that is my beautiful bride
12 over there, and --

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: That young
14 lady over there? How did you pull that off?

15 MR. GROSSENBACHER: To make this short, I
16 wanted to -- to speak, and she gave me
17 permission to do that, so I am happy about
18 that.

19 The point I would like to make, I am very
20 happy with my representation in Pasco County,
21 both in the House and in the Senate, and our
22 U.S. Representatives as well. So I don't like
23 the fluidity that I have seen in the past,
24 years back, where some areas, it looks like
25 jello when you look at a map. I would like to

1 see that condensed. I like Pasco County
2 geographically like it is.

3 So that is all I have to say, and thank
4 you all for hearing us.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
6 very much. We appreciate those comments. Next
7 up we have Ms. Jocelyn Dickman. Followed by
8 Ms. Dickman, we have Ronnie Deese.

9 Ms. Dickman, you are recognized. Thank
10 you for being here.

11 MS. DICKMAN: Thank you, and thanks
12 everyone for coming up to Wesley Chapel and
13 Pasco County. I am used to seeing everyone on
14 TV, so it is nice to see you all here.

15 The first thing is, I know you all are
16 sitting up there and we all are sitting back
17 here, but I think it is important, especially
18 in this process, to remember that people are
19 elected to serve the people, so we are here,
20 but we're your bosses. So this process is
21 being done for us, the voters, who in November
22 did vote overwhelmingly for the Fair Districts
23 legislation, which means we want our districts
24 drawn, key word, fairly, and we as citizens and
25 voters are here to say that we want to choose

1 our legislators and not have our legislators
2 choose their constituents. And I think my
3 friends on both sides of the aisle can agree
4 with this, that this is a small government
5 issue. The more government tells us what our
6 districts are and who our elected officials are
7 going to be, the worse it is for the people.

8 And I did note the little run -- I didn't
9 notice that -- maps of what it might be are not
10 here, and the maps are the old maps, and I
11 would really wonder where the maps are of what
12 it could be.

13 And, again, I welcome you and I thank you
14 for having these meetings and ask you to please
15 remember that it is about the citizens first.
16 Thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
18 very much.

19 Mr. Deese, you are recognized, sir, and
20 then following Mr. Deese, we have Ms. Vonnie
21 Mikkelson from the Greater Zephyrhills Chamber.

22 You are recognized.

23 MR. DEESE: Thank you, and good evening.
24 I want to thank the Florida Legislature for
25 going into the communities of Florida and

1 listening to input from the Florida residents.
2 I especially want to thank you tonight,
3 Representative Weatherford and other members
4 here, for coming into our local community.
5 Thank you.

6 My name is Ronnie Deese, and I have lived
7 and worked in the bay area for 40 years, and
8 prior to that, up around Panama City, Florida.

9 Pasco County is distinct and different
10 from Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties. While
11 those counties are becoming national urban
12 centers competing with each other and other
13 major metropolitan regions in terms of jobs,
14 art, sports and living conditions, Pasco County
15 retains two distinct communities: A small
16 urban west side of the county and a more rural,
17 small charm county located on the east side of
18 the county. You cannot compare Pasco with any
19 of its other neighbors. East Pasco is very
20 similar to the southern portions of Sumter
21 County; however, as a whole, I suspect Sumter
22 politics is increasingly dominated by The
23 Villages.

24 Hernando County shares the most similarity
25 to Pasco County. West Hernando has built along

1 Highway 19 and is comprised of large retirement
2 and urban communities very similar to west
3 Pasco.

4 East Pasco, on the other hand, with its
5 pure rural lifestyle and Tampa commuters is
6 very similar to east Pasco. Lake County and on
7 the other side of Pasco County will have some
8 rural areas adjacent to Pasco County. Lake as
9 a whole, the other areas of Lake County and its
10 representation is increasingly being dominated
11 by the metropolitan lifestyle of Orlando, its
12 tourist attractions and the commercial
13 attractions in the I-4 corridor.

14 In my experience working for 23 years with
15 the people of Pasco County, I find two distinct
16 groups of people with different views. East
17 Pasco, east Hernando, southern Sumter and west
18 Lake County are all currently rural and/or
19 small-town views and are comprised of a mixture
20 of rural and Tampa working adults. The west
21 Pasco population reflects a more urban and a
22 retiree lifestyle. Recent studies supporting
23 modifications to Pasco County impact fees
24 recognize these differences, and Pasco County
25 adopted ordinances that support the two

1 different populations and their different
2 lifestyles.

3 Because of the diversity of Pasco from
4 surrounding counties, and because of the two
5 different and distinct populations living
6 within Pasco County, in my opinion, Pasco
7 County needs to have their own representation
8 for these communities and not diluted with
9 votes from non-similar populations. Two
10 Senators, three House seats for Pasco County,
11 the Senate seats being divided along the same
12 line as currently separating the two lifestyles
13 within Pasco County, perhaps the Suncoast
14 Parkway.

15 Finally, as to our Washington
16 congressional seats, please give consideration
17 to the fact that the Pasco vote is so diluted
18 by the current arrangement, it is difficult to
19 impossible to elect someone from Pasco County
20 to represent the Pasco County residents.

21 I thank you for your time.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
23 Mr. Deese.

24 Next up we have Vonnie Mikkelson.

25 Followed by Ms. Vonnie, we have our Supervisor

1 of Elections, Brian Corley.

2 You are recognized, Vonnice. Thank you for
3 being here.

4 MS. MIKKELSON: Thank you, Chairman
5 Weatherford, committee and the Florida
6 Legislature for providing this opportunity for
7 citizens' input in this very important process.

8 I am Vonnice Mikkelson, Executive Director
9 of the Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce,
10 and on behalf of the more than 400 businesses
11 and community organizations served by the
12 Zephyrhills Chamber, I would like to present a
13 couple of our ideas.

14 I would, after hearing the last speaker,
15 in all due respect, would like to disagree with
16 the fact that the east side of Pasco is rural.
17 I actually live in central Pasco in Land O'
18 Lakes, and I have worked for the Greater
19 Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce for the last
20 year and a half. I have been pleasantly
21 surprised on a daily basis of the activity and
22 the potential for growth in this side of the
23 county, and I think it is part of my job to
24 make sure that residents, visitors,
25 Congressmen, Congresswomen and Representatives

1 of our great county and our great area know
2 this and continue to look forward and
3 appreciate at least our perceptions and our
4 ideas to change these perceptions.

5 During the last year and a half as
6 Executive Director, I have come to understand
7 some of the interesting dynamics of this area.
8 As economic and business development has been
9 discussed with local businesses, business
10 owners, government staff, elected officials, it
11 has become and more evident that we must think
12 collectively and regionally.

13 It is obvious that we are a smaller part
14 of the Tampa Bay/west central Florida economic
15 region; however, over the past several years,
16 as growth has occurred in this region, the
17 central east Pasco area has become a more
18 significant player in the region for growth.
19 Based on the evolving submarket region,
20 business owners believe it to be imperative to
21 have representation on both the state and
22 national level that understands the
23 significance of this growth region.

24 We are centrally located in the state of
25 Florida to all regions. We have the ability to

1 capitalize on a variety of logistics from two
2 Interstates, rail, port access, air expansion
3 possibilities and the availability of land.

4 We are enthusiastic about our future, but
5 we can better utilize these resources with
6 Representatives that will work with our local
7 communities as a whole and understand these
8 attributes to develop them to the highest level
9 possible. In today's climate, many entities --

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Vonnice, I
11 am going to need you to wrap it for me.

12 MS. MIKKELSON: I will be wrapping it up,
13 thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

15 MS. MIKKELSON: We are looking forward --
16 we are -- and many entities are looking to
17 forward-thinking leaders, not only at the local
18 government, that would represent the state and
19 national levels. We need local representation
20 to assist us in bettering our possibilities in
21 a very competitive market. While east Pasco is
22 a relevant submarket of central Florida and
23 Tampa Bay, we share many commonalities with our
24 partner communities of central and east Pasco.
25 Those would be Zephyrhills, Crystal Springs,

1 Wesley Chapel, Dade City and so forth. We --
2 however the lines are drawn, we are asking for
3 representation that makes sense, and sensible
4 representation.

5 I would like to invite everybody to the
6 greater Zephyrhills area, the best-kept secret
7 in Pasco County --

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right.

9 MS. MIKKELSON: -- and thank you again for
10 your time.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
12 very much, Ms. Vonnice, we appreciate your
13 comments.

14 Next up we have our wonderful Supervisor
15 of Elections, Brian Corley, and after Brian,
16 Ralph Grant. All right.

17 MR. CORLEY: Thank you Mr. Chairman, good
18 evening. Welcome, members of the Legislature,
19 welcome to the best county in Florida. Nice to
20 have y'all here.

21 I want to first thank you all for the
22 opportunity to provide input on the front end
23 of this very important topic, and I want to go
24 on record to applaud all of you for this
25 unprecedented level of transparency of the

1 process to date. The posting of
2 citizen-submitted district maps and comments
3 on-line and these meetings are to be commended.

4 As has already been stated, I don't envy
5 the daunting task that lies ahead for all of
6 you. However, I will say this: I am confident
7 when it is all said and done, my fellow
8 supervisors and I with my great staff will
9 continue to make Florida shine with elections
10 administration.

11 My comments are in a slightly different
12 light from the other speakers, Mr. Chairman. I
13 want to briefly focus on two issues that are
14 very important to my colleagues and I. First,
15 the issue of time. To conduct successful
16 elections in 2012, we as elections officials
17 need time to complete required tasks, time to
18 adjust precinct lines to new districts, gain
19 approval of those precincts by the Board of
20 County Commissioners and notify all voters, all
21 11 million plus, and nearly 300,000 in Pasco
22 alone, well in advance of election day. And as
23 you all are well aware, we can't re-precinct
24 our counties until your work is done.

25 As such, I would respectfully ask that you

1 approve the new maps as early as possible in
2 the 2012 session. The earlier in the session
3 you all approve the plans, the more it will
4 help us with our required tasks. We have a
5 very short window of time to do our part, to
6 get ourselves, and more importantly, the voters
7 ready in time for election day.

8 The second issue I would like to address
9 is district lines. In short, please respect
10 communities when you draw district lines. I
11 would like to thank the legislative staff, and
12 particularly Mr. John Guthrie, who has been a
13 great resource and has provided training for my
14 colleagues and I. For many of our supervisors,
15 including myself, this is our first go-round
16 with redistricting, and it is not a lot of fun
17 so far and I can only imagine what it is like
18 for you all. Also, by allowing us to provide
19 our county voting tabulation districts data,
20 which is a step in the right direction, as it
21 takes into consideration the following: Intact
22 communities, traffic patterns, physical
23 barriers. Ladies and gentlemen, please adhere
24 to these lines wherever possible. Ideally, we
25 would ask that you draw a district line along a

1 county line whenever possible.

2 Again, thank you for the opportunity to
3 provide some input on this very important
4 process. As an elections administrator, it is
5 very much appreciated. Thank you all very
6 much.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
8 very much, Mr. Corley, and thank you very much
9 for your service to the state and to our
10 community.

11 Next up we have Ralph Grant. After
12 Mr. Grant, we have Milton Chojnowski. Ralph, I
13 saw you earlier. He may have stepped out for a
14 moment. How about Milton Chojnowski, is Milton
15 here? I hope I said your last name right
16 there, sir. If not, you can correct -- okay,
17 good.

18 Mr. Chojnowski, thank you for being here,
19 and we will try to get back to Ralph. You are
20 recognized, sir.

21 MR. CHOJNOWSKI: My comments are really an
22 approach that you should take, I think, to get
23 started. I would suggest that you look at this
24 whole process by way of the computer. Let the
25 computer by the various restraints you want to

1 put in it, east and west, rural, city wide,
2 whatever, and let that make the first cut, and
3 then after you do that, without getting into
4 too many side bars, I think you would be able
5 then to make some modifications to that and not
6 get into gerrymandering and all the rest of the
7 stuff. That is all I have to say. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
9 very much, sir. Brevity gets bonus points.
10 Good job.

11 Okay. I don't see Ralph here. Ralph
12 Grant, is he back? If not, we are going to
13 move on to Ms. Rachel O'Connor. Rachel, you
14 are recognized, and after Rachel, we will have
15 Fern Williams.

16 Rachel, thank you for being here.

17 MS. O'CONNOR: Hi. My name is Rachel
18 O'Connor. I have been a resident of Pasco
19 County for over 18 years, and I currently live
20 in Wesley Chapel. So, first of all, I would
21 like to thank you guys for taking the time to
22 get the input of the public, and second of all,
23 for entering into this public discourse without
24 pre-drawn maps, because I think that is
25 emblematic of your openness and willing to

1 consider and use the input of the public.

2 What I would like to say is when you are
3 drawing the new redistricting -- the new
4 districts is I think that Pasco County has
5 benefited greatly from having multiple
6 representation. As the people before me have
7 said, Pasco is very diverse, with the west side
8 being very urban, and the central and east side
9 still being agricultural based, even though it
10 is growing, and I would like the Board to
11 consider when drawing these new districts that
12 we should probably look at moving the --
13 looking north, drawing districts north, because
14 the counties north of us are also designed in
15 the same way, with the west coast being the
16 most populated and the east sides of the county
17 being very agricultural based, and I think they
18 would be best represented in that way, so thank
19 you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
21 very much, Rachel.

22 I see that Ralph is here, but you know
23 what, I believe that ladies always go first, so
24 we are going to let Fern -- come on, Ms. Fern,
25 you go first, and then after that, we will have

1 Ralph Grant.

2 Thank you very much for being here, Fern
3 Williams.

4 MS. WILLIAMS: Good evening. Thank you
5 for the time. My name is Fern Williams and I
6 live here in Pasco County now. I have been a
7 Florida resident and a voting resident for 50
8 years, and I have seen a lot of changes. I
9 have seen gerrymandering, both sides of the
10 aisle.

11 I brought a couple of maps that I got off
12 your website, and these are examples of what
13 the districts look like now. This is Florida
14 Senate 27, and it goes from the -- from the
15 Atlantic Ocean in Palm Beach County all the way
16 to the Gulf, and I just don't see that anybody
17 can adequately represent that area. It
18 certainly is diverse. This is -- this is in
19 Orange County, and this is two districts, 9 and
20 19, and as you can see, they are interesting.

21 The Fair District amendment is voted, was
22 bipartisan, it was voted by 63 percent of the
23 voters, and some of it says that the lines
24 cannot be drawn to favor a party or an
25 incumbent, and they must be contiguous,

1 compact, adhere to existing local boundaries,
2 and these obviously don't. I just hope that
3 you take that into consideration, and we will
4 have better districts and better
5 Representatives for all of us. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
7 very much, Ms. Williams. We appreciate those
8 comments.

9 Next up we have Mr. Ralph Grant, and then
10 after Ralph, we have Justin Cracchiolo. You
11 are recognized, sir.

12 MR. GRANT: Are you taking questions as
13 well, or just comments?

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I'm sorry,
15 sir?

16 MR. GRANT: Are you taking questions as
17 well, or just comments?

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You can ask
19 questions, yes, sir. In fact, what we will do,
20 and I probably didn't state that at the
21 beginning, if you have specific questions, as
22 opposed to getting in a back and forth, if you
23 state them, at the very end, we will try to
24 answer every single question that is asked
25 today.

1 MR. GRANT: My specific point is primarily
2 the Senate Districts with Pasco County, they
3 seem to be pretty well distributed right now,
4 with only one being down only seven percent in
5 population. Are you looking at population
6 growth within the districts? Because the next
7 time you do, are you looking to look at the
8 growth within each district before you start
9 the redistricting, before you start redrawing
10 the lines? If not, I would like to see if --
11 since we are so well represented as far as the
12 Senate is within the Pasco County, to keep
13 those districts as close as possible to what we
14 already have. Can you answer that as far as
15 looking at potential growth within those areas,
16 or --

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, we will
18 get to that answer, and, in fact, with regard
19 to the growth specifically, I will go ahead and
20 do that. In the back, there is a chart, and
21 John Guthrie is here and can walk you through
22 it, it actually explains the deviation and who
23 is over-populated and who is under-populated.

24 MR. GRANT: Right, I understand that, but
25 as far as how far out are you looking at

1 growth?

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: How are we
3 looking -- I'm sorry.

4 MR. GRANT: How far out are you looking at
5 the growth?

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: We just look
7 at -- based on the census from 2010.

8 MR. GRANT: Okay. That is it. That is my
9 question.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay. Thank
11 you very much, you got it.

12 Next up we have Justin Cracchiolo, and
13 after that we have Jim Cracchiolo. I'm sorry,
14 Justina. I said Justin.

15 Ms. Cracchiolo, how are you doing today?

16 MS. CRACCHIOLO: Good. How are you doing?

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you for
18 being here.

19 MS. CRACCHIOLO: My name is Justina
20 Cracchiolo, and I live in Wesley Chapel,
21 Florida, and I have lived in the community for
22 31 years in east Pasco.

23 I want to thank the committee for allowing
24 the citizens to make a contribution with the
25 redistricting process. Truly an educated

1 citizen can understand the decisions that
2 ultimately become law. In fact, the My
3 District Builder software on the
4 floridaredistricting.org website has become the
5 hottest new game in my house.

6 This evening I would like to specifically
7 address the community of Wesley Chapel,
8 Zephyrhills and Dade City in east Pasco County,
9 because the needs of these east Pasco
10 communities are very different from those of
11 our neighbors to the west of the Veterans
12 Expressway.

13 In the course of drawing up my own maps, I
14 believe that the communities of interest and
15 compact geographic areas causes -- offer
16 compelling standards to apply to the east Pasco
17 County when drawing up the boundaries for our
18 district. It is my hope that you will keep the
19 communities of Zephyrhills, Wesley Chapel and
20 Dade City together and not split them up.
21 These communities are contiguous and are within
22 10 miles' drive from one to the other. I have
23 raised four children in this district.

24 My children were born in Dade City,
25 educated in San Antonio, Zephyrhills and Wesley

1 Chapel. Whether volunteering in the community,
2 at church, the PTA or school advisory council,
3 I have come to recognize that my fellow
4 citizens in Zephyrhills, Dade City and Wesley
5 Chapel share common interests and goals for
6 their families, neighbors and communities. I
7 hope that the committee will consider my
8 testimony this evening and to the best of their
9 abilities decide to keep Zephyrhills, Dade City
10 and Wesley Chapel communities together in one
11 district.

12 Thank you again for allowing me to express
13 my opinion on redistricting. I am proud to
14 live in a state that is giving the voters a say
15 in picking their lawmakers, rather than the
16 lawmakers picking their voters. Good evening
17 and God bless.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
19 very much, Ms. Cracchiolo, we appreciate that.

20 And now that we have heard from your boss,
21 Mr. Cracchiolo, you are now able to speak, so
22 you are recognized, sir. And after
23 Mr. Cracchiolo, we have Steve Van Gorden.

24 MR. CRACCHIOLO: That is a hard act to
25 follow. I didn't know we were going to put

1 that in line like that.

2 I want to thank the Legislature as well
3 for coming tonight. Welcome, everybody, to
4 Pasco County, great to have you here.

5 My first step in Pasco County was in 1973.
6 The first impression was memorable. It was
7 like a glimpse into the wild, wild west. There
8 were cowboys and cattle and Indian history, and
9 it was all surrounded by this little seasonal
10 midwestern retirement community called
11 Zephyrhills. Highway 54 was sparsely inhabited
12 with isolated dots of populations along the
13 way, Saddlebrook was just getting started, and
14 Bruce B. Downs was known as the road to nowhere
15 basically. Pasco County was completely
16 polarized really east and west as well, and
17 there was very little in between.

18 Moving here after getting married took
19 quite a bit of convincing, I might add. After
20 all, east Pasco was not quite the midwest urban
21 upbringing my wife was accompanied to. Feeling
22 pioneerish, we made the commitment and raised
23 our four children here in Pasco. Zephyrhills,
24 Dade City and Wesley Chapel, although somewhat
25 geographically isolated, became the communities

1 we were involved with, always driving long
2 distances, it seemed, from school to stores to
3 events and so forth.

4 Since these early days of isolated
5 population dots along Highway 54, growth has
6 connected the dots and the picture has changed
7 rather dramatically. With the growth over the
8 past ten years, these communities of
9 Zephyrhills, Dade City and Wesley Chapel have
10 now established a true sense of community.

11 During this redistricting process may this
12 sense of community that has been created over
13 the past couple of decades be preserved by a
14 redistricting plan that will enhance our
15 community by maintaining the current boundaries
16 rather than carving up our community we have
17 all worked so hard to create.

18 Thanks again for coming. We really
19 appreciate you being here.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
21 very much.

22 Next up we have Mr. Steve Van Gorden.
23 Following Mr. Gorden, we have Ms. Doris Tosen,
24 I hope I say that right, Tosen.

25 Steve, thanks for being here.

1 MR. VAN GORDEN: Thank you, Representative
2 Weatherford, and thank you, legislative
3 redistricting committee. It is great to see
4 you guys out here to Wesley Chapel area and
5 taking your time and listening to the citizens.

6 I am going to be very brief with my
7 comments. I echo a lot which was already
8 previously stated. I am a current principal of
9 Zephyrhills High School. I was very privileged
10 also to be the principal of Hudson Middle
11 school. And there's been a lot already tonight
12 talked about east versus west, and there are
13 distinct differences. There's also very
14 distinct differences between Wesley Chapel --
15 Wesley Chapel, Land O' Lakes, the New Tampa
16 area, and then also the Dade City community,
17 San An, Zephyrhills, Crystal Springs and
18 Trilby.

19 I would like to see you when you go ahead
20 and start drawing these plans look at three
21 state House districts for Pasco County, one in
22 eastern Pasco, one in central Pasco and then
23 one on the west side. I would like to see us
24 look at two state Senate districts, with the
25 Suncoast Parkway being the dividing line. And

1 I would also like to see us have one
2 Representative for the U.S. Congress, and have
3 it a solely Pasco County seat to give Pasco
4 County what they deserve.

5 So with that, I -- as my colleagues
6 stated -- as my colleagues stated earlier, and
7 fellow citizens, I think you have a daunting
8 task, but I am confident in each one of your
9 leadership's ability to do what is best for all
10 the citizens of Florida, but particularly the
11 citizens of east Pasco County. So thank you
12 and God bless each one of you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
14 Steve.

15 Next up we have Ms. Doris Tosen, and after
16 Ms. Tosen, we have Kim Irvine. Is Doris here?
17 There she is. I hope I didn't mess up your
18 name too bad; if I did, I apologize.

19 MS. ROSEN: I believe you meant to say
20 Rosen instead of Posen.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I'm sorry.
22 It is misspelled, that is our fault, but,
23 Ms. Rosen, thank you very much for being here.
24 You are recognized.

25 MS. ROSEN: Okay. I am adaptable.

1 This is my third redistricting event and
2 the second time I have spoken in front of this
3 august body.

4 I want to tell you now that we have
5 Amendments 5 and 6 which were voted by
6 63 percent of the voters. The people have
7 spoken. We want fair and reasonable districts.
8 We don't want them to favor either party. I
9 was here in 1990 when it favored the Democrats,
10 I was here in 2000 when it favored the
11 Republicans, and it is time to get it right and
12 not favor any political party. It should be
13 fair and equitable.

14 There are no survivorship rights to
15 districts. There are no survivorship rights to
16 districts. No politician is entitled to grow
17 into a district. He has to earn it. We need
18 action and not words, we need the maps, we need
19 to get started and we need to move now. Thank
20 you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

22 Next up we have Ms. Kim Irvine. After
23 Kim, we have Jim Mathieu.

24 Ms. Irvine, thank you for being here, you
25 are recognized.

1 MS. IRVINE: Thank you very much, and
2 thank you for taking the time to listen to us.
3 I really -- the public, we do appreciate you
4 taking the time and we appreciate the
5 opportunity to speak.

6 First of all, I am not unhappy with the
7 way the representation has gone at this point.
8 I do realize we are diverse, but I think our
9 government should be gender blind. I think it
10 should be race blind. We are all people. We
11 are all Americans. You should serve all of us
12 equally. Color shouldn't play into it. Gender
13 shouldn't play into it. Party shouldn't play
14 into it. We need representation from our
15 legislators that represent us all as Pasco
16 County residents.

17 I have been here over 18 years, I love
18 Pasco County, and I am thrilled to be here and
19 I trust that you will all make the effort
20 required to make sure that this is a fair
21 process and will represent the people of Pasco
22 County to the best of your ability. Thank you
23 again.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
25 Ms. Irvine.

1 Next up we have Jim Mathieu, followed by
2 Ilene Miller. And I just want to make a quite
3 point. We've got about 50 people still to go,
4 we've got two hours left, so you can run the
5 math. If we can keep it at two to three
6 minutes, that would be great. The last couple
7 of speakers have been wonderful. We just want
8 to give everybody the opportunity.

9 Mr. Mathieu, thank you very much for being
10 here, sir.

11 MR. MATHIEU: James Mathieu, I will be
12 brief in light of that comment. Thank you for
13 letting me speak, Representatives, Senators,
14 and thank you for this open process. It is
15 very impressive.

16 I am an attorney. I have been here in
17 Pasco County now for seven years. I have been
18 a city attorney in the city on the west side, I
19 have also been a city manager. I feel that I
20 have a pretty good feel for the wants, needs
21 and concerns of the people of Pasco County, and
22 my observation after seven years is that Pasco
23 County needs three separate legislative
24 districts at the Representative level and at
25 least two State Senators.

1 The western side of the county is
2 predominated by U.S. 19, which is a major
3 artery. It is somewhat of a retired area,
4 people with retirees, people do not commute
5 into Tampa, it is too far. It has one of the
6 highest crime levels. Just a quick check of
7 the sheriff's office will see that. It has
8 riparian water rights, it has access, it has
9 marinas. This is one type of -- one part of
10 the county.

11 When you go to the middle of the county,
12 it is, in my opinion, a bedroom community.
13 Many of the developments, as I call them, of
14 this area here are sandwiched between the
15 Suncoast and 75. That is what created these
16 communities. They have zoning issues, they
17 have commuter issues, they have transportation
18 issues. These are distinct, different issues
19 from those on the west side.

20 On the east side of the county, Sans --
21 Dade City, it is an agrarian area. They have
22 many different needs, wants and desires and
23 concerns.

24 And if you cannot statistically and
25 mathematically get three and two, then I think

1 if you are going to look one way or the other,
2 you have to push us to the north and hook up
3 with Hernando County as opposed to Tampa, which
4 has much different needs than we do. Thank you
5 very much in allowing me to speak.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
7 very much, Jim. We appreciate that.

8 We have Ms. Ilene Miller, and after
9 Ms. Miller, we have Sandy Graves.

10 You are recognized. Thank you for being
11 here.

12 MS. MILLER: Hello. My name is Lavonne
13 Miller, but anyhow --

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I apologize.

15 MS. MILLER: No, no, it's fine.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: It is my
17 eyes, I can assure you.

18 MS. MILLER: I signed "Ilene L."

19 But I have been a resident of Pasco County
20 for thirty some years. I moved here when I was
21 ten. But, anyway, I would love to see our
22 county where we have a Representative that only
23 represents us here in Pasco County. I don't
24 know -- I don't know how -- I haven't looked at
25 the maps, I didn't know there were maps. They

1 are on -- and I will look at those tomorrow and
2 probably then make some comments to you all.
3 But what I would like to see is I would love to
4 see equitable, true Representatives of the
5 people here in Pasco County.

6 I realize that all of you have traveled to
7 be here tonight. I don't know what that is
8 costing you all, but some of that probably
9 would have been better off staying in the
10 budget and doing something else with it,
11 education, one thing and another.

12 But, anyway, just look carefully, make
13 certain that the -- that the districts are
14 equitable and that we have true representation
15 just for Pasco County.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much.

18 Next up we have Sandy Graves. Following
19 Ms. Graves, we have Jarrod Scharber.

20 You are recognized.

21 MS. GRAVES: Hi, my name is Sandy Graves.
22 I live at 21946 Shamu Drive in Land O' Lakes,
23 Florida. I am a native Floridian, a native
24 laker and a native Pasco resident. I was
25 probably here when Mr. Cracchiolo came and saw

1 the cowgirls and cowboys. I was probably one
2 of them.

3 But, anyway, I want to thank the
4 delegation for allowing me to offer my two
5 cents' worth on redistricting, and because I
6 realize that the new amendments to our
7 Constitution will most likely end in
8 litigation, and I do not have the wherewithal
9 to litigate, hopefully my two cents will be
10 worth something now.

11 I am here for the representation of my one
12 vote because I feel the founding fathers were
13 quite specific that the vote be heard and
14 counted, a vote that represents me and my life
15 according to my community and what affects me.
16 Though there may be some here tonight that seek
17 to have that vote superseded by special
18 interests that do not have my vote or the best
19 interests of Pasco citizens in mind, I ask that
20 you look beyond their voices and consider some
21 very unique issues that face Pasco and the
22 people that live here, and why we need our
23 representation to have teeth and not to be
24 diluted by special interests or voters not
25 concerned with what face us daily.

1 Some Pasco-specific issues are insurance.
2 After 15 years with Liberty Mutual, I was
3 dropped and given reasons of sinkholes. Now I
4 am the proud owner of Citizens Insurance,
5 because of no choice of my own, though I
6 thought I lived in a country of free trade and
7 competition.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sandy, I love
9 you, but we got to keep it on redistricting.

10 MS. GRAVES: Okay, I am just going to pass
11 on, but basically Pasco has a lot of issues
12 that affect her, and we have neighbors to
13 either side that conflict with us sometimes.
14 So what I would like to ask is that you not
15 dilute our vote by having us with Hillsborough
16 or Pinellas so much, because we need to be
17 considered with what our issues are. We have
18 economic issues here that don't necessarily --
19 which conflicts with Hillsborough, sometimes in
20 Pinellas we have the water issue, and we have
21 the insurance issues. So I just ask that you
22 -- and I was getting to that point, but most of
23 all I want to thank you for being here and
24 listening to me, and though I think there is a
25 difference between east and west Pasco, there

1 is also a difference between our neighbors,
2 Hillsborough and Pinellas, so I want you to
3 consider that when you are thinking about us
4 and our representation. I also want to pray
5 for your discernment and your wisdom and your
6 mental health. Thank you very much.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you for
8 your prayers, Sandy, we appreciate that. We
9 all appreciate that.

10 Next up we have Mr. Scharber, followed
11 by -- I want to say this right, William
12 Peterseim I believe is how it is -- I believe
13 is how it is spelled.

14 Jarrod, you are up. Thanks for being
15 here.

16 MR. SCHARBER: Thank you. First I want to
17 thank Representative Weatherford again and the
18 remainder of the committee members for taking
19 the time to get some input from the public this
20 evening. It certainly means a lot to all of us
21 that you would take the time to listen to what
22 we have to say before acting on such an
23 important issue.

24 As stated, my name is Jarrod Scharber. I
25 am not here as a representative of any group or

1 organization. I am here tonight representing
2 Jarrod Scharber, and by extension, my family.
3 I am a fourth-generation resident of Pasco
4 County, and other than a brief period when I
5 left to pursue my education, I've resided in
6 the San Antonio and Dade City area my entire
7 life.

8 As you all know, as Will certainly knows,
9 there have been significant changes in our
10 county, especially this portion of our county,
11 over the past ten years, and there have been
12 developments in the patterns of growth such
13 that even an outsider could examine a map, take
14 a look at where the growth corridors are, what
15 goes on on the west side of the county, what
16 goes on on the east side of the county, and
17 make an analysis of what we need in terms of
18 our representation moving forward both at the
19 state and the national level.

20 Much of what I was going to say is going
21 to dovetail with what you've already heard.
22 The western side of our county is largely made
23 up of smaller urban centers, New Port Richey,
24 Hudson, Holiday, things -- getting on up in
25 Hernando, Weeki Wachee, Spring Hill. Those

1 communities, while they have their own
2 interests that are very important and specific
3 to them, they don't necessarily always align
4 with what we have in terms of our goals, our
5 needs and what we see as our future challenges
6 here on the east side of the county.

7 When you are making an analysis of what
8 our Representatives are going to be, I think it
9 is important that you make the distinction
10 between the types of communities and then the
11 types of people who actually reside in those
12 communities. Drawing district lines somewhere
13 near the center of the county, whether it is
14 U.S. 41, whether it is Suncoast Parkway, making
15 a distinction between the west side of the
16 county, the east side of the county, and
17 certainly I think there should be no question
18 that we need to have ourselves separate and
19 distinct from the northern portions of
20 Hillsborough County. Grouping this east side
21 of the county in with southern
22 Hernando/southern Sumter Counties I think is
23 going to give us what we all want, elected
24 officials, the one we send to Tallahassee and
25 the ones we send to Washington, are going to be

1 there to represent our interests, and that is
2 exactly what we are electing them to do is
3 represent our interests, not the interests of
4 north Tampa, not the interests of New Port
5 Richey, but the interests of east Pasco. And,
6 again, I think that -- again, some of my
7 thunder has been stolen this evening, but three
8 districts in the House, two districts for the
9 Senate, and trying to keep as much of east
10 Pasco independent of some of these other
11 competing interests as possible, that is going
12 to serve everybody's best interests. Thanks
13 again.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much.

16 Next up we have Mr. Peterseim, I believe,
17 I hope I said that right, followed by James D.
18 Porter, who I know -- I believe is Don Porter.
19 I hope I have that right.

20 MR. PETERSEIM: That is correct. How are
21 you?

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You're up.

23 MR. PETERSEIM: I am a -- my name is Bill
24 Peterseim. I am a certified financial planner,
25 economist, political analyst and 20th century

1 historian, and I broadcast daily into 38
2 nations on five continents about what is going
3 on in this country.

4 I thank you for being here because, quite
5 frankly, I don't think any time in the history
6 of our nation until the past four and a half
7 years have we had such a feeling of total
8 disconnect between the electorate and the
9 elected officials across this nation as a
10 disconnect between what we want, what we
11 believe in, and what the Legislatures are
12 voting. So I would remind you, it is a
13 republican form of government, and I thank you
14 for that.

15 I also thank you for the moment of levity
16 when we said there would be no political issues
17 involved in gerrymandering redistricting. It
18 was a good moment of levity.

19 And I do have one question that I really
20 would like clarified, because it really wasn't
21 that clear on the ballot in November, and I am
22 sure I am not alone on that, but there was a
23 specific proposal that was voted on and
24 approved that had direct influence on the
25 redistricting process, and I am sure you know

1 what I mean. If you would, please, take a
2 moment to explain that and clarify it for all
3 the voters. Thank you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, sir.
5 Thank you very much, and Mr. Peterseim, we will
6 make sure and do that. We addressed it in the
7 very opening of our comments about Amendments 5
8 and 6, but I can assure you my colleague,
9 Chairman Gaetz, at the very end will make sure
10 that he goes through it one more time to
11 explain its impact on the process and how we
12 plan to follow it.

13 J. D. Porter, you are recognized here. In
14 fact, I will take a moment of privilege. We
15 are actually sitting on land that was donated
16 by the Porter family to allow Wiregrass to be
17 built. It is an honor to have you here, and
18 thank you all for your kindness in unofficially
19 hosting us tonight.

20 MR. PORTER: First of all, thank all of
21 y'all for coming out this evening. I really
22 appreciate it. As stated, my name is J. D.
23 Porter. I work for a small family business
24 here called Wiregrass Ranch. We happen to be
25 sitting on one of the pieces of property that I

1 grew up on. It has been in our family for
2 going on 80 years.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Speak a
4 little closer to the mike, if you could, J. D.

5 MR. PORTER: Sorry about that.

6 This piece of property has been in our
7 family for around 80 years, and I think it is
8 important for everybody to know and everybody
9 to understand and recognize that Pasco itself
10 has been kind of in the background for an
11 extended period of time. We have been here
12 through that.

13 It is coming into the forefront now, and
14 it is important to the representation that
15 where we are seeing and one of the important
16 facts that was not mentioned is during the
17 growth boom, Pasco County was the second
18 fastest-growing county in the state. That kind
19 of growth everybody in this room felt and
20 everybody in this room saw. It is something
21 when those kind of people and when we get that
22 kind of density that you are seeing, whether it
23 is at the Shops at Wiregrass, the community
24 college that is coming up down the road, one
25 of the -- the best high school, in my opinion,

1 in the county that we are sitting in right now,
2 you are seeing growth that is taking place
3 during a depressed market. We need to make
4 sure that our representation is basically
5 correct and dead-on for the type of
6 constituents that are in the areas.

7 A lot of people said west Pasco is a lot
8 different than east. I agree with that, but we
9 are in central Pasco. Where we are at now, you
10 are seeing in a lot of the things that we have
11 done and a lot of the things that we feel and
12 that we have seen in the past, we came from a
13 ranching background, we came from a setup where
14 we still run cattle, we still have citrus
15 trees, but we are also seeing a lot of smart
16 growth and we are trying to do the right thing.
17 We are trying to protect the land and do things
18 that benefit the community.

19 I think a lot of the other communities
20 like Dade City, like Zephyrhills, like San
21 Antonio, they are going to feed off growth, and
22 we share a lot of the same community
23 backgrounds and values that have been here
24 forever, and a lot of the people that have
25 stand up all have made good points, but there

1 is a distinctive difference between the west
2 side and when you get on the other side of the
3 Suncoast, maybe even 41, but I think the
4 Suncoast is a good place to put that, a lot
5 different dynamics and a lot different
6 demographics there than what there is here.
7 There is a way -- if we are going to go anyway,
8 I think that we should go north and extend
9 districts northward, because they are going to
10 benefit off the growth and the change that we
11 are seeing, even during a downtime.

12 When you are looking at areas and when you
13 look at certain things, I like looking at the
14 past as being a historic example of what is
15 going on. This is very similar to a setup like
16 in Atlanta where you have Buckhead growing to
17 the north. That is a very good layout, that it
18 changed over time, and because of districts and
19 because of representation at the state level,
20 they were able to be successful, and I think
21 that is very important for all of y'all to take
22 into consideration. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much, J. D. We appreciate that.

25 I apologize to the next speaker, I don't

1 think I gave you a heads-up, but Mike Pheneger,
2 President of the ACLU of Florida. Mike, are
3 you here, sir? I'm sorry that I did not give
4 you a heads-up on that. After Mr. Pheneger, we
5 have Georgiana Jones.

6 Mr. Pheneger, thank you very much for
7 being here, sir.

8 MR. PHENEGER: Yeah, actually, we are a
9 lot of things. I happen to be the President of
10 the ACLU of Florida. I am also a retired Army
11 colonel. I think elections are extremely
12 important. In 30 years in the Army, I managed
13 to vote each one of those 30 years, 15 of them
14 overseas from such unlikely places as Korea,
15 three years in Vietnam, Panama, Germany and
16 Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. I also managed to
17 spend the afternoon in church with Senator
18 Joyner and Representative Reed this afternoon.

19 Here -- the purpose of my appearance
20 tonight is to talk about Amendments 5 and 6,
21 which got almost no notice during your
22 introduction and no comment on what they all
23 mean. Now, I support Amendments 5 and 6, and
24 have since the outset. I actually am involved
25 in supporting the suit to oppose the suit

1 against Amendment 6, but I am doing it with my
2 money, not the taxpayers' money. I understand
3 that the House of Representatives is doing it
4 with about \$300,000 worth of taxpayer money,
5 according to the recent issue in *The New York*
6 *Times*.

7 So I think what we need to do is to focus
8 the Legislature on implementing the will of the
9 people in terms of Amendments 5 and 6, which,
10 to remind, have several things. They say that
11 you can't draw a district to favor or disfavor
12 an incumbent or a party. Districts should be
13 contiguous, they should be compact, they should
14 be roughly equal in population, they should use
15 existing city, county and natural boundaries,
16 and most of the time right now, if you look at
17 our district maps today, they don't do that,
18 and finally they should preserve the ability of
19 minorities, both language and racial, to vote
20 for Representatives of their choice.

21 Someone here earlier talked about the
22 possibility of litigation, but, frankly, if you
23 all fulfill your constitutional mandate in 5
24 and 6, you won't have to worry too much about
25 litigation, because you will have basically a

1 fireproof solution to the problem.

2 I think it is important for you all to
3 develop maps, simply because the Constitution
4 requires that in 2012, you actually vote on new
5 districts. It would be nice for us to see what
6 you are considering before you do it so we can
7 kind of advise your deliberations while you are
8 doing that in the legislative session early
9 next year.

10 And, finally, I would like to recommend
11 that in contrast to people that we have in
12 Washington nowadays, I wish you all would
13 refrain from taking any pledges before you
14 arrive there, because it is going to be hard
15 enough to draw these districts, and if you have
16 pledged yourself into a solution before you
17 have a chance to deliberate and debate, it is
18 not going to work very well. Thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
20 sir. Thank you, Mr. Pheneger, and thank you
21 for your service to our country. We are very
22 grateful for that.

23 Next up we have Ms. Georgiana Jones, and
24 followed by Ms. Jones, we have Steve Graves.
25 Thank you for being here, ma'am.

1 MS. JONES: I want to tell you that I am
2 very pleased to see you all here today to
3 listen to all of us. I must say in confessing
4 that I have been in Tallahassee during sessions
5 during the past three years, and in the past
6 two years when we spoke as educators and others
7 working in public service, I don't feel that
8 there was listening.

9 I do want to say, as so many others have
10 spoken before me, that it is very important
11 that you understand that we speak and you are
12 working for us. We have already voted for
13 Amendments 5 and 6, and you have heard before
14 me exactly what that means and what your task
15 is for us.

16 I am very concerned, and this is my last
17 statement, that there seems to be another check
18 place that if you fairly redistrict, there are
19 new voter laws in place that will pull people
20 out of lines and ask for certain important
21 pieces of identification to prove themselves by
22 names, addresses, changes. I do not believe
23 that we are on the road to fairness and justice
24 in Florida, and I want you to know that we are
25 not going to go backwards. We are moving

1 forwards, and I hope that you will take into
2 consideration that you have been given a task
3 by us.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
5 very much, Ms. Jones.

6 Next up we have Steve Graves, and after
7 Mr. Graves, we have Bill Bunting.

8 Steve, you are recognized, sir.

9 MR. GRAVES: Yes, thank you,
10 Representative Weatherford. I would like to
11 thank all the panel for being here and coming
12 to Pasco County and listening to the voters and
13 what we have to say.

14 My name is Steve Graves. I have lived in
15 Pasco County for approximately 16 years in the
16 Land O' Lakes area.

17 Just concerning the State Senate seat,
18 based upon the current amendment, each Senate
19 seat is supposed to have approximately 470
20 voters. Pasco has right now 464. I believe
21 that Pasco County should have at least one, or
22 only one Senate seat. However, if whenever the
23 grand scheme comes together you see that Pasco
24 has to be divided, I don't think that it should
25 be any more than two. Currently we have three,

1 and I think that is one too many.

2 For the State House, under the amendments,
3 it's 157,000 -- 157,000 citizens per seat.
4 Again, with the 464,000 citizens in Pasco
5 County, that equals to about three state seats.
6 That is what I think that the current number
7 should be. As of right now, it is six.

8 For the congressional seat, it is 696,000
9 citizens, with 464. Currently we have two
10 congressional seats. I think we should keep
11 that.

12 If there should be any type of divisions
13 that should be made, I agree with a lot of the
14 other past speakers about taking a look at
15 either 41, the Suncoast, as being maybe the
16 line of demarcation, and from there, take a
17 look at the west side and plus the central and
18 east together.

19 Again, I want to thank all of you for
20 being here and thank you so much for this time.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
22 very much.

23 Next up we have Bill Bunting, and after
24 Bill, we have Ken Blankenship.

25 Bill, thank you for being here, sir.

1 MR. BUNTING: Well, thank all of you for
2 being here. You guys are doing a great job.
3 Now you will hear from me, and we will see how
4 great it is going to be.

5 Okay. One, I am going to be more specific
6 on the growth. First of all, I am a Pasco
7 resident for 23 years. I am on the
8 Governmental Affairs Board of Directors for
9 West Pasco Chamber with 1,400 businesses, and I
10 am on the Advisory Board of Directors for the
11 Salvation Army, so I am involved in my county.

12 One, we would like to see Richard
13 Corcoran's seat move up out of Pinellas.
14 Pinellas is going to lose their growth, they
15 have to give up ground, so there is no
16 question. Representative Corcoran has
17 represented Pasco very well, and we think he
18 should be a full Pasco legislator, just like
19 John Legg and hopefully Will Weatherford will
20 be out of Hillsborough and be a full
21 legislator, too.

22 The second part is extremely important,
23 and that is Congressman Bilirakis' district,
24 District 9. He represents three counties. It
25 would be -- behoove us if we could get

1 Mr. Bilirakis out of Hillsborough County and up
2 into east Pasco so he would only have two
3 counties to represent, it would be easier
4 access for all of the people to get in, and he
5 also is a great legislator.

6 And on the Senate seats that you are
7 hearing here, they are going to be contested in
8 Pasco, we have three precincts from a State
9 Representative whose name escapes me from
10 Hernando County, if we could push him back into
11 Hernando County, that would solidify what we
12 have to do.

13 And we think it is important that these
14 legislators come here, Mr. Weatherford is here
15 and John Legg is here and Mr. Corcoran is here.
16 Crime is an issue on the west side of Pasco
17 County, and the more we have legislators that
18 are directly involved in their own county and
19 they can work with our sheriff, we will be
20 better served. And I look forward to seeing
21 y'all on television when you have to redistrict
22 Corrine Brown's district. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much, Bill. We appreciate that, sir.

25 Next up we have Ken Blankenship, and after

1 Mr. Blankenship, we have Nick Bliesner.

2 Mr. Blankenship, are you here, sir? There he
3 is. Mr. Blankenship had the misfortune of
4 having to teach many of my brothers and sisters
5 in Land O' Lakes High School. Thanks for
6 bearing with us then and we appreciate you
7 being here tonight, sir.

8 MR. BLANKENSHIP: I think I even got to
9 teach you one day as a sub.

10 I am Kenny Blankenship. I am from Land O'
11 Lakes, Florida, I am a teacher in Pasco County,
12 and I have lived here since there was one house
13 in Lake Padgett Estates. There was no Trinity,
14 there was no Wesley Chapel when I moved.

15 This -- you can answer something for me.
16 I am a bit confused. You and Mr. Legg must be
17 playing tag team with the chairmanship. I got
18 a letter stating Mr. Legg was going to be the
19 Chairman, so -- but no problem. I always enjoy
20 when you are Chair, too.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: He is a
22 Chair, he is a co-Chair.

23 MR. BLANKENSHIP: Co-Chair, okay.

24 To me, not having maps to comment on is
25 kind of confusing. I am a visual person, I

1 like to see things that I make comments on.
2 And I think -- I think it would have probably
3 been a little bit more prudent to have maps
4 drawn as other states have already done and
5 then take public comment on those maps and make
6 adjustments according to the public's desires
7 as you went along.

8 Will you be holding public hearings once
9 the maps are completed is one question that I
10 have. I would encourage you to complete the
11 maps -- the drawing of the maps and the
12 preliminary hearings that you are going to be
13 conducting that begin in September so that you
14 can vote on them during the first week of the
15 legislative session. I think waiting and
16 pushing it out to the last possible minute
17 would be confusing for voters and those who may
18 desire to run for office. I would like to know
19 which district I am going to be voting in well
20 in advance of any deadline to either register
21 to vote in or to run for office should I so
22 desire.

23 My desire is that you draw the maps
24 according to Amendments 5 and 6 that were
25 ratified by the people of Florida so that they

1 are equitable, that they are fair and that they
2 are contiguous. I hope that you will -- also
3 hope that you will withdraw from the lawsuit
4 that you entered into and that you would save
5 that \$30 million that you had set aside and
6 follow the Florida Constitution and the will of
7 the people in Florida. And thank you very
8 much, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for
9 being here.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
11 Mr. Blankenship. You brought up several
12 questions there, and I believe our co-Chairman,
13 Senator Gaetz, will make sure and try to
14 address each and every one of those questions,
15 so thank you very much for that.

16 Nick, you are up, sir, and after Nick, we
17 have -- I believe it is Maurice Massey. Thank
18 you for being here today.

19 MR. BLIESNER: Thank you, Chairman
20 Weatherford, Chairman Gaetz. I am actually --
21 lived for the last ten years on Indian Rocks
22 Beach, the beautiful pristine coast, the Gulf
23 Coast. There was no oil, I checked before I
24 left, but I -- the last four years, I have been
25 a resident of Pasco County, attending St. Leo

1 University. I am only 23 years old. I think
2 that is relevant, because it is a travesty that
3 there aren't more students, more younger people
4 my age involved in this process. And having
5 been in Pasco for the last four years, I have
6 noticed that it is -- it is a wonderful
7 community and it is a -- truly it is a
8 different community than the one that I grew up
9 in back in Pinellas, and it definitely
10 encompasses that melting pot that -- you know,
11 culture that the state prides itself on, and I
12 think that the biggest issue that we face is
13 trying to encompass all of that into one, you
14 know, area, and having one district, two
15 districts, even three I don't think is enough
16 to represent the wonderful aspects of Pasco
17 County.

18 But I think the other important thing,
19 too, is that we as residents and citizens of
20 the state of Florida, and you as the Board,
21 might -- we all might misunderstood, and I was
22 a history major at St. Leo, so I came across
23 this quote by James Madison that I think was
24 extremely relevant, and it says, "A dependence
25 on the people is no doubt the primary control

1 on government, but experience has taught
2 mankind the necessity of auxilliary
3 precautions." While, yes, we have the right to
4 express our opinions and we have the right and
5 the honor of electing you all, we also need to
6 know that we do need the help of you all.

7 So thank you for your time, and I know
8 that you all will make the right decisions.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
10 Nick.

11 Next up we have Maurice Massey. Is
12 Maurice here? All right. We will put him on
13 the side, we will keep moving.

14 Matt Edwards, I saw Matt was here earlier.
15 Is Mr. Edwards here? Okay, we will keep going.

16 Next up, Lutfi Jadallah. Mr. Jadallah,
17 sir, I'm sorry if I mispronounced that. It is
18 good to see you again. Thank you for being
19 here, you are recognized.

20 MR. JADALLAH: Yes, sir. My name is Lutfi
21 Jadallah. I have been a Wesley Chapel resident
22 since '97. I want to thank you for being here.
23 Welcome to Wesley Chapel.

24 You know, I am glad I am involved in this
25 thing, because I think we want to move forward.

1 I believe Amendment 5 and 6 says that you have
2 to follow contiguous, follow city lines,
3 counties, and where it's feasible, be feasible.
4 Right now we have Representative in -- for
5 Pasco that is part of Hillsborough or Polk
6 County, and even though I respect the other
7 counties, but we want to have a Representative
8 for the Pasco County.

9 Also I want to ask you all -- I believe
10 that you all are adults and mature, and I would
11 truly, truly appreciate that you will behave
12 that way in Tallahassee. I have been a
13 Republican since I was old enough to vote, so I
14 understand, but also we want to quit this us
15 and them, us and them. I think we should be
16 we.

17 So please keep in mind Amendment 5 and 6,
18 and keep in mind the people who put you there.
19 Thank you very much.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
21 sir.

22 And I apologize, next up we have David
23 Kulscar, or Kulcsar. Did I say it right? I'm
24 sorry, David. You are up, sir, and after that,
25 we will have Mr. Gary Willner.

1 MR. KULCSAR: Thank you for coming
2 tonight. A lot of people that spoke tonight
3 are acting like it is a turf war between east
4 Pasco and west Pasco, whatever. We are not
5 Europe, and I think we should act that we are
6 not like going to be having wars over this.

7 I see you right there, Mr. Weatherford, I
8 see you there, Mr. Norman, I see you there, Mr.
9 Gaetz. I know what each of your districts look
10 like. For example, Mr. Norman, you used to
11 represent in the County Commission of
12 Hillsborough County, north Tampa --

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Speak into
14 the mike a little bit. It is kind of hard to
15 hear you.

16 MR. KULCSAR: Sorry. And you represent
17 districts that are very much areas. For
18 example, Mr. Gaetz, your district is on the
19 coast in Pensacola, and you are probably not
20 going to be drawn into the areas of north
21 Escambia and north Santa Rosa, because they are
22 just too -- just different from where you are.

23 Mr. Weatherford, you represent Wesley
24 Chapel and the eastern part of this county.
25 These areas, they may have been scorned by the

1 people that voted for 5 and 6 about how they
2 are drawn for gerrymandering purposes, but I
3 think one thing is this: These districts can
4 be drawn fairly without much changing of the
5 status quo. For example, Mr. Norman, how often
6 have you gone up and down U.S. 41 and not even
7 notice the difference between Lutz and Land O'
8 Lakes? There's not much difference, is there?

9 So I think we should at least be
10 acknowledging about the way some areas are.
11 Some areas can't be drawn from another one.
12 For example, Mr. Rouson's district, his
13 district goes from Tampa to St. Petersburg to
14 Bradenton and Sarasota. Now, his district is a
15 little more complicated than most, but the
16 think of the contiguousness of 5 and 6 asking
17 for it. It says here in the pamphlet you gave
18 us that the districts have to be contiguous,
19 and a district is contiguous if all of its
20 territory is interrupted. And I think we need
21 to look into this more often because, well, we
22 have bridges in Florida, whatnot, but it is
23 kind of wrong to see a Representative
24 representing just a part of a city for
25 political purposes or whatever purposes, to get

1 the numbers up in a certain demographic, simply
2 out of political expediency. And I think that
3 perhaps by drawing your districts in a fair
4 way, at least think of like where the core of
5 the district would be, whether it be a House
6 district, a Senate district or congressional
7 district, that at least adheres to a bit of
8 compactness. And I think by doing that, it can
9 easily be achieved, voters can be happy, you
10 can be happy, of course, you will at least have
11 shorter places to drive when you have
12 constituent services, and we can at least have
13 some parity when it comes to our congressional
14 districts, State House districts and State
15 Senate districts. And I think that should be a
16 standard that we should try and strive for, and
17 for -- and it is probably the best for Florida
18 anyway. So thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
20 very much. Great comments.

21 Next up we have Mr. Gary Willner, and
22 after Mr. Willner, we have Mr. Charles Waller.

23 MR. WILLNER: Good evening, Gary Willner,
24 I live in Trinity.

25 First of all, I hope you all have tough

1 skin, because when this is over I figure six
2 million people are going to love you, six
3 million people are going to be angry at you,
4 and the six million that don't know what is
5 going on won't care.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: The question
7 is which one of those are you going to be?

8 MR. WILLNER: I am hearing two schools of
9 thought tonight. One is to sort of try and
10 keep counties together. I am not of that
11 school at all. What I would hope you would do
12 is consider areas of interest together. For
13 example, the coastal areas of Citrus, Hernando
14 and Pasco have a great deal in common. They
15 have issues around the Gulf, they have issues
16 in restoring beaches, they have issues in how
17 do you get away from a hurricane, which are
18 considerably different than the inland issues
19 of Citrus, Hernando and Pasco. Now, I am not
20 an expert on Hillsborough County, but I've got
21 to think that the people in Tampa have
22 different issues than the area where they grow
23 the strawberries. They are day and night. So
24 I would hope you would sort of not get hung up
25 on the counties, but keep in mind that the

1 areas of interest that people have.

2 Frankly, I am kind of happy that there's
3 three Senators in Pasco. I think that is three
4 votes we have in the Legislature. I am not
5 bothered by the fact that we have six, and I am
6 delighted that we are -- the next Speaker and a
7 future Speaker. I kind of like that. I love
8 my Congressman, and I hope I am -- I always
9 joke on Congressman Bilirakis -- I am the last
10 house in Congressman Bilirakis' district, and
11 when you are done, I would be very happy if I
12 am still the last house in Congressman
13 Bilirakis' district.

14 Thank you for what you are doing, but
15 please try and keep the common interests
16 together, more than county lines, because
17 there's a lot of different interests and issues
18 that can take place in the same county. Thank
19 you for being here tonight.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
21 very much. We appreciate those comments,
22 Mr. Willner.

23 Next up we have Mr. Waller, and following
24 Mr. Waller, we have Peter Hanzel.

25 Thank you for being here, sir.

1 MR. WALLER: I realize the acoustics here
2 are not the best. I hope they are better up
3 there than they are back here.

4 I am Charles Waller. I would just like to
5 let you know that my children are
6 seventh-generation cattle ranchers here in
7 Pasco County, Florida. We are -- I've been an
8 attorney here in Pasco County for 41 years, I
9 served 12 years as city attorney, City of
10 Zephyrhills, I have been appointed by three
11 different Governors to the Tampa Bay Regional
12 Planning Council, so I have an interest in my
13 community.

14 What you might not know, and I am not
15 going to throw stones, but about 35 years ago
16 it went on a referendum here to actually
17 separate west Pasco from east Pasco. Thank
18 goodness it was defeated, but we do -- we do
19 have a diverse interest. And when I come to
20 you, I like to come with a solution. I don't
21 know if it is permissible to give a document,
22 Mr. Weatherford, or not, but if I can, I would
23 like to pass this around, because you need to
24 do some research, and I've come here to help
25 you, I have done the research for you. And

1 we've got communities here of like interest.

2 There is nothing wrong with the people in
3 New Port Richey and Hudson. We have -- in
4 addition to living in Dade City, we have a
5 weekend home over there, but we speak a
6 different language. Over there, they talk
7 about arts and crafts. Over here, we talk
8 about rodeos and county fairs. Someone said
9 this is not rural. I don't want to see rural
10 then. I still take in chickens and eggs for
11 making wills and doing divorces. But we need a
12 Representative who can talk our language, and I
13 say "ours." We have in northeast Pasco a huge
14 minority population who help us out and work in
15 our businesses and in our agricultural
16 business. They need representation.

17 So I've got a solution for you, and that
18 is simply take the Parkway, make that the
19 dividing line. That area over there has
20 similar interests up and down that coast, and
21 if you will take that Parkway and come forward
22 then through the rest of central and east
23 Pasco, come up through Sumter County and
24 Hernando County, we speak the same language.
25 We are farmers, we are ranchers, we are chicken

1 farmers, we are cattle farmers, we own groves,
2 and we need someone who can look out for our
3 interests. And in the past, you know, we have
4 had great representation, but it is not easy
5 trying to balance the interests of New Port
6 Richey and Dade City, and we need someone who
7 has an agricultural interest who can speak for
8 us.

9 And thank you for coming. I wish this
10 meeting were in Dade City, because in Dade
11 City, we have never seen this many suits and
12 ties in one place ever. And I know our
13 hospitality here in Pasco County, and I feel
14 assured that Representative Weatherford is
15 going to invite all of you over to his house
16 for dinner when this is over with, but if it is
17 permissible to hand something --

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes.

19 MR. WALLER: And maybe you can pass this
20 around so --

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Counselor, we
22 will make sure everybody gets a copy of that.

23 MR. WALLER: And that will solve the whole
24 constitutional issue that we have here of
25 community interest. Thank you for your time.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
2 Mr. Waller. We appreciate that.

3 All right. Next up we have Mr. Peter
4 Hanzel, and after that, we have -- I believe it
5 is J. Arnigale, Sr. I hope I said that right.

6 Peter, thanks for being here, sir, you are
7 recognized.

8 MR. HANZEL: I want to thank all of you
9 for coming out and listening to us tonight
10 before you produced any maps, and I would like
11 to say something to my friends over here to the
12 right. I don't know what it is, whether it is
13 optical illusion or not, but you all seem so
14 far away, so I hope you all listen to my
15 comments tonight, please, I need you, I need
16 your help. I do need you all.

17 I am here as an individual citizen, and my
18 concerns are -- and I am going to start with my
19 third concern and move my way up to my top
20 concern. My third concern deals with District
21 12. We already heard one remark tonight, how
22 it should include Zephyrhills, which is
23 currently in District 10, and I agree that it
24 should be moved into District 12. And to make
25 it fair and balanced, I would say let's take

1 that area that is represented currently in
2 District 12 and remove the areas of
3 Hillsborough into another district. That is
4 basically the New Tampa area.

5 The second request I have deals with one
6 of my favorite districts, House District 61. I
7 think that district does need to lose some
8 individuals. I don't mean lose them like in
9 lost. I mean reduce the number of people
10 there. I want to make myself clear on that. I
11 think the line needs to move east to Land O'
12 Lakes and delete that portion that currently is
13 in Hillsborough County.

14 And I apologize, I made a mistake earlier.
15 This area is in the New Tampa area that deals
16 in Hillsborough. The other area that was in
17 Senate District 12 was basically Citrus Park
18 and Northdale area and some other communities
19 over in that area. I apologize for that
20 mistake.

21 But I also agree, and it was mentioned
22 earlier, that the Crystal Springs area should
23 move into District 61. It is a very small area
24 and it is currently in House District 62.

25 Now, my other concern is this: I sit on a

1 community development district board, and, you
2 know, I don't have to say this, but that was
3 created by Florida Statute 190. And they are
4 basically -- I call them amoebas, but they are
5 very small governmental districts. And what I
6 would like to ask, and I need your help on this
7 one here, is to make sure that wherever you
8 draw those lines at for these larger districts,
9 the more important districts -- and you see
10 where I am going, don't you -- I am going to
11 make sure that when you do draw those lines,
12 that there is no line that would separate or
13 divide those CDD districts.

14 And, again, I want to take the opportunity
15 to thank all of you for being here, and thank
16 you all over there to my right for listening to
17 me. Don't forget, help me out on this issue,
18 please. Thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
20 Peter. We appreciate that, sir.

21 Next, I don't know if I said the name
22 right, and I apologize, I am sure it's just my
23 eyes, J. Arnigale, Sr., from 2595 Southern Bell
24 Drive. I see somebody -- no? Okay, we will
25 put him off to the side for just a minute.

1 Next we've got Paul Waltenberg, Watenberg,
2 or Wartenberg, I'm sorry. Paul? Is Paul here?

3 Okay. Next up we have Sheada Madani
4 Practico. Sheada?

5 All right. Greg Lenners, I saw Greg
6 earlier. I don't know if he is still here.
7 Greg Lenners, is Greg here? Greg runs the mall
8 that Kathleen spent all her money at earlier
9 today. I don't see him here either.

10 Okay. Gary Worthley. Is Gary here?
11 Okay, he says he is not speaking, he is just
12 happy to be here. All right, we are happy to
13 have you.

14 Karen Hanzel, I know Karen is here. Is
15 Ms. Hanzel here? There she is. All right.
16 After Ms. Hanzel, we will have Emily Barsch.

17 Ms. Hanzel, thank you very much for being
18 here. We are excited to have you. You are
19 recognized, ma'am.

20 MS. HANZEL: Thank you. I am Karen
21 Hanzel. I live in Wesley Chapel. I have been
22 there for 11 years.

23 When possible, I would like to see the
24 Senate and House districts be drawn into one
25 county. For as an example, I think Pasco

1 District 61 should be exclusively represented
2 in central and east Pasco. The portion of
3 Hillsborough County which is now included in
4 61, which is south of Wesley Chapel, I believe
5 should be removed from that district.

6 Basically what I am saying is try to keep the
7 State Representatives in one county, rather
8 than spread out.

9 Thank you, and I really commend all of you
10 for being here. Thanks a lot for listening.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
12 very much. We appreciate that.

13 Next up we have Ms. Emily Barsch.
14 Following Ms. Barsch, we have John Russell.

15 Emily, thank you for being here.

16 MS. BARSCH: Good evening, and thank you
17 all for coming. We really appreciate it.

18 I am a native Floridian, growing up in the
19 metropolitan area of Jacksonville, probably
20 only one of 20 people that ever lived in Two
21 Egg, Florida, and also I have lived in the
22 Marion County area and now in Pasco County.

23 Having been in such diverse areas of
24 Florida, rural opposed to metropolitan, I think
25 it is extremely important to keep that in mind

1 when redistricting Florida. As many have said
2 before me, it is very imperative that we
3 remember that there is a diverse group in this
4 county, and we need to make sure that people
5 are represented according to their diversity.

6 We appreciate the fact that you will
7 listen to us and not to groups that are -- that
8 have ulterior motives, and we trust that you
9 will do what is best for this county and what
10 is best for the people of this county. The
11 special interest groups do not always have our
12 best interest at heart, so we know that you
13 will listen to we, the people. Thank you very
14 much for being here, and we certainly
15 appreciate it.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much, Emily, we appreciate that.

18 Next up we have Mr. John Russell.
19 Following Mr. Russell, we have Hugh Townsend.

20 Mr. Russell, you are recognized, sir.

21 MR. RUSSELL: Thank you very much. Of
22 course, we appreciate everyone being here. I
23 think some of you have driven some distance to
24 be here.

25 I would like to say how I would have done

1 this. No one has said this. I think we have
2 some people who have gone to business school
3 here, run some businesses, and quite frankly,
4 the parameters that are outlined in Amendments
5 5 and 6 are quite precise. So rather than have
6 this quite discombobulated effort of people
7 drawing up their own districts and -- I mean,
8 in reality, if people -- if a thousand people
9 drew districts, which wouldn't be an outrageous
10 number, you are on the Internet, what are you
11 going to do with those? The idea is to draw
12 fair districts. The parameters are quite
13 strict. So you draw the fair districts, you
14 come here with pro forma designs, which
15 Mr. Chojnowski said earlier in this program,
16 and you put it on a computer like they have
17 done in Hillsborough County to redo the county
18 commission districts, and then your task is
19 greatly simplified.

20 But, of course, we know this is political,
21 it is inherently political. And the bottom
22 line is, we know how -- those of us who have
23 run for office know how things work. With one
24 single variable being the great arbiter between
25 who gets elected, that being money, no one

1 knows better than Mr. Weatherford with \$927,000
2 for a \$30,000 --

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Russell,
4 we would like you to keep the focus of the
5 conversation on redistricting.

6 MR. RUSSELL: It is focused totally on
7 redistricting, Will, totally.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Please do.

9 MR. RUSSELL: This is our political
10 system, which is sadly broken. And this is one
11 effort that the public of all political
12 persuasions have decided, they have had their
13 vote, they have had their vote counted, and it
14 is counted greatly in the majority to have the
15 districts fairly apportioned. It is your job,
16 because you work for us, as people have said,
17 but we know that, when we are in politics, we
18 understand that these people here don't get
19 great sums of money nearing a million dollars
20 or whatever to do the will of the people. It
21 is to do the will of the powers that be.

22 And so, quite frankly, I am going to hand
23 you this, and the guy's name is Dan Hardy. You
24 know, if you truly were interested in doing
25 this properly, you would give Dan a call. I

1 talked with Dan, and Dan ran this thing, it is
2 about being objective. There's nothing
3 subjective about doing this.

4 So I could go on and on about how broken
5 the political system is. Most people
6 understand it. It is money that is the
7 problem. But we have the people here who,
8 because of the money, they are mostly
9 appointed, you are appointed by virtue of the
10 amount of money that you receive from the
11 powers that be. Same with the judiciary where
12 this is going to go.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Russell,
14 I think it is time to wrap up, sir.

15 MR. RUSSELL: Hold on one second, I am
16 almost done. Let me make my conclusion here,
17 Will.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay.

19 MR. RUSSELL: The judiciary likewise is
20 appointed in the same way, so we know this is
21 going to the courts --

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Russell,
23 I think we get your point. We really
24 appreciate your comments tonight.

25 MR. RUSSELL: Will, I know. Just let me

1 complete my sentence.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: If you keep
3 it on redistricting, I will let you finish.

4 MR. RUSSELL: The bottom line is --

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Russell,
6 I will give you 15 seconds to wrap it up.

7 MR. RUSSELL: Exactly.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: There you go.

9 MR. RUSSELL: Shouldn't have been
10 interrupted in the first place.

11 The judiciary will see fit, and you are
12 going to run this thing through using our tax
13 dollars against us. I thank you very much.
14 This is a dog and pony show. It is a fig leaf
15 over what will be the end result. Thank you
16 very much.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
18 very much, sir.

19 All right. Moving on, we are now going to
20 hear from Mr. Hugh Townsend. Hugh, thank you
21 for being here, sir. After Mr. Townsend, we
22 are going to hear from Tom Hanlon.

23 You are recognized.

24 MR. TOWNSEND: Well, first of all, good
25 evening and thank you all for coming out, both

1 our elected officials and our residents here.
2 My empathy to you. Having been on the Board of
3 Planning and Zoning, I have faced that same
4 type of interesting exchange.

5 But on a much brighter note, I came down
6 here to Pasco County in '93, and for almost the
7 entire time I have been the President of my
8 homeowners' association. We, however, in our
9 association, are split between two
10 congressional districts. If at all possible --
11 again, to reiterate -- to keep homeowner
12 associations and major communities intact with
13 representation from one congressional district
14 would be the first thing I would like to see,
15 if possible.

16 Secondly, I serve on the parish council of
17 St. George Greek Orthodox Church. I am very
18 active in the Greek community, despite the
19 name, and I would like to see an ethnic
20 community that we have established in this
21 greater west Pasco area and northern Pinellas
22 of Hellenic Americans continue to be
23 represented as they are currently with an
24 excellent congressional district that can
25 address the needs of not just the general

1 populi, but that of the specific Greek
2 community.

3 So I would like to see our congressional
4 district that is currently occupied by
5 Congressman Bilirakis to stay for the most part
6 intact and able to represent the Greek
7 communities that range from our church here in
8 Pasco County on the southwest side all the way
9 down through Clearwater.

10 I also am fortunate to serve as co-Chair
11 of the Juvenile Justice Board and on the
12 Juvenile Justice Council, because the Sixth
13 Judicial Circuit, as some of you are aware, is
14 all of Pasco and Pinellas, so in that respect,
15 moving on to a Representative seat, I would
16 like to see the existing Representative seat
17 continue to represent both this area. The fact
18 that we have three Representatives representing
19 Pasco actually makes a great deal of sense.
20 You have heard in great length about the
21 patrician families and the agriculture to the
22 east, which is true. We also have a growing
23 population of young, upward professionals
24 moving from north Tampa, and, of course, we
25 have the Hellenic community that I like to

1 represent, as well as the New York community
2 that's moved down and taken over the west side
3 of Pasco. So having three different State
4 Representatives would be essential to maintain
5 a homogenous representation for those
6 communities. If --

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Hugh, I am
8 going to have to ask you to wrap it up.

9 MR. TOWNSEND: Lastly --

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay.

11 MR. TOWNSEND: -- if we can get one Senate
12 seat representing all of Pasco, that would be a
13 wonderful conclusion to a good process every
14 ten years that we serve here. Thank you all
15 very much.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much.

18 Next up we have Tom Hanlon, and after Tom,
19 we have Randy Hixson.

20 Tom, thanks for being here, sir. You are
21 recognized.

22 MR. HANLON: My name is Tom Hanlon. Thank
23 you --

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: If you would
25 get real close to that mike. There you go.

1 MR. HANLON: My name is Tom Hanlon. I
2 appreciate you giving me the opportunity to
3 talk to you. We on the east side are happy to
4 give you the flavors we do on this side, and
5 they never will match that on the west side,
6 and you have to take that into account. We are
7 a rural company -- I mean part of the county.
8 We are happy to give you that, give you the
9 beauty. And just don't take -- what we need is
10 a Representative to represent our interests.
11 You know, the County -- the County just made
12 the growth in central Pasco -- they don't want
13 to have growth, and we are happy to do that,
14 and we ask you to do the same thing and take
15 care of our interests in east Pasco. Thank
16 you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
18 very much, Tom, we appreciate it.

19 Ladies and gentlemen, if we could ask
20 people in the back, if you are having a
21 conversation, it is getting a little hard to
22 hear in here, we would ask you to take it
23 outside. So please give the speakers the
24 respect that they deserve.

25 Mr. Hixson is up. After Mr. Hixson,

1 Ms. Alison Morano.

2 Randy, good to see you, sir. You are
3 recognized.

4 MR. HIXSON: Thank you. Thank you,
5 Representative Weatherford and members of this
6 Legislature. I just wanted to -- my name is
7 Randy Hixson. I am a Pasco County resident,
8 been here 11 years, live in Seven Oaks.

9 I just want to reiterate one of my
10 thoughts for you to take away from this
11 meeting. It has been said a couple of times
12 before, but I live in Seven Oaks, as you are
13 drawing these lines, I think it is very
14 critical and important that you don't just take
15 a pencil and draw through communities, that you
16 use community boundaries as a boundary so we
17 can keep communities together as they are CDD
18 communities that have common -- common
19 interests, and also to keep that community
20 unity together. So I think it is very critical
21 that you do that. There are some communities
22 that are divided. I would ask that you
23 consider putting those back together and then
24 not dividing any future communities.

25 I thank you for your time, and God bless

1 you and I thank you for your work here. Thank
2 you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
4 Mr. Hixson. We appreciate it, sir.

5 Next up we have Ms. Alison Morano.
6 Alison, it is good to see you. Followed by
7 Alison, we have Mr. Robert Nathe.

8 MS. MORANO: Hi. Good evening,
9 Representative. Good evening, everybody. I am
10 a resident of Wesley Chapel, and I have lived
11 here for about 11, 12 years. I know this
12 county pretty well. I have served on the Board
13 of Pasco United Way, I have served on the Pasco
14 County Long-Range Library Planning Committee, I
15 have served on the Boards of Leadership Pasco,
16 I have served on Leadership Tampa Bay, I have
17 served on several other committees, including
18 being -- serving as the Chair of the Greater
19 Wesley Chapel Chamber of Commerce for three and
20 a half years. I was here before this high
21 school was built. I was here for the
22 groundbreaking of Wiregrass. So I know this
23 county pretty well.

24 One of the things I would like to disagree
25 with that's been brought up is that Wesley

1 Chapel actually is a very diverse, growing
2 community. I absolutely do believe that we
3 work with New Tampa and that we -- I have an
4 identity with Hillsborough County. I would not
5 like to see that cut off in any way.

6 But I would like to say thank you and that
7 I appreciate all the legislators that are here,
8 and I appreciate that you are taking this time
9 to listen to us.

10 I also appreciate the 63 percent of the
11 voters that came out in 2010 to pass Amendments
12 5 and 6, and I hope that you will all take the
13 time to implement what we have asked for and
14 what the voters have asked for.

15 And as far as the maps being drawn, I
16 think that 5 and 6 pretty much lay out the
17 makeup of what you need to do in order to draw
18 these maps, and it may be an arduous task, but
19 I think that the rules are there and the lines
20 are there to be drawn and the numbers are there
21 from the census and the demographics are there
22 to make this a lot easier than it would have
23 been if you are starting from scratch. And
24 what you have asked us to do basically is start
25 from scratch, because we -- we do not have your

1 knowledge of the census or the demographics,
2 and we can go on the software, and maybe it is
3 very advanced, but we believe that all of you
4 providing us the starting point and then we can
5 have our input is the way this process is
6 supposed to go.

7 Now, having said that, another thing that
8 was brought up this evening by our Supervisor
9 of Elections from Pasco County is the matter of
10 timing. I realize that the Legislature is
11 going to start in January 2012, as I believe
12 happens every time there is a redistricting
13 process, you start in 2012. I am not sure that
14 this year is an exception. But I think that if
15 you don't give us maps by August -- by January
16 when you are ready to meet, and you wait until
17 August, as Brian Corley brought up, you put us
18 in a very difficult position of being able to
19 tell people who they are voting for and where
20 they are voting. You are right on the tail of
21 the primary, which is only two weeks later,
22 given the date that I have been reading about,
23 and I don't know how we get through the court
24 process and then the Department of Justice
25 process and then the redistricting and the

1 precinct re-draws and notifying everybody where
2 it is they are supposed to vote in time to be
3 able to even think about a primary. That
4 doesn't even start with the fact that the vote
5 by mail ballots go out so soon after you are
6 talking about passing these maps. I just think
7 that the timing is very bad, and I would
8 appreciate it if you could come into the
9 January legislative session in 2012 with maps
10 drawn, put them on the table and let us start
11 from there. This process of going around the
12 state and holding these hearings is taking a
13 very long time, and I believe that we could
14 have maps in that process that you could be
15 bringing with you.

16 So thank you for your time and thank you
17 for coming out, and I hope you enjoy Wesley
18 Chapel.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
20 very much, Alison.

21 Next up we have Robert Nathe, Jr.,
22 followed by Jeff Novotny.

23 Junior, good to see you, sir. You have
24 the floor.

25 MR. NATHE: Thank you all. Thank

1 everybody for being here. I am
2 fourth-generation native of Pasco County, Dade
3 City area, and I am not very good at speaking.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You are doing
5 good.

6 MR. NATHE: Our family has been in ag, and
7 the east side of the county is heavy -- heavily
8 rural agriculture, and with -- the other
9 counties is Sumter and part of Hillsborough and
10 Hernando Counties, you have the same
11 demographics. The west side of Pasco County is
12 a lot different. I have seen this county
13 change dramatically over the years, and I just
14 bring that up. Thank you all.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, sir,
16 thank you very much. Great comments.

17 We have Jeff Novotny up, and after
18 Mr. Novotny, we have Robert Graydon.

19 Jeff, good to see you.

20 MR. NOVOTNY: Good to see you, too. Thank
21 you very much for coming out and for your time
22 and your patience to listen to all of us here
23 tonight. My name is Jeff Novotny, I live at
24 29725 Chapel Park Drive, Wesley Chapel. I am a
25 business owner here in Wesley Chapel, one of

1 the few ten years ago, but our area has changed
2 from being a pass-through zone to being an
3 origin point for many people. It is now
4 becoming a destination for many.

5 The boundaries between the counties
6 somewhat get muted. Other than our children
7 going to different schools and our taxes being
8 collected by a different tax collector, many of
9 the people that live here also commute down to
10 the New Tampa area. So I think it is important
11 that as you are drawing districts, you look at
12 different areas and the character of the
13 communities, the areas that you serve, the
14 needs and the interests of the people and how
15 they align. It is also important that you look
16 at communities and developments and keep those
17 common and together.

18 With that, I think if you were to look at
19 Wesley Chapel in ten years, maybe it serves its
20 own House district because it will be large
21 enough. However, until that point, if you were
22 to take Wesley Chapel and expand beyond that,
23 there are similarities with New Tampa, so it
24 does make sense to include New Tampa in some of
25 the discussions there.

1 There is a big difference between this
2 area and the western part of the county on the
3 other side of Suncoast Parkway, so a dividing
4 line makes sense at that point. As you expand
5 from Wesley Chapel, the Land O' Lakes and Lutz
6 area have a lot of similar character, as well
7 as Zephyrhills, so that becomes kind of a
8 contiguous zone with common interests.

9 So with that, I appreciate your time, and
10 have a good time.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
12 Jeff. We appreciate that.

13 Next up we have Mr. Robert Graydon. After
14 Robert, we have Cliff Gill.

15 MR. GRAYDON: Hello, my name is Robert
16 Graydon. I am actually a native Floridian,
17 born and raised in the Panhandle of Florida,
18 moved here in '88 and actually live in Wesley
19 Chapel now since '93, raising my family here.
20 It is a great place to raise your kids.

21 Like -- actually, like the previous
22 speaker, one thing I do want to say is I am
23 generally pretty happy with the way that our
24 district is. I do want to encourage you to
25 definitely keep in mind the types of

1 communities in the area. Obviously, western
2 Pasco is definitely different than central
3 Pasco, but we are also considerable different
4 than the rural farming areas. This area is
5 growing like crazy. It wasn't too long ago
6 that we would have been in a cow pasture right
7 here. I have seen all of that change since I
8 have been here. When I first moved here in
9 '93, again, Bruce B. Downs was a road to
10 nowhere.

11 So it is definitely growing. It is a
12 great place to be. We need representation that
13 recognizes that it is a growth area. It is
14 very important to us to continue that growth
15 and to make it even more of a destination
16 rather than just a bedroom community to Tampa.

17 That is all I have to say. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
19 very much.

20 Next up we have Cliff Gill, and after
21 Cliff, we have Joe Worrell. Cliff? I don't
22 see Cliff, so we will put him to the side and
23 allow Joe to come up.

24 Joe, good to see you, sir, and after
25 Joe -- I apologize if I can't say this name

1 right, but Colleen Branch, maybe, or Calvin
2 Branch, on 12718 Sugar Creek Boulevard. There
3 we go. Sorry about that, sir. I'm sure it is
4 my eyes.

5 Joe, you are recognized.

6 MR. WORRELL: I'm Joe Worrell. I have
7 been a resident of Pasco County for 25 years.
8 I am glad to see all of you here. A lot of you
9 are from south Florida. You had a good trip
10 up, I hope.

11 When I moved to Pasco County, I closed on
12 my home in '87, I drove down Bruce B. Downs,
13 581 30th Street, met one car. The sign for
14 Wesley Chapel was at Smith Road. The rest of
15 it was all Zephyrhills. Now they have moved it
16 and they've got the sign up at Marsh Ridge
17 Road.

18 What I would like to see is if we are
19 going to have three Representatives, one for
20 the east, one for the central, one for the
21 west, but don't split communities, don't split
22 neighborhoods. We have the population now for
23 Senate seat for the entire county. We've got
24 the people say we've got a problem with the
25 east and the west. We already have to go to

1 New Port Richey every other week and then to
2 Dade City the other week for county business.
3 That's not going to change. Tom has to go both
4 sides to cover the news for *The Tribune*. The
5 rest of the county is used to the east and the
6 west working together. I think we deserve one
7 county, one Senate seat. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
9 very much.

10 Next up we have Calvin Branch, I believe,
11 and then after that Joel Coston, or Coston.

12 MR. BRANCH: Yes, thank you very much. I
13 have been watching you and listening to you,
14 and thank you for being here. And I started
15 doing a rough count, and you are just a little
16 bit larger than one of the last classes I ever
17 taught, which was on the introduction to
18 philosophy, which I taught for a quarter of a
19 century.

20 One of the classes -- one of the books we
21 taught in that class was a book called *Theory*
22 *of Justice* by John Rawls. And in that, there
23 was an interesting little experiment, and I am
24 going to ask you for a moment, because you have
25 been really good for the last three hours, I am

1 going to ask you for a moment just to play
2 along with me a bit.

3 In this *Theory of Justice*, Mr. Rawls said
4 consider yourself, and right now I am going to
5 draw a veil of ignorance across you. You do
6 not know what is on this side. Now, over there
7 on that side, you are responsible for setting
8 up a theory of justice, and you don't know what
9 you are going to be when that veil is down.
10 Male or female, rich or poor, whatever, you do
11 not know. The theory was that when you have to
12 do that, you will, in fact, set up the most
13 perfect theory of justice you can, because you
14 don't know what you are going to be here.

15 Now, here's where we get down to what you
16 are doing. You have to set up a theory,
17 redistricting. And I am going to suggest that
18 what you do is forget for a moment whether you
19 are a Democrat or Republican or whatever. What
20 you should do at this point is to say, "When
21 the veil of ignorance comes down, I don't know
22 what I am going to be here, I don't know what
23 community of interest I am going to be in," but
24 you should, in fact, pay attention to all the
25 communities of interest and then try to make

1 sure that the way you draw things up will serve
2 those communities of interest. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
4 sir.

5 Joel, you are next, sir, and after Joel,
6 we have James Quinlon. Thank you for being
7 here.

8 MR. COSTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You
9 are also my Representative, and I am very
10 pleased.

11 I, too, am a transplant to Pasco County,
12 originally born and raised in Tampa, Florida.
13 We came up from Tampa 32 years ago, live in a
14 little community in northeast Pasco called
15 Blanton. Some of you know who -- I know you
16 do, Will.

17 What I would like to say is in the past, I
18 also served in the political process in Pasco
19 County. From 1980 to 1984, I was Vice-Chairman
20 of the Republican party. I had the opportunity
21 to meet Governor Reagan three times before he
22 was elected President of the United States, and
23 supported his campaign in 1980. But I would
24 like to say that looking at the county now,
25 it's come a long ways, baby, and we have six

1 Representatives, three Senators and two
2 Congress members for the county.

3 I, too, agree with Mr. Van Gorden who
4 spoke before me, and Mr. Waller, about the
5 content and the characteristics of east Pasco
6 County. I hope at the end of this process we
7 can get a consideration up for that. We are a
8 rural community. I grew up in south Tampa,
9 went to Plant High School, the whole business
10 down there. Came up here a long time ago to
11 get in the country. I would like to keep it
12 that way like -- and others have done the same
13 as I. We are very pleased with the life up
14 here in Pasco, it is a wonderful place. We
15 would like to see it continue to be that way.
16 And let's have a haven for that lifestyle when
17 you're drawing these districts and setting the
18 lines.

19 And, Will, I hope you don't go away,
20 because I know you are over -- according to the
21 model out here, you are over the top, but I
22 hope you stay my guy and keep doing what you
23 are doing. And I thank every one of you for
24 coming. I know you came from a lot of far
25 distant places to be a part of this process.

1 And thank you, too, Ms. Storms.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
3 very much. Thank you for your kind words. We
4 appreciate that.

5 Next we have James Quinlon, and after
6 James, we have Joe Wicker.

7 MR. QUINLON: I will be very brief since I
8 didn't actually sign up to speak, but in any
9 event, I am a little disappointed that -- I
10 understood Senator Gaetz's point about not
11 having come here with maps and giving us the
12 opportunity to give our input first, but I
13 really think that you all being the
14 professionals, it would have been more helpful
15 if you had the maps and we reacted to them.

16 In any event, I want to thank you for
17 being here, and I just want to point out that
18 Amendments 5 and 6 have been approved by a vast
19 majority, as everybody has pointed out, and I
20 beg you, please don't subvert them with
21 litigation, please implement them fairly and do
22 it soon, because time is running out. Thanks.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, sir,
24 thank you very much. We appreciate those
25 comments.

1 Joe Wicker, and followed by Joe, we have
2 Jim McBride. Joe, are you here, buddy? There
3 we go. And if we can get Jim McBride in the
4 queue. After Jim, it is going to be Greg
5 Armstrong. I saw Greg earlier.

6 Mr. Wicker, you are recognized, sir.
7 Thanks for being here.

8 MR. WICKER: All right. Thank you very
9 much. I am Joe Wicker. I am a former Army
10 officer, and now I am in business and one of
11 the 3.8 million new Floridians in the last --
12 over the last ten years, and I have been here
13 about three years now, trying to settle in and
14 finally live somewhere for a little while.

15 So here we are in this decennial process
16 of reapportionment, and we got organizations
17 from all over the place coming to Florida to
18 influence policy, and it is a difficult
19 process, so I appreciate what you guys are
20 going through, and, you know, it is the off
21 season and you are here and you're touring
22 Florida, and we appreciate that. Redistricting
23 is always difficult, it is going to be
24 difficult every single time.

25 And before I bring up gerrymandering,

1 which, you know, gets brought up every
2 redistricting process, I just want to remind
3 people that when you -- when you vote for a
4 constitutional amendment, those have second and
5 third order effects that are very serious, and
6 we are going to live through some of that. You
7 are going to get judges involved instead of
8 your Representatives who you can more directly
9 interact with. So we will see how that turns
10 out.

11 But it is natural for people to have a
12 distrust of government. I mean, were seeing
13 that more and more now. You all are aware of
14 that. But, you know, before the committee can
15 really get into some of what do seem like
16 legitimate issues, you know, having one Senate
17 seat or two Senate seats, Pasco and the
18 different lines, I mean, those are some
19 legitimate concerns, but before the committee
20 can even get into that, they have to deal with
21 a number of other issues, which is based off of
22 law, they have to deal with the
23 majority-minority district, the minority
24 crossover district, the minority coalition
25 district, meaning that if there's two or more

1 minority groups, they can make it a
2 majority-minority district, and then the
3 minority influence district, and all that
4 before they get into the compactness, the
5 contiguity, the preservation of the counties
6 and political subdivisions, before they can get
7 into preservation of communities of interest,
8 preservation of cores of prior districts and
9 compliance with Section 2 of the Voting Rights
10 Act, of which Hillsborough County has to
11 receive pre-clearance, and all this has to be
12 done within a very small deviation of the
13 population, so it is extremely difficult.

14 So just in closing, you know, for the
15 people, I would like to say that I am really
16 proud that we got this much involvement, and I
17 would ask that we realize that what we think is
18 fair tends to be from where we sit and not from
19 where someone else sits, and to remember that
20 you want your Representatives to be involved in
21 this process, you do not want the courts
22 deciding how you get represented.

23 And for the committee, with all the
24 back-door meetings that are going on in DC
25 right now, I am really appreciative that you

1 are doing this out in the open so everybody can
2 see it and we can put it on TV, there's no
3 back-door deals at least for right now. But
4 keep getting out in front of the people so that
5 we can be proud of the integrity that we have
6 in this process. Integrity was one of the key
7 values of being a military officer, and I
8 believe that Florida is going to be able to get
9 through this and show that value, and I know
10 that you will use common sense, even though
11 common sense is not very common, and I
12 appreciate your time. Thank you very much.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
14 very much, Mr. Wicker. We appreciate that,
15 sir.

16 Next up we've got Mr. McBride, and after
17 Mr. McBride, we have Mr. Armstrong.

18 You are recognized, sir.

19 MR. McBRIDE: How do you do,
20 Mr. Weatherford?

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Please speak
22 into the mike.

23 MR. McBRIDE: Jim McBride, one of the few
24 people that you have heard here tonight that is
25 several generations of Floridians. In fact, I

1 have lived in the same house in excess of 50
2 years up near the intersection of 41 and 52,
3 and I want to tell you all it is a real
4 pleasure for a guy with this kind of gray hair
5 to stand out here this whole meeting and
6 identify with each one of you behind your
7 yellow name tag and let you know that a person
8 that has voted every year in the military
9 absentee in Pasco County, to thank you for
10 being out here.

11 In America at this time, we know what is
12 going on in Washington, there's a lot of tough
13 things going on. You all have got some of the
14 toughest decisions to make, and I want to tell
15 you this: My heart and my prayer goes out with
16 every one of you all. You've got a tough
17 decision to make. I have the utmost confidence
18 in every one of you all that you are going to
19 do what is right for Pasco County and Florida,
20 myself, my family and my grandchildren. Thank
21 you very much for coming out here tonight.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
23 Mr. McBride. And, most importantly, thank you
24 for your prayers, sir. We greatly appreciate
25 that.

1 Greg Armstrong, is Greg here? I saw him
2 earlier. We are going to put him to the side.

3 Next up we've got Jason Smith. Is Jason
4 here? Mr. Smith, welcome. After Mr. Smith,
5 we've got Mary Hanchan, I hope I said that
6 right, 5603 Grindstone Loop.

7 Mr. Smith, you are recognized, sir.

8 MR. SMITH: Thank you, and thank you guys
9 for being here, I really appreciate it. My
10 name is Jason Smith. I have lived in Pasco
11 County since the age of two, and I am a proud
12 resident of Pasco County and my family is
13 growing up here.

14 I do have some comments specifically on
15 how I would like to see the districts redrawn,
16 but I came here skeptical. Like a lot of
17 folks, I guess I just am not fully sure that I
18 can trust the process, but, actually, in
19 learning about the website and everything, I
20 did go on and register and try to do the
21 mapping. I found that very difficult to do, I
22 will be honest with you. I am going to keep
23 working with it and try to do it to where I
24 draw lines, but I did not find that process
25 very friendly.

1 District 9 specifically I would like to
2 speak to, Bilirakis' district. I would like to
3 see that actually moved out of Polk County
4 completely. I think we go too far away from
5 Pasco County with that. I would like to see it
6 move into Hillsborough County somewhere, maybe
7 go as far south as Tampa Road and then up to
8 Gunn Highway or something, and then maybe even
9 push it down south a little bit into St.
10 Petersburg.

11 If it is possible, based -- and another
12 thing I learned tonight is that you have
13 restrictions on -- your hands are tied
14 apparently on a lot of this as far as how you
15 are going to redraw the lines, and I actually
16 like that, I like that there are rules of the
17 road and that there's more -- that the citizens
18 have kind of tied your hands and that there's
19 more regulation around this and I am glad for
20 that because I think part of the skepticism
21 that I came here with and a lot of people came
22 here with was because in the past, things were
23 done in back rooms, you know, in smoke-filled
24 rooms, and I hope that if any of you are on a
25 committee that actually does draw some lines

1 and it is not your folks that, you know, like
2 smart people like Jason back there figuring out
3 everything for you, if you are actually in a
4 room and the moment comes when you are looking
5 at drawing some lines, I hope that politics
6 don't play a part in that. Please resist the
7 urge. That is why 63 percent of us voted for
8 this is because we want politics out of it. We
9 want that to stop. And I want to urge you
10 please keep the politics out of it, keep it
11 clean.

12 And if it is possible, one last thing, I
13 would like to see a Senate representative just
14 for Pasco, if that is possible, based on -- I
15 know you are restricted based on how many
16 people live there, and there is a population
17 number you have to meet, but as much as that as
18 possible, as close to that, because three
19 representatives all sprawled out, some in
20 Hillsborough, some representing other areas, we
21 have issues in Pasco that don't pertain to
22 places like Hillsborough. They got funding,
23 for instance, for schools, we didn't, and our
24 schools are funded differently. Our county
25 commissioners dictate, you know, how funding is

1 worked out. So I would like to keep us as
2 autonomous as possible so that we can deal with
3 our issues internally.

4 So I appreciate your time, thank you for
5 being here and I really appreciate you doing
6 this. Thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thanks very
8 much. We appreciate it.

9 Mary -- Mary Hanchan. Is Mary here?

10 Okay, Dave Domino. Dave, are you here?

11 All right. Moving on, Suzanne Fulford.

12 Ms. Fulford? After Suzanne, we have her
13 husband, Kevin. And while we are waiting for
14 her to come down, after Kevin, we will have
15 Joyce Hamilton Henry.

16 Ms. Fulford, it is good to see you. You
17 are recognized.

18 MS. FUL.FORD: Hi, how are you?

19 First of all, I would like to thank you
20 all for coming. I know that you have taken a
21 lot of time out of your schedules to go around
22 the state and listen to everybody, and I would
23 like to -- I would like to thank you for the
24 transparency and actually coming and listening
25 to us and hearing what we have to say.

1 That being said, I am going to be short
2 and sweet, because a lot of people have said
3 exactly what I have been thinking, and the
4 first thing is basically the three separate
5 districts for Pasco County I think is
6 important, east, central and west, because of
7 the population, the way it is separated and the
8 different needs of the communities. So thank
9 you very much.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
11 very much. We appreciate the brevity. We are
12 giving bonus points at this point for that, so
13 that was wonderful, Ms. Fulford.

14 Mr. Fulford, your boss has also gone
15 before you, so you are now recognized to speak.

16 MR. FULFORD: Good evening. Thank you all
17 for coming. I know this is a monumental task
18 and a rather unenviable task as well.

19 I am Kevin Fulford, and I live and work
20 here in Pasco County. Thank you. I just
21 wanted to not get hit by the microphone.

22 I just want to say a couple things. I
23 grew up in St. Petersburg, and then when I was
24 stationed at MacDill Central Command, I lived
25 in Valrico, but now I live and work in Pasco

1 County, and they are very different areas.

2 A couple of thoughts that I had is just to
3 consider not splitting a city right in the
4 middle. Hillsborough County is very different
5 than Pasco County when we look at drawing the
6 lines, and if you look at the makeup of the
7 areas, urban versus rural, and the Highway 19
8 corridor here in Pasco County versus the east
9 side. And I just looked at the numbers real
10 quick based on the population. It's gone from
11 344,000 in 2000 to 464,000 now based on the
12 2010 census. That gives us, based on the
13 recommended numbers of representation, three
14 Representatives and one State Senator. So the
15 three distinct areas in Pasco County, east,
16 central and west, would perhaps make a lot of
17 sense, and also one Senator seat. So thank you
18 for your consideration.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
20 very much, Mr. Fulford. We appreciate that,
21 sir.

22 Next up we have Joyce Hamilton Henry with
23 the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida,
24 and after Ms. Joyce, we have Hutch Brock.

25 MS. HENRY: Good evening.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Good evening.

2 MS. HENRY: My name is Joyce Hamilton
3 Henry, and I am here to speak on behalf of the
4 ACLU of Florida. I am the Director for the
5 mid-Florida regional office, which represents
6 20 counties, and so I am here and will continue
7 to be here as long as you are meeting in my
8 region.

9 The ACLU of Florida, as you know, is a
10 nonprofit, nonpartisan organization. We
11 protect and defend the American Constitution
12 and Bill of Rights.

13 I want to speak to an area of this issue
14 that I have not heard mentioned very often, and
15 part of it has to do with putting this issue in
16 context on behalf of a population of
17 individuals that have been historically
18 under-represented.

19 I want to speak to the Voting Rights Act.
20 I know many of you are already familiar with
21 it, but bear with me. I would like to review
22 some key components of this act. It was passed
23 in 1965, and stands as one of the most
24 important legislative achievements of this 20th
25 century. Signed into law shortly after the

1 murder of civil rights activists in Mississippi
2 and the unprovoked attack against peaceful
3 marchers across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in
4 Selma, Alabama, the Voting Rights Act outlawed
5 discriminatory tests like literacy tests, tests
6 of good character, racial gerrymandering and
7 the use of poll taxes in many southern states.

8 Coupled with intense and sustained
9 enforcement by the federal government, the
10 Voting Rights Act opened the door for millions
11 of blacks for the first time to be able to
12 participate in the political system. Over the
13 years, amendments to the Voting Rights Act have
14 been used to protect the voting rights of other
15 previously disenfranchised groups such as
16 language minorities. This act was intended to
17 create a level playing field to ensure that
18 under-represented and historically marginalized
19 Americans would have an opportunity to
20 participate fully in the Democratic process.

21 Every ten years, as you know, and we are
22 here because of that, due to the census, we
23 have to redraw the district lines, and for the
24 purpose of ensuring that we franchise our
25 growing citizenry, one person, one vote.

1 You have been hearing over the past couple
2 of weeks from everyone, groups of individuals,
3 their wish list as to what they want to see the
4 maps look like. You have a mandate from
5 63 percent of Floridians to draw the map, and
6 you have heard this already, compact,
7 contiguous, meet the interests of communities
8 of interest, but also does not favor or
9 disfavor any political group. I would like to
10 remind you of that mandate.

11 You have heard some great suggestions from
12 other groups, including the League of Women
13 Voters yesterday, about the timeline, some
14 ideas about expediting the timeline to ensure
15 that we all not only have an opportunity to
16 respond to the maps -- and, yes, we are still
17 waiting to see the maps -- but we also want to
18 make sure that when you do draw the maps, that
19 there is sufficient time for all of us to know
20 who our Representatives will be, for those who
21 are running for office to know which districts
22 they represent, and to also make sure that --
23 and you've heard from Supervisor of Elections,
24 that they know the parameters and timelines.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Henry, I

1 am going to have to ask you to kind of wrap it
2 up. There are several speakers, and we want to
3 get to everybody.

4 MS. HENRY: And I will.

5 What I would like to close by saying is
6 this: You have also been hearing a lot of
7 distrust in government, and there is good
8 reason for that. And you have also been
9 hearing the importance of being fair and
10 transparent in the process. I implore that you
11 listen to what we, the citizens, have been
12 saying to you. Thank you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, ma'am,
14 thank you very much. We appreciate that.

15 Next up we've got Hutch Brock, former
16 Mayor of Dade City. Mayor, it is good to see
17 you. And after Mr. Brock, we've got Ms. Annie
18 Baker.

19 Good to see you.

20 MR. BROCK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Folks,
21 thanks for coming to Pasco County, we
22 appreciate your time. I know this has been an
23 enjoyable three hours. It is very important,
24 though, and we do appreciate your
25 attentiveness.

1 One of the things that I have not heard
2 for last three hours -- and by the way, I
3 didn't get the memo to show up early and sign
4 up early, but one of the things I have heard,
5 or have not heard in the last three hours is
6 that we are looking for an unfair line or we
7 are looking for gerrymandering or we are
8 looking for something that is going to create a
9 problem. I think we all have a common interest
10 that we want something that can be sustained
11 and that will be fair.

12 I have read the literature about what it
13 is that is going to direct and lead you all in
14 consideration of these very difficult
15 decisions, and what rings with me are the
16 issues of common interests, common
17 transportation corridors and common industry.
18 So let's talk about that.

19 If you are looking for common
20 transportation corridors and you are trying to
21 suggest that east Pasco and west Pasco are
22 common, I need you to go ride around the
23 county. I was talking to a friend of mine who
24 took his child up to the University of Florida
25 to look around the campus, and it was the first

1 time he had been there, and until he was there,
2 he didn't appreciate how broad it was and how
3 much transportation on that campus was
4 important. He didn't know until he went and
5 looked. I invite you to look. I think you
6 will see common industry runs on the spine of
7 301. Common industry runs on the spine of U.S.
8 19. There appears to be a divide. I sit on
9 Boards that are spanning the county and, quite
10 frankly, in the Tampa Bay area, and no one
11 likes to say we are divided, but there are some
12 natural divisions, whether it is the Parkway,
13 whether it is 41, certainly there is a division
14 on a perspective. So it applies to
15 transportation corridors and it certainly
16 applies to industry as well. If you look at
17 the industry of the 19 spine of U.S. 19, you
18 see a much different and dramatic picture than
19 what you see along the 301 corridor going up
20 into Sumter and Hernando County. I don't think
21 anyone will deny that.

22 So we are urging you, when you consider
23 these issues on the House side, and in
24 particular on the State Senate side, and even
25 when you are looking for the congressional

1 seat, that you follow these directives and you
2 look around and you consider the differences
3 between the east Pasco and the west Pasco side,
4 and you give us proper and adequate
5 representation.

6 Folks, thanks again for all of your time,
7 and good luck with the process.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
9 Mayor. Good to see you.

10 Next up we've got Ms. Annie Baker, and I
11 saw Ms. Baker earlier. I don't know if she is
12 still here. If she is not here, we will keep
13 moving. Mr. Colson, Clay Colson, I see you
14 back there, sir, and after Mr. Colson, we've
15 got George McDowell.

16 Clay, good to see you, sir. Thanks for
17 being here, and you have the floor, my friend.

18 MR. COLSON: Greetings. My name is Clay
19 Colson. I am a native Floridian and one of an
20 endangered species.

21 I would first like to say that I am not
22 going to come up here and tell you all how I
23 think you should draw districts or how it
24 should represent three parts of Pasco or any of
25 that stuff. I believe that y'all are all here

1 because you are going to carry out the will of
2 the people. That is your job, that is what got
3 you elected, and to do that, you only have to
4 do some very simple things.

5 First like to refer to our correspondence
6 that we had, Will. You tell me in your
7 correspondence that you wanted to make it clear
8 that what you wanted to do was to finalize the
9 redistricting process prior to June of 2012,
10 and that June of 2012 is a deadline and not a
11 goal. You are confident that the Legislature
12 can complete this work on the redistricting
13 plans prior to then. You also say you believe
14 that guidance from the Florida residents can
15 create new district maps that will represent
16 how it is that Floridians want their
17 communities to be represented in Tallahassee
18 and in Washington, DC. And you point out it is
19 important to note that Florida's redistricting
20 timeline is in part mandated by the Florida
21 State Constitution, cite Article III, Section
22 16. So I looked it up and checked it out. It
23 doesn't say you have to do it in 2012. It
24 doesn't say you can't do it beforehand.

25 So in that vein, I would like to give you

1 a little guidance. I ask that you act swiftly.
2 Florida has been one of the very last states to
3 complete redistricting historically. This
4 hurts candidates, voters and ultimately the
5 quality of our governing. Most of the states
6 complete their redistricting process this year.
7 It is time to bring Florida to the front of the
8 pack. The Legislature can speed up this
9 timetable, and they should work hard to do
10 exactly that.

11 Now, here is why I am not worried about
12 how you are going to draw these maps, you see,
13 because you are here to carry out the will of
14 the people, and 63 percent of the voters told
15 you what they wanted you to do. We now have a
16 constitutional amendments, 5 and 6, which are
17 part of the Constitution that you pointed out,
18 and all that you have to do is follow these
19 constitutional guidelines. That means that we
20 shall -- that -- all that means is that
21 districts shall be nearly equal in population
22 as is practicable, districts shall be compact,
23 districts shall, where feasible, utilize
24 existing political and geographical boundaries.
25 These standards make sense. I love the KISS

1 doctrine. I say keep it simple, stupid. It is
2 really simple.

3 I know that some of you don't feel too
4 much for John Russell, but he makes a very good
5 point. Let's take the politics out of this.
6 Hillsborough County is successfully doing their
7 redistricting of commission seats, using a
8 computer program where you just put in the
9 pertinent data and you put all the data in, and
10 the computer will draw the districts, and then
11 there is no politics involved. It is that
12 simple, and that is exactly what you should do.

13 Now, in closing, I would like to point out
14 the City of St. -- or *The St. Petersburg Times*
15 wrote an article back on the 20th of this month
16 talking about the fact that the Legislature has
17 spent our money fighting Amendment 6. So far
18 to date, you spent \$350,000 of our money when
19 63 percent of us told you what we wanted. What
20 gives you the right to spend our money? What
21 are you doing holding off money to do
22 litigation? You have no right to do that. You
23 are in violation of what people elected you to
24 do. You are here to carry out our will. Our
25 will is clear. Thank you for your time.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
2 Clay. Good to see you.

3 Next up we have George McDowell. After
4 George -- good to see you, sir -- we've got
5 Stephen Sarnoff.

6 MR. McDOWELL: I will keep this simple. I
7 am George McDowell from Land O' Lakes, I am a
8 Florida native.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Please speak
10 into the mike, sir.

11 MR. McDOWELL: Thank you. I appreciate
12 your allowing this platform.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: We cannot
14 hear you, sir.

15 MR. McDOWELL: You can't hear me?

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: No. Get
17 really close.

18 MR. McDOWELL: Okay.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: There you go.

20 MR. McDOWELL: Basically I want my
21 Representative to be local. I would hope that
22 you will take the information from the latest
23 census and draw up a plan so that when I call
24 my Representative, that he can have empathy for
25 my concerns because he is in the area. I live

1 in Land O' Lakes. I have nothing in common
2 with a guy from Gulfport. I know that isn't
3 relevant, but I think you get the picture.

4 So I am hoping that you will use due
5 diligence in drawing up the new districts.
6 Thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, sir,
8 thank you very much.

9 Next up we have Stephen Sarnoff.
10 Following Mr. Sarnoff, we have David Bussey.

11 MR. SARNOFF: Good evening. As a child
12 growing up, I learned that before I was a
13 Floridian, a New Yorker, a Bronxite, a Jew, I
14 was an American. Some reason today, we have
15 the hardest the time remembering that we are
16 all Americans.

17 The reason why I supported and voted for
18 Amendment 5 and 6 was because about three years
19 ago, I sat in a schoolroom in a political
20 science seminar and demonstrated to me on a
21 screen was how political consultants decide how
22 to gerrymander. They have tremendous databases
23 of who is registered and what political party,
24 how often they vote in an election, and if I am
25 a well-financed candidate for office, I can pay

1 one of these people to show me the perfect
2 district that will get me elected every time.
3 That is why I believed that we needed Amendment
4 5 and 6, and many Floridians agreed and voted
5 the same way.

6 One of the hardest things that I can't
7 understand about this process was the fact that
8 if it was not for Amendment 5 and 6, I really
9 feel the process probably would be done by now,
10 or would have been well underway much more than
11 it is now. I understand that we had to go to
12 court to uphold the will of the people, and
13 even though I know there is some resentment or
14 some animosity towards the judicial, thank God
15 for the balance of power, because that is a
16 true American democracy.

17 Yesterday Lori Edwards, Supervisor of
18 Elections in Polk County, told this committee
19 -- told the committee that waiting until the
20 last deadline to approve the maps will force
21 election officials not to have or to have
22 barely enough time to change districts,
23 precincts and a myriad of other things, and if
24 the Legislature waits to the end of the
25 session, followed by the court review and the

1 Department of Justice 90-day, they take 90 days
2 to review, election supervisors in the state
3 could have only two weeks before the absentee
4 ballots have to be mailed for the August 14th
5 primary. If that happens, then during the
6 two-week period, we would have to change all
7 district maps, align the precincts and
8 boundaries with the new lines --

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Sarnoff,
10 I am going to have to ask you to wrap it up.
11 We are getting really tight on time here.

12 MR. SARNOFF: Thank you. Every court,
13 every -- each home in each district, check and
14 recheck voter rolls and notify the voters that
15 he or she is in a new district, all within two
16 weeks before the absentee ballots. That is not
17 American democracy, that is what we call
18 disenfranchisement, and it needs to be stopped
19 before it starts. Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
21 sir.

22 Okay. We've got Mr. David Bussey.
23 Mr. Bussey, good to see you, sir. After
24 Mr. Bussey, we have Jerry Marshall Hester.

25 Good to see you, sir.

1 MR. BUSSEY: Yes, good to see you all too,
2 Senator Storms. I will try and keep this -- I
3 will keep this under three minutes.

4 When I came in here tonight, I really
5 don't have a clue about what redistricting is
6 all about. I have learned a lot out in the
7 hallway and listening to everybody in here.

8 Kind of sounds like where I live. I live
9 in Zephyrhills in a retirement snowbird
10 community. I live there year-round. We have
11 about 300 residents there and we have a
12 homeowners' association and we are guided by
13 condominium rules. And basically what that
14 means is that each of us that live there can't
15 do things the way we think it ought to be done.
16 We have to give away some of our wants and
17 desires for the greater good of everyone that
18 lives there. I can't just go and plant a tree
19 on my neighbor's property without getting
20 permission, which I wouldn't get. Once in a
21 while, we get some people that do some things
22 like that, and then we have some real problems.

23 You folks have, from what I am seeing
24 here -- God bless you, and I mean that, we need
25 to be praying for our State Senators and

1 Representatives this coming session that they
2 are given the wisdom they need to do what needs
3 to be done, because if you do what we have all
4 asked you to do, boy, it is going to take a big
5 computer to figure that out. I have never -- I
6 have not been in a room where I have heard so
7 much personal agendas voiced, and rightly so, I
8 mean, I understand your concerns. I have
9 concerns, too. I am just praying that you will
10 lay down your -- set aside your political
11 agendas and do what is right for the farmer and
12 do what is right for the businessman and do
13 what is right for the hairdresser and do what
14 is right for the maid, try and put it all
15 together in a way where we all don't get what
16 we want, but some of us don't get screwed real
17 bad either, you know what I mean. You have a
18 tremendous undertaking, and I pray that
19 providence will be with you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
21 Mr. Bussey.

22 Mr. Hester, we have been advocating for
23 you all night, because you are our last
24 speaker, we made it to you. So
25 congratulations, and you are recognized for the

1 floor.

2 MR. HESTER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My
3 name is Marshall Hester. I am a resident of
4 Wesley Chapel. I came up here tonight just to
5 represent myself and my family. I've got a
6 little bit different take perhaps on what some
7 other folks have said.

8 I believe the current structure of our
9 representation here in Pasco County is of great
10 benefit to me, and I prefer it not be changed,
11 and I will tell you why. Pasco County, as is
12 presently apportioned, is represented by six
13 State Representatives, three State Senators and
14 two Congressmen. This provides me and my
15 family with many different avenues of redress,
16 and it gives us a very powerful voice in
17 legislative matters. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
19 sir. Thank you for your brevity. If we had a
20 balloon, we would give you one. That was
21 great. Thank you very much.

22 Ladies and gentlemen, that concludes the
23 public hearing portion of this. We have a few
24 minutes left. What I would like to do is if
25 there are any members on the body or in the

1 committee that would like to speak -- if we
2 could, Mr. Chairman, we will start off with
3 House members. Members, are there any House
4 members who would like to take just a minute or
5 two to speak or have something to add to the
6 conversation? Anyone, anyone? Yes, sir,
7 Representative Baxley. We will bring the
8 microphone to you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: I want to thank
10 our Chairmen for their leadership tonight and
11 how orderly these meetings have run and how
12 patient people have been to hear one another.

13 One thing that I am -- I am one of the few
14 people on this line-up that's ever been through
15 redistricting, and what I would like to --
16 there is a great myth out there that everybody
17 is picking their own seat. Most of these
18 people ran for seats that somebody else drew.
19 I am probably the only -- is anybody else was
20 in the process last time, ten years ago? I am
21 it. And so they are not designing districts
22 for themselves. They are trying to design
23 districts that serve communities. Obviously a
24 lot of things go into that, but term limits
25 took care of that problem. Congressmen do not

1 draw districts. Your elected members draw that
2 map, trying to fit together all these different
3 parameters. I hope that gives you some
4 consolation about the myth of self-service in
5 this regard. Term limits has changed that
6 dimension already. Thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay. All
8 the House members, any other House members that
9 wish to speak? Okay, Representative Williams
10 and Representative Corcoran.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Thank you,
12 Mr. Chair. I just want to introduce myself.
13 My name is Alan Williams. I represent Leon
14 County, Tallahassee, Florida. I wasn't here on
15 the front end, because I got caught up in your
16 traffic on 75 north, and so I am hopeful that
17 DOT will get some more funding so we can fix
18 that process.

19 REPRESENTATIVE CORCORAN: Real fast, as
20 one of your Pasco Representatives, I just want
21 to say of how proud I am of all the testimony
22 that you guys gave today. This is my fifth
23 hearing from around the state, and I can
24 unequivocally say that over 90 percent of the
25 people that testified today gave us specifics

1 that we can start to work with on what the
2 communities of interest that matter to you.
3 That is a significant input that benefits all
4 of us, and I just want to thank you guys for
5 making this, for me, and I am very proud of
6 Pasco, one of the most informative
7 constituent-related public hearings that we
8 have had to date. Thank you very much.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right.
10 Any Senators? Any Senators that would like to
11 contribute? I'm sorry, we've got one more
12 Representative, Representative Workman. You
13 are recognized, sir, for very brief comments.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Very brief. I
15 just wanted to tell Steve -- Representative
16 Steve Crisafulli, it is his 21st birthday
17 today -- Representative Crisafulli, happy
18 birthday.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Happy
20 birthday, Representative, but I don't think it
21 is your 21st.

22 Okay. If we could, for just a moment, we
23 are almost done, ladies and gentlemen, there
24 were some statements that were made tonight and
25 some questions that were raised tonight that I

1 want to make sure we have clarification on. My
2 partner in this process, Chairman Gaetz,
3 Senator Gaetz, is going to take just a few
4 minutes to clarify a few of those points to
5 make sure everybody walks out of this room with
6 the same understanding as to where we go from
7 here and what this process will entail here on
8 the back end. I want to thank you again, and I
9 will turn it over to Senator Gaetz.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
11 Let me just go briefly through some factual
12 questions that were raised so that, as the
13 Speaker indicated, we all have the same
14 understanding as we leave.

15 First, there were several speakers who
16 said 63 percent of the voters voted for fair
17 districts, why don't you just be precise and
18 implement fair districts. I have taken tonight
19 nine pages of notes, and those notes show that
20 even within this room, there is substantial
21 disagreement or at least a little bit of
22 tension as to what people think fair districts
23 means and how those standards ought to be
24 applied.

25 I will give you an example. We heard

1 tonight nine different times the term
2 "communities of interest," that it was very
3 important that communities that -- I believe
4 the phrase was had common interest, had common
5 transportation borders, had common industry,
6 went to school together, that that ought to be
7 the definition of an entity that then you would
8 use as a building block for representation.
9 Well, Amendments 5 and 6 don't talk about
10 communities of interest. As a matter of fact,
11 there was an effort made to add the term
12 "communities of interest" to the Constitution,
13 and the Supreme Court struck that down. And
14 so, therefore, what we are left with is on the
15 one hand, a number of people testifying
16 persuasively about the need to maintain
17 communities that have some integrity together,
18 and other people persuasively testifying that
19 it ought to be county lines that would be the
20 determining factor, not communities of
21 interest.

22 I only mention this to say that there was
23 one rather emotional young man who said that he
24 thought that -- that what we were doing tonight
25 and around the state wasn't very useful. I

1 think he called it a fig leaf. Well, the fact
2 is we have to hear from people at the local
3 level as to what they believe and how these
4 standards ought to be interpreted in order to
5 be faithful to the Constitution. The reason
6 why is because the language of Amendments 5 and
7 6 are brand-new. Taken together, altogether,
8 these templates or mandates have never been
9 applied to a single state before. So we can't
10 say, "Well, let's just do it the way Indiana
11 does it." Instead, we are charting new ground
12 now, and we have to be careful so that we are
13 faithful to our constitutional oaths and to the
14 will of the voters.

15 So as somebody from the Panhandle of
16 Florida who lives in the central time zone, I
17 couldn't have sat in Tallahassee in an echo
18 chamber just filled with legislators and
19 special interest groups and figured out all of
20 the nuances and particular concerns that all of
21 you expressed tonight. I've got page after
22 page about east Pasco and west Pasco and
23 Hernando versus Tampa and all of the things
24 that matter to you.

25 So I would simply say that Democrats and

1 Republicans, House members and Senators, all
2 are learning from these hearings, 26 of them,
3 to understand the local issues that will help
4 us properly and faithfully implement Amendments
5 5 and 6. But it isn't easy. Let me give you a
6 sentence from Amendments 5 and 6. This wasn't
7 quoted by the gentleman who described them.
8 Here it is, and it is a direct quote from the
9 Constitution, listen carefully: "No line -- no
10 line may be drawn with the intent to either
11 favor or disfavor any incumbent or any
12 political party." Now, draw the first line.
13 You can understand how there can be differences
14 of opinion as to what all of that might mean.
15 So that is why it is important to listen to
16 you.

17 Questions about the timeline. Other
18 states may have completed their redistricting
19 already. That is true. Illinois completed it
20 very early. They had a group of politicians,
21 went in a closed room, came out, said, "Here
22 are the maps, take them or leave them," and
23 that was that, and the one political party
24 dominated everything. We don't think that is
25 the right way to operate.

1 Also, Florida was one of the last states
2 to receive its census data from the U.S. Bureau
3 of the Census. Not all states got it at the
4 same time, it came in different tranches, and
5 we were not the last, but we were one of the
6 last. And you can't begin to draw any lines or
7 even conceive of where districts might be until
8 you know where the people live. And so that is
9 why we are a little bit later than some states,
10 first because we didn't believe in the back
11 room, and secondly, because we got our census
12 data later than many other states.

13 But the other thing is that there are some
14 states, for example, Louisiana, who completed
15 their redistricting earlier, and that is
16 because they have their elections on odd
17 numbered years, and so they completed theirs in
18 time for odd number year elections and they
19 were able to get their census data earlier and
20 get their process going earlier because of that
21 fact.

22 Contrary to what some may have thought and
23 maybe even said tonight, final deadlines for
24 action on maps do not prevent -- do not prevent
25 earlier action. We can vote as soon as

1 January. Can't vote earlier than that, because
2 of the State Constitution. If our Fair
3 Districts friends would have wanted to change
4 the Constitution so we could vote in September
5 or in August, they could have done that, but
6 they chose not to include such a change in
7 their amendment.

8 Those are -- who are concerned that the
9 Legislature shouldn't take all the time that it
10 legally can I think make a good point. We
11 would urge you to also encourage the other
12 parties, the Federal Justice Department, the
13 courts, the Attorney General, not to take all
14 the time they can, but, rather, to take the
15 time that they need, and that is what the
16 Legislature is going to do as well. As Speaker
17 Weatherford indicated, we can vote as early as
18 January. We can vote as early as members of
19 the Legislature and citizens come forward with
20 their individual maps and suggestions.

21 There were suggestions tonight that the
22 current maps are examples of gerrymandering.
23 Maybe they are, but only Representative Baxley
24 was in the Legislature when those maps were
25 drawn, so it is all his fault. No, not really.

1 The fact is that all of the rest of us ran in
2 districts where somebody else drew the lines.
3 So we didn't draw lines for ourselves. We ran
4 in districts that were drawn by others for
5 either good or bad reasons. We are trying to
6 correct that in this process.

7 There were several questions. Are we
8 looking at population growth in the future as a
9 way of articulating what kind of districts
10 there might be? Federal law doesn't let us do
11 that. The census is a federal function and
12 there is a snapshot taken, and it is who lives
13 where and how many people live there on that
14 first day in April when the census is taken.
15 That is the snapshot. So we can't -- we can't
16 count future growth. That is called rotten
17 boroughs. We can't say, "Well, some people
18 might live there, there are some chickens there
19 now, but some people might live there, let's
20 count the chickens." Federal law won't let us
21 do that. We can only count the people who are
22 there on April 1st, counted by the federal
23 government, they give us the numbers, those are
24 the numbers we live with.

25 And then, you know, we had a number of

1 folks who said it is good to have Pasco County
2 represented by several legislators, because
3 that gives us a stronger voice in Tallahassee,
4 and others said we want fewer legislators
5 representing us, because that will give us a
6 stronger voice. But you gave excellent reasons
7 for your points of view. I took notes, others
8 took notes. We want to take that information
9 and use it to try to not make everybody happy,
10 but try to make the wise decisions.

11 There are a couple of folks who said
12 tonight, "Where are the maps?" Well, the
13 answer is, there's a bunch of them in the back,
14 there's a bunch of them over there. If you go
15 to our website, you will see that there are 17
16 maps. Any Democrat, any Republican, any
17 Senator, any Representative, can propose any
18 map at any time. There seems to be some sense
19 that maybe there is a magic map that is going
20 to suddenly emerge fully grown, sprung from the
21 brow of Zeus, and that that is going to be the
22 map. Well, talk to these folks afterwards,
23 Democrats, Republicans, House members,
24 Senators, you are going to find that there are
25 many different opinions. I can tell you as

1 Chairman of the Senate committee, no Senate
2 maps have been drawn, but already I am starting
3 to like some of the maps that we are getting
4 from the general public, because members of the
5 general public are drawing maps without
6 necessarily having a dog in the fight. But it
7 is not as though there's suddenly going to be a
8 map that will emerge and everybody will agree.
9 There will be lively debate about all of these
10 issues.

11 Now, someone said, "Well, what will happen
12 if your -- will you be in the room, if any of
13 you are in the room when the maps are drawn?"
14 Well, the fact is, all of us are going to be in
15 the room, and the room is going to be on
16 television. So you are going to be able to see
17 the debates and you will be able to also see
18 Chairman Weatherford and me say, "Are there any
19 members of the public who want to testify? Did
20 we get any e-mails, did we get any information
21 that we can share with members of the
22 committee?" And there are 19 million auditors
23 to this process. All of you can see every
24 proposal before any votes are taken.

25 And then finally, Mr. Speaker, there was a

1 -- there was a suggestion that it is not us --
2 I'm sorry, let me hit one other thing. Someone
3 said -- I am glad to see the number keeps
4 moving around -- that there is \$30 million in
5 some special fund to fight lawsuits in the
6 House of Representatives. Well, by golly, when
7 I -- I am Chairman of the Appropriations
8 Committee in the Senate. When I was dealing
9 with some of these guys, they didn't tell me
10 they had \$30 million snuck away to fight
11 lawsuits. The fact is that that is an urban
12 legend. There is no \$30 million snuck away to
13 fight lawsuits. Instead, there is \$30 million
14 in reserves in the House of Representatives,
15 because we have a big state, we have a huge
16 budget and we have a lot of things that might
17 happen, the House has set aside money for
18 reserves. Now, some of those reserves will pay
19 for heat, lights and phone, some of them pay
20 for lawyers, some of them may pay for other
21 operational expenses, but it is absolutely an
22 urban legend that there is \$30 million that has
23 been designated to fight some sort of a
24 lawsuit.

25 And then, finally, Mr. Speaker and

1 members, I think there was -- there was an
2 eloquent point that was made by a gentleman who
3 wore a shirt that had a -- I think it had a
4 patriotic emblem on it, and he said, "It
5 shouldn't be us versus them, it should be we,"
6 and someone right behind him said that if you
7 drew an imaginary line and you had a theory of
8 justice on one side that could apply to people
9 that were invisible as to their race, creed,
10 color or political party on the other side, we
11 would do well, and then he used that term,
12 "communities of interest," which, sadly, is not
13 in the Constitution. I would just offer this
14 as a fact. There are Democrats and
15 Republicans, House members and Senators, who
16 will all have a role to play in creating the
17 "we," and then when we are done, it will be the
18 courts. So it will be the Legislature and the
19 courts. And we must all come together,
20 including the Federal Justice Department, in
21 order for a plan to actually be implemented.
22 So there are many, many checks and balances.

23 A gentleman said he hoped that we had
24 thick skin, that there wasn't six million
25 unhappy people and six million happy people,

1 though he thought it might happen. I used to
2 work for a guy named Everett McKinley Dirksen,
3 who was a Senator from Illinois. Dirksen said,
4 "When everyone is equally dissatisfied, justice
5 has been done." We hope we will do a little
6 bit better than that.

7 We thank you. I thank you as a Panhandle
8 Senator for making me aware of issues I never
9 would have learned about had I not come here
10 tonight.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
12 Senator, very timely. I think everybody in
13 Pasco now recognizes why you are going to be a
14 great Senate President. So tremendous job in
15 wrapping that up.

16 Ladies and gentlemen, thank you again for
17 tonight. We appreciate your input, continue to
18 work with us, and with that, Chairman Gaetz
19 moves we rise.

20 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
21 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 165 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 20th day of November, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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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 NALFO
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

7

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CLARA C. ROTRUCK

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Notary Public

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State of Florida at Large

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Commission Expires:

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November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, JULY 28, 2011
BREVARD COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBER
MELBOURNE, 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 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Ladies and gentlemen, if
3 you would be kind enough to find a seat if you
4 would like to participate in our hearing this
5 morning, and I would ask members of the House
6 and Senators who are here for the hearing to
7 please take their seats as quickly as possible
8 so that we can get started.

9 The Joint Senate House Redistricting
10 hearing is called to order. We are pleased
11 today to be joined by members of the House of
12 Representatives and the Senate from across the
13 state of Florida who are here to listen to you
14 and we will give them a chance to very briefly
15 introduce themselves and indicate where in
16 Florida they live and where they represent so
17 you will know that -- you will know who you are
18 talking about.

19 Thanks to the Brevard County Commission
20 for allowing us to use this facility this
21 morning and thank you for being here, all of
22 you, especially those who have come to testify
23 and provide insights about the redistricting
24 process and how you believe the legal
25 standards, Federal and State, ought to be

1 applied in this community and in this part of
2 Florida to help shape Congressional Senate and
3 House Districts for the next decade.

4 My name is Don Gaetz. I am a member of
5 the Senate. I Chair the Senate Reapportionment
6 Committee, and along with my House colleague,
7 Representative Rich Workman, who is to my left
8 and many of you know Rich because he is from
9 this neck of the woods, I will be Chairing
10 today's hearing which is being webcast
11 statewide by the Florida Channel over the
12 Internet.

13 We are pleased to be joined this morning
14 by the President of the Florida Senate,
15 President Mike Haridopolos, who represents this
16 area in the Florida Senate.

17 President Haridopolos has laid out for us
18 an interactive public and transparent process
19 for reapportionment and redistricting. We are
20 here today at his direction and the fact that
21 we have interactive websites, the fact that we
22 are involving the public in this process more
23 than any other state in the Union is because
24 Senator Haridopolos as President has directed
25 us to do so.

1 Mr. President, thank you for letting us be
2 on the Space Coast and it is an honor to
3 recognize you, sir.

4 PRESIDENT HARIDOPOLIS: Well, good
5 morning, and thank you for coming out in such
6 large numbers. We are looking forward to
7 hearing from you, not just today, but
8 throughout the process.

9 As Senator Gaetz has described quite well,
10 we are making this the most open transparent
11 process in state history. You will literally
12 have the opportunity to draw your own maps.

13 I believe already 17 have been produced,
14 over 70 different suggestions of how we draw
15 lines have been produced, and we are going to
16 follow the road map that is I believe served
17 this state well on prior issues.

18 As you know, with the property tax
19 reduction that we made in 2008, we went across
20 the state and listened to people before we drew
21 the legislation, because the idea is we want to
22 have a bottom up, not a top down solution to
23 all problems, and so I think today is symbolic
24 of that very effort.

25 Wherever you might stand in this

1 particular issue, what is most important is
2 that we listen to your ideas, because
3 ultimately the maps that are produced are going
4 to be representative of what we have heard
5 throughout the state and the testimony that the
6 good citizens of not only this area, but across
7 the state of Florida have given to us.

8 And so we look forward to your remarks and
9 I think this is one of 26 meetings across the
10 state of Florida and they will continue as we
11 continue to make this, again, a very open and
12 transparent process using all of the technology
13 at our fingertips literally, in which you can
14 produce your ideas.

15 And we are hopeful that anyone who has an
16 idea today to present a map, we would be happy
17 to accept it, and after hearing all of the
18 testimony, that you might do the same, but
19 let's be clear on two things.

20 If you draw a perfect square or a perfect
21 circle, there is still going to be a line drawn
22 where one person on one side of that street is
23 going to be on the opposite district of the
24 other person on the other side of the street,
25 because there are going to be lines at the end

1 of the day and we are looking forward to your
2 input in that process.

3 So I want to thank you for coming out on a
4 beautiful Florida morning and we look forward
5 to your testimony over today and we hope again,
6 today, it does not end today, that you continue
7 to give your input throughout the process and I
8 am just grateful for all the good work of both
9 the Republicans and the Democrats here in the
10 room who are participating in this process,
11 especially the Representatives who give so much
12 of their time to this effort.

13 So Chairman Gaetz, good luck to you in the
14 meeting and we look forward to hearing from the
15 folks here in Brevard County.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. President.
17 Let's take a moment to let you know who is here
18 from the Legislature so you will know who you
19 are talking to, and why don't we begin with
20 you, Representative.

21 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Thank you, Senator.
22 My name is Peter Nehr. I am a State
23 Representative from District 48 in Pinellas
24 County. With your indulgence, I have one quick
25 thing. This young lady would like to say

1 hello.

2 A VOICE: Hi, thank you for being here.
3 My name is Jillian. Good job. Do a good job.

4 REPRESENTATIVE NUNEZ: Well, that is a
5 difficult act to follow, but good morning, my
6 name is Jeanette Nunez, I am State
7 Representative for House District 112, which
8 consists of portions of Miami-Dade, Broward and
9 Collier County. Thank you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Good morning, I
11 am Representative Steve Precourt, House
12 District 41, which is west Orange County and
13 parts of Lake and Osceola County.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BRODEUR: Good morning, I
15 am Representative Jason Brodeur. I am from
16 District 33 which represents parts of Volusia,
17 Orange and Seminole Counties.

18 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: Good morning, my
19 name is John Legg. I represent west Pasco,
20 House District 46.

21 REPRESENTATIVE EISNAUGLE: Good morning,
22 Eric Eisnaugle, representing House District 40
23 in Orlando and Orange County.

24 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Good morning, I am
25 Representative Jim Frishe. I represent the

1 western edge of Pinellas County, most of the
2 beaches, and I am very happy to be here today.

3 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good morning, my
4 name is Betty Reed. I represent District 59
5 which is in Hillsborough County, Tampa,
6 Florida.

7 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good morning, I
8 am Chuck Chestnut, House District 23, a portion
9 of Marion County and a portion of Alachua
10 County.

11 REPRESENTATIVE TOBIA: John Tobia District
12 31, Brevard County.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PLAKON: Scott Plakon,
14 Florida House District 37, Orange and Seminole
15 Counties.

16 REPRESENTATIVE DIAZ: Good morning, I am
17 Jose Diaz, I represent District 115 in
18 Miami-Dade County, Florida.

19 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good morning,
20 everyone, John Patrick Julien, representing
21 House District 104, which is in Miami-Dade
22 County. It is a pleasure to be here.

23 REPRESENTATIVE ROUSON: Good morning,
24 Darryl Rouson, I represent District 55, which
25 is south Pinellas, north Manatee, Sarasota and

1 the southern most tip of Hillsborough County,
2 and I want to thank Cocoa's finest for giving
3 me a ride to the hearing this morning when my
4 car caught a flat 27 miles out.

5 SENATOR ALTMAN: Thad Altman, State
6 Senator, District 24, which we are in the heart
7 of. It is a great honor to represent this
8 community.

9 I have traveled the state, been to a lot
10 of the meetings across the state, but this is
11 actually the best looking crowd I have seen in
12 the entire state of Florida.

13 As you know, I spent many hours of my life
14 in this room serving you as a County
15 Commissioner, and I would like to say
16 something, building on what President
17 Haridopolos said.

18 You know, some of the comments we have had
19 in past is people asking us why aren't we
20 producing maps, and I think it is appropriate
21 that I am sitting here in this room, coming
22 from local government, sort of becomes a part
23 of your DNA, that before you take any action,
24 whether it is a zoning item, a budget item, a
25 contract, you always got public input first.

1 That is sort of the way it becomes a part
2 of your essence when you come from that bottom
3 up local government level and I am really
4 enjoying this process.

5 I am excited about hearing from my
6 constituents when they can go to Map Builder
7 and build their own maps. We are doing the
8 same and it is really, I really commend our
9 leadership, Senator Haridopolos and Senator
10 Gaetz and Representative Weatherford in putting
11 this series of public hearings.

12 It is unprecedented. I would venture to
13 guess no one in the country has ever had such
14 public input and public involvement in a
15 redistricting process.

16 It is a great honor to be here and thank
17 you for taking the time to come out this
18 morning.

19 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Good morning,
20 Representative Daphne Campbell, District 108
21 from Miami-Dade County.

22 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good morning,
23 Hazelle Rogers, State Representative, District
24 94, representing eight cities in central
25 Broward County, one of the most diverse

1 counties in Broward County with approximately
2 1.8 million residents. It is good to be here
3 this morning.

4 SENATOR MARGOLIS: Good morning, my name
5 is Senator Gwen Margolis. I represent District
6 35 in Miami-Dade County, and south Broward
7 County and delighted to be here and listen to
8 you today.

9 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good morning,
10 they put the two Gwens together. I am State
11 Representative Gwen Clarke-Reed, representing
12 House District 92 which is northeast Broward
13 County, representing seven cities.

14 SENATOR SIPLIN: Good morning, Gary Siplin
15 State Senator, Walt Disney World.

16 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good morning,
17 State Representative Mack Bernard, West Palm
18 Beach, Florida, District 84.

19 REPRESENTATIVE CRISAFULL: Good morning,
20 Steve Crisafuli, House District 32, central and
21 north Brevard and east Orange County.

22 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: Good morning, Tom
23 Goodson, House District 29 from Mims, Florida,
24 to the St. Lucie County line. I have told
25 everyone here today that I have been to about

1 every meeting, except two.

2 I have told them how wonderful you are
3 going to act and how courteous you are going to
4 be. So please don't let me down. Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Good morning, I
6 am Rich Workman, your State Representative,
7 District 30 in Brevard, welcome.

8 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
9 members and Senators for introducing
10 yourselves.

11 Let me go over our procedures for today so
12 everybody knows how they can participate. It
13 is important that you sign in. We ask you to
14 sign in so that we can maintain an accurate
15 public record of all attendees, and also all
16 speakers, and that will allow us to put you on
17 our mailing lists and our e-mail lists so we
18 can keep you informed about the redistricting
19 process as it moves rapidly forward into
20 committee meetings in September, and into the
21 session that President Haridopolos has arranged
22 for us to call earlier than usual to take
23 actions on these maps as quickly as we can.

24 If you have not signed in we ask you to
25 raise your hand and a member of our team will

1 get to you so that you can sign a card. There
2 is a young lady and a gentleman down here,
3 another young lady. So if you will keep your
4 hands up, I apologize, another young lady over
5 there, we will ask our staff if they would get
6 to you and give you a card.

7 It is the same card, if you just want to
8 participate by observing or if you want to
9 speak. So please, please fill out that card.
10 Right over here, John, if you wouldn't mind.

11 Before we begin the Chair will recognize
12 Representative Rich Workman to explain how
13 today's hearing fits into the redistricting
14 process and schedule so that you will have a
15 sense of where we are in the process now and
16 what happens next. Representative.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Thank you,
18 Chairman. Every ten years the Legislature is
19 required by our Constitution to redistrict the
20 state based on increases and decreases in
21 movements of population.

22 Because Florida has grown more than any
23 other, most other states in the last ten years
24 we will move up from 25 to 27 members of the
25 U.S. House of Representatives.

1 Because some parts of our state have
2 increased or increased disproportionately in
3 population, many State and House Districts will
4 change either adding or losing population.

5 When redistricting is completed,
6 Congressional Districts must be equal in
7 population and contain 696,345 people. Those
8 40 Senate Districts must also be nearly equal
9 at about 470,000 people and our 120 House
10 Districts must be nearly equal at about
11 156,700.

12 We have displays in the front of the room
13 showing the current boundaries of districts in
14 this area of the state and a number of -- and
15 the number of persons which must be added or
16 subtracted from those current districts to
17 achieve equal representation.

18 Equality of representation isn't the only
19 legal requirement the redistricting plans must
20 meet. The laws and important court cases
21 governing redistricting are explained in detail
22 in the House and Senate websites.

23 Those websites are listed on the
24 Redistricting 2012 brochure that was available
25 to you when you came in. If you did not get

1 one, please make sure you do. Our
2 Redistricting 2012 brochure summarizes both
3 Federal and State laws and outlines topics we
4 hope you will discuss here at today's hearing.

5 If you did not get a copy when you came
6 in, as I said, please make sure you get one
7 even now so that you can review it while we
8 give public testimony.

9 The brochure also lists the House and
10 Senate websites. The websites are packed with
11 information about redistricting in Florida,
12 including explanations of laws and important
13 court cases governing redistricting.

14 The two websites are complimentary and are
15 updated frequently. Visit both and check back
16 often. It is a great way to stay connected
17 about how your new Congressional State Senate
18 and State House Districts are taking shape.

19 The websites also deliver to your
20 fingertips all of the demographic information
21 that we will use to redraw districts and the
22 exact come computer programs that we as
23 Legislators and professional staff will use.

24 Any member of the public can participate
25 in building plans or seeing maps submitted by

1 Legislators or other citizens. Before, during
2 and after this hearing Senate and House
3 professional staff are available to show anyone
4 the simple steps to getting done on-line.
5 Building districts and submitting a plan now or
6 in the weeks to come.

7 Senator Gaetz has said at every one of
8 these meetings that he is not very computer
9 smart, and it took him 15 minutes to learn how
10 to draw these districts. So I guess I can say
11 if he can do it, so can you.

12 Recommendations from citizens and groups
13 of citizens will be made publicly available.
14 In fact, 17 public submissions of partial or
15 complete maps and approximately seven written
16 seven -- 70 written ideas for maps are
17 available on the website and after this week I
18 am sure that number is going to drastically
19 increase.

20 The submission of proposed maps that makes
21 sense for your community is the single most
22 effective form of public participation in the
23 redistricting process.

24 The redistricting schedule under which we
25 are operating is imposed by the State

1 Constitution. The Constitution does not permit
2 the Legislature to act on State Legislative
3 maps before the second year after the census.

4 In other words, before 2012. We
5 accelerated the process as much as possible by
6 moving up the 2012 legislative session from
7 March to January, and by beginning our
8 statewide hearings five months in advance of
9 the 2012 legislative session.

10 It has been suggested that the Legislature
11 should draw maps first and then ask for public
12 comment. We believe that puts the answer ahead
13 of the question.

14 There should be no preconceptions created
15 by politicians, but rather public testimony
16 should be free and unrestricted. In fact, a
17 principle author of Florida's New Redistricting
18 Standards and the Chairperson for Florida Fair
19 Districts campaign is on record and in
20 agreement with the notion that the maps should
21 not be drawn until after public testimony has
22 been completed.

23 Our intent is to use the recommendations
24 made at the 26 public hearings and through our
25 Internet websites as the basis for developing

1 one or more options for district maps.

2 We will discuss those options in open
3 public meetings before any votes are taken,
4 even in a committee.

5 In other words, what we are literally
6 saying is, if you look at those maps in the
7 back of the room, the ones actually submitted
8 by Legislature by Florida residences to the
9 Legislature by Florida residences.

10 We are literally starting the legislative
11 process with those maps and other suggestions
12 from you, the public. So if you want to know
13 where we will begin our deliberations, it is
14 with those public submissions, your public
15 submissions, testimony from these meetings and
16 other public input.

17 Throughout the process, last page, by the
18 way, throughout the process we will solicit
19 additional public comment so that proposed maps
20 can mature with the public involvement, all
21 before the Legislature approves its final maps.

22 Whatever the Legislature passes, when it
23 then is submitted for judicial review to ensure
24 that the final plans meet every legal
25 requirement.

1 Because our purpose today is to hear from
2 you, and not me reading and reading, all of the
3 time between now and 1:00 will be used to hear
4 you and your concerns from the public.

5 All that wish to speak will have time to
6 present testimony and to be listened to
7 respectfully without interruption or argument.

8 If after every citizen has had his or her
9 say, there is time remaining before our
10 scheduled adjournment, any member of the
11 Committee may make any statement or offer any
12 observation.

13 Of course, any member of the Legislature
14 may today or at any time propose a map or plan
15 and we will make it available to the public.

16 Mr. Chairman, I hope this description of
17 our schedule and process helps set the stage
18 for a successful hearing, and welcome to
19 Brevard, Chairman.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much. Is
21 Libby Duncan here? She is outside? Well,
22 there is overflow seating across the hallway.
23 So if you have not been able to find a seat and
24 you would like to sit, there is some overflow
25 seating and you can see and hear what is going

1 on.

2 The reason I asked about Libby Duncan is
3 because she is the 57th person who signed up to
4 speak, and I am an advocate for Libby Duncan.
5 I want to make sure she gets to speak, and so I
6 hope everybody will be an advocate for Libby,
7 and therefore, as we call your names to come
8 forward, please come forward as soon as you
9 good.

10 I will call about three names at a time.
11 If you would like you can line up behind the
12 microphone there and then in order to be fair
13 to all of those who have signed up so we can
14 hear from everybody I would like to ask if you
15 would please hold your remarks to three
16 minutes.

17 Hopefully we will be able to get through
18 everyone who wants to speak, because the last
19 person who signed up is just as important as
20 the first person who signed up.

21 With that said, our first speaker will be
22 Alan Bergman. Then Ben Campione, and then
23 David Kearns.

24 And so, Alan Bergman, if you would make
25 your way it the microphone, and Mr. Campione,

1 and Mr. Kearns, if you would be on deck,
2 please.

3 And Mr. Bergman, we are delighted you are
4 here this morning and your recognized before
5 the Committee.

6 MR. BERGMAN: Thank you. I appreciate the
7 opportunity to speak before the Committee, and
8 it is a pleasure to see so many people have
9 come out to this because I really feel this is
10 an important event.

11 Good morning. I would like to thank the
12 Committee for taking the time to listen to my
13 thoughts on redistricting.

14 My name is Alan Bergman. I have resided
15 in Indialantic for ten years now. Our existing
16 districts have been blessed with large
17 population growth. Now we require
18 redistricting on all levels of government.

19 This is done not only to meet the present
20 needs, but also as an eye to the future and
21 enabling continued growth and perceived needs.

22 I came across an amusing situation where a
23 gentleman owned a business which was straddling
24 two counties. Consequently he collected
25 different amounts of sales tax depending on

1 which side of the store the purchase was made.

2 You can guess on which side of the store
3 the floor boards were more worn. My key point
4 is I would urge you not to draw district lines
5 inspired simply by geographical boundaries, but
6 more important is the concept of community.

7 That is communities matter, Floridians
8 matter. I would where possible set district
9 boundaries to allow communities with similar
10 vocations, ideologies and beliefs to address
11 the same legislative responsibility.

12 They would best know the needs of their
13 constituents. Florida is a diverse state with
14 industry ranging from agriculture to space
15 travel, from fishing to drilling for oil.

16 We have the oldest and yet the newest
17 technologies from the simplest to the most
18 complex. We must consider the unique needs of
19 these industries and the people who work in
20 these industries when drawing boundary lines.

21 I would not negate other considerations
22 that are involved in this process, but due to
23 today's constraints of time I would just
24 emphasize this priority because I believe
25 commerce is the life blood of our nation, state

1 and county. I would thank you very much for
2 this consideration.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, Mr.
4 Bergman, we appreciate your testimony. Next,
5 Ben Campione, please, and then following
6 Mr. Campione, David Kearns, and following Mr.
7 Kearns, Doreen Archer, if you will be on deck,
8 please.

9 Mr. Campione, thanks for being here this
10 morning. We are looking forward to hearing
11 from you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: My name is Ben
13 Campione, and I would like to thank the
14 Committee for allowing the citizens such as
15 myself to address redistricting concerns.

16 I reside in House District 29, currently
17 represented by Tom Goodson. District 29 runs
18 from north Brevard where it contains parts of
19 at Titisville, Cocoa, Port St. John and
20 Rockledge. Then runs down the west portion of
21 unincorporated and relatively unpopulated
22 Brevard County to south Palm Bay where it
23 includes Grant and Micco in south Brevard
24 County.

25 It continues into Indian River County as

1 Representative Goodson mentioned where it
2 includes Fellsmere and parts of west Vero. The
3 north and south areas of this district are
4 50 miles apart and separated by the relatively
5 large population centers of Melbourne and Palm
6 Bay.

7 If one was to look at a map of the
8 district which is right there, they would
9 wonder why in the world the map was drawn this
10 way.

11 While I will focus on District 29, there
12 are certainly other districts in Florida that
13 are drawn similarly.

14 First, it is exceedingly difficult for a
15 Representative to properly represent
16 constituents when their district is literally
17 all over the map.

18 Certainly there are common problems that
19 need to be addressed statewide, but the large
20 distances in population distributions of a
21 District like 29 place much greater burden of
22 on a Representative to properly represent the
23 people that reside there.

24 Additionally, we know that there are many
25 concerns of the residents, for example, in the

1 Titusville, Cocoa area, that are different from
2 Grant and Fellsmere.

3 For the sake of brevity I won't cite all
4 of the differences, but they are real. It can
5 become very difficult for a person to be tuned
6 in to all that is going on in his or her
7 district.

8 Clearly it is better for constituents to
9 have a Representative who can focus on an area
10 that have more interests in common rather than
11 less.

12 Additionally, one problem Florida
13 Representative and the taxpayer is that in
14 District 29, a Representative must keep two
15 offices, one in the north area and one in the
16 south area to provide proper constituent
17 access. This is unnecessary and a significant
18 increase in cost to the taxpayer.

19 Secondly I would like to point out that a
20 large portion of District 29 is rural, as is
21 much of Florida. The only real population
22 centers are at one end of the district, up in
23 Titusville, which is at a significant distance
24 from a large portion of the rest of the
25 district.

1 This creates a situation where the
2 interests of those far away population centers
3 can significantly outweigh the interest of the
4 rural areas.

5 While I realize that it may not be
6 possible to create districts that don't include
7 some population centers, those that are
8 included should be relatively contiguous to
9 their adjacent rural surroundings.

10 Finally, it is exceedingly difficult for a
11 person to run as a candidate for a state office
12 in a poorly designed district. For example, in
13 District 29 a candidate that lives in
14 Titusville must not only do all of the
15 necessary functions to effectively compete in
16 his or her local area, but he has to do the
17 same thing, he or she has to do the same thing
18 many miles away.

19 This increases the time, the cost and
20 other burdens on a candidate, but the most
21 problematic of which is becoming knowledgeable
22 about the concerns of his or her constituents,
23 who, as I already noted, may not even share
24 common interests.

25 It could also discourage good potential

1 candidates from running in such a district as
2 they should not have to bear these additional
3 burdens simply because they were unfortunate
4 enough to live in a poorly designed district.

5 In summary, I believe my concerns
6 highlight the need for creating districts that
7 are contiguous and where citizens share common
8 interests. This helps elected representatives
9 who better understand the concerns of the
10 constituents and can take that with them when
11 they go to Tallahassee.

12 It also allows for a better and fair
13 environment under which interested candidates
14 can run for office.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Campione,
16 and if any members of the public are here have
17 remarks that would go on for longer than three
18 minutes, you are welcome to submit them.

19 We will make them part of the record.
20 They will be on the website for everybody in
21 Florida to see and for the Senators and
22 Representatives to study.

23 David Kearns is next and then Doreen
24 Archer from the League of Women Voters and then
25 William Rettinger is next and then Eddie

1 Freeman.

2 Mr. Kearns, thank you for coming this
3 morning, and you are recognized.

4 MR. KEARNS: Good morning, my name is
5 David Kearns. I reside in Brevard County. Let
6 me just get a show of hands. I didn't hear
7 party affiliations from anybody.

8 If everybody could, Republican, could you
9 raise your hands? Democrat? So I think maybe
10 we have a problem with the districts as they
11 are currently drawn.

12 We have more, we definitely have more
13 Republicans than Democrats up here.
14 Representative Workman, I really appreciate you
15 talking this morning, talking about the
16 demographics and so forth.

17 I can drive in and out of my district for
18 House Representative Workman, I can drive in
19 and out on the southbound lane of 95 three
20 times, three times. I can go in and out of his
21 district, so I think we probably have a
22 problem.

23 A staffer outside tells me that you can't
24 draw the proposed map because the Federal
25 Census data wasn't available until the last

1 minute. Blaming the Federal government again,
2 okay, but you have the demographic info
3 available on your website.

4 So you could begin a proposed map and you
5 have a ten-year period between these episodes
6 that you have to draw the map, and it has not
7 been drawn.

8 So, you know, I have been watching the
9 progress of these meetings and I can say I am a
10 little disappointed. I think we have three
11 things that represent bad faith.

12 First of all, looking up what is a
13 partisan commission, what is a nonpartisan
14 commission on Google, I discovered that there
15 is something called partisan commission when
16 most of the commissions, members, at least
17 three quarters are one party as opposed to
18 another.

19 So I think we might have a partisan
20 commission here. I don't know, and, you know,
21 the great examples of partisan commissions in
22 history are called juntas, you know, and juntas
23 are a real problem, and juntas get power and do
24 you know how many times a junta has given up
25 power in the history of the United States of

1 America, in the history of the world? Never.

2 A junta has never willingly given up
3 power, never, probably never established rules
4 in order to go ahead and rend up power, with
5 the exception of the Constitution of the United
6 States that planned to keep juntas out of power
7 and to have equal representation for all
8 citizens of the United States of America.

9 So I think what you have here is you have
10 a timeline, you have a bit of a gag order and
11 you have a war chest, okay. You have a
12 timeline for releasing your committee findings
13 that leaves precious little time or no little
14 time from meaningful input. Making this a
15 little bit of a joke, call it a junta joke, a
16 joke --

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I would love to hear
18 about Paul Pot, Cambodia is a wonderful place
19 to hear about, but we have got a whole bunch of
20 people now, 70 people who would like to speak
21 behind you.

22 MR. KEARNS: Okay, I will get to the
23 rules, I am sorry, I will go back.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: We will give you ten
25 seconds to wrap it up.

1 MR. KEARNS: Ten seconds?

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And you can submit
3 further comments.

4 MR. KEARNS: Well, you see, the rules are
5 important and I have seen you guys kind of
6 stepping over the rules in voting for each
7 other.

8 In Tallahassee, there is videos, you guys
9 voting for each other up there. I can point to
10 some people, but I am not going to, you know, I
11 have a problem.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Sir, could you keep it to
13 redistricting, remember, the 70 of your
14 neighbors and friends who want to speak.

15 MR. KEARNS: Okay, I think they would like
16 to hear this, you know, I think right now you
17 have, you have --

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Sir, thank you very much.
19 Thank you for your testimony.

20 MR. KEARNS: You have a situation in the
21 state of Florida --

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Next we will have Doreen
23 Archer from the --

24 MR. KEARNS: -- where a junta --

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: -- League of Women

1 Voters.

2 MR. KEARNS: -- controlled by the
3 (inaudible) brothers is taking over public
4 education in the state of Florida.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Sir, we are going to
6 thank you.

7 MR. KEARNS: And these people right here
8 are responsible for it. Mike Haridopolos got
9 paid \$850 per page for a book that nobody can
10 read.

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, thank you,
12 sir, we appreciate your comments. Now, you can
13 -- you can clap and expostulate all you want.
14 This is America, everybody is entitled to an a
15 opinion and a picket sign, but however, just
16 understand that the time that you take, whether
17 you are applauding or showing disfavor takes
18 time away from your friends and neighbors who
19 wish to speak.

20 Ms. Archer, you are with the League of
21 Women Voters. We are delighted to hear you
22 today and you are recognized before the
23 Committee.

24 MS. ARCHER: Thank you very much. As you
25 say, I am a member of the League of Women

1 Voters of the Space Coast and I am a
2 constituent of Senator Altman and
3 Representative Workman.

4 I just have a simple question, and maybe
5 somebody will give me the answer. Why does the
6 Legislature continue to spend taxpayer money to
7 oppose the will of the constituents as
8 expressed by 63 percent of the voters who voted
9 for the fair district standards?

10 They held over 30 hours of committee
11 meetings in 2009 and 2010, trying to find fault
12 with the Amendments, using lawyers from Speaker
13 Cannon's law firm at \$300 an hour and then
14 tried to confuse voters by trying to place
15 Amendment 7 on the ballot.

16 They then tried in court again
17 unsuccessfully to have Amendments 5 and 6
18 stricken from the ballot, costing more tax
19 money and legal fees.

20 The Florida House signed on to join a
21 lawsuit that was filed by Representatives
22 Corrine Brown and Diaz-Balart, which asks the
23 Court to strike Amendment 6 from the
24 Constitution, and this is interesting, the
25 Secretary of State because he is charged with

1 implementing Amendment 6 is a Defendant in that
2 case.

3 So Florida taxpayers are now paying to
4 both sue and defend the same lawsuit. The
5 Legislators say they only joined the lawsuit to
6 seek clarification of the reforms, not to
7 invalidate Amendment 6, but the lawsuit
8 contains no request for clarification.

9 It ask just to invalidate the Amendment
10 and to hold it unconstitutional. If the
11 Legislature would stop trying to get out of
12 following the fair district standards and apply
13 them as the voters intended there would be no
14 need for litigation and no need to spend the
15 taxpayers' money.

16 It is obvious that the Legislature does
17 not want to comply with the standards and have
18 set aside more funds for court battles to fight
19 what is now part of the Florida Constitution.
20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
22 ma'am. William Rettinger is next, and
23 following William Rettinger we have Eddie
24 Freeman and then Peter, and I apologize, Peter,
25 if I guess this wrong, Fusscas, and then Joyce

1 Hamilton Henry with the American Civil
2 Liberties Union.

3 Mr. Rettinger, thank you for being here.
4 We look forward to your testimony.

5 MR. RETTINGER: And thank you for hearing
6 us all today, Senator. My name is William
7 Rettinger and I am a constituent of both
8 Representative Workman and Senate President
9 Haridopolos. I have spoken to both of them
10 many times, but the fact of the matter is, this
11 is and will and always has been a dog and pony
12 show.

13 Sorry, folks, but I have gone through
14 redistricting with Florida Legislators four
15 times now.

16 Never have I gone to a hearing where there
17 weren't maps for us to look at and give our
18 input on and then ya'll come back with the
19 finished product.

20 I have heard some staff say to us, well,
21 that is putting the horse -- the cart before
22 the horse. No, it is not. You are required to
23 do the maps. It is your job, not ours. Our
24 job as citizens were to go vote. We did.
25 Sixty-three percent of us voted for fair

1 districts. That is the will of the people,
2 whether you are a Republican, Democrat,
3 Independent, NPA, no matter what you are.
4 Sixty-three percent of the voters spoke.

5 You should be listening to that, not
6 fighting it in court, not spending taxpayer
7 dollars to be both Defendant and Plaintiff in a
8 court case, not wasting tax dollars that we can
9 ill afford to waste when we have needs in
10 education and everything else.

11 Do the redistricting maps, let us see what
12 you draw and then let us give input. That is
13 how it has always been. That is how it should
14 be. Gerrymandering should be ended. It
15 doesn't matter whether it is a Democratic
16 Legislature doing it or, Republican Legislature
17 doing it, it does not matter. It is wrong.

18 Districts that go from one end of this
19 county down to another county are ridiculous.
20 Other speakers have spoke. It is the truth. I
21 feel for that Representative that has to follow
22 through with all of those constituents. He
23 cannot represent them all equally and it is not
24 fair.

25 The 14th Amendment to the Constitution of

1 the United States gives --

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Sir, could I ask you to
3 wrap up?

4 MR. RETTINGER: Yes, sir. Gives us equal
5 representation. Do it. Give us the maps, let
6 us do input and give us fair districts like we
7 voted for. Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, sir. And
9 next, Eddie Freeman, and following Mr. Freeman,
10 Peter Fusscas, and then Joyce Hamilton Henry
11 and then Vicki, I think it is Impoco, and if
12 you could line up that way we could use the
13 time to hear from each one of you.

14 Mr. Freeman, thank you for being here and
15 we look forward to any testimony you have.

16 MR. FREEMAN: Thank you, sir. I
17 appreciate it very much and I will stay within
18 my time.

19 Honorable Senators and Honorable
20 Representatives, right now, right now American
21 men and women are fighting to defend our
22 freedom and democracy. What will you purchase
23 with their sacrifice?

24 Ten years ago the Legislature bought
25 districts that bent and stretched like a snake

1 through parts of six, seven, eight counties, in
2 our democracy with representatives who cannot
3 live in their communities.

4 A vote to gerrymander is a vote to
5 dishonor the sacrifice of over one million men
6 and women who gave their lives for our liberty
7 and democracy.

8 Gerrymandering only works with ignorance
9 and I can promise you this. If this
10 Legislature votes to gerrymander again, I will
11 visit every veteran Senator and organization in
12 central Florida to let them know who to file
13 their sacrifice in defiance of our democracy.

14 As you venture forth, may God bless you
15 and God bless our democracy.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very, very
17 much. Good testimony. Peter Fusscas is next
18 and then Joyce Hamilton Henry and then Vicki
19 Impoco, and then following Vicki, Phil, and I
20 apologize, Phil, I think it is Koechlein. Mine
21 gets butchered, too.

22 Mr. Fusscas with the Brevard Citizens
23 Coalition, welcome, and thank you for your
24 testimony.

25 MR. FUSSCAS: Thank you very much, and it

1 is a pleasure to be here today addressing the
2 junta. Sounds to me like sour grapes. They
3 with like to be the new junta, but I am here to
4 represent a stretch we call it the outer banks,
5 Melbourne Beach, Indialantic and we call south
6 beaches.

7 We would like to preserve the three
8 principles which you were espousing, and
9 correctly so, the issue of compactness,
10 continuity and the preservation of shared
11 interests.

12 Now, compactness does not mean geographic
13 shapes, but the ability of citizens to relate
14 to each other and their Representatives, and
15 continuity has been defined as one where a
16 person can go from any point within the
17 district to any other point, and it is these
18 three principles that I am here to discuss.

19 When the Spaniard, Ponce de Leon, landed
20 in 1513 on Melbourne Beach, it was historic.
21 From that point we have built a very strong
22 community in the ocean side and the beaches.

23 We send our children to school together.
24 Our gardens clubs decorate the community
25 together. We share our parks and beaches. We

1 celebrate home day, which I think is close to
2 95 years. The original bridge on 192, the
3 causeway, was built by members of our
4 community, and the south beaches, we soon will
5 be sharing the same Post Office, because I
6 understand one is going to be closed, or at
7 least it is recommended, and the two municipal
8 offices are less than a mile away. We have a
9 shared community and I wouldn't like to see
10 that broken up anymore than it is.

11 Now, my Representative in Precinct 154 is
12 Debbie Mayfield, a very charming and able State
13 Representative, but, and that is House District
14 80. We would like to, in all due respect, we
15 would like to be considered to be a part of
16 another district because of our shared
17 interests.

18 And so if you would just give us some
19 consideration in regards to the ocean side, it
20 would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir,
22 and Representative Mayfield did come in. There
23 she is. Thank you very much, Representative,
24 for being here.

25 Next we will hear from Joyce Hamilton

1 Henry with the ACLU, and following her, Vicki
2 Impoco and then Phil, who's name I butchered
3 and I am sorry, Phil.

4 Ms. Hamilton Henry, thank you very much
5 for being here.

6 MS. HAMILTON HENRY: Good morning, I am
7 the Director for the Mid Florida Regional
8 Office of the ACLU. The ACLU protects and
9 defend the U.S. Constitution and Bill of
10 Rights.

11 You have heard, already heard from
12 hundreds of Floridians who demand that the
13 process be fair, transparent and that you act
14 with integrity.

15 You have heard from me and numerous others
16 that is critically important that district
17 lines are drawn in full compliance with
18 Amendments 5 and 6. These Amendments establish
19 rules in the Florida Constitution to stop
20 politicians from designing districts to favor
21 themselves.

22 We implore you to draw maps and complete
23 this lengthy and expensive process.
24 Sixty-three percent of Floridians have already
25 told you what we want.

1 Over the past weeks, hundreds of
2 Floridians have reinforced that mandate and the
3 main date is to be fair, expeditious,
4 transparent, act with integrity, and protect
5 our democracy.

6 Citizen participation is at the heart of a
7 healthy democracy. Too many citizens have
8 already been rendered, been disenfranchised and
9 rendered voiceless.

10 We want to make sure that our democracy
11 works fairly, vibrantly and inclusively and we
12 will continue to provide input in this process
13 and we will continue to monitor this for the
14 remaining months.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Henry. It
16 is good to see you again. Vicki Impoco and
17 then Phil with the AARP, and then Lori Scott,
18 the Brevard County Supervisor of Elections.

19 Ms. Impoco, did I get your name right,
20 ma'am?

21 MS. IMPOCO: Yes, you did.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, it is nice to see
23 you, and thank you for being here. You are
24 recognized.

25 MS. IMPOCO: Thank you. Yes, my name is

1 Vicki Impoco. I am the Vice-President of the
2 Brevard Chapter of the National Organization
3 for Women and the Vice-president Of the Space
4 Coast Progressive Alliance.

5 Floridians overwhelmingly approved fair
6 districts to end gerrymandering. We want
7 districts that are set along geographic rather
8 than political boundaries.

9 Many states have already completed their
10 redistricting process. Other states have
11 provided proposed legislative maps at their
12 public hearings to allow citizens the
13 opportunity to comment on actual proposed maps.

14 It is your job and your responsibility as
15 elected representatives to present maps to
16 constituents, not the other way around.

17 Voters have requested over and over at
18 public district meetings to see your concept of
19 the fair district. Once again, where are the
20 maps?

21 The redistricting timeline which ends
22 later than almost every other state in the
23 nation discourages potential candidates from
24 engaging in what is supposed to be a democratic
25 process.

1 This timeline protects incumbents because
2 challengers will have insufficient time to
3 mount campaigns. State lawmakers have filed a
4 lawsuit specifically designed to overturn the
5 Amendment voters just approved.

6 Taxpayer money is not only funding this
7 lawsuit, but also paying Florida Secretary of
8 State Kirk Browning's office to defend the
9 standards. This is an outrageous waste of
10 taxpayer money at a time when funding for
11 critical services for millions of Floridians
12 are being cut.

13 State Senate President Haridopolos assured
14 us this process would be open and in the
15 sunshine. If this is the case, why has my
16 Representative John Tobia been unable to tell
17 me how much this lawsuit is costing taxpayers.

18 Your position on the Amendments allegedly
19 negatively impacts minority voters, and it is
20 disputed by the very people you claim to be
21 trying to protect. The Florida Conference of
22 Black State Legislators, Democracy Ahora and
23 the NAACP have all endorsed fair districts.

24 Voters should question whether your
25 lawsuit actually stems from a desire to promote

1 democratic ideals or to thwart them.

2 State Representative Will Weatherford and
3 State Don Gaetz were members of groups created
4 to defeat Amendments 5 and 6. That means that
5 the two Legislators most responsible for making
6 sure that the Legislature follows the
7 redistricting rules laid out in Amendments 5
8 and 6 were both members of a group explicitly
9 created to defeat those rules.

10 Florida leads the nation in the number of
11 Federally convicted public officials, yet you
12 fail to pass a single ethics reform law. This
13 failure along with your fair district foot
14 dragging demonstrates your complete lack of
15 interest in doing anything to restore the
16 confidence of Floridians in our government.

17 As our Representatives you took an oath to
18 uphold and obey the State Constitution.
19 Amendments 5 and 6 are now a part of the State
20 Constitution. You must immediately end the
21 lawsuits, road blocks and delays. Stop
22 spending taxpayer money to manipulate the
23 system to protect your political careers.

24 Florida is not a kingdom and you must
25 uphold the entire Constitution, not just the

1 laws and amendments you approve of, and would
2 everyone that voted for 5 and 6 and would like
3 to see maps, please stand up.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
5 Ms. Impoco.

6 MS. IMPOCO: Thank you very much.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: We appreciate your
8 testimony today. Next, Phil, I am going to
9 apologize to you. How do we pronounce your
10 last name?

11 MR. KOECHEIN: That is all right, it is
12 Phil Koechein. Only my parents and my siblings
13 understand it.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, Phil,
15 notwithstanding that we are delighted to have
16 you here today representing AARP, and then Lori
17 Scott, our Supervisor of Elections from Brevard
18 County, if you will be on deck, Ms. Scott, and
19 then Georgia Phillips.

20 Thank you very much, sir, for being here
21 and your are recognized.

22 MR. KOECHLEIN: My name is Phil Koechlein.
23 I live here in Brevard, and I am fortunate to
24 represent AARP for Brevard, northern Indian
25 River and Osceola Counties.

1 I want to thank you all for having shown
2 up today, and so on, but the way districts are
3 now drawn I don't think even Matel or Hasbro
4 would ever develop a puzzle piece that looks
5 like this. It is just that has happened over
6 the years.

7 It is very, very difficult for any one up
8 there to be able to go ahead and follow what
9 people need or their thoughts are. I don't
10 understand really how Representative Goodson or
11 Representative Crisafuli can possibly do it in
12 their territory, because anywhere from the
13 state, in Goodson's case from Titusville all of
14 the way down to west Vero, or from, and in the
15 other case all of the way from Port Canaveral
16 all of the way over, Alafia, did I say that one
17 right?

18 A VOICE: Alafia.

19 MR. KOECHLEIN: Alafia. Sorry, I was
20 close, but the thought pattern is so far
21 removed and I don't understand why they don't
22 even get a ticket from the FAA for flying too
23 low when they try to get from one end of their
24 counties to the other, very difficult.

25 If you would as much as possible look at

1 trying to hold together not just the
2 communities, but the neighborhoods. Try to
3 draw the lines as much as possible as you can
4 so that the neighborhood or the homeowners'
5 associations or whatever stay contiguous within
6 themselves. It would be very, very helpful
7 that way.

8 It also helps because trying to hold that
9 thought pattern over these people and so on so
10 you can possibly represent them is very, very
11 important.

12 It allows you to go ahead and to know
13 better what their need and be able to handle
14 and help to them.

15 You would much be able to represent the
16 people if you would be elected along those
17 lines and try to help it on that basis. I
18 would like in conclusion then to mention three
19 things.

20 Go ahead and vote the way we passed that
21 amendment, very, very important. That is why
22 we felt very strongly about it. We wanted it
23 not it be set along party lines, but along
24 community lines.

25 Return that 30 million or whatever the

1 number was, rather than fighting the issue,
2 turn it back and put it back into the
3 Legislature and the funds, but I prefer if you
4 could, of course, being AARP, that it be help
5 for medical for the seniors, okay.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I will let you have that
7 short commercial there.

8 MR. KOECHLEIN: Yes.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And could you wrap up,
10 please, sir.

11 MR. KOECHLEIN: I will, and please review
12 our proposals and give it enough time that at
13 the very end that we have time to be able to
14 look at it and say, have a say to respond to
15 it.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very, very much
17 for your testimony today. And Ms. Scott, thank
18 you for being here, and thank you for your
19 service to the people of Brevard County. You
20 are recognized.

21 MS. SCOTT: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman
22 and members. I feel like I should be
23 presenting in a Bill, I have got the Sergeant's
24 office in here.

25 I wanted to welcome you to Brevard County

1 on behalf of Brevard's 360,000 voters. We are
2 the eighth largest county in the state of
3 Florida.

4 We are unique in that we have a big
5 geographic footprint as my delegation members
6 sitting there know, which is for my office, it
7 creates issues of just servicing our voters.

8 We have seven delegation members, five
9 single member County Commission districts, five
10 single member School Board districts, 16
11 municipalities and five special tax districts.

12 So as you can imagine when those lines are
13 drawn, it is very unique and can create little
14 niches of precincts.

15 I know that a lot of my fellow Supervisors
16 have come and spoken to you about timelines and
17 I just want -- and I am not going to repeat
18 that. I am just going to say, thank you for
19 the service that you do. Traveling around the
20 state as a veteran of the working in the
21 Legislature, I know that the job before you is
22 very daunting and we have a big state and a lot
23 of voters, and thank you for the service that
24 you do, and anything that my office can do to
25 be of assistance if we can, I appreciate it

1 very much. Thank you and enjoy your day in
2 Brevard.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Scott,
4 thank you for being here. Georgia Phillips is
5 next, and followed by Barbara Knick, and then
6 David Bradford.

7 So if those individuals will come forward
8 so that we can hear from them.

9 Ms. Phillips, thank you very much. It
10 says you are from the city of Rockledge and
11 that must mean that are you representing the
12 City today?

13 MS. PHILLIPS: Well, we have three here
14 from the City, we have Councilman Dick Blake
15 and myself and we are going to let our
16 Chairman, Councilwoman Colleen Stuart to do the
17 talking in interest of your time.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Okay, that is very good.
19 And your name again, ma'am?

20 MS. STUART: My name is Colleen Stuart,
21 and I am Chairman of the Rockledge City
22 Council.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you.

24 MS. STUART: You will find my card
25 somewhere down on that list so when you get to

1 it you can skip over it.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, thank you for being
3 here and representing those other individuals
4 who have ceded their time.

5 MS. STUART: Thank you. I would like to
6 read a letter from the Mayor of Rockledge on
7 behalf of all of the Council members offering
8 our input as a council.

9 "On behalf of the Rockledge City Council,
10 please accept our appreciation for the work
11 being done to reapportion House and Senate
12 Districts based on the 2010 census data.

13 We as an elected body are aware of the
14 task ahead of you and the ramifications for all
15 of the citizens of the state of Florida.

16 The Rockledge City Council would like to
17 go on record with the committee with regard to
18 the concept of nesting or establishing a Senate
19 District and carrying three House Districts
20 from each nest or Senate District.

21 This would appear to be the simplest and
22 most representative manner in which to approach
23 reapportionment. The City of Rockledge is
24 currently in three House Districts and we have
25 no objection to continuing to be in a multiple

1 House Districts if that is feasible and
2 practical.

3 We are also open to being in two Senate
4 Districts if that also is necessary for proper
5 division of the population.

6 Thank you for your service and we wish you
7 the best in completion of this critical task
8 for our state and please call upon us if we can
9 be of any assistance." Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Madam
11 Chairman. Appreciate your being here. Barbara
12 Knick is next and then David Bradford and
13 Richard Ware.

14 Ms. Knick, thank you for being with us
15 today and we look forward to your testimony.

16 MS. KNICK: Thank you. This is quite a
17 show you are putting on.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I like Representative
19 Workman a lot, I like to hang with him, but I
20 would much rather be at home with my wife,
21 Vicki, so, you know, keep that in mind as well.

22 MS. KNICK: Well, that is not what you
23 took the job for.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: That is right. That is
25 why they pay me the big bucks.

1 MS. KNICK: That is right. I just want to
2 say, it is not about party politics. It is
3 about one country established by our founders
4 who gave us the Constitution as the law of the
5 land.

6 If we follow the Constitution and put our
7 country back above party politics we can get
8 back to a country of prosperity. You were
9 elected to represent the people.

10 I ask that you put aside personal
11 ambitions and do the job we elected you to do
12 and establish districts for the benefit of the
13 people. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
15 ma'am. And next, David Bradford from Brevard
16 Community College. Mr. Bradford, thank you for
17 being here, and I understand that you may have
18 maps to present, is that correct, sir?

19 DR. BRADFORD: Yes, I will leave them with
20 you.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Very good, thank you for
22 that.

23 DR. BRADFORD: Thank you. I am
24 Dr. Bradford, I teach political science at the
25 Brevard Community College, Cocoa campus. The

1 founding fathers, and I am speaking, by the
2 way, for my 32 political science students.
3 Some of them are here and they have done all of
4 this work on drawing this map.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Could we just take a
6 second since they submitted maps, if your
7 students are here could they please stand?

8 DR. BRADFORD: They could be across the
9 hall.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Okay.

11 DR. BRADFORD: Some of them are in
12 classes.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Some of them are in
14 class. That is good. Go ahead, sir.

15 DR. BRADFORD: The founding fathers of the
16 United States of America defined the purpose of
17 the Federal government when they created the
18 Constitution and Preamble.

19 They were very concerned with limiting the
20 power of the new government while promoting
21 individual freedoms and providing the welfare
22 for the citizens. So their wisdom and their
23 effort created this new government and country
24 that has endured now for over 200 years.

25 So Congressional representatives, and by

1 the way, these maps we have drawn are based on,
2 we are looking at the Federal law, we are
3 looking at Congressional delegations, not
4 State.

5 We want, or the voice of the government,
6 we wanted to ensure that Congressional
7 Districts continue to be the voice of a
8 grouping of people who will be represented in
9 Washington. We now know that Speaker Tip
10 O'Neil was right.

11 All politicians are local and the most
12 effective voice is that well-designed
13 Congressional District.

14 Now, my 32 students took it upon
15 themselves in the last six and-a-half weeks to
16 design the Congressional Districts by doing the
17 work of laying it out by looking at the law.
18 We did look at the Ortiz study.

19 The problem with the Ortiz study is that
20 it does build these specialized districts of
21 minorities and not spread out throughout the
22 county well.

23 So we didn't -- we wanted to really look,
24 examine this and so we looked at the concepts
25 of boundaries, natural boundaries, river

1 boundaries, road boundaries. We looked at the
2 districts, the laws and the Court's intent.

3 One thing that we ask that you look at
4 when you get back into Tallahassee and you
5 start designing these Congressional Districts,
6 is that the Voting Rights Act in 1965, while
7 important at that time, should not be allowed
8 to create districts within districts, because
9 we believe redistricting should be done with
10 what we have drawn and we respectfully submit
11 it to the committee today.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Dr. Bradford, and we really appreciate the
14 submission, and any further testimony that any
15 of you or your students have, we would be
16 delighted to take.

17 DR. BRADFORD: By the way, I made sure
18 that all of my students are registered to vote,
19 so this is the future of Florida.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: All right, all right,
21 great. Thank you, Dr. Bradford, and now, from,
22 we would like to hear from Richard Ware,
23 following Mr. Ware, Peter Koch, and then
24 Colleen Stuart. Is the City of Rockledge going
25 to speak some more or is Ms. Stuart -- that was

1 you. That is right, Madam Chair, I apologize,
2 then Josiah Gattle.

3 Mr. Ware, thank you for coming and giving
4 your time today. You are recognized.

5 MR. WARE: Thank you, and thank the other
6 members for coming out and listening to us
7 today.

8 This is not my first time in a
9 redistricting meeting. In '91, I lived in
10 Orlando. I was unfortunate to live in what
11 became U. S. House District 3 due to
12 gerrymandering. In 2001, I lived in Volusia
13 County, lived in an area that created a new
14 House District in, and at that time we were
15 able to point out the problems with the maps
16 and say, you are proposing to do this but you
17 are leaving six precincts in the entire county
18 into someone's district from another county and
19 they were able to go back and redo some of
20 those things to eliminate some of the
21 gerrymandering problems that they had and some
22 are just bad drawings in some cases.

23 This is the first time I have come to one
24 of these meetings and not had at least five or
25 six proposed maps from the Legislature, itself,

1 that we could say, well, this is a good idea
2 and this is a bad idea, why don't you take this
3 from this map and move it over here.

4 What I would ask is this body, once you
5 come up with your maps, come back out with them
6 and present them to the public and then get
7 public input to refine those maps, because
8 without that we are not going to be able to
9 progress and correct what we see as problems
10 that are undoubtedly going to happen, and if
11 you do that you may be able to save some money
12 in terms of lawsuits.

13 Obviously we have had and still have
14 districts within this state that are
15 gerrymandered, such as U. S. House District 3
16 which runs from Jacksonville all of the way
17 down to the south part of Orlando and into
18 Orange County.

19 When it was originally drawn it started
20 all of the way over by Ocala and when it went
21 into the court system, that was cut down, but
22 still it was gerrymandered to represent a
23 minority population, which whether you feel
24 that that is correct or not, people in
25 Jacksonville and people in Orlando are not

1 properly represented by one person trying to
2 cover that entire area.

3 Here in Brevard County, I am a citizen of
4 Titusville and we have House District 29, House
5 District 32, both of which are very expansive,
6 they represent a lot of people but they
7 represent people at opposite ends of interest.

8 When you are talking about people that
9 live by the airport in Orlando versus people
10 that live in Merritt Island, you are talking
11 about two very diverse groups of people that
12 have very different concerns and desires from
13 the folks that represent them in government.

14 The same thing with folks in House
15 District 29 in Titusville versus the folks in
16 Vero Beach.

17 Then again you have House District 80,
18 which is represented by Ms. Mayfield down in
19 the south end of Brevard County, but most of
20 her district is actually in another county. So
21 she represents only a small portion of that.

22 If we could try and move that into someone
23 who lives in Brevard County and has interests
24 there in that area, that would make more sense
25 in terms of representing the actual communities

1 that we have here today. That is all I have.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Ware.

3 Very good suggestions. Peter Koch, and then

4 Josiah Gattle and then Joseph Pishgar.

5 Mr. Koch, thank you very much for being

6 here, we appreciate it.

7 MR. KOCH: I am Peter Koch.

8 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I apologize.

9 MR. KOCH: Well, that is incorrect also,
10 but it is for convenience's sake.

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: If you say it, it is
12 correct.

13 MR. KOCH: Okay.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: If I say it, it is wrong.

15 MR. KOCH: I registered to vote on 17
16 August, 1954, at 3:00 in the afternoon. In
17 those days, you recall, you had to be 21 to
18 register. I have not missed an election since
19 then, whether State, Federal or local.

20 Enough about me. Every ten years we
21 create a monster in this country. You guys are
22 fully aware of this monster. It is called a
23 gerrymander.

24 Some of you are going to feed this monster
25 for your own political advantage and interest.

1 Others of you are going to fight this monster
2 because you got something like this that
3 supports you.

4 This is called the United States
5 Constitution and its various amendments. The
6 14th Amendment particularly is your shield.
7 This is the Holy Grail of democracy, the U. S.
8 Constitution.

9 Some of you don't pay attention to this
10 because all you are interested in is political
11 advantage. We have got to get rid of political
12 advantage and use the Constitution to its
13 fullest extent, and believe me, if we catch you
14 clowns doing this, we are going to bring the
15 Constitution to bear upon you, and believe me,
16 as was pointed out before, the state of Florida
17 leads with the population of Federal elected
18 officials in various jails.

19 We can make -- we can get you there, too,
20 if necessary, and don't think I am -- this is
21 not a joke. This is the -- this is the big
22 problem with you people.

23 You think this whole thing is a joke. I
24 come from a place where this was never a joke.
25 I am not a native born American. I lived for

1 the rations and for 12 years, and believe me,
2 this is important.

3 You guys, you guys have never experienced
4 that. You live fat, dumb and happy on your
5 salaries which can't be attached. It is time
6 you guys woke up.

7 Wake up, America, this is the
8 Constitution. This is the Holy Grail, and if
9 you are going to fight it, you are going to
10 lose.

11 The Holy Grail always wins, and you -- you
12 guys, you know who I am talking about. You are
13 the guys, who your offenders are, you know who
14 you are. And believe me, you may be here
15 today, maybe even tomorrow, but next week, next
16 month, next year, you are out of here, and once
17 you are out, you stay out. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, I think.
19 Next, Josiah Gattle and then following Josiah
20 Gattle, Joseph Pishgar, if you will be on deck,
21 please, and next, Harry Goode.

22 Mr. Gattle, thank you for coming today and
23 we look forward to what you might have to say.

24 MR. GATTLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
25 registered to vote about two years ago right

1 after the 2008 election, and I am relatively
2 new at this, but I was thinking as I was
3 thinking about the districts and what unites
4 people.

5 In this hard economy it is economic
6 issues. It is about what they earn their
7 living from, and in this county we have three
8 major economic drives, tourism, space and
9 agriculture, and I believe that the districts
10 should be drawn in such a way that all three of
11 these interests are represented by each of our
12 Representatives, so that they can represent the
13 whole interest of the counties.

14 Now, whether it is Orlando with tourism
15 based, and also agriculture, but incorporating
16 all of the economic interests in each
17 representative district, that way we can fully
18 represent each and every individual, because
19 they are across party lines.

20 Economic interests are what drive your
21 livelihood, what drive how you get to your
22 beliefs, and what is valuable to you.

23 I thank you from balancing these interests
24 and for these open meetings and the opportunity
25 to give you input. Thank you very much,

1 Mr. Chairman.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Gattle.

3 Next, Joseph Pishgar with the Space Coast
4 Progressive Alliance and then Harry Goode with
5 the City of Melbourne and then Jack
6 Schluckebier, Schluckebier.

7 Mr. Schluckebier, did I get that right,
8 Schluckebier waives his time and then David
9 Gunter.

10 So Mr. Pishgar with the Space Coast
11 Progressive Alliance, we are delighted you are
12 here and we look forward to what you may have
13 to say.

14 MR. PISHGAR: I will submit this
15 afterwards by the way, in writing as well.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you.

17 MR. PISHGAR: My name is Joe Pishgar and I
18 live in west Melbourne. I am represented by
19 State Representative John Tobia, and State
20 Senator Mike Haridopolos.

21 On behalf of the citizens of Brevard
22 County and the Space Coast Progressive Alliance
23 I would like to nominate the Florida State
24 Legislature for a Tony award in the category of
25 political theater.

1 In the past few weeks you have provided
2 considerable value and entertainment by hosting
3 a series of sham meetings to request feedback
4 on a process that has not yet begun.

5 While states as contentious as California
6 and as bureaucratic as Massachusetts have
7 somehow managed to generate first and second
8 drafts already of their redistricting maps,
9 you have languished and agonized over how
10 transparent you are by providing the public
11 with a piece of software that each hard core
12 geeks and nerds find daunting, clumsy and
13 altogether pointless.

14 These proceedings are a farce, part of a
15 blatant delay that many consider the incumbent
16 protection program. Many other states have
17 already completed their redistricting, South
18 Carolina, Michigan, Iowa, Missouri, Indiana and
19 Texas, Minnesota is nearly done. Oklahoma has
20 been done for some time now.

21 Can you honestly expect us to believe that
22 our redistricting should naturally proceed at a
23 slower pace than Oklahoma's. Is the state
24 where humans have been blasted into orbit for
25 the past half a century somehow technologically

1 inferior to Oklahoma?

2 Is there a special redistricting buffalo
3 that we can borrow on loan from Oklahoma at
4 some point to help speed things along?

5 What precisely are these hearings for? I
6 mean, apart from the massive waste of taxpayer
7 dollars as each of you chalk up expenses
8 attending these to your office accounts. You
9 want our feedback. On what exactly?

10 Fair districts passed with 63 percent of
11 the vote. You have given us nothing to provide
12 feedback on. Yes, on the surface, the thing is
13 transparent, but there is no substance behind
14 the glass to speak of.

15 You have had census data for months now.
16 Is there no one in Tallahassee with Google
17 Maps, Microsoft office, and a wide format
18 printer, and asking us to draw the maps for you
19 is even further a stretch, and a contemptible
20 attempt to crowd source blame for the incumbent
21 favoring maps you will end up producing on your
22 incumbent favoring timeline.

23 You will pick the map that best suits the
24 preservation of the incumbents and point to the
25 adorable little Aunt Betty sitting on her front

1 porch with a glass of lemonade and a book and
2 My District Builder loaded up --

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: As much as I want to hear
4 more about Aunt Betty, because --

5 MR. PISHGAR: I will wrap it up. I will
6 wrap it up.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Just because we have now
8 about ten more people who want to speak in
9 deference to them if you could summarize.

10 MR. PISHGAR: Have I occupied my three
11 minutes already?

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You have just got a
13 little bit of time, so if you could summarize.

14 MR. PISHGAR: You will point to Aunt Betty
15 and you will say, it wasn't us, it was Aunt
16 Betty, but by that point in time candidate
17 qualifying will be opponents, candidates who do
18 not have the incumbent's inside track on
19 districts will not even know what their
20 districts look like.

21 How long will candidates have to wait
22 until they know what their districts look like,
23 a month, a day, will they even get to know
24 before qualifying?

25 This is to say nothing of the havoc this

1 is going to reap now on the Supervisor of
2 Election's Office.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Mr. Pishgar, I am going
4 to ask you to summarize, please and just take
5 about ten seconds.

6 MS. PISHGAR: Sure. We demand the
7 expeditious drawing of fair nonpartisan
8 election districts. We demand that you put a
9 stop to these fake hearings, these pointless
10 futile practices of naval gazing that you have
11 seen fit to expend our tax dollars on and focus
12 maybe, I don't know, on something more
13 important, like jobs.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Pishgar.

15 MR. PISHGAR: Thank you for your time.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Harry Goode is next with
17 the City of Melbourne, and then following
18 Mr. Harry Goode with the City of Melbourne and
19 then David Gunter and then Ernest Wohlbold.

20 Mr. Goode, thank you very much for being
21 here and look forward to your testimony.

22 MR. GOODE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, it is
23 a pleasure to be here. My City Manager is also
24 here, as you mentioned, he has waived his time
25 unless there is any questions.

1 I just have a few points and I will try to
2 be brief. First, again, thank you for
3 undertaking these 26 hearings around the state
4 and bringing one of them to the Melbourne area.

5 Having sat in your chair as 14 years as a
6 former Legislator, I can assure you that I am
7 not here to criticize this process or question
8 your motivation. I especially applaud the
9 direction your protocol to make this a
10 listening and not a speaking tour. I know it
11 takes discipline.

12 Second, most cities would probably
13 consider that having a city represented in the
14 Legislature or Congress should be cohesive to
15 the city boundaries as possible.

16 I would also agree, the idea for smaller
17 cities, but not for cities greater than 40,000
18 or 50. Take Melbourne, for example, which is
19 nearly 80.

20 Right now, for as long as I can remember
21 we have had at least two Representatives and
22 two Senators. I would like to keep it that
23 way. We must prefer it that way. And we could
24 ask that you do your best to keep it that way.

25 It is the closest thing that we can get to

1 represented coverage that we had before Florida
2 moved to single member districts. We now have
3 in my opinion what is very important.

4 Third, as you think about references I
5 have just stated, I would combine them with
6 your constitutional duty to neither favor nor
7 disfavor any political party, and as most of
8 you know, I was in the process, I have been a
9 Democrat and I have been a Republican and now I
10 am an Independent, so I have been around the
11 horn and some days it is 14 to three R and the
12 next day 14 to three D, it can change.

13 Therefore, you may want to consider doing
14 something like these cities, such as Melbourne,
15 by our City Charter, have to do, since we also
16 redistrict every ten years. Consider though we
17 are not partisan by charter, as most cities are
18 not.

19 If you disregard partisanship and consider
20 the constitutional rules, also provide that you
21 cannot disfavor one another as incumbent
22 Legislators, you really should not have a hard
23 time doing as we do. Just drawing the district
24 map with roughly equal population groups and
25 keeping cohesive communities is an important

1 objective.

2 I would ask that you consider our city's
3 unique request because you may not hear it put
4 quite the way as you listen elsewhere on your
5 tour. It is worth repeating, we in Melbourne
6 welcome and desire as many State
7 Representatives and State Senators as you will
8 give us, as you can afford.

9 Similarly, if you want to carve our city
10 up and give us tiny slices of three
11 Congressional Seats, we will take that, too.

12 Once again, on behalf of the citizens
13 thank you for taking the time to do this and
14 being such good listeners, and as they say in
15 the universal Melbourne language, good day.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you
17 very much. Mr. Gunter is next.

18 MR. GUNTER: Yes.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And then Mr. Wohlbold and
20 then William Whitehead with the Brevard Chapter
21 of the ACLU. Mr. Gunter.

22 MR. GUNTER: Members of the Legislature,
23 I thank you for this opportunity. I am here
24 representing only myself. I will try and be
25 very brief and run through this quickly.

1 First, everyone needs to be attentive to
2 the fact that this community voted for fair
3 districts just like the rest of the state did.
4 Granted, the results otherwise were not
5 anyone's surprise that they were sort of
6 dominated by one party, but this community went
7 for fair districts overwhelmingly.

8 Second, the notion of the Legislature
9 paying to oppose fair districts at this point
10 is repugnant to our democracy. It is
11 absolutely ridiculous to have you taking our
12 money, fighting the will of the people and now
13 trying to resist what we voted for as a
14 majority. If you want to take up a collection
15 among yourselves to oppose it, we welcome that.

16 Finally, I want to address each of the
17 maps very briefly. With regard to the
18 Congressional delegation, we obviously know it
19 doesn't make any sense for the Space Coast to
20 also be in with Polk County. I don't know why
21 that happened, but it makes no sense at all.

22 What really makes sense is for the Space
23 Coast to have a Representative who represents
24 this entire community. So I think we should
25 have, the size of Brevard County is almost big

1 enough from its own Congressional District.

2 I think we should have one district and
3 have the overload go wherever the maps
4 otherwise dictate as we have to fill in around
5 us, but I think we should be united with one
6 member of Congress.

7 With regard to the Senate, it is not too
8 difficult. We are only allowed two Senate
9 seats, basically. We have more or less drawn
10 horizontally which is an appropriate means in
11 this county, and the only question becomes from
12 a fairness standpoint, is it fair to everyone
13 around us if we have two Representatives in the
14 Senate.

15 We have two fine Representatives in the
16 Senate and we are very well represented, but
17 there is not much to do there because like I
18 said, it is relatively simple, just how we
19 divide it east, west.

20 The House unfortunately is indicative of
21 gerrymandering. We have now taken all of these
22 communities and with all deference to Mayor
23 Goode, it makes no sense to take Palm Bay and
24 minority populations in Cocoa and so forth and
25 to split them into ribbons vertically where we

1 now divide it all up.

2 In fact, if we take, I know we are trying
3 to avoid in this process supposedly showing
4 where Legislators live, but I went on the
5 computer and looked it all up, and basically
6 every Legislator in this community lives in the
7 central corridor of the county more or less.

8 There is no one from up in the Titusville
9 in the northern part of the county. They don't
10 have representation, and remarkably, Palm Bay
11 is almost big enough to have its own House
12 District. There is no one from Palm Bay.

13 Certainly Palm Bay should be represented
14 by a member of the House. Likewise, Melbourne,
15 which is the second biggest community, there is
16 no one who lives in Melbourne. So, again, that
17 particular part of the county, it is my belief
18 that there is not a single member of the
19 delegation who lives south of the Pinetta
20 Causeway on the mainland.

21 So that entire pocket of people is not
22 represented by any one who resides within their
23 community. We all know as residents here that
24 commonly because of the unique geography of our
25 county, we refer to south county, central

1 county and northern county. I think that the
2 House Districts need to sort of reflect that,
3 and again, when we draw lines they need to be
4 horizontal coming across, you know,
5 thoroughfares there.

6 The only question that may be unique is,
7 again, the beach side communities may have
8 enough common interests that it makes sense on
9 the beach side to run up the beach and then
10 down Merritt Island or something like to sort
11 of keep them -- they have the unique issues
12 with regard to things like insurance coverage
13 and protection from storms and so forth. They
14 may be better represented by someone who
15 represents those, but I thank you for your time
16 and I thank you for your consideration, and I
17 look forward to seeing the fruits of the
18 process.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Gunter,
20 very helpful testimony. Earnest Wohlbold, did
21 I get that correct, sir?

22 MR. WOHLBOLD: Yes, you did.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And then following
24 Mr. Wohlbold, William Whitehead, and then
25 Dwayne Lyndgren.

1 Mr. Wohlbold, thank you for being here,
2 and you are recognized.

3 MR. WOHLBOLD: Thank you. My main concern
4 about this whole process is it is going to drag
5 out so long that our representatives aren't
6 going to have a chance to choose an office to
7 run for. They will not know where they are
8 running.

9 This seems to me to be an incumbent
10 protection act the way you are working this.
11 Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you. And I might
13 say, if we have time, we want to hear from the
14 public, but if every member of the public has
15 time within the time limits we have, we have
16 made notes and we are going to get back to a
17 number of the questions about timelines and
18 other factual questions, not to get into a
19 debate with people who may have different
20 points of view, but rather just to provide some
21 factual information that might provide some
22 either reassurance or even cause greater
23 concern.

24 Mr. Whitehead with the Brevard Chapter of
25 the ACLU. Thank you very much for being here,

1 and we are anxious to hear your testimony.

2 MR. WHITEHEAD: Welcome, Legislators and
3 concerned citizens. I am Bill Whitehead, I am
4 a Board member of the Brevard Chapter of the
5 ACLU.

6 Your appearance today at this hearing
7 would suggest to some that you are earnestly
8 seeking positive input from the citizenry, but
9 most of you supported the passage of voter
10 suppression laws and most of you supported the
11 expenditure thus far of about a million dollars
12 to fight the Fair Districts Amendments.

13 So a skeptic might conclude that you are
14 conducting sham hearings in order to delay the
15 creation of new districts and to make it
16 difficult for challengers to compete against
17 incumbents.

18 After all, you have had the census data
19 for over four months and you are responsible
20 for the creation of the new districts, not us.
21 So why are you asking us to push the process.

22 Sixty-three percent of Florida voters
23 voted for the creation of fair districts, and
24 in the 2012 campaign coming up we want to make
25 sure that we have fair contests or challenges

1 to be able to compete against incumbents, and
2 certainly your delaying tactics are going to
3 make it very difficult for challengers to be
4 recognized by the public and to compete fairly
5 against incumbents.

6 We want an end to redistricting delays, an
7 end to the waste of taxpayer's money. After
8 all, you have set aside something like \$30
9 million for continuing to fight fair districts,
10 and we want you to cease these self-serving
11 tactics. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
13 Dwayne Lyndgren is next, and then followed,
14 following Mr. Lyndgren we would like to hear
15 from Mr. Stuart Gorin, and then Liz, I think it
16 is Schillo, so if they will be on deck, please.

17 Mr. Lyndgren, thank you for coming and you
18 are recognized before the Committee.

19 MR. LYNDGREN: Dwayne Lyndgren, Satellite
20 Beach. I appreciate you all being here. I
21 didn't realize that I should have come with
22 prepared insults, but I will try to do better
23 if I can make --

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: That is all right, you
25 can get copies outside.

1 MR. LYNDGREN: I probably observed that if
2 you had some maps here there would be an equal
3 number of people here to tell you that this is
4 a sham because you guys have already made up
5 your minds of what you are going to do. So if
6 I were you I wouldn't worry about it. You guys
7 are doing a great job.

8 I think there was adequate warnings went
9 out about what the, what Amendment 5 would do
10 in the redistricting process, and what I would
11 suggest is that you do that the way the
12 Constitution says it, and then there are
13 Federal laws that require you to make
14 exceptions to what the Florida Constitution
15 says, then do that second.

16 And on our own county, I notice that we
17 have got, as you know, we have got five
18 Representatives, including Representative
19 Mayfield, we got two Congressmen, we got two
20 Senators. That mix has served us very well.

21 Our representative, our legislative
22 delegation works very well together. The, you
23 can tell that by, and I have had meetings with
24 all of them. I can tell that they get
25 together. I would love very much to be able to

1 keep what we have got as far as total
2 representation. I do realize that we have got
3 some districts that are over populated.

4 I think Senate District 24 is about
5 54,000, and the Congressional District by
6 117,000 over. But when you look at our
7 districts you will find that both of those
8 districts, if you -- there is a lot of western
9 movement out there.

10 I mean, District 15 goes all of the way --
11 Congressional District 15 goes all the way to
12 Polk County. So I would urge that you kind of
13 carve off the western portions of those
14 districts to see if we can't get to the numbers
15 we are looking for there, because our real, I
16 believe our real interest is more Brevard
17 County, Indian River County than it is Brevard
18 County, Polk County.

19 So I would really urge you to try to keep
20 it as much together as we can in Brevard and
21 Indian River County, and I really, I ask you to
22 continue to do what you are doing. I think you
23 guys are going to do a great job. I am looking
24 forward to see how it comes out. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, and thank you

1 for your service to our country, sir.

2 MR. LYNDGREN: I appreciate -- I didn't see
3 anything about the Constitution, I didn't bring
4 a copy of the Constitution although I did spend
5 32 years of my life in the Army defending it,
6 but I noticed there must be some Glen Beck
7 people in the people in the crowd because they
8 are bringing their constitutions with them and
9 I appreciate that.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You bet. There are
11 several of us who do that. Stuart Gorin is
12 next and following Mr. Gorin, Liz Schillo, and
13 then Molly Tasker with the League of Women
14 Voters.

15 Mr. Gorin, thank you for coming and we
16 look forward to what you might have to share
17 with us.

18 MR. GORIN: Thank your, good morning. My
19 name the Stuart Gorin, I live in Viera. I am
20 aware that Florida will be gaining new, two new
21 Congressional Districts and that one of them
22 may very well be incorporated in the central
23 part of the state.

24 With that in mind I strongly believe that
25 all of our county of Brevard should be in the

1 same Congressional District. It is a
2 completely diversified county, economically,
3 socially and ethnically and our Federal
4 Legislators should be able to represent all
5 Brevardians.

6 For a population parity, of course, this
7 district could include all or part of a
8 neighboring county as well.

9 At the state level I live in a legislative
10 district that runs as a thin snake through two
11 counties, forcing our Legislator to travel long
12 distances to serve constituents.

13 I would like to see my district redrawn
14 horizontally rather than vertically, keeping
15 part of Brevard as one contiguous sector for
16 our Legislator to serve. Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
18 Next we will hear from Liz Schillo, I believe
19 it is, and because we have had a number of
20 people who have come in a little bit late and
21 have asked to also be able to testify, we want
22 to hear from them.

23 So I, you know, with respect to those who
24 may be coming behind issues please try to limit
25 your comments and then if you have extended

1 comments, we will take them for the record and
2 distribute them to all members of the
3 Committee.

4 Ms. Schillo, you are recognized. Thanks
5 from being here.

6 MS. SCHILLO: I am Liz Schillo, and I am
7 from Merritt Island here in Brevard County, and
8 I just want to thank you for holding these
9 hearings across the state and taking the public
10 comments before you draw the district lines.

11 When you draw the district lines here in
12 Brevard I would like to ask if you keep Merritt
13 Island and Cape Canaveral, as well as Cocoa
14 Beach areas together in the State House, Senate
15 and Congressional districts.

16 These areas represent a coastal community
17 of interest that we need to keep together to
18 the greatest possible extent. Coastal areas
19 like these have unique concerns like tourism
20 and property insurance that need representation
21 in the Legislature.

22 I think you should also split Brevard into
23 north central and south sections in terms of
24 State House seats and last year we all know
25 Amendments 5 and 6 were passed to make the

1 district lines more fair.

2 After reading the Orlando Sentinel article
3 this morning about your meeting yesterday and
4 then going on-line and rereading the
5 Amendments, it seems that the Amendments say
6 that the districts didn't have to be compact,
7 if they are minority districts.

8 To me this sounds like there are two
9 standards of districting, one for minority
10 seats and one for non minority seats. Is this
11 true? Do minority seats have to be compact
12 according to Amendments 5 and 6? If they don't
13 issues then I think the seats surrounding
14 minority districts won't be compact either
15 because they have to fill in the borders of the
16 non compact minority seats.

17 Isn't that what we have now? I am really
18 hoping this committee can shed some light on
19 this issue for me. In this case I must say I
20 am a little disappointed because this is not
21 what I thought when they were passed last fall.
22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
24 ma'am. Next, Molly Tasker from the League of
25 Women Voters, and then Katherine Smith, if you

1 will be on deck, and then William Joseph.

2 Ms. Tasker, thank you for coming today.

3 You are recognized.

4 MS. TASKER: Thank you. Good morning, I
5 am Molly Tasker and I live in Melbourne,
6 Florida, and I would like to say that I am a
7 constituent on this issue of each and every one
8 of you are that are sitting up there today.

9 I am part of the 63 percent of the Florida
10 voters that want fair redistricting. I have to
11 take my glasses off to read.

12 We directed, gave instructions, gave input
13 to our Legislators that we want redistricting
14 equal in population, compact and utilizing the
15 existing geographic and political bounds to the
16 extent possible.

17 We expected in response to that for our
18 Legislators to come up with ideas and to come
19 up with possible redistricting plans. That has
20 not yet happened.

21 Our Legislature has said there is nothing
22 you can do, the Constitution requires you to
23 draw the districts during the 2012 session.

24 However, the Legislature will hold interim
25 committee meetings from September through

1 December, you could use that time to present
2 maps, you certainly are allowing some public
3 comment but not on any of your proposals, and
4 prepare final plans to submit to the full House
5 and Senate before the Legislature convenes.

6 The Legislature could then bring the maps
7 to the floor as a first order of business,
8 voting on them by the end of session's first
9 week, January the 13th. This would perhaps
10 allow potential candidates to plan a little
11 better and so forth.

12 Additionally, I think that you should
13 perhaps utilize the staff that this committee
14 has, if you as individual Representatives and
15 State Senators don't want to do it, utilize
16 your staff and have them go in and prepare some
17 possible redistricting maps.

18 You shouldn't depend on the public to do
19 your job. You should do it and we should have
20 that done as soon as possible and put on your
21 websites these potential redistricting plans.

22 Then we could, we, the public, those of
23 us, the 63 percent that wanted redistricting
24 could then comment on those potential
25 possibilities.

1 I know we can comment and you put on the
2 website what private institutions and private
3 individuals have put forth, but I believe that
4 is insufficient. I believe that you are
5 dodging your job. We need to move along with
6 it.

7 Without maps to comment on, the public
8 does not have a real opportunity for meaningful
9 comment on real maps. I know you have promised
10 that you will have a two or three day comment
11 period before any votes are taken on any
12 proposal, but honestly, how can citizens
13 hundreds of miles from Tallahassee review,
14 analyze and comment on complicated statewide
15 maps in two or three days.

16 So I encourage you to do this as soon as
17 possible and to make it available to the
18 general public as soon as possible and
19 certainly probably we should all enlist the aid
20 of the media in this to publicize the maps and
21 so forth.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Could I ask you to wrap
23 up, Ms. Tasker, because we have a lot of
24 people?

25 MS. TASKER: Yes, in fact, I am done, but

1 I do want to remind you that we, all of us, are
2 the constituents of you, all of you, on this
3 issue. So please be responsive.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
5 Ms. Tasker. Next is Katherine Smith, Katherine
6 Smith is next and then following Ms. Smith,
7 William Joseph, and then Debra Gileco.

8 Katherine Smith, thank you for being here
9 and I are recognized. You can move that down
10 anyway you want to.

11 MS. SMITH: Yes. Thank you for being here
12 today.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Of course.

14 MS. SMITH: And listening to our ideas and
15 concerns, and I will be very brief. As a
16 citizen I am very interested in this process
17 because I want to make sure that I am fairly
18 represented for the next decade at both the
19 State and Federal levels.

20 I have a few concerns I want to raise
21 today. I don't think I mentioned, I am from
22 Canaveral Groves here in Brevard County.

23 First of all, I dislike gerrymandering as
24 much as anyone, but as I was reading Amendments
25 5 and 6 which are now in the State

1 Constitution, I was becoming confused as to how
2 they are going to be carried out when key words
3 in the Amendments are not defined.

4 For example, what does the phrase,
5 existing political boundaries mean? Are those
6 boundaries the current legislative and
7 Congressional seats? If Amendments 5 and 6
8 were meant to end gerrymandering, then how can
9 we use existing seats as political boundaries?

10 Are existing boundaries city boundaries?
11 Has anyone looked at how city boundaries look
12 lately? Melbourne, for example, is all over
13 the place. Which brings me to another
14 question.

15 What does it mean for a district it be
16 drawn in a compact manner? Is there one
17 standard scientific definition for compactness?
18 Sometimes districts may be more compact if they
19 are in one county and other times they may be
20 more compact if they are drawn to include
21 portions of several counties.

22 Won't this lack of definition potentially
23 lead to lawsuits over how new maps are drawn?
24 I think it could. I only raise these questions
25 because I want to make sure my family and I are

1 fairly represented when new maps are drawn.

2 I think you have a very difficult task
3 ahead of you that will be confusing and
4 difficult to accomplish. Thank you again for
5 your time.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
7 Ms. Smith, and now William Joseph is next and
8 then following Mr. Joseph, Debra Gileco, please
9 be on deck, and then Maureen, I think it is
10 Rupe.

11 Mr. Joseph, thank you for coming and you
12 are recognized, sir.

13 MR. JOSEPH: I have lived in Brevard
14 County with my wife and family for 40 years,
15 and I have seen our Legislatures get
16 progressively worse, and all I want to say
17 today is, you have gotten the message, fair
18 districts, present them to us, we will give you
19 our input. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 Mr. Joseph. Debra Gileco is next and then will
22 Maureen Rupe please be on deck, followed by
23 Frank Montelione.

24 Ms. Gileco, thank you for coming? Is it
25 Gileco?

1 MS. GILECO: Yes, it is Gileco.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you.

3 MS. GILECO: I would just like to speak to
4 you this morning on a subject that is very near
5 and dear to my ear, and yes, I said ear.

6 During the last election cycle I
7 personally spent time on the telephone. I
8 spoke with over 2,500 people in regards to the
9 Fair District Amendments.

10 So needless to say after the election was
11 over with and the Amendments were passed, I
12 felt like maybe I had done some good. I am
13 sitting here now wondering, why did I do that?
14 We are not being listened to.

15 But you know what, I am really not
16 discouraged. I am a very tenacious woman, so
17 when it is time for the next election cycle to
18 roll around, I am going to make 5,000 calls and
19 I am going to talk to people about this process
20 and what we are doing right now, about the time
21 that is being wasted, the money that is being
22 wasted.

23 All I am asking for you to do is what the
24 voters voted for. I just, I do not understand
25 this process. I was at the event yesterday in

1 Orlando, and the common theme from all of the
2 people here in the audience is the same, and I
3 know that you have to be getting a little tired
4 of hearing the same thing over and over and
5 over again.

6 So please, listen to what we want. Make
7 fair districts. That is all we are asking.
8 Thank you very much.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank your, Ms. Greek co,
10 thanks for your public service in getting
11 people out to vote.

12 Maureen Rupe and then Frank Montelione,
13 and then Kathleen, I believe it is Dove. Is it
14 Rupe, ma'am?

15 MS. RUPE: Yes.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you for coming.

17 MS. RUPE: Maureen Rupe. I live in Port
18 St. John. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.
19 I am not unfamiliar with redistricting. I was
20 on the county redistricting ten years ago and I
21 am currently on the -- for this year's
22 redistricting, but some of your process has me
23 really concerned.

24 For start, I don't like meetings at 10:00
25 a.m. when most of the work is disenfranchised

1 from it, but I believe your use of the
2 software, I don't know how it can be feasibly
3 used.

4 What if you have thousands or even
5 millions of suggestions and maps? Do you have
6 the resources to be considerate of every one
7 that submits?

8 In addition, the software was developed
9 for the people to submit their proposals. What
10 about the people that cannot afford computers
11 or do not understand using computers? I
12 believe the redistricting timeline is
13 unrealistic.

14 The last public meeting is on
15 September the 1st, 2011 in Hendry County. The
16 final districts don't have to be in place until
17 June 2012. Once you past the final map in
18 March, the map requires court preclearance and
19 a Department of Justice review.

20 If the final maps are not ready until
21 June, how can anyone really campaign if you
22 don't know what district you have to campaign
23 in?

24 Why when we are in dire straits
25 financially, and more importantly, the people

1 have given you directions loud and clear at the
2 ballot box, are you spending tax dollars to
3 overturn the vote of the people and spend
4 unnecessary money on this paid tour of the
5 state, especially when the majority of people
6 are telling you at these meetings to do your
7 job and show us the maps.

8 I am looking for a reconfiguration of
9 District 29. District 29 is a poster child to
10 gerrymandering. It stretches from Mims in
11 north Brevard to St. Lucie County. I was
12 surprised there weren't a bit of Key West in
13 it, it was so silly.

14 It is a -- it is a vertical misshape in
15 configuration that served to give a seat to
16 Representative Tom Feeney and everybody knows
17 that.

18 This district is an example of why the
19 people brought Amendment 5 and 6 to the ballot.
20 I am asking you to follow the law, put aside
21 your personal interests and do what is best for
22 Florida. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Rupe.
24 Mr. Montelione, we have to impose a little
25 tighter time frame.

1 MR. MONTELIONE: Sure.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: We have had a number of
3 additional people. So now, just in respect to
4 the people behind you, we are going to have to
5 ask that comments verbally be limited to two
6 minutes, but if you have additional comments
7 that you want to present in writing, we will
8 take all of them and make all of them available
9 publically.

10 So with that said, Mr. Montelione, you are
11 recognized for two minutes.

12 MR. MONTELIONE: I would like first to say
13 thank you to the Representatives, the Senators,
14 Mr. President, Mr. Chairman, thank you for
15 being here in Brevard and for doing a good job
16 that you are doing.

17 I keep hearing words like 63 percent,
18 words like input and feedback, and I don't, I
19 was not one of the 63 percent, because my
20 belief is that if the Constitutional Amendment
21 is so confusing that you don't know what it
22 actually says, then don't vote for it, and
23 there was so many things in that Amendment that
24 were not defined that, you know, to me it was
25 not worth voting for.

1 As far as maps go, I was -- I was up as a
2 volunteer to help draw those maps the last time
3 and it was more confusing then than it is now.
4 At least you are looking for input, not
5 feedback, but input, in order to draw these
6 maps.

7 The last time it was only the
8 Representatives and the Senators that were
9 drawing the maps. If you happen to be in
10 Tallahassee you can give your input, but at
11 that time it was only, it was input and you
12 went and drew the maps and drew the lines.

13 As far as District 29, let me defend
14 District 29 a little bit. The only things that
15 lived in District 29 ten years ago were cows
16 and pigs. There were a few places like
17 Titusville and down in the south that did, but
18 most of the people who lived in District 29
19 were agriculturally based and that is why that
20 district was drawn the way it was, to keep that
21 group together.

22 I would like to see a map drawn for our
23 county, for Brevard County, north, south,
24 central and the beaches, because we all have
25 different and separate interests and I think it

1 would work out best that way and I would like
2 to thank both the Republicans and the Democrat
3 Representatives and Senators that are here
4 today. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, sir. Next we
6 will hear from Karen Dove and then Ann Ford,
7 and then Steven Lindsley, and then Spence
8 Guerin, and we would ask you to hold to two
9 minutes if you can. Submit your written
10 comments, we will certainly take them into
11 account. You are recognized.

12 MS. DOVE: Okay, I just wanted to say, my
13 name is Karen Dove and I am from Palm Bay and I
14 did want to thank you all for holding these
15 forums before deciding on the lines on the maps
16 in accordance with the redistricting because of
17 the census.

18 But I have to say, I kind of, everybody
19 says that politics is local and I just couldn't
20 help but thinking, I kept going back to, oh, I
21 am watching the whole debate thing, where is
22 Obama's plan, why do you already have one and
23 it is the same thing, you complain when you
24 have one, you complain when you don't.

25 I don't think you are ever going to make

1 everybody happy here. So I do appreciate you
2 allowing us to have our input and I certainly
3 agree with, it is best if we have areas of
4 people that have common interests and I do
5 think that the north, central, south and beach
6 is a good idea.

7 I know that sometimes that is probably not
8 practical, but I do think that that would be
9 the best thing for Brevard. I have kind of
10 tossed around back and forth whether I liked
11 the idea that it was split between, you know,
12 two people, but I am like, well, then you have
13 two people, you know, working for you, so,
14 maybe one is better. I don't know, but then
15 again, you are the guys that were paid to do it
16 and I am sure you are getting big, big bucks,
17 right?

18 I have lived here for 25 years and I know
19 that Brevard is a large county and I certainly
20 believe it would be nice if we only had one
21 Representative, as I said, but I am sure that
22 two somehow gives us a little bit more clout if
23 one doesn't think the way I do, maybe I can get
24 one of them to at least listen to me.

25 We are unique with our space capabilities

1 and I think that that is imperative that we
2 have as many people working to that as
3 possible.

4 Tourism, of course, is the life blood of
5 Florida, being we don't have an income tax, and
6 I would clearly like to keep it that way.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And Ms. Dove, could I ask
8 you to summarize very quickly, please?

9 MS. DOVE: And so I just want to say,
10 thanks for doing this and I am sure you are
11 going to do a good job and I am going to keep
12 my eye on-line and I appreciate what you are
13 doing.

14 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
15 ma'am, for your testimony. Next is Ann Ford
16 and following Ms. Ford, Steven Lindsley and
17 then Spence Guerin.

18 Ms. Ford, thank you for being here. You
19 are recognized.

20 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: Good morning, I am
21 Ann Ford. I live in Port St. John. I have
22 been a Brevard County resident for over 30
23 years.

24 First of all, I would really like to thank
25 you all for making the time to gather citizen

1 input before you begin redrawing the district
2 lines.

3 District 29 where I live is probably one
4 of the most distorted districts in the state of
5 Florida. It really needs work, it is over 80
6 miles long, some places it is about a mile
7 wide.

8 If we were still rural, that might make
9 sense, but we have some high concentrations of
10 populations. So I would like to see a district
11 that is smaller and more compact.

12 I welcome the opportunity to play on-line
13 and I do have the map that I may consider
14 submitting that.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Please do submit it.

16 MS. FORD: I would like to talk about
17 Amendments 5 and 6. I was very glad that they
18 were passed. I believe that they are going to
19 give you some additional guidance in the task
20 before you, but I have some concerns about
21 them.

22 Some of the key language I don't think has
23 been defined clearly, words like compact, words
24 like existing political boundaries, existing
25 geographical boundaries.

1 In other words, like practicable,
2 feasible. Have these words been defined in
3 this application? If they have, how so, and by
4 who?

5 One final comment on the Amendments. If I
6 understand it right, a district will not have
7 to be compact if it is in direct conflict with
8 the Voting Rights Act. So will some districts
9 be compact, other districts won't?

10 Again, the concerns that I have, while I
11 think the intentions are good, is there is some
12 vagueness, there is some exemptions and
13 loopholes that I think may prevent the best
14 possible outcome for District 29.

15 Clearly you have a very challenging task
16 before you that I don't envy, but I am here
17 simply today to ask you to do your very best
18 for District 29 and all of Florida. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
20 ma'am. We appreciate it. Steve Lindsley is
21 our next speaker and following Steve, Spence
22 Guerin and then if Juanita Baker will be
23 prepared to come forward.

24 Mr. Lindsley, thank you for taking your
25 time today. We look forward to your testimony.

1 MR. LINDSLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I
2 appreciate all of your time and it is nice to
3 see so many Legislators out here. I know it is
4 a thankless job. You don't get paid near
5 enough as far as I am concerned, but thanks for
6 taking the time to receive our input.

7 I think this is the right way to go,
8 taking our input before you get to the maps. I
9 did try the tool and I did find it difficult to
10 use, but I am reinspired, I will try it again
11 and I am glad to have the opportunity to have
12 that input.

13 I would agree with those of us around that
14 have said that we need to have compact
15 districts. What we have now are these three
16 headed monsters and I don't think we need to
17 have those. They need to be compact. I don't
18 think they need to be necessarily drawn
19 arbitrary based on the attitude and longitude,
20 but they need to be compact and they should not
21 take any sort of, you know, demographic into
22 account.

23 You shouldn't group them based on
24 minorities. You should just, you know, base
25 them on community. Let's see, sorry, I didn't

1 have prepared remarks but I heard -- anyway, I
2 think compact is the key. Compact is much
3 better than being driven off of any kind of
4 demographic. I am an unapologetic
5 conservative.

6 I don't have anything to worry about as
7 far as having a compact district. Conservatism
8 is a winning argument. I think we can, we
9 don't have to be afraid of having three headed
10 -- we don't need three headed monsters to be
11 able to win the argument, and I am ready for
12 compactness. Thanks.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
14 Sir, we appreciate your testimony. Spence
15 Guerin is next, and then Juanita Baker, if you
16 will be on deck, followed by Jim Tulley. Did I
17 get that right, Mr. Guerin?

18 MR. GUERIN: My name is Spence Guerin. It
19 is nice to have citizen input. Who can argue
20 with that? I have heard a lot about
21 transparency. I kind of question this
22 transparency.

23 I saw the hearings at The Village. No
24 Legislator at those hearings, despite the
25 questions from the audience, no Legislator,

1 including yourself, Senator Gaetz, was
2 forthcoming about the amount of money the
3 Legislature has spent and continues to spend, I
4 presume, on the lawsuit having to do with
5 Amendment 6.

6 According to the St. Petersburg Times, the
7 Legislature has spent about half of the
8 \$700,000 already spent on redistricting, about
9 half of that has been spent on Amendment 6
10 lawsuit, according to the St. Peter Times, who
11 got that information from a spokesman for the
12 Florida House of Representatives.

13 I heard people ask Senator Hays if he had
14 voted for it, and with clever answers that
15 actually were not transparent, they are were
16 avoiding answering the question which the
17 people wanted to know, are you spending money
18 on fighting this lawsuit, and actually, on
19 fighting this Amendment 6, and actually the
20 answer is yes, you have spent half of \$700,000
21 on that lawsuit, and no Legislator at that
22 hearing had the whatever it takes to stand up
23 and say simply, I am sorry to say, yes, we
24 have.

25 And yourself, too, Senator Gaetz, didn't

1 admit that, and I think that just contributes
2 to continued citizen distrust in our
3 Legislature.

4 If you had maps here for us to review,
5 like are being produced by citizens, then we
6 would be able to comment on them and that is a
7 really, it needs to be done.

8 To have citizen input is great, but we
9 need the maps to comment on bottom line. Thank
10 you.

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Guerin,
12 and again, if we, if we have time after
13 everyone has had a chance to speak, albeit
14 briefly, we will try to get back to some of the
15 questions that have been raised, factual
16 questions.

17 Ms. Baker, Juanita Baker is next, followed
18 by Jim Tulley, followed by Elizabeth Nall.
19 Ms. Baker, you are recognized.

20 MS. BAKER: Yes. I am Juanita Baker from
21 Indian River County. It is a distance up here,
22 but my Representatives live even further up
23 north.

24 Sorry, I have to put on my glasses. The
25 eyes of the nation are really upon Florida.

1 This is a historic opportunity to shine, to
2 raise Florida as an example to others to strive
3 to live up to the ideals of our country
4 liberty, justice, equality for all.

5 The people of Florida have spoken, not
6 just Democrats, not just Republicans, but
7 everyone. The great majority of people want a
8 fair system to be devised so that everyone's
9 vote counts.

10 I am afraid that I want that, too. I want
11 there to be a chance that the district in which
12 I vote will be someone who will represent my
13 interests. I need to be able to be nearer my
14 Representative to be able to talk to them.

15 You do have a very difficult job ahead.
16 And thus, it is a danger of being accused of
17 being unfair, which may cost dearly in the
18 future elections.

19 You will gain much admiration if instead
20 you can raise, rise above the party and devise
21 a map that is rationale, logical and based on
22 areas where everyone is fairly represented.

23 Now, you may, your map and website really
24 demonstrates the tedious, the difficult of this
25 task. It is really overwhelming for anyone,

1 and I am very computer literate and it is very
2 frustrating to work with that map.

3 You also, you all have that are involved
4 really have a choice to strive for your best,
5 your highest ideals, or resort to being
6 pressured again.

7 I appreciate this kind of input, but, you
8 know, there is a better way, there is a better
9 way to make this process to draw lines that are
10 fair for everyone.

11 California has a process of having a
12 committee. I don't believe that. I think you
13 need experts. We base our decisions on science
14 these days. We want to do the best by what is
15 logical and rational.

16 Well, the political science students took
17 six weeks. I would imagine that it would be
18 best to have you take \$500,000, I am sure you
19 could get many scientists willing to spend
20 three months to make a good map that is
21 demographically representative of people.

22 We have a wonderful state here with many
23 diverse people. We need to have each of those
24 groups representatives so that they have a fair
25 chance that their vote really counts. You can

1 have this committee of scientists, social
2 scientists know the population. We have
3 population scientists, we have geographers --

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Ma'am.

5 MR. BAKER: We could get together and have
6 a great group of experts that are nonpartisan
7 to make this map drawing process. Then you can
8 have the input from every citizen, too, both
9 processes you need citizen input. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
11 ma'am. We appreciate your testimony. Jim
12 Tulley and Elizabeth Nall, and I don't mean in
13 any way to be overly firm, but I am going to
14 have to interrupt you when you hit two minutes,
15 because we have a bunch of people who still
16 want their voices heard. Mr. Tulley, you are
17 recognized.

18 MR. TULLEY: Good afternoon, my name is
19 Jim Tulley. I am the Mayor of Titusville, but
20 I am not here speaking for that constituency, I
21 am here for myself.

22 I find gerrymandering completely
23 offensive. I am an unabashed Conservative but
24 I want to see people elected on the strength of
25 their ideas, not because lines are drawn in a

1 particular way.

2 You just have to look around the room and
3 see what we have right now. I want to see our
4 elected leaders elected on the strength of
5 their ideas, on their ability to lead and build
6 consensus and certainly most important on the
7 content of their character.

8 I have been playing around with My
9 District Builder for a couple of weeks now and
10 I have learned three things.

11 Number one, you don't have an easy task.
12 Number two, compact districts can be built, I
13 have done it. And number three, on this notion
14 that either a county or a city ought to be in
15 the same district, there is two sides to that
16 argument.

17 If you put a city or a county all in one
18 district, that district only gets one vote. If
19 you divide it up into multiple districts, then
20 it may get more than one vote, but those votes
21 are diluted by the other interests that are
22 incorporated into those numerous districts.

23 Either way you do it is going to be viewed
24 as unfair by somebody. So the bottom line,
25 wherever you draw lines you are going to be

1 criticized.

2 And so I what would propose to you is that
3 you inject a certain amount of scientific
4 randomness into the process. Seriously, that
5 you draw compact contiguous districts that are
6 somewhat random and don't force you to make
7 decisions that result in things like this or
8 have resulted in things like this in the past.

9 You are at a historic moment in time. Our
10 democracy has been the life of the world for
11 200 years. It started out imperfectly and we
12 have made gradual steps to better it.

13 You are at a rare moment in time where you
14 can make another historic step. You can help
15 us get past this notion that race, ethnicity,
16 religion, national origin are important for
17 voting districts. They are not, we have got to
18 get past that, otherwise, why don't we build,
19 why don't we build districts based on gender or
20 age.

21 It is all ridiculous. Inject some
22 randomness into it. Stephen Covey says we
23 should begin with the end in mind. Well, the
24 end is easy.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And the end has been

1 arrived at. Thank you for very much,
2 Mr. Mayor.

3 MR. TULLEY: Okay, thank you, do the right
4 thing.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Elizabeth Nall is
6 recognized next, and following Ms. Nall,
7 Richard Smith, and after Mr. Smith, Judy
8 Strahan.

9 Ms. Nall, thank you for coming today and
10 you are recognized.

11 MS. NALL: Hello. I am a public school
12 teacher and the reason I mention that is
13 because this is the last meeting I will be able
14 to attend.

15 I think you should think, take into
16 consideration proposals to have these in the
17 evening if you can so that more people could
18 attend them.

19 On the onset, this looks beautiful. You
20 know, an open air forum, but I think really it
21 is disingenuous because you don't have the
22 maps.

23 Basically when you get the maps, then is
24 when we are going to have the most important
25 input. We need to have the maps. Once you get

1 the maps up there, then all of these people who
2 are here speaking could tell you what is wrong
3 with that.

4 Are you going to have all of these
5 meetings after we get the maps? I don't think
6 so, because I don't think your calendar allows
7 for it.

8 We need the maps now and we need to get
9 rid of this ridiculous lawsuit and those of you
10 who are involved in the lawsuit should come
11 forward and tell us who you are. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Nall. And
13 Richard Smith, with the Brevard Federation of
14 Teachers, then Judith Strahan and then Milly
15 Krause.

16 Mr. Smith, thank you for coming today.

17 MR. SMITH: Hi, guys. Time means
18 everything. I have an Aunt Jean who is pretty
19 much a cleaning freak. I was having breakfast
20 one time at her house, I had a bite or two
21 eggs, dropped my napkin, this literally
22 happened, I bent over to get the napkin, she
23 already had my plate scraped and she was
24 washing it in the sink. I didn't get a fair
25 shot at that breakfast.

1 I can't read into your hearts what you are
2 as people. That is not for me to do and I
3 can't do it. I am not going to try to do it.
4 So motivation is not something I want to
5 ascribe to you. However, actions are something
6 I can see.

7 I teach physics, I understand about data
8 and behaviors, and I understand that there is
9 difficulties with the precincts. I understand
10 that and I understand that some time in early
11 November this could be done.

12 It will be obvious to all of us citizens
13 that if these maps are drawn early November,
14 and then acted on in January, so the maximum
15 amount of time can be provided to people to run
16 for these districts, then you will have done
17 your job.

18 I am thinking about that young man that
19 stood up here and talked about the sacrifice of
20 people who fought for freedom. I hope you will
21 think about that, too. Timing is everything.
22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
24 Mr. Smith. Excellent points. Judith Strahan
25 is next, and then Milly Krause.

1 Ms. Strahan, are you still here, ma'am?

2 All right, we will pass her.

3 Milly Krause, Ms. Krause, thank you for
4 coming today, and then Earnestine Aaron and
5 then after Ms. Aaron, Kathleen Jaskolski,
6 Jaskolski, I believe.

7 Ms. Krause, thank you. You are
8 recognized.

9 MS. KRAUSE: Yes, good morning. I am from
10 Cocoa Beach, and I just want to be brief. I
11 wanted to mention, when I was in high school,
12 this is something 40 years ago, I remember
13 discussing gerrymandering and for some reason
14 up until, you know, maybe 20 years ago I was
15 thinking it was illegal, and I am just amazed
16 at this time and place in history that we still
17 have gerrymandering.

18 And I would like to say maybe it is not
19 illegal as far as the law, but it should be
20 illegal ethically and we should really be
21 working to preserve our democracy and we are
22 not when we continue such practices.

23 I know among my friends we have talked, we
24 are really concerned about our democracy. We
25 don't feel like we are being represented.

1 There is many things that have happened, but
2 that is not the purpose of what I am here for
3 right now.

4 The other thing is I wanted to say that I
5 really do believe in geographically compact
6 districts, and I don't see any question with
7 that, compact means compact.

8 It is altogether, and I have a friend who
9 lives in Cocoa Beach, four streets from me.
10 She is not in my District 30. I have a friend
11 in Palm Beach who is in my district. A friend
12 in Melbourne who is not. That is not
13 geographically compact and that does not bring
14 people together.

15 And then my final point I wanted to
16 mention was about the ability to do and create
17 fair districts. We have laws and some of those
18 laws are helpful and some of them do appear to
19 hamper us and I wanted to reiterate not on the
20 same tune exactly, but with the Mayor of
21 Titusville said.

22 There are some, you know, we are not doing
23 it on age. We are not doing it on this and
24 that, but we do have some discriminatory
25 problems, and I would like to try to look at

1 those road blocks and see how we can look at
2 those road blocks and still create fair
3 districts. Thank you very much for your time.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Krause.
5 Now, Earnestine Aaron, Ms. Aaron? We will pass
6 Ms. Aaron. In that case, Kathleen Jaskolski.
7 She left.

8 All right, Valerie Brant-Wilson with Alpha
9 Kappa Alpha. Is that you, ma'am? Okay, we
10 look forward to your testimony in a moment.

11 Mary Greene, if you will be on deck,
12 please, and then Ken Greene, if you will be
13 prepared after Mary Greene.

14 Ms. Brant-Wilson, thanks for coming today.
15 You are recognized.

16 MS. BRANT-WILSON: Good afternoon. I want
17 to thank all of you for being here and I also
18 want to thank Florida Channel because with
19 Florida Channel I was able to actually hear a
20 lot of the public hearings and the same things
21 are being generated.

22 My questions are, and first, Alpha Kappa
23 Alpha does not, is a nonpartisan organization
24 which means that we only look at policies. We
25 did not push one way or another, which your

1 lines should be drawn.

2 However, as a private citizen, I vote in
3 Brevard County. I also would like to think
4 about not just you, the people, the will of the
5 people who are saying that they want it to be
6 common with agriculture, common with the Space
7 Coast, common with whatever geographical, the
8 beach area.

9 We as African-Americans, me personally, I
10 want representation that looks like me as well
11 up there, and I do, I am a little nervous.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are doing fine.

13 MS. BRANT-WILSON: But I do want the young
14 gentleman who stated about economics, here in
15 the Space Coast we know that our jobs are
16 diminishing. So therefore, we want
17 representation who is going to actually push
18 for economics and that is going to generate.

19 We also know that this is a tourist area.
20 We want that as well, and I work in Indian
21 River County, which means that I commute. So
22 therefore I have the pulse of both communities,
23 and I am like some of the Representatives here
24 who have to travel and have to listen to
25 everybody, but some of my concerns are, well,

1 when you get back to Tallahassee --

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Ma'am, could we ask you
3 to bring it in for a landing because we have a
4 lot of people behind you?

5 MS. BRANT-WILSON: My concerns are, I have
6 two questions. When you start your timeline,
7 when you open up in January, will the public
8 still have input to help formalize the lines
9 that are going to be drawn?

10 Two, at what point are you going to cut
11 off public input so that you can do your job so
12 that we can quickly get it done?

13 And then thirdly, I would like to see that
14 we as the public get a chance to review what
15 you have.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am, very,
17 very much. Next is Mary Greene and then
18 following Mary Greene, Ken Greene, and
19 following Mr. Greene, Bob, I think it is Wille,
20 Bob Will or Wille.

21 Ms. Greene, thank you all for being here.

22 MS. GREENE: Thank you all for being here,
23 my name is Mary Greene, I am a resident of Palm
24 Bay. I have lived here in Florida for about 22
25 years.

1 I have some concerns like many other
2 people have already mentioned about this whole
3 process. I have gone on-line to try and look
4 at the maps and to try and work with them. I
5 am not a computer geek, so it was not an easy
6 process at all for the average citizen to be
7 able to come up with a map to present to you.

8 My also -- one of my other concerns is the
9 fact that that is your job, not mine. I am not
10 getting paid for that. I happen to be
11 disabled. I volunteer a lot throughout my
12 community.

13 I expect you to do the job that you are
14 getting paid to do and so far I haven't seen
15 that happen. I have been following this
16 process on-line and in the newspaper as you
17 have traveled throughout the state. By now I
18 would think you have probably been presented
19 with some maps that citizens and organizations
20 have given you, that you probably could have
21 had some suggestions up here already from
22 people who have already come up with these
23 maps, but they are not here.

24 So we have been presented with nothing.

25 This is your job, not our job as citizens and I

1 resent that you are throwing it back into our
2 laps and expecting us to do the job you are
3 being paid for. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
5 Ms. Greene. And Ken Greene is next. Ken, we
6 just heard from your boss.

7 MR. GREENE: You know it. Do you want to
8 argue with her?

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: No, sir, boss.

10 MR. GREENE: I haven't won a battle yet, I
11 have been married 30 years. I am still waiting
12 for my first victory.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, so have I and I
14 have learned it is better to be happy than
15 right.

16 MR. GREENE: I will remember that there.

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are recognized, sir.

18 MR. GREENE: Okay, thank you.

19 Representatives, thank you for taking your
20 time, I know you all have busy schedules. I am
21 here as Ken Greene, not as an elected official
22 from the City of Palm Bay. So what I am
23 expressing now is my personal views.

24 I was at a meeting where there were some
25 elected officials from Tallahassee and they

1 made a general statement, and I generally give
2 people the benefit of the doubt until you prove
3 otherwise.

4 When this person got up and spoke, he, I
5 will name the agenda, and I will stop right
6 there, made a comment that the Democratic party
7 has \$43 million in their till to fight this
8 issue.

9 I was giving him the benefit of the doubt
10 until he opened that statement or made that
11 statement. In my mind, you are, your job is,
12 and I know a smaller portion of it, is to
13 gather the facts, make an informed decision and
14 represent the people of your district.

15 Anything else is above and beyond. And in
16 my mind, when I hear an elected official who is
17 going to be making a decision on it and tells
18 me information I don't even know about, nor did
19 I really want to know about, but when you fight
20 the system with our own money on the tax
21 dollars and you have a bottomless pit, because
22 it is our tax dollars, I have a problem with
23 that.

24 I know the job is difficult. I know you
25 make 51 percent of the people happy and

1 49 percent you make unhappy, but you have been
2 given a mandate of 63 percent of the people
3 which tells me the writing is on the wall.

4 One individual just said it before, you
5 have the opportunity to go down in history in
6 the state of Florida as doing it right, and I
7 implore you as a citizen, please do it right.
8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much. Bob
10 Wille, or Wille is next and then Carolyn, I
11 think it is Norton, 1365 west Island Club, and
12 then John, and I apologize, it is my eyes,
13 John, not your writing, okay, you know who you
14 are.

15 Bob, you are recognized, thanks for coming
16 today.

17 MR. WILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I
18 would like to introduce myself as Bob Wille, I
19 am a resident of Titusville. Tom Goodson is my
20 Representative, Thad Altman is my Senator.

21 I have been a resident here in Brevard
22 County for 30 years. I live in Titusville but
23 I commute to Melbourne. I was an elected
24 official in the south part of the county, so I
25 feel a sense of being a resident of all of

1 Brevard County and over these past 30 years,
2 and I got the sense that these meetings were
3 for the purpose of you to glean information
4 from us so that you could do your job and
5 create these maps and that is what I am here
6 and prepared to do.

7 I don't take lightly your investment and
8 your time and energy to come from all parts of
9 the state and very busy schedules to come here
10 and I appreciate it. So I will leave it at
11 that.

12 I start, you know, with communities of
13 interest. Being in Representative Goodson's
14 District 29, it has been referred to a number
15 of times here today, and so from that
16 standpoint I am going to reference what I
17 believe is, at least in Titusville where I
18 reside, there is probably more of a community
19 of interest to the west than to the south. So,
20 you know, I will preface my comments from that.

21 Economic, transportation, educational and
22 social connections, we have state routes from
23 Brevard County of 46, 50, 192, as well as the
24 beach line that connect us east, west. We have
25 synergies between Port Canaveral, Orlando

1 International Airport, and the Space Center.

2 We have a new medical city in Lake Nona
3 that is closer to Titusville than where I
4 commute to work in Melbourne. So I offer that
5 as testimony in this discussion in drawing your
6 lines.

7 We have a close association with the
8 University of Central Florida and our Brevard
9 Community College here. Brevard's beaches --

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And, Bob, I am going to
11 have ask you to summarize if you can because of
12 the large number of people behind you.

13 MR. WILLE: And I appreciate that and I
14 will. So having made those comments I just
15 would like to identify that we have more of an
16 interest to the west and I would like you to
17 consider that when drawing those lines, okay.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
19 Mr. Wille, I appreciate your testimony.
20 Carolyn, is it Norton?

21 MS. NORTON: Yes, it is.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And following Ms. Norton,
23 John, you are going to have to help me with
24 your name when you get up here, and a second,
25 John Schantzen, please be on deck. Ms. Norton,

1 thanks for coming.

2 MS. NORTON: Good afternoon, I live in
3 Vero Beach and Indian River County, and I met
4 with a number of people today to car pool and
5 we met in front of Nike, and in the words of
6 Nike, we are asking you to please do the right
7 thing.

8 I am a transplant and I have been here
9 about 11 years. I am proud to be an American
10 and I am proud to live in a democracy.

11 Unfortunately, in the time that I have
12 lived here I have seen the people running this
13 state do some things that at times have been
14 ridiculous, incompetent and unfortunately,
15 unethical.

16 My friends back up north sometimes send me
17 e-mails and say, Carolyn, please come back, you
18 have got to get out of there. I want to be --

19 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Don't leave, Carolyn, we
20 want you to stay.

21 MS. NORTON: I don't want to leave.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: It will get better.

23 MS. NORTON: I love it here and I am
24 asking you to follow the will of the people,
25 they voted overwhelmingly in support of these

1 Amendments, make me proud to be a Floridian, do
2 the right thing.

3 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you so much for
4 your testimony. John, I apologize, how do I
5 pronounce your last time?

6 MR. TITKANICH: Titkanich, everybody
7 butchers it.

8 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Titkanich, I should have
9 known that.

10 MR. TITKANICH: I forget it on days.

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Now, thank you so much
12 for being here, you are recognized.

13 MR. TITKANICH: Well, actually, we would
14 like to thank you for coming here to Brevard
15 County to listen to us. I commend you for
16 taking that opportunity to solicit public input
17 prior to letting the computer technocrats and
18 the GIS technicians go behind the closed doors
19 and start drawing the lines.

20 You certainly have a heavy responsibility
21 to ensure fair representation and I don't think
22 I or anybody really should be commenting or
23 condemning your efforts until the results of
24 those maps are out, you know.

25 I mean, you have a process set up. It is

1 providing public input, that is foundational to
2 local government, get public input first and
3 then put policy out or put, you know, what you
4 are proposing out. So I think you are doing
5 the right thing.

6 With that being said I would like -- I
7 would hope that you would recognize that the
8 population shift to central Florida and
9 certainly hope you strive to ensure fair and
10 equitable representation for our region.

11 You know, take into account the
12 communities and the uniqueness that our
13 community, Brevard County. I echo what
14 Rockledge said in terms of, you know, I like
15 the idea, Senator, three districts or three
16 Representatives, or Mayor Goode, the more the
17 better. I mean, we are being, you know, it
18 gives us better representation.

19 Finally, just exercise that same faith,
20 the extraordinary faith that our founders did
21 when they set up this form of government and
22 they put this system of democracy that we have
23 in place.

24 I have faith in you, I know, I work for
25 the City of Cocoa, we are looking forward to

1 what you have to do. We enjoy working with you
2 and we again appreciate your time to come here
3 and listen to the people first. Thank you so
4 much.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, sir. We
6 appreciate your testimony. John Schantzen is
7 next and then Slullz, I think it is Phupps and
8 then Jerel Banks, please be on deck.

9 Mr. Schantzen, did I pronounce your name
10 right, sir?

11 MR. SCHANTZEN: Yes, you did. Thank you,
12 Senator.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are recognized.

14 MR. SCHANTZEN: Okay, thank you. I
15 appreciate you being here. I am a voter in the
16 districts represented by Senator Haridopolos
17 and Senator Crisafuli, and I dare Senator
18 Crisafuli to drive from one end of the district
19 to the other without crossing another district.

20 He can't, because he can't go through the
21 Space Center to get there. If he could go all
22 the way up and then back down then he could
23 probably get to his Orlando and Orange County
24 district.

25 Similarly, with my Congressional District,

1 they gerrymandered my Congressional District so
2 that Tom Feeney could have a seat in Congress.
3 That is wrong.

4 You are all sworn to uphold the
5 Constitution of the State of Florida. I trust
6 you have the same feeling about the
7 Constitution of the United States.

8 Remember your religious roots when you
9 take that oath and do what is right and not go
10 in there with an R or a D in front of your
11 name, but go in there blindly, representing the
12 people who elected you, representing the
13 63 percent of the population that changed our
14 Constitution, the one you are sworn to uphold,
15 and let's do it in a manner that is expeditious
16 so that anybody who seeks to run for office
17 which our democracy encourages has the
18 opportunity to know where they are running.

19 Let's not wait until the last week of the
20 Legislature like we do with the budget and so
21 nobody knows what is happening. Let's get it
22 out, get it done early so that people when they
23 have to qualify, are knowing what they are
24 qualifying in, okay. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

1 Shirley, I think it is Shirley Plupps, did I
2 get that right, ma'am?

3 MS. PLUPPS: You sure did.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And following Ms. Plupps,
5 Jerel Banks and then Renie Parsons, or Renie
6 Parsons.

7 Ms. Plupps, thank you for coming today and
8 we are anxious to hear from you.

9 MS. PLUPPS: Okay. I am representing the
10 North Brevard Republican Club and the Space
11 Coast Republican Winners Club and I would like
12 to echo the previous comments of speakers.

13 The importance of keeping districts
14 geographically together cannot be over
15 estimated. My District, number 29, again, is
16 represented by Tom Goodson, and runs from Mims,
17 south to St. Lucie County. It looks like a
18 Rorschach blot.

19 This makes representation of the varied
20 interests of diverse populations a very
21 difficult task. It is also expensive, because
22 extra district offices must be established to
23 serve the electorate.

24 So let's make an effort to draw lines that
25 will serve the contiguous population. I know

1 you have heard this many times today before,
2 but constant dripping, where is the stone?
3 This is another drip dropping on you. Thank
4 you.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you. Jerel Banks
6 and after Ms. Banks, I then it is Renie or
7 Renie Parsons and then John Schmidt.

8 Mr. Banks, thank you for being here.

9 MR. BANKS: And good morning to everyone,
10 I am a little nervous.

11 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are doing good.

12 MR. BANKS: And I am thinking about
13 running for office and I can't run for office
14 being nervous, but anyway.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You should see us.

16 MR. BANKS: But anyway, I really would
17 like to thank you for coming out and I am in
18 Senator -- who? I am in Senator Altman's
19 district, yes, and also -- huh, and also I am
20 in Representative Goodson's district, also, but
21 I would just like to say that you really need
22 to get this done so if people do decide to run
23 for office, they will have a chance to know
24 exactly who to go to, if they decide to raise
25 funds, because you may raise funds thinking it

1 is going to be one way and it is not.

2 So I would really appreciate it if you
3 hurried it along and also if you are the ones
4 that are supposed to be making the maps, make
5 the maps and then bring it to the people,
6 because, you know, then we can have a voice
7 about it. So that is all I have to say. Thank
8 you.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
10 Mr. Banks, you did very well. And then, I
11 apologize.

12 MS. PARSONS: Renie.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Renie, Renie Parsons, and
14 then John Schmitt and then, boy, I am going to
15 have a hard time with this, somebody at 160-C
16 something Trail, and I apologize to that lady
17 or gentlemen.

18 Ms. Parsons, you are recognized.

19 MS. PARSONS: Thank you so much. I will
20 try not to repeat what has already been said.
21 I am Renie Parsons from Vero Beach, Florida,
22 and I was one of 63 percent of Indian River
23 County residents who voted in support of
24 Amendments 5 and 6.

25 That is really important for you to know,

1 because Indian River County is not exactly a
2 Baskin of Democratic party or populism.
3 Sixty-three percent of Indian River County
4 support Amendments 5 and 6. So I don't feel I
5 should have to be here today supporting or
6 defending Amendments 5 and 6, but here we are.

7 The voters have already spoken and you
8 really don't need our feedback because we don't
9 have the demographic information. We don't
10 have the necessary data that it is going to
11 take to put those maps together, and we expect
12 you folks to do the job.

13 It is a big job. You have a lot of
14 responsibility because as the Washington Post
15 has said, Florida is the number one state to
16 watch with regard to redistricting, because of
17 the 2012 election, and we all know what that
18 means.

19 So the fate of the country really is in
20 your hands. I don't think that is overly
21 dramatic to say that. And it is nice to have a
22 public hearing, but it is really unnecessary,
23 because we really need you folks to move along
24 and do your job, but where are the maps?

25 Well, we know where the maps are.

1 Apparently I have read that some State
2 legislative -- Legislator was adopted to
3 withhold the maps. Well, that doesn't sound
4 very democratic to me. That doesn't sound,
5 that doesn't sound like a good basis for the
6 start of this process, so that worries me.

7 And I guess I would just like to add that
8 it is up to you to do the maps with a credible
9 job, that have credibility with them, that have
10 integrity and aren't going to be challenged.

11 I am concerned that we are taking this
12 time now when there is a very unrealistic
13 timeline for you folks in January, to put those
14 maps together. Will those maps be finalized by
15 March 15th?

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Ma'am, I apologize. Can
17 you summarize? You are over time.

18 MS. PARSONS: We would like those maps to
19 be done so that they follow the legally
20 mandated timeline and that there is not a delay
21 at the other end.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

23 MS. PARSONS: Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much for
25 your comments. John Schmitt, Mr. Schmitt? And

1 now I apologize, someone from 160 something
2 Trail, 32963. I know your phone number. Is
3 that you, anybody? I am very sorry if we
4 missed you up. Dianne, M-a-r-c-u-r, I think,
5 from Cape Canaveral, and then following Dianne,
6 Joanne Muncey, and then Libby Duncan and then
7 Tim Franta or Franta.

8 Dianne, I apologize, is it Marcur?

9 MS. MARCUM: It is Diane Marcum.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Marcum. I am sorry, it
11 is my eyes, not your writing.

12 MS. MARCUM: No, it is any writing.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are recognized.

14 MS. MARCUM: And I live in Cape Canaveral,
15 and I would just echo everything everybody said
16 and I was -- I can't say it any better than the
17 person that had the water dripping on the
18 stone.

19 We say it but it, 63 percent of the people
20 said it, you have your marching orders, for
21 whatever reason you don't seem to want to
22 follow them, or if you are going to follow
23 them, that is great, but that is what we all
24 seem to be telling you to do.

25 I personally would not want one dollar of

1 my dollar, of my money or any of our money
2 funding a lawsuit against us. That is such a
3 waste of taxpayer dollars.

4 In a session you just came out of where
5 you did away with a lot of other things that
6 didn't seem very important. So I would ask you
7 respectfully to please pull back that lawsuit,
8 because that just seems ridiculous.

9 If I were going to define success for my
10 opinion, I would look at the map and I would
11 see chunks instead of snakes. That word keeps
12 coming up and it is so obvious from everybody's
13 perspective that there is no reason to have a
14 snake unless someone is trying to get something
15 that is outside the logical drawing of the
16 maps.

17 So I wouldn't want to see any of those. I
18 think Brevard County, if I am not mistaken, our
19 population is about equal to the Congressional
20 District, and about equal to four of your
21 House, Florida House Districts, and a little
22 less than two Florida Senate Districts.

23 Excuse the cliché, but it doesn't get, it
24 isn't rocket science, we are the easiest county
25 you can deal with, I think, because of our

1 population, we have made it real easy for you.

2 I would like to see Brevard County all one
3 Congressional District for the most part
4 because I think we have all of the same common
5 interests around tourism, technology, space and
6 echo tourism and environmental issues. So that
7 would be my suggestion.

8 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, thank you very
9 much for your testimony. Joanne Muncey.

10 MS. MUNCEY: Yes, good morning, and thank
11 you for being here, and I am Joanne Muncey from
12 Cape Canaveral, Florida, and I just want to say
13 that I really believe that you are all
14 intelligent enough to take on this challenge.

15 What I am depending on is that you are
16 going to be fair and creative in keeping
17 community interests intact, and hopefully
18 having the common sense to keep neighborhoods
19 intact and not divided along a street line.
20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
22 ma'am. Next is Libby Duncan and following
23 Ms. Duncan, Tim Franta or Franta, and then John
24 Duncan.

25 Okay, Tim, thank you very much for being

1 here and you are recognized. Is it Franta or
2 Franta?

3 MR. FRANTA: Franta.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Franta, okay. You are
5 recognized and we look forward to your
6 testimony.

7 MR. FRANTA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
8 Mr. President, members of the Legislature. I
9 just wanted to, I will be real quick. I will
10 submit my testimony, but two things I would
11 like to say.

12 One, I would like to concur with Bob
13 Wille, if you do north and south versus east
14 and west, you can draw districts that have no
15 higher education, no water sources, no garbage
16 dumps, no manufacturing.

17 If you do east, west, you get very uniform
18 districts that have diversity in business and
19 education, but if you did north and south you
20 can have really limited districts. So I
21 encourage east and west, we have far more
22 similarities than north and south.

23 I would like to disagree with the previous
24 speaker. We desperately need two Congress
25 people and let me tell you why.

1 We need someone on the Appropriations
2 Committee and we need someone on the
3 Substantive Committee. We have three large
4 Federal installations in the district and we
5 have had one seat flip over three times in the
6 last three elections.

7 So we have no seniority in one seat and
8 the other seat if you are on a Substantive
9 Committee you can't be on Appropriations. So
10 we desperately need two Congressional Seats in
11 the Space Coast. It is absolutely necessary.

12 And since most of you aren't from here I
13 would like to point out that we did have some
14 unity, both the ACLU and a lot of the
15 Republicans said north, south, central and
16 beach. So there was some community, I just
17 wanted to make that observation, so thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: The lion shall lie down
19 with the lamb. Patricia Farley Crutcher, I
20 believe, with the Democratic Club, are you
21 coming, ma'am? And then following her, Lee
22 Newell and then Jan Siren, and I am sorry,
23 ma'am, I didn't give you a heads up soon
24 enough.

25 Thank you for coming and you are

1 recognized.

2 MS. CRUTCHER: Thank you very much for
3 doing this. First, I would like to say that I
4 have been a resident in Brevard County over 40
5 years. I registered when I was 18 and I
6 haven't missed an election either.

7 I have been a public school teacher for
8 over 20 years, and the subject that I teach is
9 American Government. Every year I teach over
10 300 students what gerrymandering is, why it is
11 wrong and their textbook says it is
12 unconstitutional.

13 Now, then I give them a map of the Florida
14 districts, and with crayons my high school
15 students can pick out areas that certainly
16 don't look right. Over around Pinellas County,
17 around Tampa Bay, around Lake Okeechobee, you
18 have got districts that start on one side of
19 the state and go all of the way to the other
20 with a very thin line.

21 And in Brevard County, our own county, we
22 have got the north end of the county going a
23 big loop around to the bottom end of the
24 county. That doesn't look right either.

25 Now, I am going to ask you to please do

1 what the voters ask and make us some fair
2 districts. I worked very hard on the fair
3 districts issue. It is very important to the
4 voters in this area.

5 Please draw us some maps. That is your
6 responsibility, bring us some maps, present us
7 with the maps, do your jobs and let me be proud
8 of the state of Florida with my students,
9 please.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: And Ms. Crutcher, before
11 you leave, just a quick, since you are a
12 history teacher, I learned something I didn't
13 know and a lot of things I didn't know at the
14 Gainesville hearing, but we had a teacher at
15 the Gainesville hearing say that it wasn't
16 Governor Eldridge Gary from Massachusetts after
17 whom gerrymandering is named that did it the
18 first time, that it was Patrick Henry trying to
19 crowd out James Madison. Is that true?

20 MS. CRUTCHER: That I am not aware of. I
21 thought it was Eldridge Gary, that is why my
22 book says. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Well, dog-gone, Patrick
24 Henry, he is starting to get a bad wrap here.
25 Lee Newell and following Lee Newell, Jan Siren

1 and then Alice Kreitz or Kreitz.

2 Mr. Newell, thank you for coming, and you
3 are recognized, sir.

4 MR. NEWELL: Thank you for hearing me
5 today. I live in Micco, Florida, Micco is as
6 far south in Brevard County as you can go. We
7 are so far south in Brevard County that we have
8 an Indian River County zip code and area code
9 which, of course, makes us part of the infamous
10 District 29.

11 One thing we do have in common with Mims
12 at the far north end of Brevard County, is that
13 we are a rural area and we have lots of senior
14 citizens. So I have some suggestions for
15 improving your process.

16 Many of the people I know have dial up
17 access to the Internet which makes your whole
18 Internet function really impossible for them to
19 use. So I think you need to reach out to the
20 larger community that does not have the
21 Internet access or does not have the broadband
22 access to the internet.

23 So you need to find a way to get your
24 information out and solicit from them, how to
25 engage the media, I don't know, perhaps you can

1 get Caylee Anthony involved.

2 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: I think she is busy.

3 MR. NEWELL: Yes.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank God.

5 MR. NEWELL: And to speed up the process.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: She is not babysitting.

7 MR. NEWELL: Yes. To speed up the process
8 so that we have an opportunity to comment on
9 what the Legislature comes up with as far as
10 new district lines and so that we can avoid the
11 thing that really concerns me is that right at
12 the bottom of this on your page you have got
13 for qualifying for elections, June 4th, through
14 June 8th, four days to qualify for elections.
15 I think that is obscene. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: You are welcome. Now,
17 Jan Siren, please, and then following
18 Mr. Siren, Alex Kreitz, I am sorry, Alice
19 Kreitz or Kreitz, and then Ken Greene, please
20 be ready. Thank you, sir, for coming and you
21 are recognized.

22 MR. SIREN: Thank you all for coming here
23 to hear our input. I appreciate this very
24 much. I don't -- I did not come here with
25 prepared remarks and it is just as well because

1 given the limitation of time I would have had
2 to throw them away by now.

3 So what I am going to read to you is
4 pretty much written in the last few minutes. I
5 will try to be brief. I take polite exception
6 to Mr. Tulley's earlier remarks about
7 randomness in this process.

8 I believe the whole process should be
9 deliberate. The District Builder tool does not
10 fully facilitate that. It specifically
11 excludes voter registration information,
12 supposedly to avoid even the appearance of
13 political bias.

14 In other words, you can't bring Republican
15 versus Democrat versus Independent into the
16 District Builder tool and I wondered why not.

17 I would expect that after all of these
18 submissions that various people will make of
19 maps, party insiders will take the maps and
20 apply them to other software that includes the
21 registration information that the public has no
22 access to and those insiders will maximize the
23 benefits to incumbents of both parties.

24 I say the voter registration information
25 should have been made available in that, in the

1 software so that citizens could see the
2 political impacts of the maps.

3 I would, and finally in conclusion, ten
4 years from now when we are back here, the
5 process will be very different. Thank you very
6 much.

7 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, sir, and next,
8 Alice, is it Kreitz or Kreitz?

9 MR. KREITZ: Kreitz.

10 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Kreitz.

11 MR. KREITZ: It is Kreitz in German.

12 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Yes, ma'am.

13 MR. KRIETZ: And I would like to put in a
14 plug for my favorite newspaper which is the
15 local newspaper, Hometown News, because this
16 Friday they are printing a letter of mine, 800
17 and some words about the Constitution.

18 So I was pleased to see the Constitution
19 be brought here today. Well, that only ties in
20 with those that spoke before me regarding the
21 Constitution.

22 I came here as a private citizen. Having
23 worked for two U. S. Senators I have read a lot
24 of Bills in the past but that was during the
25 Reagan years before lawyers wrote most of the

1 Bills and amendments and things like that, and
2 I think that most of the people that voted for
3 the Amendments 5 and 6 to the Florida
4 Constitution, you know, probably didn't have
5 the scope of understanding that many of us need
6 on definitions.

7 And I actually came here today just to
8 find out the definition of some of the words in
9 Amendments 5 and 6, because I sat at home on my
10 computer and read the words and they just
11 jumped out at me. What does this really mean?

12 And I think most of us that voted, you
13 know, for the fair districts probably didn't
14 take the time to define every single word.

15 So I am just wondering if somehow in all
16 of your work you could put together the
17 definition, the best to your ability, of
18 compact and practicability and feasible, well,
19 you know, and some of these are really, you
20 know, they are just confusing words, and then
21 existing political boundaries, even that is
22 confusing.

23 I mean, to me it reminds me of what the
24 definition of is, is, you know, and I did not
25 have sex with that woman, and that sort of

1 thing. It just, it just somehow doesn't make a
2 lot of sense when you start reading these
3 things and wondering, and I come from a state
4 that had a lot of gerrymandering.

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Ma'am, I have to ask you
6 to wrap up.

7 MS. KREITZ: Okay, so I just don't like
8 gerrymandering either.

9 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Tank you very much. I
10 appreciate your testimony. Next is Ken Greene,
11 Mr. Greene? We did hear from him, okay. Then
12 Frances Speegle with the Democratic Executive
13 Committee. Is Frances Speegle here? Very
14 good, and while you are making your way to the
15 microphone, Ms. Speegle, please next, Matthew
16 Susin or Susin, S-u-s-i-n, Susin, I am sorry,
17 and then Chris Curdis please be prepared to
18 testify.

19 Ms. Speegle, thank you very much for
20 coming, and we are grateful you took the time
21 today to be with us. You are recognized,
22 ma'am.

23 MR. SPEEGLE: My name is Frances Speegle,
24 I live in Palm Bay. I have been a citizen of
25 Florida for 43 years and things keep getting

1 worse.

2 All of you should be ashamed of
3 yourselves, especially you, Senator
4 Haridopolos, even with all of your efforts to
5 stop us, fair districts passed by 63 percent of
6 the vote. A good many of those voters being
7 from your party.

8 I worked hard to get that done, now
9 instead all of you are -- as you now instead of
10 all of you doing as you should and getting the
11 maps drawn, I have to watch the lawsuits, these
12 delaying tactics, this dog and pony show that
13 we, the taxpayers are paying for.

14 We should be here today looking at maps,
15 discussing if the lines have been drawn
16 properly. No maps. Where are the maps?

17 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
18 Ms. Speegle, and next, Matthew Susin, Susin,
19 Matthew Susin. Not here, Chris Curdis followed
20 by Mary Nail and Courtney Roberts. Chris
21 Curdis?

22 Mary Nail? Thank you very much for your
23 testimony today, we look forward to hearing
24 from you.

25 MS. NAIL: Thank you, gentlemen, and

1 ladies. As far as my elected officials are
2 concerned, I actually elected you to represent
3 me and to do the job that was put forth in the
4 ballot initiative resulting in Amendments 5 and
5 6. You see, I don't really like this citizen
6 legislation idea.

7 I like representative government more than
8 that and I would like to have you all, yes,
9 indeed, do the work, but you are providing
10 ample input for people to come here and present
11 your ideas and also on-line.

12 If somebody is having trouble with
13 broadband versus dial up you can go to your
14 public library, they have broadband, okay. So
15 there is access for everybody. Anything else
16 is an excuse.

17 The talking points, people are saying they
18 don't understand the tools that you have
19 provided, the Internet tools. That they want
20 to be involved to the bitter end, that you are
21 spending too much money, and that they want to
22 know the definition of words.

23 This audience is clearly representing
24 those who put forth the ballot initiative. I
25 did not vote for this, because I believe in

1 representative government.

2 You know, what they are really saying is,
3 they don't want to provide you with any maps
4 because they want you to provide maps because
5 they want to hang you on your map provisions in
6 the next election and say, look what you did,
7 look at these awful maps. So therefore, let's
8 defeat these people.

9 No, I am glad that you are allowing the
10 public to have input and put forth their maps
11 because there is the process. The people and
12 the representatives and you ultimately decide.
13 So I don't want people that look like me
14 representing me. I want people that are
15 qualified, that love the Constitution of the
16 United States of America, that will carry it
17 out and I say, bully, bully, buggedy, buggedy,
18 keep it up, love everything that you are doing
19 and I support you 100 percent. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, Ms.
21 Nail. Courtney Roberts is next, and following
22 Courtney Roberts, Mary Hillberg.

23 MS. ROBERTS: I had withdrawn my request
24 to speak today originally but I resubmitted it
25 because you guys are getting blasted for --

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: What is your name, sir,
2 please?

3 MS. ROBERTS: Courtney Roberts.

4 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Okay.

5 MR. ROBERTS: R-o-b-e-r-t-s.

6 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Got it. Take your best
7 shot, two minutes.

8 MS. ROBERTS: You guys are getting blasted
9 for trying to do something that I think that we
10 need to have more of, which is open government.
11 I am very proud of my Legislature. I am very
12 proud of the delegation from Brevard County
13 that has gone forth this year and done a very
14 tough job in the last session of trying to take
15 care of our economy, our state economy in tough
16 times. I am very proud of that.

17 The big contention in these hearings that
18 I have been watching since the first one up in
19 Jacksonville is the interpretation of the
20 Constitutional Amendments.

21 What is fair? And it has got to all boil
22 down to one thing. You guys are our
23 Representatives. We are a republic, you are
24 going to have to make that decision. I am an
25 engineer. I am a retired space program

1 engineer. Unlike so many that are just getting
2 laid off, I lasted through the program until I
3 had been worn out.

4 But my impression of the way to approach
5 this is very mechanical. I agree with Mayor
6 actually. Do a computer break down, make
7 polygons throughout the whole state, then
8 incorporate the number of people that are
9 required to be in each district. The heck with
10 all of this diversity and special interests and
11 you got to take care of me so I can take care
12 of you, do it on the actual numbers.

13 There is no way you cannot have diversity
14 in a Congressional District in Florida. There
15 is no possible way. How many hundred thousand
16 are there? It is going to be diverse. The
17 people that are saying that you can't do that
18 without gerrymandering are saying because we
19 have a black President, white people aren't
20 represented in this country.

21 Now, I think you guys can do the job and I
22 have faith in you, thank you very much.

23 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, sir. Next is
24 Mary Hillberg, Ms. Hillberg and then Shannon
25 Roberts and then Ernest Williams and then Jim

1 Stroud.

2 Ms. Hillberg, thank you for coming today.

3 You are recognized.

4 MS. HILLBERG: Thank you, I am Mary
5 Hillberg and I am from Merritt Island, Florida,
6 and I would like to thank you for having us
7 here today and I remind you that we have all
8 voted in a majority way to have this done, and
9 you have a certain amount of resources to use,
10 and I would appreciate it, I think all of us
11 would appreciate it if you would use the
12 remainder of those resources in a productive
13 way to do the job that we have asked you to do.

14 I would also agree with Mayor Tulley in
15 using a nonpartisan blind sort of approach that
16 would initially give us some kind of a grid or
17 some kind of an idea of what fair is, and of
18 course, using the populations statistics that
19 you have to use. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 ma'am. Next is Shannon Roberts, Ms. Roberts
22 and then following Ms. Roberts, Ernest Williams
23 and then Jim Stroud.

24 Shannon Roberts, you are recognized,
25 thanks from coming.

1 MS. ROBERTS: Thank you so much. I am
2 Shannon Roberts from Cape Canaveral, and I want
3 to thank you very much for coming here today,
4 although I agree with certainly a lot of the
5 presenters that said we probably could have
6 done this in a more timely way, just proceeded
7 very aggressively, you know, after November
8 2010, when we supported 5 and 6 just to move
9 out smartly.

10 I think the elements of a successful
11 approach would be that it is fair and obviously
12 that is what fair districts stand for, it is
13 professionally done and that is where I do
14 believe that if we had three to five optional
15 maps that were professionally prepared by the
16 staff that we pay for up in Tallahassee, that
17 we would have been much better off.

18 And also that it should have been customer
19 focused, because as many have said today, a lot
20 of the processes used with the website are not
21 very friendly, very burdensome, even for
22 professional people, even information
23 technologists, and it also should be in that
24 way customer focused and friendly for all of
25 your residents to use.

1 It should be timely. I think a number of
2 the persons that have spoken have talked about
3 the delay in the process, it is going to take
4 us out to June 2012, when I believe that
5 Florida is second to last in the nation to have
6 the redistricting process completed, when we
7 really should be first in the nation if we
8 really are making ourselves proud to be
9 Floridians.

10 And lastly, it should be cost effective.
11 I know this is something Representative
12 Crisafuli talks about in terms of cost
13 effectiveness, and if we look at the costliness
14 of this process in terms of the different
15 hearings that are being taken, I know that is
16 good for the public to have involvement, but
17 the lawsuit considered as well as the time
18 involved in dragging this out, I think it has
19 been a very costly process.

20 And I just would hope in closing that you
21 would make us proud to be Floridians by making
22 Florida a showcase for the nation about how to
23 do it best.

24 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Roberts.
25 Excellent testimony. Ernest Williams and

1 following Ernest Williams, Jim Stroud and then
2 Michael Blake, the Mayor of Cocoa. Ernest
3 Williams.

4 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, Melbourne Beach. For
5 140 years, one party dominated Florida and drew
6 the district lines to suit and protect that
7 party.

8 In 1996 that changed, and another party
9 took power. All of a sudden things were wrong.
10 Where was the ACLU and all of these other
11 protectors of the Constitution for 140 years?

12 Amendment 5 and 6 were passed solely to
13 undo the election of 1996. I applaud your
14 attempts to do this in this climate. Dozens of
15 people have referred to the 63 votes or
16 63 percent that passed 5 and 6.

17 Well, that is the same election that you
18 were voted in into office, and one election
19 does not negate the other. It is your
20 responsibility. Use common sense and reason
21 and good luck.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much, Mr.
23 Williams. Jim Stroud, Mr. Stroud? Are you
24 with us? Mayor Michael Blake, Mr. Mayor?

25 MAYOR BLAKE: Yes, sir.

1 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you so much for
2 coming, and thanks for your service to the
3 people of Cocoa.

4 MAYOR BLAKE: Thank you very much,
5 Senator, and to all of our elected
6 Representatives, job well done.

7 I mean, I am a school teacher first and
8 foremost, and I understand the reason why, you
9 know, we are seeing both ends of this double
10 edged sword. So I think you very much for
11 coming.

12 A few short quick points. One, I want to
13 say thank you for your commitment. Two, so
14 long as you do the will of the people and it is
15 done fair and equitable, then we will stand
16 beside you and support you. That is all I ask.

17 More so than anything else, sir, we ask
18 that the maps be readily available, the City of
19 Cocoa has prospered by having multi
20 Representatives. Currently we have about three
21 that runs through our city of Cocoa, Senator
22 Thad Altman, my Representative Crisafuli, and
23 also Representative Thomas Goodson.

24 So clearly beyond a shadow of a doubt
25 there is a great number, there is power in

1 numbers. So we thank you for having that for
2 us.

3 And in conclusion, I am a little nervous,
4 believe it or not, can you --

5 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Mayors can't be nervous.

6 MAYOR BLAKE: Oh, yes, we can, I am human
7 just like everyone else. Yes, sir. In
8 conclusion, and we want something about you
9 making history. If I may quote Dr. King, you
10 are not history makers. History is making you
11 all. So we thank you very much and God bless
12 you. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,
14 Mr. Mayor. We have heard or called 73 people
15 to testify today. We have received a lot of
16 extraordinarily helpful testimony.

17 What I would like to do now in our
18 remaining minutes and we don't have too many
19 left, is to ask if there are members of the
20 Committee, Democrats, Republicans, House
21 members, Senators, who would like to respond to
22 any questions that were raised or make any
23 comments or offer any specific proposals.

24 Let me start first with the members of the
25 House of Representatives.

1 A VOICE: Thank you, Senator, if you
2 haven't figured it out yet, I am 29, okay. But
3 I would like to say this. If you leave here
4 with nothing else, what you should have learned
5 here today, that 80 people came before us.

6 Out of those 80 people, half could have
7 been over here, half could have been over there
8 or a quarter here or there. So that being
9 said, you can only imagine the job we have to
10 do, and this being the first time I am
11 involved, it is extremely pressing to try to
12 please everybody.

13 So that being said, please, after the
14 meeting if you have any questions get with me
15 and my aid, Amy, if you want some further
16 information we will try to get to it. Please
17 be as patient as you can with us.

18 We are going through the state, this is
19 going to be done right. It is going to be done
20 the right way. Thank you so much. Thank you,
21 Representative.

22 A VOICE: Members of the House, anymore
23 members of the House that wish to make comment?

24 A VOICE: Thank you very much. I am the
25 Vice-Chairman of the House Reapportionment

1 District Subcommittee.

2 There are a lot of things I knew about
3 Brevard County, growing up in Winter Haven, I
4 came over to the beach a lot, every time I
5 could sneak away, that is.

6 It has changed a great deal. We have
7 learn a lot today that I wouldn't have known
8 otherwise and to be able to do an effective
9 job. So for those of you who brought us
10 concrete suggestions, thank you very much.

11 There are a lot of people who stood up and
12 said, where are the maps. Folks, some of them
13 are out in the lobby. If you want to
14 contribute something constructive, please go
15 look at those and give us some suggestions
16 because those are some of the basis that we are
17 going to start with when we actually get right
18 down to finalizing this.

19 That is where we are going to start. We
20 are starting with what the people in each area
21 want for their Representatives. So that is,
22 and that is why we are here, so if you have got
23 some, something to contribute, take a look at
24 the maps out there and give us your input on
25 what changes you think ought to be made to

1 those maps.

2 It is a very good starting point and
3 really, I beg you to participate in that
4 process. Freedom is a heavy lift. All you
5 have to do is look around the world and see how
6 hard it is to maintain freedom.

7 It takes everybody's participation. We
8 are a part time Legislature, most of us have
9 other jobs to try to maintain. We need your
10 help. Freedom is a heavy lift, more hands make
11 a lighter one.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Representative
13 Nehr.

14 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Thank you,
15 Mr. Chairman, and I just want to really quickly
16 just let everybody know in the audience that
17 Representative Workman over here is probably
18 one of the hardest working Legislators for you
19 in your district.

20 Let me tell you what, he got many people
21 to join the Space Caucus, you know, and he had
22 to explain it me exactly why he needed to do it
23 but he works extremely hard.

24 And Chairman Gaetz at the beginning of the
25 meeting told me to make sure I take a lot of

1 notes to make sure I fully understand your
2 questions. And the notes that I took about
3 were referencing more about the timelines that
4 people were talking about here during the
5 meeting.

6 And people are referencing timelines in
7 the various legislative websites and we just
8 want to let you know, those are deadlines,
9 those are not goals.

10 The timing for two out of the three maps
11 that we must draw as Senator Gaetz will tell
12 you is dictated by the Florida Constitution,
13 and since the Florida Constitution only allows
14 passage of the maps after 2012, we in the
15 Committee just wanted to make sure that we
16 allowed input from the public during these
17 summer months.

18 You know, committee meetings start in
19 September. Maps will be discussed during that.
20 I am sure we will be seeing maps and public
21 input will also be allowed at those committee
22 meetings before anybody makes any votes on any
23 maps, the public will be allowed to do that.

24 Session, as you know, it starts on
25 January 10th for two months. We will try and

1 Senator Gaetz and also Representative
2 Weatherford who is not here, who is the Chair
3 of the Redistricting Committee for the House,
4 have also stated in public that we will be
5 looking and voting on those maps as soon as
6 possible when the Legislature starts.

7 It doesn't mean we are going to vote on
8 them on the last day. We could easily vote on
9 them in the first week or the second week if
10 that happens to work out for us in committee
11 meetings, and I think that people should know
12 that, but again, we have deadlines but we also
13 have goals to get them much more ahead of time.
14 Thank you, Senator.

15 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much. The
16 Chair recognizes Representative Stargel.

17 REPRESENTATIVE STARGEL: Thank you, I am
18 Representative Stargel, I represent Polk
19 County, and this the 12th meeting that I have
20 attended. We finished session, the date in
21 April, we finished session in May, we started
22 these meetings in June. I have five children.
23 There is a lot of ways I would have liked to
24 have spent my summer besides going to these
25 meetings, but they are profitable.

1 Many people have said where are the maps,
2 draw the maps. I can't begin to assume that I
3 know what is best for your community until I
4 have taken the time to hear what is most
5 important to you.

6 I heard in the panhandle how some people
7 wanted to have, add districts together and the
8 coastal areas together, other people wanted to
9 have vertical lines. The Villages said they
10 wanted to stay all in one compact little area
11 in the middle of The Villages.

12 We heard input from Wesley Chapel and the
13 things I have heard today about considering the
14 north, the south, the central, these have been
15 profitable meetings, they have been beneficial.
16 It is not a dog and pony show.

17 I am taking this information. I am taking
18 a lot of notes and I am going to go back and
19 then start trying to draw maps to take what you
20 need into consideration. So thank you,
21 Mr. Chairman, for this meeting.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Representative Legg?
23 John?

24 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: Thank you,
25 Mr. Chairman. One thing I do want to mention

1 to those here, I know there was some discussion
2 about the difficulty perhaps using District
3 Builder. It is a wonderful program and I have
4 wanted to offer to the community my
5 professional staff who is becoming quite adept
6 with District Builder.

7 We will offer our office resources for
8 workshops or if you have lines that you would
9 like to have drawn, we will offer that as a
10 service, because we have no preconceived ideas
11 of where those lines should be.

12 We want to hear your input. So I have
13 Trey Holton, Carey Jansen, Rick Kindras here,
14 all three, I know Trey is spending a lot of
15 time really becoming adept and expert in
16 District Builder, so do that, please, offer
17 that.

18 And I am sitting here, I actually began
19 the political process as an intern in Jason
20 Steel's office in the 1981/'82 session, when
21 they were drawing redistrict lines. So I have
22 been doing this 30 years off and on and I can
23 tell you, one thing that a lot of people have
24 said, they are discontent, their unhappiness
25 with the way the lines were drawn, even to a

1 point where we have a Constitutional amendment,
2 with Amendments 5 and 6 and one thing that
3 really has been in common with all of those
4 lines that people are upset with is never
5 before has the Legislature heard input from the
6 public prior to drawing those lines.

7 What is different this time is we are
8 going to get public input and we are going to
9 let the people of Florida participate, and I
10 think it will be quite different. So I think
11 this is a good thing, and what is unique in
12 this process.

13 So I am just honored to it be a part of
14 it, and again, as I said earlier, our
15 leadership has shown a great vision and it is
16 exciting to travel around the state and to
17 listen different parts and different
18 communities and what is important to them and I
19 want to thank the members that took the time to
20 bring their ideas forward and to assist us in
21 drawing the best lines possible.

22 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Other members who wish to
23 comment or make any statements? Senator Storms
24 and Senator Rhonda Storms joined us during the
25 hearing the she heard the testimony and I want

1 to ask if you would like to make any comment,
2 Senator?

3 SENATOR STORMS: Well, I am here. I have
4 been fiddling around with the District Builder
5 in trying to draw maps and I just want to tell
6 you a little bit about what the experience is,
7 and do two things.

8 For the teacher that is here, I am a high
9 school English teacher and for the teacher that
10 is here, I don't know where you are sitting,
11 but let me encourage you to give District
12 Builder, it is on-line, available to your
13 students, give them an assignment and say for
14 the first semester, here is your job.

15 Draw maps, divide the class into three
16 sections. You have the State House, the State
17 Senate and Congressional Districts and that
18 should be their project. They will get no
19 better experience in the political process in
20 understanding what they can do if they do that,
21 and I encourage teachers to take that as an
22 opportunity and besides, it is free. It won't
23 cost you anything. So that is a good idea, but
24 let me just tell you this.

25 You understand that when you start with

1 the districts you have to have a certain amount
2 of population and it is one person, one vote.
3 So you want to have, when you get down with any
4 districts you want to kind of land one plus one
5 or it would be great if it would all be equal,
6 right, the exact number of people that you need
7 in the district, but if you can't get there,
8 then plus one or minus one, right?

9 Now, let me tell you what my experience
10 is. You look at the state and if you are
11 thinking, you are like me, you are saying,
12 okay, can I just do squares. I mean, how hard
13 is it? Just what you want and all of the
14 hearings that I have heard, you want compact
15 districts and you want communities of interest,
16 right?

17 Well, set aside for a second that
18 communities of interest is not in the Fair
19 Districts Amendment, but I will try and draw
20 you your districts on compactness and
21 communities of interest.

22 And so what you do is, I said, okay, where
23 do I start, would I start, if I am drawing
24 those districts would I start in the middle of
25 the state and then what would happen with the

1 population as I got to the end of the state
2 around the fringe.

3 So instead of starting in the middle of
4 the state I started at the end of the state.
5 So I started up by the panhandle and then my
6 plan is to rotate back and forth, top of the
7 state, bottom of the state, top of the state,
8 and hopefully by the middle I will come up with
9 a bunch of people left to draw districts,
10 right.

11 So then as I looked at District Builder, I
12 went in and I started doing what you might do,
13 which is pick up by counties, grab this county,
14 this county, this county until I got where I
15 needed to be with District 1.

16 Well, that left me about 6,000 people over
17 by doing just the counties. So now I had to
18 stop and I had to say, okay, now, I have to
19 lose 6,000 people. How do I lose 6,000 people.

20 Well, I do what the District Builder says,
21 it takes you down to the VTDs, which are voter
22 tabulation districts, and those are kind of
23 communities of interest. So I start taking out
24 VTDs.

25 I find myself now 200 people short for my

1 district. So now I have to add 200 people.
2 How do I do that? I now have to drill down
3 even further to go to the census blocks, which
4 is what the census has provided us, and so now
5 I can start until I get to just plus one minus
6 one, now I have my district that I have worked
7 so hard on now. I spent an hour on this one
8 district.

9 And now because I am working in the census
10 block, now I have to come out and take the
11 larger view of the district, and what do I
12 find. Now I see what the district looks like
13 by numbers and I find that it is kind of funky.

14 I have got this little squiggly thing over
15 here and I am looking at that and I am like,
16 somebody is going to say that is not compact
17 and I am trying to do something bad.

18 So I say to my staff and I am looking,
19 okay, we have got to square this up. Cut this
20 off and bring it down.

21 Now, here is where these public meetings
22 are important, because if I go to square it up
23 and I want to find out where I lose people in a
24 place I know nothing about, the public hearings
25 will tell me if you are going to take from

1 somewhere, if you are going to make a line
2 break, break at this road, break at the
3 Interstate, break at this toll road and keep
4 this community together if you can do it.

5 I have not looked at minority districts.
6 I have not looked at party affiliation. That
7 is how I am doing it.

8 One last thing that I will tell you is
9 this, that after you do all of that, you have
10 got the Fair Voting Rights. You have got the
11 Voting Rights Act that you have to apply to
12 that.

13 We cannot infringe upon the rights of
14 minorities. So after I do all of this
15 compactness, what will happen with my minority
16 access seats. I don't know the answer to that
17 question yet, but I will tell you in my
18 district, there are people who care whether or
19 not people who look like them, who talk like
20 them actually have a shot to be elected.

21 And so take is what I am working at, and I
22 am sorry, Mr. Chair, for taking so long but I
23 thought that that explanation was -- would be
24 helpful to people. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN GAETZ: Thank you very much,

1 Senator Storms, we are at the end of our period
2 of time.

3 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
4 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 173 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 4th day of October, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

MONDAY, AUGUST 15, 2011

6:00 P.M.

BLAKE LIBRARY

STUART, FLORIDA

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: Ladies and
3 gentlemen, if you would take your seats,
4 please.

5 The Joint Senate/House Redistricting
6 Hearing is now being called to order. We are
7 very pleased today to be joined by several
8 members of the Florida House and the Florida
9 Senate who, as we get going I will ask to
10 briefly introduce themselves and to tell the
11 audience what communities they represent, and
12 for that we will be passing the microphone
13 around.

14 But first I want to start with
15 Representative Will Snyder, in who's district
16 we are, who I believe has a couple of welcoming
17 remarks and will also lead us in the Pledge of
18 Allegiance. Representative Snyder.

19 REPRESENTATIVE SNYDER: Thank you so much,
20 Chairman Precourt. Senator, we are so glad to
21 have you here.

22 Ladies and gentlemen, I am honored that
23 you are here in the Blake Library for our
24 redistricting committee hearing. We have had
25 town halls before in Stuart, and I think Stuart

1 is one of the nicest places in the state of
2 Florida to do the people's business. And we
3 have this evening some -- a topic that is
4 extremely important, but I think it is one that
5 engenders some passion. It may engender some
6 discussion and some disagreement, but I have
7 assured my colleagues up here who have come
8 from all over the state of Florida that they
9 will find the people of Stuart to be very
10 civilized, very gentlemanly, very gentle,
11 ladylike, and this experiment in democracy,
12 that is America, this is a perfect place for it
13 right here in Stuart.

14 So I am sure we will all have our say
15 tonight and we will say it agreeably and
16 peacefully in the spirit that I am sure we are
17 all here.

18 So with that, if you would stand with me
19 and the flag is right behind me.

20 "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the
21 United States of America and to the Republic
22 for which it stands, one nation, under God,
23 indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

24 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
25 Representative Snyder. You folks are blessed

1 with the representation you have in this area,
2 as we all are in the whole state of Florida, I
3 might add.

4 I also want to add my own personal thanks
5 to the Martin County Library System for
6 allowing us to use this facility and to all of
7 you, too, for being here. You have come from
8 taking time out of your day, out of your jobs,
9 away from your family, to provide input on this
10 very important subject, so thank you very much.

11 My name is Steve Precourt. I am the House
12 Committee Vice-Chair, and I will -- but I will
13 be chairing tonight's meeting along with my
14 colleague, Senator Don Gaetz, who is the
15 incoming President of the Senate, and this
16 session will also be being webcast statewide by
17 The Florida Channel over the Internet so we can
18 get as many people the opportunity to be heard
19 and to see what we are discussing here tonight
20 as possible.

21 Speaking of which, our sole purpose here
22 tonight is to hear from you, is to hear from
23 the public about how you believe the legal
24 standards governing redistricting should be
25 applied in your community, so you are

1 represented as you see fit in Washington and
2 Tallahassee fairly, equitably and sensibly.

3 Now, in order to have a public meeting, we
4 unfortunately do have to have some procedures,
5 and they are fairly simple, but it is very --
6 it is going to be very important to hear -- to
7 follow the procedures so that we hear from
8 everyone who wants to speak tonight.

9 It is also important that you sign in so
10 that we can create an accurate public record of
11 all of the attendees and speakers. So if you
12 don't have a card, please raise your hand or
13 see one of our staff at the back of the room
14 and get signed in whether you wish to speak or
15 not.

16 You may also opt to join our e-mail lists
17 so that we can keep you informed on an ongoing
18 basis of happenings in the redistricting
19 process over the next few months. So, again,
20 if you haven't signed in yet, go ahead and
21 raise your hand and we will get you a card.

22 If you wish to speak today and you have
23 not filled out an attendance card, you must --
24 this is very important to reiterate that -- you
25 must fill out an attendance card, because that

1 is how I will know to call your name and get
2 you in line at the podium right here to speak.
3 So I can't emphasize that enough. And it is
4 the same attendance card whether you wish to
5 speak or not, but if you don't wish to speak,
6 go ahead and write that on there as well.

7 Now, before we go too much further, I want
8 to recognize Senator Gaetz to explain in more
9 detail how today's hearing in particular fits
10 into the overall redistricting process.
11 Senator Gaetz.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Mr. Chairman. Is this mike on? Okay, it is,
14 is it not?

15 A VOICE: It is.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: It is. Well, I have a
17 loud voice in any case.

18 Every ten years, the Florida Legislature
19 is required by our Constitution to redistrict
20 the state based on increases, decreases or
21 movements of population within the state. And
22 because Florida has grown more than other
23 states in the last ten years, we will move up
24 from 25 members of the House of Representatives
25 in Washington to 27 members, and we move up to

1 29 electoral votes. So Florida is more
2 important in the Presidential election, and we
3 will have a stronger voice, a more numeric
4 voice, in the U.S. House of Representatives.

5 Now, because some parts of our state have
6 increased or decreased disproportionately in
7 population, many Senate and State House
8 districts will change by either adding or
9 subtracting population.

10 When redistricting is completed,
11 congressional districts, U.S. House Districts
12 must be equal in population, and each U.S.
13 House district has to contain 696,345 people.
14 Now, the courts are pretty exact that those
15 districts have to be equal, 696,345 people.
16 The 40 Senate districts, we have 40 Senate
17 districts in the state, must be nearly equal at
18 about 470,000 people each, and our 120 State
19 House districts must also be nearly equal at
20 about 156,700 people. Those numbers are
21 important, so as we talk about where lines
22 ought to be drawn, you can see how many people
23 need to be in a House district, in a Senate
24 district or in a U.S. congressional district.

25 Now, we have displays that are in the back

1 of the room showing the current boundaries of
2 districts in this area of the state and the
3 numbers of persons that would have to be added
4 or taken away from existing districts in order
5 to achieve equal representation. But equality
6 of representation is not the only legal
7 requirement that redistricting plans have to
8 meet.

9 The laws and the important court cases
10 that govern redistricting are explained in
11 detail on the House and Senate websites. Those
12 websites are listed on the "Redistricting 2012"
13 brochure which was available when you came in,
14 and our "Redistricting 2012" brochure
15 summarizes the federal and state laws and
16 outlines topics that we really need your input
17 on. If you did not get a copy when you came
18 in, copies of that very simple but important
19 brochure are available on the tables outside
20 the meeting, and our staff would be happy to
21 give you a copy.

22 The brochure shows the House and Senate
23 websites, which are packed with information
24 about redistricting, including explanations of
25 laws and court cases, and the two websites are

1 complementary and are updated frequently. So
2 we hope you will visit with them and stay tuned
3 to them often. It is a great way to remain
4 current about how the new congressional, Senate
5 and State House districts are taking shape.

6 The websites -- and I can't emphasize this
7 enough. The websites also deliver to your
8 fingertips all of the demographic information
9 that will be used in drawing districts and the
10 exact same computer programs that Legislators
11 and professional staff use.

12 As soon as we received the demographic
13 information about Florida from the U.S. Bureau
14 of the Census, as quickly as we could we put it
15 on-line so everybody in Florida could see that
16 demographic information, and then we took the
17 computer programs that are used by
18 policy-makers and would be used perhaps by the
19 courts in redistricting and we put those
20 computer programs on-line so that you can use
21 the computer programs and the demographic
22 information to see where districts might be
23 developed or might be outlined in your area.

24 Before, during and after this hearing,
25 Senate and House professional staff are

1 available to show anybody the simple steps to
2 getting on-line and using the computer programs
3 to build districts if you would like, so that
4 if you want to submit a plan now or in the
5 weeks to come, you are able to do it. And I
6 can tell you that I am rather tech stupid, and
7 it took the staff about 15 minutes to make me
8 smart enough so that I was able to use the
9 software. So I am sure for me, if it took 15,
10 it will probably only take five or ten minutes
11 for you.

12 Recommendations from citizens and groups
13 of citizens will be made publicly available.
14 So if you submit your ideas for how you think
15 your neighborhood or your community or this
16 part of the state or the whole state ought to
17 be districted, we will make your ideas
18 available to everybody else so everyone can see
19 the input we are getting.

20 In fact, as of today, there have been 31
21 public submissions of partial or complete
22 district maps for congressional, Senate or
23 House districts. There are 31 maps available
24 now for you to look at, and 110 written
25 proposals for maps are also available on the

1 Web. So there's 31 maps on the Web now and 110
2 written descriptions of areas of the state that
3 people think ought to be districted this way or
4 that, and after this week, I am sure those
5 numbers will increase.

6 The submission of proposals from you,
7 proposals that make sense for your community,
8 is the single most effective form of public
9 participation in the redistricting process.

10 The schedule under which we are operating
11 is imposed by our State Constitution. The
12 Constitution does not permit the Legislature to
13 act on state legislative maps before the second
14 year after the census; in other words, the
15 Constitution says that we as a Legislature
16 can't vote on district maps before 2012. We
17 can discuss them as we are doing today. We can
18 hear people propose them. Members, Democrats,
19 Republicans, House members, Senators, can make
20 proposals of their own anytime they want, but
21 we can't take dispositive votes until the 2012
22 session.

23 Now, some people have suggested that the
24 Legislature should just draw the maps first and
25 then say this is the way it is and ask the

1 public to comment or refute what the
2 Legislature has drawn. We believe that this
3 puts the answer ahead of the question.
4 Instead, we think there should be no
5 preconceptions created by politicians, but,
6 rather, public testimony should be free and
7 unrestricted. We hope that is what we will
8 have tonight.

9 In fact, the Chairperson of the Fair
10 Districts campaign is on record, having
11 testified before the Senate and the House, that
12 she believes that no maps should be drawn until
13 public testimony is taken in public hearings.

14 Our intent is to use the recommendations
15 from the 26 public hearings that we are having
16 around the state, I think this is hearing
17 number 15, and the input we are getting through
18 the Internet sites as the basis for developing
19 several options for district maps, and we will
20 discuss every option that comes forward in the
21 form of a Bill in open public meetings before
22 any votes are taken, even votes in committee.

23 In other words, what we are saying is if
24 you look at those maps in the back of the room,
25 if you look at the ones actually submitted to

1 the Legislature by groups of Florida residents,
2 and there are some 21 of those already, we are
3 starting the legislative process with the maps
4 that have been submitted to us and the maps we
5 have now. That is a starting point and any
6 other suggestions from the public that we might
7 receive. So if you want to know where we will
8 begin our deliberations, it is with those
9 public submissions and it is with the testimony
10 from these meetings and other public input we
11 will receive either through the U.S. Mail or
12 through the Internet or through your
13 conversations with your legislators.

14 Throughout the process, we will submit
15 additional public -- solicit additional public
16 comment so that proposed maps can mature with
17 the public involved all before the Legislature
18 finally approves any ultimate or final maps,
19 but the Legislature doesn't get to make this
20 decision on our own.

21 Whatever you propose, whatever we hear
22 from the public, whatever is proposed from
23 interest groups or within the Legislature, once
24 it goes through the legislative process and
25 options are voted on and decided upon, then

1 whatever the Legislature passes is submitted
2 for judicial review to ensure that final plans
3 meet every legal requirement. That judicial
4 review is at the state and the federal level.

5 Because our purpose today is to hear from
6 you, all of the rest of the time between now
7 and our 9:00 adjournment, Mr. Chairman, would
8 be used to ensure that every member of the
9 public who is here and wishes to speak will
10 have time to present testimony and be listened
11 to respectfully.

12 If after every citizen has had her or his
13 say, and that is our first priority, if there
14 is time remaining before our scheduled
15 adjournment, and I hope there will be, then any
16 member of the Committee, Democrat, Republican,
17 House member or Senator, may make any
18 statement, offer any observation, answer any
19 question or make any proposal.

20 Of course, any member of the Legislature
21 may today or at any time submit a Bill that
22 includes a redistricting plan, and as soon as
23 that is submitted, we will also make that
24 available to the public.

25 Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out

1 before I yield the Chair back that we are
2 pleased tonight to have with us the
3 distinguished Minority Leader of the Florida
4 Senate, Senator Nan Rich, who is here, and I
5 would like to just recognize her so that people
6 here will know that the Minority Leader is with
7 us.

8 Senator Rich, could you identify yourself?
9 Senator Rich.

10 Mr. Chairman, I hope this description of
11 our schedule and how we will proceed, our
12 timeline and methodology, will help set the
13 stage for a successful hearing.

14 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, Chair
15 Gaetz. That was an excellent overview.

16 For the folks in the back, there are some
17 seats up front, if you would like to come up
18 and sit down. I know it looks like we have a
19 little bit of an overflow here, but we do have
20 some additional seats available at the front of
21 the meeting room. Otherwise -- and we need you
22 to take a seat. Otherwise, apparently the fire
23 code doesn't permit us to let other people in
24 the room. So please come forward and take a
25 seat if you don't have one.

1 Now, while you are doing that, I also want
2 to go ahead and go around and allow each of the
3 members to briefly introduce themselves, and in
4 particular, I want you to hear which different
5 and various parts of the state that they come
6 from, and I think I will start to my left over
7 her with Senator Negrón.

8 SENATOR NEGRÓN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
9 Good evening, everyone, and my name is Joe
10 Negrón. I represent northern Palm Beach County
11 and the Treasure Coast in the Florida Senate,
12 and it is great to see so many constituents
13 from Palm Beach County, St. Lucie County,
14 Indian River County, Okeechobee County and
15 northern Palm Beach County here tonight. So
16 thank you for the wonderful turnout, and we
17 look forward to hearing from you and hearing
18 your comments.

19 I also sit on the Reapportionment
20 Committee, so I will be carefully taking notes
21 on your observations and how you would like the
22 lines to be drawn.

23 And then I would also briefly like to
24 thank Chairman Gaetz and Chairman Weatherford
25 for agreeing to put Stuart as one of the cities

1 where the Reapportionment Committee would meet.

2 SENATOR SIPLIN: Good evening. Gary
3 Siplin, State Senator, District 19, Orlando,
4 Florida. It is a pleasure to be here tonight.
5 God bless you all.

6 SENATOR BENACQUISTO: Good evening. My
7 name is Lizbeth Benacquisto. I am a State
8 Senator for District 27. I also serve on the
9 Redistricting Committee. I represent portions
10 of western Palm Beach County, Glades County,
11 Hendry County, Charlotte County and a big swath
12 of Lee County. Thank you very much for being
13 here and having your voices heard.

14 REPRESENTATIVE MAYFIELD: Good evening.
15 My name is Debbie Mayfield. I represent
16 District 80, which is part of Brevard County,
17 Indian River County and St. Lucie County, and I
18 am just happy to be here to hear what the
19 people have to say on this redistricting
20 process. Thank you.

21 SENATOR RICH: I am Nan Rich, and I am a
22 State Senator, District 34, and as you heard, I
23 am the Democratic Minority Leader, and I
24 represent parts of southwestern Broward County
25 and then my district goes all the way down to

1 the southern end of Miami-Dade County, and I am
2 really happy to be here and to listen and hear
3 what you have to say.

4 SENATOR ALTMAN: Chad Altman, your
5 neighbor to the north. I represent Brevard,
6 Orange and Seminole Counties, portions of those
7 counties, Senate District 24. It is really
8 great to see such a good turnout here, and we
9 really appreciate your time to be here and give
10 us your input.

11 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good evening,
12 everyone. My name is Dwayne Taylor, I
13 represent House District 27 in Volusia County.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: State
15 Representative Mack Bernard representing
16 District 84 in West Palm Beach.

17 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good evening,
18 everyone. John Patrick Julien, representing
19 House District 104, which is in Miami-Dade
20 County. It is a pleasure to be here.

21 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good evening,
22 everyone. State Representative Gwyndolen
23 Clarke-Reed, representing House District 92,
24 all in Broward County, Deerfield Beach, Pompano
25 Beach, Oakland Park, Wilton Manors, a little

1 bit of Ft. Lauderdale, a little bit of north
2 Lauderdale and Tamarac. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Good evening,
4 State Representative Daphne Campbell, District
5 108 from Miami-Dade County.

6 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: Good evening, my
7 name is Tom Goodson. I represent House
8 District 29 from north Brevard County all the
9 way to the St. Lucie County line, running about
10 112 miles long. I serve on the Congressional
11 Redistricting Committee. Thank you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE ROONEY: Good evening
13 everybody, Pat Rooney, House District 83, which
14 is just to the south, northern Palm Beach
15 County, mainly Palm Beach Gardens and Jupiter.
16 Welcome to everybody and look forward to
17 tonight.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Thank you. I am
19 Trudi Williams, House member from District 75,
20 which is Lee and parts of Collier County in
21 southwest Florida. Glad to be here. Thank
22 you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Hello, I am
24 Dorothy Hukill. I represent District 28, which
25 is Volusia County, and I serve on the

1 Redistricting Committee and the Senate
2 Redistricting Subcommittee.

3 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Good evening. My
4 name is Mike Horner, State House District 79,
5 which is Okeechobee County, Orange County,
6 Osceola County and Polk County.

7 REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: Hello, and thank
8 you for coming. I am State Representative Dana
9 Young, and I represent the City of Tampa and
10 parts of Hillsborough County in House District
11 57. Thanks for coming.

12 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thank you for
13 coming tonight. I am Dennis Baxley, serving in
14 the Florida House from Ocala, Marion County,
15 District 24.

16 REPRESENTATIVE JENNE: State
17 Representative Evan Jenne, District 100 in
18 southeast Broward County. Thank you all for
19 having us.

20 REPRESENTATIVE HARRELL: I am
21 Representative Gayle Harrell representing the
22 wonderful District 81, and I see so many of my
23 wonderful constituents here. Thank you all for
24 coming. We are so anxious to hear your input.
25 And District 81 includes St. Lucie and Martin

1 Counties, and I am so pleased to see all of
2 you. It is a standing room only, so thank you
3 all so much. Your input is invaluable. We
4 appreciate it.

5 REPRESENTATIVE HOLDER: Good evening. I
6 am Doug Holder, I represent District 70, which
7 is all within south Sarasota County in
8 Sarasota, and I sit on the Redistricting
9 Committee and am one of the co-Chairs of the
10 Congressional Redistricting Subcommittee.

11 REPRESENTATIVE SNYDER: Good evening. I
12 am William Snyder, State Representative, I
13 represent District 82, which is portions of
14 north Palm Beach County, most of Stuart, you
15 are in my district now, and parts of southern
16 St. Lucie County.

17 And with the Chair's permission, I would
18 like to recognize several of the elected
19 officials. If I have missed you tonight, it is
20 an oversight, but the Sheriff of Martin County,
21 Robert Crowder, is here, sitting over there.
22 Sheriff, if you will stand, we are glad you are
23 here, and his wife, Debbie is sitting there
24 with him. We have County Commissioner Pat
25 Hayes from Martin County. Pat, you are sitting

1 right there. And City Commissioner Jeff
2 Krauskopf, City of Stuart, Jeff is back there.
3 And then we have all the way up from Tequesta,
4 city council member Calvin Turnquest. Calvin,
5 glad you are here. Paula Lewis, County
6 Commission, St. Lucie County. Ms. Lewis, you
7 are -- glad you are here. And then if I could
8 just thank the Sergeant's office from the
9 Senate is here, and all the way from
10 Tallahassee also, the Sergeant's office from
11 the House of Representatives. We are glad you
12 are here.

13 A lot of effort that went into this
14 tonight. And then, folks, thank you so much
15 for coming. We are honored and dignified by
16 your presence. Thank you so much.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Mr. Chairman, my
18 Senate district is in coastal northwest
19 Florida, from Pensacola to the Panama City
20 area.

21 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: And he neglected
22 to say he is from a quaint little town called
23 Niceville, and he is a very nice man.

24 I am Representative Steve Precourt from
25 House District 41, which is smack-dab in the

1 middle of the state, just west of Orlando. It
2 is parts of Orange County, Lake County and
3 Osceola County. I am Chairman of the House
4 Finance and Tax Committee, Vice-Chairman of the
5 House Redistricting Committee, and also a
6 member of the Rules and Calendar Committee.

7 One more time I would remind the folks
8 standing in the back, don't get me cross-ways
9 on a fire code issue, if you can. There's
10 still a few seats up here, and apparently there
11 is a problem letting additional people in while
12 we have folks standing, so I would appreciate
13 that.

14 So everyone sees, you've got a pretty
15 impressive showing from around the state of
16 people that are here to listen to you, and I am
17 happy to welcome them all here today.

18 We are going to adjourn promptly at
19 9:00 p.m. That is what we have advertised this
20 meeting for, and we have over 60 people signed
21 up. So doing the math, we can afford about two
22 minutes per person to speak, but you can always
23 submit written comments, especially if you have
24 some prepared comments today that maybe
25 somebody else has said effectively the same

1 thing, if you can just say I agree with
2 so-and-so and here's my comments for the record
3 and hand them into staff, that will get in the
4 legal record. So you will certainly be on the
5 record.

6 So we are going to -- again, we are going
7 to limit folks to about two minutes. I am
8 using this phone as a timer up here, and it is
9 general. Sometimes we are going to let people
10 talk a little bit more if they are bringing
11 brand-new information to the table, but if they
12 are saying something that six people have
13 already said the same thing, I am going to ask
14 you to please expedite your remarks.

15 So with that, if you could make sure -- I
16 am going to call three or four names out. Come
17 up and actually get in line at the microphone
18 so that we can get people moving through as
19 fast as possible.

20 Our first speaker is going to be Stephanie
21 Abbonizio, followed by Debbie Dent, Allen
22 Miller and Kathy Brandon. So if y'all would
23 start making your way up, we can get this
24 hearing under way.

25 So Ms. Abbonizio?

1 MS. ABBONIZIO: Yes.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: The speaker is
3 yours.

4 MS. ABBONIZIO: Good pronunciation.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

6 MS. ABBONIZIO: Thank you for the
7 opportunity to speak tonight. I am just an
8 ordinary citizen of Palm Beach County, and I
9 have lived in West Palm Beach for the last
10 eight years. I was one of those who retired
11 and moved to Florida.

12 I follow the hearings on television on The
13 Florida Channel and I listen to the PR that is
14 given by various spokespersons before the
15 hearings begin, and I think it all sounds
16 reasonable. Then I am jolted back to reality
17 by what the different presenters say, and I
18 think, uh-oh, proceed with caution.

19 We know that this redistricting is
20 political, but asking the politician to take
21 out politics, to take that out of the equation,
22 is like asking a fish not to swim.

23 The committee spokesperson says every
24 Representative can expect a change in his or
25 her district. He also says Democrats have as

1 much say as Republicans, and to me, that means
2 that there's equal numbers of Democrats and
3 Republicans on the committee and subcommittees.
4 I don't know if that is true.

5 We hear the reason that there are no maps
6 is because there was late notification from the
7 Census Bureau. Maybe that was so, but that was
8 a couple months ago.

9 Others on the Committee say, "We want to
10 hear from the people. We will not begin to
11 undertake this arduous task until everyone who
12 wants to say their piece gets to say it. The
13 Committee will not begin until such time as we
14 hear from everyone."

15 Well, arrangements -- I'm sorry --
16 Amendments 5 and 6 were passed overwhelmingly
17 by Florida voters, and the Legislature joined
18 the suit against these amendments. What didn't
19 you hear?

20 Some people think these hearings are a
21 sham, a waste of taxpayer money, but I'm a
22 believer. The citizens will know whether you
23 hear what we say by your deeds, not your words.
24 If you have a plan then before the end of the
25 session, a plan that follows Amendments 5 and 6

1 and the Voters Rights Amendment Act of 1965, if
2 you have a plan to give citizens an opportunity
3 for the end of time to discuss the plan and
4 contact their Representatives, and if you want
5 all this early in the session, then and only
6 then will we know if we've been heard or not
7 heard, or maybe heard and ignored. I hope this
8 Committee hears what the citizens of Florida
9 have to say and act accordingly. Thank you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
11 much. Our next speaker is going to be Debbie
12 Dent, and, folks, while it may not seem like
13 much, that was about three and a half minutes
14 versus two, and there will be dozens of people
15 who don't get to speak if everyone takes that
16 much time. So, Ms. Dent, the microphone is
17 yours.

18 MS. DENT: Thank you. My name is Debbie
19 Dent, and I'm the Chief Deputy for the Martin
20 County Election. I want to welcome all the
21 committee members to our beautiful Martin
22 County. Supervisor of Elections Vicki Davis
23 sends her regret that she is unable to attend.

24 Her main points are we want to urge you to
25 finalize the redistricting process as soon as

1 possible. The current timetable allows only
2 two weeks to update data, notify voters of
3 changes and provide updated information. When
4 the decision-making process is finalized, our
5 work begins. We must educate the voters, we
6 must lay out the ballots, we must mail overseas
7 ballots 45 days prior to June 30th, and
8 everything has to be done accurately.

9 In drawing district lines, please take the
10 consideration of the city lines. The City of
11 Stuart and Martin County has 10,000 registered
12 voters, and they're divided in two House
13 districts. County lines compact districts.
14 Our voting districts are our precincts. Limit
15 ballot size, which costs less money while
16 confusion. And, of course, our neighborhoods
17 that share common interests.

18 (Inaudible) which is a rural community
19 located in the western area of Martin County
20 with a population of approximately 6,400
21 voters -- 6,400 residents with 2,900 registered
22 voters, they're divided into three House
23 districts and two congressional districts,
24 which creates six ballot styles. They are a
25 very small community population wise, and under

1 the current lines, they're very fragmented.
2 They need a unified voice.

3 In 2012, the eyes of the world will be
4 watching Florida. We have to be successful.
5 We have a huge task ahead of us and we have no
6 room for error. As our Secretary of State Kurt
7 Browning reminds elections officials, failure
8 is not an option.

9 In closing, the decisions you make should
10 not be about what is the best for the
11 legislators, or even what is best for the
12 elections officials. It should be about what
13 is best for the voters. Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
15 ma'am.

16 Our next speaker will be Allen Miller, and
17 then if Nicholas Pecoraro, Timothy Williams and
18 Jon Taylor could come up and get in line, I
19 would appreciate that.

20 You will notice Senator Gaetz is taking a
21 lot of notes. He will be addressing a lot of
22 these questions at the end.

23 Mr. Miller.

24 MR. MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My
25 name is Allen Miller, I've lived in St. Lucie

1 County for almost 40 years, and the first thing
2 that I want to do is let you know that this is
3 my third shot at this process.

4 In '91, you all sent out great big gray
5 books that gathered an incredible amount of
6 dust. In 2001, you sent out CDs, and we all
7 had to go buy new computers because we couldn't
8 handle the size of the files. But we did, and
9 both of those processes were good.

10 I want to compare that to the process that
11 you have done this year, and I want to thank
12 you for it. And the reason I want to thank you
13 for it is it truly is easy to use, and I am not
14 computer literate. It has been very simple to
15 go on-line to find the demographic data and to
16 figure out where we are going.

17 And the one thing I want to leave your
18 staff with, and my notes is, I will be here in
19 2021, and you will not be here in 2021, and I
20 want to remind you that --

21 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank God.

22 MR. MILLER: -- 10, 20 years ago, you held
23 this hearing in Indian River County. This
24 year, of course, we are delighted that you are
25 having it in Martin County. But in 2021, I

1 expect you to bring it to St. Lucie County and
2 (inaudible).

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
4 much, sir.

5 MR. MILLER: But only your staff can get
6 that. Is that me or is that -- I will back up.

7 The one problem that I have with this
8 whole process is you can't get it over fast
9 enough. Those of us who have to work with your
10 product when you are done can't get started
11 until you finish the product. And we realize
12 that after you have heard from all of us, you
13 are not going to be able to do what we all tell
14 you. We also realize when you hear from each
15 other, you are not going to be able to do what
16 you all decide you want done. And then the
17 dirty little secret is the court isn't going to
18 be happy with anything that any of us have
19 done, which is simply going to delay the
20 timeline so badly for this election that those
21 of us who are on the ground sharing the other
22 supervisors' comments have a real problem with
23 the process. So I would urge you to do this as
24 quickly as you can, expedite it all the way
25 along, push for it so no chance of not seeing

1 the courts.

2 The problem for me with 5 and 6 is they
3 are so ambiguous that I don't know how you can
4 do this job. And those are the primary points
5 that I wanted to cover. Thank you very much.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
7 much, sir.

8 Next we have Kathy Brandon. Ms. Brandon,
9 go ahead with your two minutes.

10 MS. BRANDON: Good evening. My name is
11 Kathy Brandon, and I am the Vice-President of
12 the League of Women Voters, St. Lucie County.

13 Let me say that I feel that we are living
14 in this evening. Tonight we should be speaking
15 about maps, but instead I will plead to you to
16 move up your timeline. The congressional maps
17 can be drawn now. There is no reason to wait.
18 Other states have already begun the process and
19 are well ahead of Florida. We are in the
20 national public eye and need to do this process
21 well.

22 St. Lucie County is represented in Florida
23 Congress by four House Representatives and
24 three Senators. This is confusing to the
25 voters. Now is the time to implement Fair

1 Districts. You must move up your timeline in
2 order to avoid massive voter confusion in 2012
3 and allow the public comment or input on the
4 maps.

5 The Committee should be working on maps in
6 September in order to have final approval when
7 the session begins in January 2012.

8 Here is the League of Women Voters'
9 suggestion: One, an October 3rd deadline for
10 legislators to file all proposed redistricting
11 plans; two, complete the committee review of
12 the maps by the conclusion of the interim
13 committee hearings in December of 2011; three,
14 require any amendment be filed with sufficient
15 notice to afford citizens an opportunity to
16 review the various plans; and four, vote on the
17 final plan on the floor by no later than the
18 end of the first week of session, Friday,
19 January 12th, 2012. This allows two months for
20 the court and the Justice Department reviews.
21 I am worried that after 26 hearings, we will
22 still be in the dark as to what the House and
23 Senate have to do with the district maps.

24 Let me close by quoting from "A Citizen's
25 Guide to Redistricting," 2010 edition,

1 published by the Brennan Center for Justice and
2 New York University School of Law. And I
3 quote: "Why does redistricting matter? Our
4 representatives in local, state and federal
5 government set the rules by which we live. In
6 ways large and small, they affect the taxes we
7 pay, the food we eat, the air we breathe, the
8 ways in which we make each other safe and more
9 secure. The way that voters are grouped into
10 districts has an enormous influence on who our
11 representatives are and what policies they
12 fight for." Thank you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
14 Ms. Brandon, appreciate it. And as you have
15 some prepared remarks, would you please submit
16 them to our staff so we can get that accurately
17 reflected in the record?

18 Next we have Mr. Nicholas Pecoraro, who is
19 also with the League of Women Voters.
20 Mr. Pecoraro.

21 MR. PECORARO: My name is Nicholas
22 Pecoraro, and I live at 202 River Walk, Ft.
23 Pierce, Florida.

24 These Fair District amendments passed last
25 November by an overwhelming majority of voters,

1 and here it is in August, eight months later,
2 and in my opinion, the Republican-controlled
3 Legislature is dragging its feet in
4 implementing these constitutional amendments.
5 Please get moving and create a map of the new
6 districts.

7 The legislative holdup is creating
8 uncertainty and will not allow new candidates a
9 proper opportunity to scope out the new
10 districts and organize a strategy to run for
11 office.

12 Many believe that the delay in creating
13 new districts helps those who are now in
14 office, the incumbents. But I think the voters
15 are starting to smarten up. If the
16 redistricting doesn't happen on time, the
17 voters will know that the Republican incumbents
18 are responsible for the delay in satisfying the
19 voice of the people.

20 We all know that a small swing vote of
21 only three percent can change the outcome of
22 any election. Don't let the anger of the
23 voters turn against you. Please, let's get
24 this done fairly, according to the Constitution
25 and soon as possible. In my opinion, if you

1 put politics aside, you can do this in one
2 weekend. Get it done.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
4 Mr. Pecoraro.

5 Next we have Timothy Williams, and if
6 Stephen Hinkle, Eric Miller, Al Rivett and
7 Donna Dupuy could also get in line, I would
8 appreciate that.

9 Mr. Williams, you have the mike.

10 MR. WILLIAMS: I am Timothy Williams, a
11 Florida native. I teach civics and government,
12 and when the students see maps like these, they
13 are hard to explain, and the -- I also want to
14 go, I was lead field researcher for the Census
15 Bureau in (inaudible), and when I was surveying
16 all over West Palm Beach and the Treasure Coast
17 area, one of the things and this is positive
18 for Port St. Lucie. I was told Washington was
19 probably the most integrated city in the
20 country. That, it really is.

21 I never knew -- I repeatedly ran into
22 people in Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River,
23 Okeechobee, who didn't know who their state Rep
24 or state Senator, Congressman was. Why?
25 Because of these maps, and it's ridiculous.

1 Port St. Lucie is the largest community within
2 an hour going north, south, east -- well, not
3 east, but west, and we head up the three areas,
4 three different districts. St. Lucie County is
5 cut up in three different districts. Just
6 makes no sense.

7 Our Congressmen, for example, and some of
8 the other people in the state office,
9 districts from one coast to the other and then
10 down to the end of the state. It is crazy.

11 We also want to make it easier for you.
12 Essentially we want you to make the new maps
13 soon so that people can decide and we will have
14 concise districts that make sense to
15 (inaudible).

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Mr. Williams,
17 I'll have to ask you to wrap it up.

18 MR. WILLIAMS: It would mean -- I know how
19 much it would cost to run, but right now we are
20 making three different (inaudible) stretched
21 all over the state, and it's just too expensive
22 for the average person to run. So we want to
23 make sense for better democracy.

24 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
25 appreciate it.

1 Next we have Mr. Jon Taylor. Mr. Taylor,
2 the microphone is yours.

3 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. Legislators, I
4 welcome you to Stuart, and thank you for coming
5 here to listen to the views of residents before
6 you begin your arduous task of redrawing
7 district boundaries for State House, State
8 Senate and congressional districts.

9 Legislators, my testimony is going to be a
10 lot different than the other testimony you are
11 hearing. I am not here to complain about the
12 process or to talk about geography. Instead, I
13 am here to tell you and everyone in this room
14 the truth about redistricting.

15 Redistricting in the state of Florida has
16 been tougher by the passage of Amendments 5 and
17 6. These so-called Fair District amendments
18 use subjective terms such as "compact,"
19 "practical" and "feasible," and untested
20 concepts regarding minority voting rights.

21 The Florida League of Women Voters has on
22 their website, which you have heard and will
23 hear today for these maps before these hearings
24 are completed.

25 I would like to tell this Committee the

1 League of Women Voters here today that ten
2 years ago, the first State House map, the first
3 State Senate map and the first congressional
4 map submitted were submitted by none other than
5 the League of Women Voters. And you can see
6 this by going through the redistricting
7 archives of the Florida Senate website.

8 I ask what is the reason for this inherent
9 change in position from being the first to
10 submit maps to now saying you are wrong for the
11 legislators to seek public input. The
12 difference is the League of Women Voters and
13 their allies know that Amendments 5 and 6 are
14 so subjective and impossible to fulfill that
15 they don't want to show their hand as to what
16 they think 5 and 6 (inaudible).

17 The reality is that there is no map that
18 can be passed that will satisfy these people.
19 They will complain and sue until they find a
20 court to draw this plan and (inaudible)
21 representatives of the people of Florida.

22 So, in closing, my advice to you is to
23 ignore this nonsense, complete your hearings,
24 and then do your best to draw a fair and good
25 map for the people of Florida. Thank you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

2 Next we will have Stephen Hinkle, followed
3 by Eric Miller, Al Rivett, Donna Dupuy and
4 David Lutrin. Is Mr. Hinkle here? And, again,
5 folks, if you can -- when I call your name out
6 the first time, if you can come up and get in
7 line, that will expedite the process.

8 Mr. Hinkle, you have the microphone, and,
9 again, he is going to be followed by Eric
10 Miller, Al Rivett, Donna Dupuy and David
11 Lutrin. If you can come get in line, I would
12 appreciate it.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Okay. You have
14 the mike.

15 MR. HINKLE: (Inaudible).

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Okay, thank you.

17 MR. HINKLE: My name is Steve Hinkle. I
18 am from Palm Beach County. I am from Palm
19 Beach County in a rural community (inaudible)
20 people.

21 Regretfully for the congressional
22 districts, Palm Beach County has four. Out of
23 those four, three reside in Palm Beach County
24 and one in Broward County. My congressional
25 representative is in southwest Broward County

1 and has no idea (inaudible) with Palm Beach
2 County.

3 So when you do this redistricting, I hope
4 you take into the fact that Palm Beach County
5 itself just in land mass is the third-largest
6 county and that is a population of close to 1.4
7 million people. It would be respectful if we
8 could have a Representative in Congress who
9 could actually live in Palm Beach County
10 representing us, and not close to 80 miles
11 away.

12 Also, when you go through and the part for
13 the second district, again, I do not have a
14 Senator who lives in Palm Beach County. He
15 lives in Martin County. That is (inaudible).
16 My little section of Palm Beach County the only
17 person that basically does it anymore is when
18 it comes down for the State Representative, and
19 that is in with District 83 and (inaudible) he
20 actually (inaudible).

21 So having all these representatives from
22 the state and congressional and House, we want
23 to have truly representative of Palm Beach
24 County, and especially my community. So I hope
25 you take into consideration (inaudible) county

1 and just have people who live in our area to
2 represent us, because right now, this
3 (inaudible), I live in (inaudible), I work in
4 areas in a 12-mile area, but I have
5 (inaudible).

6 Thank you for listening, and I hope you
7 all have a good day.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
9 much, Mr. Hinkle.

10 I have been -- it's been indicated that
11 Mr. Eric Miller is not here. He had an
12 emergency and had to leave. Al Rivett is next,
13 and he will be followed by Donna Dupuy and then
14 David Lutrin.

15 MR. RIVETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
16 Senators and Representatives. Let me just say
17 that I am grateful to have the opportunity to
18 submit my testimony to you before you draw the
19 lines. So I am a 22nd year resident of St.
20 Lucie County, and nearly ten years
21 (inaudible). I currently reside in
22 Congressional District 23, which if you see the
23 map, is part of (inaudible) it comes up from
24 the south and jabs Ft. Pierce. It was the only
25 section of the (inaudible) that really was not

1 together. And I venture to say that given your
2 maps and (inaudible) we won't -- we will not
3 see a congressional representative from the
4 Treasure Coast representing my wife and our
5 family. So I would ask you to keep that in the
6 consideration.

7 We would like to have a congressional
8 district that represents a community of
9 interest.

10 Having said that, let me say God bless you
11 all for the work that you have done to this
12 point, that you are going to do. I know that
13 it is easier said than done, this is not an
14 easy task, and may God be willing and bless
15 you. Thank you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
17 much for that, appreciate it.

18 Ms. Donna Dupuy, and she has left --

19 A VOICE: I am (inaudible).

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
21 much, ma'am. David Lutrin, and if Mary Jane
22 Range, Marcia Halpern and Mona Leonard could
23 come up, we would appreciate it.

24 Mr. Lutrin.

25 MR. LUTRIN: My name is David Lutrin. I

1 started (inaudible) America. (Inaudible) part
2 of the overwhelming majority (inaudible).
3 Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I have
4 been a resident of Florida for close to 23
5 years. With the exception of the 2000
6 election, this is the worst abuse of power in
7 this state.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: And sir, and as
9 an aside ladies and gentlemen, we are here to
10 hear about the redistricting process. So I am
11 going to ask you to limit your comments to the
12 redistricting process, and there will be other
13 opportunities for you to speak to the other
14 issues, the Representatives will be here after
15 the meeting and you can pull them aside at that
16 time.

17 MR. LUTRIN: Redistricting it's pretty
18 obvious that what we say here at this meeting
19 isn't really going to matter. This should have
20 been addressed in the last legislative session.
21 This is a stall tactic. You are in the
22 four-corner offense. This process is going to
23 be delayed to the very end to deliberately
24 confuse voters, make it more difficult for
25 candidates to challenge incumbents. It's about

1 power and abuse of power, and I'm sorry, but
2 you should be ashamed of yourselves. You were
3 elected to serve all of the people.

4 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir,
5 and you have used up your two minutes of time
6 now, so I appreciate it. Thank you.

7 MR. LUTRIN: No, I didn't.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: We are going to
9 go ahead and move to Ms. Mary Jane Range next.

10 MR. LUTRIN: In November the people
11 overwhelmingly --

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Will you please
13 remove this man from the microphone?

14 MR. LUTRIN: -- voted to change the
15 Florida Constitution.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: I have almost 70
17 people that want to speak. We have to keep the
18 limits -- the meetings to two minutes.

19 Ms. Range, you have the microphone.

20 MS. RANGE: My name is Mary Jane Range,
21 AND I am a proud member of the League of Women
22 Voters.

23 I am most concerned about the lack of
24 clarity and the truthful information that
25 surrounds the pending lawsuit. The Senate

1 wisely chose not to get involved in these
2 lawsuits. However, the House has filed
3 documents that oppose the will of the Florida
4 electorate who approved these amendments by
5 63 percent.

6 In a previous listening session, it was
7 stated that the House joined on the side of
8 Balart/Brown for, and I quote, "clarification
9 and not to challenge the constitutionality of
10 the -- of Amendment 6."

11 Why then are there statements in these
12 documents prepared by -- and I have the
13 documents here -- by Gray Robinson, George
14 Meros and Alan Windsor, and I might add paid
15 for by our tax dollars, that the State -- and
16 here I quote from the Complaint in this --
17 called the Complaint in the intervention:
18 "Whereas the Florida House respectfully
19 requests that the Court -- for the Court to
20 declare the amendment unconstitutional under
21 the elections clause of the U.S. Constitution."
22 That seems clear to anyone who can read that,
23 in fact, the House is looking to overturn this
24 amendment, which is now part of our
25 Constitution.

1 I ask why are you continually spending our
2 money to join this suit. And since your
3 original answer was to obtain clarification, it
4 seems that that was clearly untruthful.

5 Further, I ask that you rescind these
6 documents, stop the suit and take the same
7 approach as the Florida Senate and respect the
8 will of the voters.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
10 ma'am.

11 Next we will have Ms. Marcia Halpern, and
12 if the following people will come to get in
13 line: Mr. Edwin Matson, Dowling Watford and
14 Art Argenio.

15 Ms. Halpern, you have the microphone.

16 MS. HALPERN: Hi. I am at two minutes,
17 ten seconds. My name is Marcia Halpern from
18 Palm Beach Gardens.

19 I remember hearing once that Helen Thomas,
20 before she self-destructed, was asked why she
21 had stayed at her job for so long. Her reply
22 was permanent outrage. I don't know if this
23 should really be attributed to her, but this
24 sentiment is why I am here tonight.

25 Outrage is the undermining of our

1 democracy. We spend trillions of dollars
2 spreading democracy around the world, but we
3 are methodically destroying it all across the
4 United States.

5 The purposeful delay in drawing maps,
6 receiving public comment and preparing final
7 plans for the Legislature before it convenes so
8 that it can be voted on in the first week of
9 the session is nothing short of voter disregard
10 and a blatant attempt to protect incumbents.

11 Democracy demands fair and competitive
12 elections. If you wait to the end of the
13 session, there will be little time for new
14 candidates to register to run and make
15 themselves known to their districts.

16 Outrage that the Legislature is spending
17 taxpayers' money to fight something that
18 63 percent of the voters want. If you are so
19 concerned about the spending of tax dollars,
20 how do you justify \$30 million set aside for
21 court battles? What about the tight budget and
22 all of the so-called necessary cuts? You don't
23 really care about the taxpayers or our money.

24 Outrage at the shame of public hearings
25 that have no proposed maps for citizens'

1 comments. Again, another waste of taxpayer
2 dollars in difficult financial times. When
3 maps are finally drawn, there will not be ample
4 time for access for meaningful citizen input.

5 Outrage at the pandering and
6 misrepresentation concerning minority rights.
7 The Florida House's own special counsel on
8 redistricting said that the amendments are an
9 enhancement of minority protections. They will
10 provide fair and equal access for minority
11 voters to elect candidates of their choice.

12 Outrage that you won't answer our
13 questions. You are public servants. We pay
14 your salaries. You owe us more than that in
15 return. You are not doing your jobs.

16 And outrage that Florida again gets a
17 reputation for shady deals and mismanagement of
18 the electoral process. Thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you. Next
20 we have Ms. Marcia Halpern. You have the
21 microphone.

22 MS. HALPERN: Hi. Thank you for letting
23 me take the time to present my feelings and the
24 opportunity for all of us to speak. Thank you
25 for this open, transparent meeting.

1 We, the people of the Treasure Coast, are
2 concerned about the expense and unnecessary
3 waste of time of litigation we cannot afford.
4 Traditionally, minority interests are
5 eliminated, not enhanced during such court
6 battles. We feel the boundaries should be to a
7 common interest, which is our Treasure Coast.
8 Many people have spoken to that and how it is
9 broken up and sort of the absurdity of that.
10 If this goes to the courts, we lose input and
11 the will of the people. Please keep the
12 Treasure Coast together. Thank you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you for
14 those comments.

15 Next on the list I have Mona Leonard. Is
16 Ms. Leonard here -- oh, I'm sorry.

17 Next, Edwin Matson. We are getting there.

18 MR. MATSON: I'm Edwin Matson. I live in
19 Martin County in Stuart, Florida.

20 Florida, after Texas, is one of the most
21 malapportioned states in the Union due to
22 blatant partisan redistricting process that
23 took place in 2002 under a Republican-led
24 Legislature bent on increasing its power. From
25 Florida, Texas, the Republican party has become

1 synonymous with back-room political deal-making
2 that voters distrust.

3 Florida's redistricting process from ten
4 years ago was so riddled with confusion and a
5 lack of standards that led to the Fair
6 Districts movement and a resounding rejection
7 of the kind of partisan redistricting made
8 famous by the Republican party in 2002.

9 Last year, Floridians demanded a change.
10 Sixty-three percent of the people spoke in
11 overwhelming numbers and demanded fair
12 districts, districts where voters decide, not
13 the politicians. The Republican Governor and
14 Republican Legislature fought the adoption of
15 Amendments 5 and 6 tooth and nail, but the
16 voters prevailed, and Fair Districting is now
17 the law.

18 While laying off thousands of teachers,
19 the Republican Legislature leadership in the
20 very same session appropriated over \$30 million
21 of taxpayer money to thwart the will of the
22 people. But we will not be thwarted.
23 Floridians voted to eliminate overt partisan
24 advantage and incumbent protection of the
25 redistricting process. I beseech you, see that

1 the law of the State of Florida is followed.

2 Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

4 Next I have Dowling Watford, and if the
5 other folks -- he will be followed by Art
6 Argenio -- is that you? Great. And then if
7 Robbie Chartier, Hoot Worley and Benjamin
8 D'Avanzo could get in line, I would appreciate
9 it.

10 Mr. Watford.

11 COUNCILMAN WATFORD: Thank you. I am
12 Dowling Watford. I am a city councilman with
13 the City of Okeechobee. As you know,
14 Okeechobee is a very rural community, and so we
15 have some special issues and some special
16 problems.

17 It sounds like I am probably the only
18 person in this room that is happy with the way
19 our district is. I would just like to say that
20 we have two State Representatives and two State
21 Senators, and we really like that. It gives us
22 more representation as a small community.
23 Otherwise, we would not have -- we would only
24 have one voice. So we appreciate having two
25 State Representatives and two State Senators.

1 We also appreciate the way that our
2 district is drawn in that we have two that are
3 from the coastal area and two that are from the
4 heartland area. In our unique position, we
5 have a great relationship with both the
6 heartland and the coast, so it is very
7 important that we keep representation from both
8 those areas.

9 The Okeechobee County Board of County
10 Commissioners has a resolution that we
11 presented to you shortly, and would like to say
12 that we certainly support that and we certainly
13 support having two Representatives for
14 Okeechobee. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

16 Okay. Next, Mr. Argenio, you have the
17 microphone.

18 MR. ARGENIO: Honorable Chairman,
19 Honorable Board, thank you for having me today.
20 My name is Art Argenio, and I actually would
21 like to talk about geography.

22 I recently ran for House District 80,
23 which includes St. -- parts of St. Lucie
24 County, Indian River County and Brevard County.
25 I actually served in the House in District 82

1 before the last redistricting, and I -- and
2 that is back when District 82 went all the way
3 into Palm Beach County. I probably knocked on
4 more doors between Palm Beach County and
5 Melbourne Beach than any person in the history
6 of the world, with the exception of possibly
7 Representative Harrell, but I would contend
8 that I knocked on more different doors than
9 Representative Harrell. And I say all that
10 because I do have a perspective of the
11 geography of the area and the makeup of the
12 area, and what I would like to see is -- and I
13 do have many friends on the platform today.
14 Hopeful they will still be my friends after I
15 slice up their districts.

16 But what I would like to see is take the
17 St. Lucie County portion of District 80,
18 combine it with the St. Lucie County portion of
19 District 78. Now, this really comes into fair
20 redistricting, because those are polar opposite
21 districts. And then what I would further like
22 to see -- pardon me, Representative Harrell --
23 is to continue that district into St. Lucie
24 County south of Midway Road as far as necessary
25 to make the new population requirements.

1 And I thank you for your time, and God
2 bless.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
4 Mr. Argenio. And this brings up a very good
5 point. If you have some specifics on how a
6 district should be drawn, comments are great,
7 but a picture paints a thousand words, so if
8 you can submit a map, even if it is a sketch on
9 the back of a napkin, that will go a long ways
10 towards conveying whatever it is that you are
11 trying to say.

12 I have also been asked by staff to let
13 everyone know that if you have a Blackberry on
14 when you come to the microphone, please turn it
15 off or leave it at your seat so that that will
16 cut out some of the interference and the folks
17 in the back can hear a little bit better.

18 Next, Robbie Chartier, you have the
19 microphone.

20 MR. CHARTIER: Good evening, Robbie
21 Chartier, I am representing Okeechobee County
22 Board of County Commissioners, who did adopt a
23 resolution that asked that you retain the
24 inclusion of two Senate House districts and two
25 State Senate districts that will best serve the

1 interests of Okeechobee County.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
3 much.

4 Next we have Hoot Worley, and if Dwight
5 Mattingly, Kathleen Boland and Jackie
6 Trancynger can come and get in line, I would
7 appreciate it.

8 Mr. Worley, go ahead.

9 MR. WORLEY: I am Mack Worley. I am
10 currently the Chairman of the Economic Council
11 of Okeechobee. I am sure you realize that just
12 means I drew the short straw.

13 I want to thank you for your extraordinary
14 effort in those most extraordinary times.
15 Thank you for the time that you spend. I know
16 that each one of you takes this very seriously,
17 and we thank you for that.

18 I want to echo what Robbie and Dowling
19 have said. We currently have representation
20 from two Senators and two Representatives. And
21 I am often told that Okeechobee is the center
22 of a wheel, that all the roads leading out of
23 Okeechobee are the spokes. I think more
24 correctly we are probably -- if you drew a
25 circle around Orlando and the Ridge and the

1 Treasure Coast and Palm Beach County and the
2 Glades, all those circles would converge over
3 Okeechobee, or overlap, and we need that
4 diverse representation. Economically, we are
5 tied to all of those areas. We recognize that
6 we don't have any clout. We do have some
7 influence because of the way the districts are
8 drawn now, and we encourage you, we think that
9 it is requisite that you don't put that out of
10 balance. And thank you for this time.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
12 Mr. Worley.

13 Next we have Benjamin D'Avanzo.

14 MR. D'AVANZO: It's close, it is D'Avanzo.

15 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

16 MR. D'AVANZO: Well, I trust I have your
17 attention.

18 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: And two minutes
19 of it, I might add.

20 MR. D'AVANZO: In Martin County, you gave
21 three, but we'll do two.

22 Senator Gaetz, you said back in March, and
23 I quote, "My direction from Senate President
24 Mike Haridopolos is to engage in the most
25 transparent, open and interactive redistricting

1 process in America." Yet in the 2011
2 Legislature, had an opportunity to increase the
3 transparency of this process, you chose not to.
4 Why do I say this? Because a Bill introduced
5 earlier this year had the lawmakers' documents
6 disclosed during the redistricting process was
7 defeated. That Bill could have lifted the
8 current exemption for disclosure, thereby
9 increasing transparency.

10 Secondly, Senator Gaetz and Representative
11 Weatherford here, it would be nice if you could
12 help us understand your dual role here. You
13 know, on one hand, you have asked us, your
14 employer, for our feedback on the
15 redistricting, yet on the other hand, you are
16 simultaneously using our tax dollars to
17 overturn the very instructions we, the people,
18 gave you this fall. Let me explain.

19 The Florida House joined a lawsuit that
20 seeks to overturn Amendment 6 and
21 unconstitutional attacks on minority districts.
22 Since Florida Department of State is defending
23 those new standards, taxpayers, all of us, are
24 stuck with the cost of lawyers on both sides.
25 That kind of stinks. The House budget

1 30 million for this litigation, while the
2 Senate set aside 9 million as its share.
3 Representative Weatherford, although he is not
4 here, he denied that the 30 million existed to
5 fight -- excuse me, he denied that 30 million
6 existed to fight the amendment, yet at a June
7 redistricting meeting in Panama City he stated,
8 and I quote, "Your tax dollars are not going to
9 be spent on anything like that." Earlier this
10 month, PolitiFact Florida ruled that your claim
11 -- or his claim was false, with House Speaker
12 Dean Cannon saying that the total sum of
13 30 million had been set aside in two House
14 accounts. Reportedly, more than one million
15 has been spent on this litigation to defeat our
16 vote.

17 Senator Hays also earned a false ruling
18 from PolitiFact. He stated the House joined
19 the lawsuit as an intervenor, seeking
20 clarification, not to fight the lawsuit, but
21 the House filed the motion according to --
22 let's see here, I apologize.

23 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: I am going to
24 have to ask you to wrap it up.

25 MR. D'AVANZO: Sure, I will wrap it up for

1 you.

2 We demand a second -- excuse me. We
3 demand a second round of public meetings in the
4 fall to explain and show your mapping revisions
5 before January to give us a chance to voice our
6 opinion before a final vote is taken in the
7 Legislature. Voters are to choose their
8 Representatives, not the other way around. And
9 I would be remiss, sir, if I didn't remind you
10 that you work for us.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

12 Next we have Dwight Mattingly.

13 Mr. Mattingly, you have the microphone.

14 MR. MATTINGLY: Thank you for the
15 opportunity to speak tonight. I think most of
16 what I would have to say has been said, so let
17 me put it this way: The citizens of Florida
18 spoke when the Amendments 5 and 6 were passed.
19 We asked that you take the wording that has
20 been added to the Constitution and apply it in
21 redistricting the districts in a fair,
22 equitable way that has been given to you.

23 As citizens, if we want to see a bridge
24 built, we would hire an engineer. If we wanted
25 to see a -- buy a piece of property, we would

1 hire a surveyor to survey that. If we wanted
2 to fly somewhere, we would want a certified
3 pilot to guide us. You are paid by the
4 taxpayers to hire staff that have the
5 professional understanding, the knowledge of
6 what the Constitution now says, and the proper
7 configuration of the map, as well as the
8 population, to be able to put together the fair
9 districts.

10 To expect us as citizens, who all work
11 jobs, if we have jobs, to take the opportunity
12 to do what Senator Gaetz said he did in 15
13 minutes, and that is learn the program, the
14 question I would like to ask of Senator Gaetz
15 is, have you drawn a map and maps? To show
16 that we are fair, we need professional people
17 to do this and then put the maps out for the
18 citizens to comment on.

19 Thank you for your time.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

21 Okay. Next we are going to have Kathleen
22 Boland, who will be followed by Jackie
23 Trancynger, and if Joseph Russo and Roland
24 O'Brien could come get in line, I would
25 appreciate it.

1 Ms. Boland.

2 MS. BOLAND: Yeah, my name is Kate Boland
3 from Martin County. As one of your employers,
4 I would like to thank you for taking the time
5 to come and talk to me and others and get our
6 opinions about the redistricting issue.

7 I think the biggest problem with the
8 redistricting, with Amendments 5 and 6, is the
9 lack of clarity as to the meaning. I did not
10 support them for that reason. In particular,
11 looking at some of the advocates for these
12 amendments and the lack of clarity, it seemed
13 clear to me that these were going to end up in
14 the courts. That is not where we want our
15 decisions to be made. This should be made by
16 the Legislature, and it should be done within
17 the proper goals of representing the citizens
18 effectively. So those are laudable goals, I
19 agree with that, but I think it is totally
20 unclear as to what is intended by these
21 amendments.

22 For example, what does compactness mean?
23 They talk about intent, intent and result. How
24 are we supposed to know what is the intent of
25 the people making these decisions? And won't

1 that be just challenged immediately? I think
2 it will be. So I don't think the trial lawyers
3 and others who are looking to see this thrown
4 into the courts ought to be given that
5 opportunity. I think we, the people, ought to
6 have the opportunity that you are giving us now
7 to comment on that and help to clarify it.

8 I would like to say, I guess, when you
9 make your decision, to keep in mind true
10 fairness for the people of Florida who will be
11 represented in districts that will not be
12 incumbency protection districts, but will truly
13 be competitive districts that will represent
14 the interests of communities such as the
15 Treasure Coast, and that their compactness will
16 not be designed in a way that will favor a
17 particular party against another party.

18 Thank you very much for the time.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
20 ma'am.

21 Next we have Jackie Trancynger.

22 MS. TRANCYNGER: My name is Jackie
23 Trancynger.

24 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: You can go ahead
25 and pull it down. You can pull it down.

1 MS. TRANCYNGER: Can it come down? I am
2 very short.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: There you go.

4 MS. TRANCYNGER: I live in Jensen Beach,
5 and I really don't want to thank you for being
6 here this evening, because I think -- I think
7 these things are shams and charades.

8 Sixty-three percent of the citizens in
9 Florida voted for the Fair District amendments,
10 you know full well how the public feels on this
11 issue, and yet you are spending my tax dollars
12 to attempt to invalidate and attack your own
13 State Constitution.

14 And I might add you are doing this at the
15 same time that your Governor and many of you in
16 our Legislature are casting votes to destroy
17 our educational system, fire teachers, fire
18 South Florida Water Management District, reduce
19 funds for healthcare and social services for
20 the poor, the elderly and children.

21 You have set aside \$30 million and you
22 have already spent a million on the lawsuit.
23 You say it is for clarification. Come on down
24 to my lanai, we will sit in the back in Jensen
25 Beach and I will clarify it for you, and -- and

1 I won't charge you \$300 an hour like the
2 lawyers are charging you for the lawsuit. Do
3 you think we don't understand why you are doing
4 this? We are not unintelligent. We are not
5 dumb. We know it is to protect your seats.
6 And what the outcome will be is a trampling of
7 my voting rights and the subverting of the will
8 of the people of the state of Florida.

9 Will the maps be done early enough in
10 2012? You throw us a bone by telling us to go
11 to a website and draw our own maps. Give me a
12 break. That is your responsibility. We all
13 know those maps will be drawn in formally
14 smoke-filled rooms away from public scrutiny,
15 and maybe we will see them three days before
16 you vote on them. I can't afford to drive to
17 Tallahassee at that time. I am trying to live
18 on my Social Security income and my \$187 a
19 month supplemental health insurance that I have
20 to pay, while, I might add, your Governor
21 spends \$400 a year for his health plan and is
22 now refusing federal healthcare funds for us in
23 the state of Florida.

24 Only two words that I can safely say and
25 retain my dignity and class here tonight are

1 disgraceful, dishonest.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
3 much.

4 Mr. Joseph Russo, you have the microphone.

5 MR. RUSSO: How do I follow that?

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Just tilt the
7 microphone up a little higher.

8 MR. RUSSO: There you go.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: There you go.

10 MR. RUSSO: Well, hello, Representatives
11 and Senators. My name is Joseph R. Russo. I
12 am a life-long resident of the City of Palm
13 Beach Gardens in northern Palm Beach County,
14 and I am currently a student at Florida Gulf
15 Coast University, studying in the political
16 science program.

17 I come here today first of all to thank
18 you. I know this process may seem very
19 agonizing and annoying at times, but it is what
20 makes our democracy great and it is a very big
21 part of the transparency that we try to put
22 forth in this state. And while there are those
23 people that are going to be angry no matter
24 what they do -- excuse me, what you do, you
25 draw maps, they are going to be angry that you

1 have already done the process, you don't draw
2 maps, they are angry that you haven't done it
3 at all, it is that you are actually here
4 talking to us that really matters.

5 What I am here to mention to you all today
6 is that although there are maps that have to be
7 made, it is not just a map. The areas that we
8 see here today are -- are our towns, our
9 cities, they are not just places on maps. That
10 is why I really appreciate everyone going from
11 town to town more so because you get to see
12 every bit of Florida, not just a little spot on
13 the map that says, "Stuart, Florida," but you
14 actually get to see the people there, you
15 actually get to see the town, you actually get
16 to see what this place is like, so when you are
17 going through this redistricting process, you
18 get to see what these like areas are actually
19 like. So when you sit down after all these
20 many redistricting meetings are done, you can
21 see why the Treasure Coast should probably be
22 grouped together with currently Representative
23 Vernie -- not that Representative Bernie, but,
24 yes, Representative Vernie's district, and
25 while some of the coastal areas of Florida are

1 best kept together because they are very like
2 areas. Some of the internal areas, the inner
3 rural and farming areas of Florida are very
4 alike, so they should probably be kept
5 together. That is what I really would like to
6 stress to you all today.

7 And, again, I would like to thank you all
8 very much, and if there is one thing I can say
9 to you, that is to keep trucking along and that
10 no matter what, I know you will persevere
11 through this and provide us good representation
12 on the state level.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
14 Mr. Russo.

15 MR. RUSSO: Thank you very much.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Okay. Next we
17 have Roland O'Brien, and then if we could get
18 Tobin Overdorf, David Glener and Mike Jones to
19 get in line, I would appreciate it.

20 Mr. O'Brien.

21 MR. O'BRIEN: Good evening, Mr. Chairman,
22 Representatives and committee members. I don't
23 have a prepared speech. I am a resident of Ft.
24 Pierce in the Treasure Coast. I am not going
25 to talk politics. I am not going to try to

1 chastise you.

2 The Treasure Coast, as some of the
3 previous speakers have mentioned, should as
4 best possible with the various districts be
5 kept together. We have a marine industry that
6 runs north and south, we have a fishing
7 industry that runs north and south. The Indian
8 River ties us all together. We have the Indian
9 River citrus district; again, pretty much comes
10 right down through the Treasure Coast.

11 I realize it is not easy. I am in the
12 Congressional District 16. Runs all the way
13 from the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf Coast.
14 What, pray tell, does Port Charlotte have in
15 common with the Treasure Coast?

16 We also don't have a lot of commonality
17 with the people out at Okeechobee. They should
18 be surrounded by people and districts that are
19 best able to suit their needs.

20 We have tourism commonality here in the
21 Treasure Coast. Someone out in the center of
22 the state doesn't tie in with the advertising
23 and the way that we operate here on the
24 Treasure Coast.

25 That is all I would like to ask.

1 Respectfully, please try to keep the Treasure
2 Coast together as best possible. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
4 Mr. O'Brien.

5 Next we have Tobin Overdorf. Tobin, are
6 you here? He will be followed by David Glener
7 and then Mike Jones.

8 Mr. Overdorf.

9 MR. OVERDORF: Good evening, and thank
10 you. Again, Toby Overdorf, I am a Republican
11 living here in Martin County, and I just want
12 to thank you all for coming through and
13 bringing your road show to us.

14 I would request that when you look at the
15 redistricting, that you first look at the lines
16 associated with the counties and located with
17 the cities. If these municipal boundaries
18 cannot be used due to population or things
19 along those lines, I would request you use
20 rivers, canals, things like that. If you cut
21 through a street, through a neighborhood, it is
22 just not working for me, and folks on one side
23 of the street getting represented by somebody
24 in one area, and another side of the street is
25 another, it just doesn't seem to work, whereas

1 you have these fantastic boundaries within
2 Florida known as our rivers, canals and
3 streams.

4 Ladies and gentlemen, I also request that
5 there are some Representatives that are --
6 frankly have their representation through the
7 middle of Lake Okeechobee, I believe that is a
8 pretty famous district, and I would request
9 that the -- there is no land that goes through
10 the middle of Lake Okeechobee that can be
11 represented, and I would request that that
12 district be amended as well.

13 Finally, I would just request that y'all
14 use some common sense when you are putting this
15 together, and that is something that often
16 alludes many of us when we are making
17 decisions, but if you sit back and take a
18 little look and use some common sense.

19 So that is what I have to say. Thank you
20 very much, and Ms. Williams, please keep up the
21 good work on the water quality.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
23 Mr. Overdorf.

24 Okay. Next we have David Glener, followed
25 by Mike Jones, and if the following people

1 could get in line: Kherri Anderson, Thelma
2 Waters, and Rose Mur -- Mur something.

3 Mr. Glener, you are next.

4 DR. GLENER: Actually, my name is David
5 Glener.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Glener.

7 DR. GLENER: I am a physician practicing
8 in Port St. Lucie for much of the 19 years that
9 I have lived in the Palm City, and I absolutely
10 promise that I am not going to scold you all.
11 Though some of you have been naughty, I won't
12 scold you.

13 I would just like to make some specific
14 requests, please, regarding districts, nothing
15 in the abstract. Number one, I live in Palm
16 City, and I feel as though I have been
17 marginalized. I am in Ms. Harrell's districts,
18 no complaints or disrespect, Ms. Harrell, but I
19 really belong with Representative Snyder's
20 district. Palm City is a bedroom community of
21 Stuart, and I have been completely marginalized
22 and grouped in with the majority of Port St.
23 Lucie. Even if you read the Stuart news, there
24 is very little comment -- there's some comment
25 about what Ms. Harrell does, but the majority

1 of it tends to focus on Representative Snyder.

2 So if you look at the map of Palm City,
3 you will see that the community is almost
4 literally bisected. It doesn't go through any
5 particular subdivision. My understanding, it
6 goes down Martin Downs Boulevard. I would ask
7 that you keep Palm City within the same
8 district as you have Stuart, at least for the
9 State House.

10 My other recommendation is -- I am quite
11 north of 40 and I actually tried to tackle your
12 website. I have 24 years of education and two
13 advanced science degrees. I couldn't do it.
14 So -- so I actually pulled out a calculator and
15 a pencil, I went to the census data and I
16 looked. The target number is about 700,000 for
17 a congressional district to represent the
18 people in the state of Florida with the added
19 two seats coming our way. I happened to notice
20 if you add the populations of Martin County,
21 St. Lucie County, Indian River County and
22 Okeechobee County, it is almost exactly 700,000
23 people. I don't see how anyone can possibly
24 dispute clarity or anything having to do with
25 Amendments 5 and 6 as to whether or not these

1 are compact or logical districts.

2 The area you are sitting in right now is
3 known as the Treasure Coast. We all know that
4 comprises Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River
5 County. I can tell you from my own experience
6 living in Martin County and practicing in St.
7 Lucie County, that I interface with Okeechobee
8 folks on a regular basis. There is not much
9 out there except agrarian interests, and when
10 they need a lot of their goods and services,
11 these folks will come into St. Lucie and Martin
12 County, and I feel like they are truly
13 integrated into the community.

14 One last thing before I let you all go. I
15 hope you can't tell my political orientation,
16 because then I will have done my job. I am
17 just trying to help, not give you a hard time,
18 and I would urge you to use our children to
19 help you through this process. I only think to
20 mention that because one of my kids' middle
21 school teachers used to pose complex political
22 problems to the middle schoolers, to the eighth
23 graders, and they came up with some remarkable
24 answers. They are not old enough to be
25 cynical, they don't have a political agenda,

1 and once you reach the age of 12, most of us,
2 if we are intelligent, pass from the age of
3 concrete reasoning to abstract reasoning. They
4 can give you some very reasonable answers and
5 it is a good measure by which you can see if
6 you are being fair and reasonable.

7 One last thing and then I --

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: I am going to
9 have to -- you are way over the two minutes.

10 DR. GLENER: I'm sorry.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: If it is quick,
12 go.

13 DR. GLENER: But just remember, you guys
14 are a huge committee, and a camel is a horse
15 that was made by a committee.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
17 appreciate that.

18 Mr. Mike Jones is next. Is Mr. Jones
19 available? No Mike Jones.

20 Khherri Anderson, you are up next.

21 MS. ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
22 members of the Committee. My name is Khherri
23 Anderson, and I represent the Martin County
24 Supervisor of Elections office.

25 I just want to briefly share with you

1 about Indiantown. Indiantown has a population
2 of 6,408 residents. 2,901 of those residents
3 are voters to Martin County. In Martin County,
4 Indiantown is the only location that is split
5 with three districts. And I want to remind
6 you, again, we are only talking about 2,901
7 voters.

8 In first, in Congressional District 16,
9 1,446 voters; Congressional District 23, 1,455
10 registered voters; House District 78, 962
11 voters; House District 81, 1,621 voters; and
12 House District 82, 318 voters.

13 I want to just take you on a brief trip.
14 Warfield Boulevard is the main stretch of
15 Indiantown, and for those of you who are not
16 familiar, Indiantown is a community that prides
17 on being its brother's keeper. Voter A resides
18 and lives at 12000 Southwest Warfield Boulevard
19 and is in Congressional District 23 and House
20 District 82, while voter B lives at 16022
21 Southwest Warfield Boulevard and is in
22 Congressional District 16 and House District
23 81. And we have voter C who resides at 19200
24 Warfield Boulevard and is in district --
25 House -- Congressional District 23 and House

1 District 81. I ask you, how is that considered
2 equal representation?

3 Also, on Kanner Highway, which is also in
4 Indiantown, where they have two congressional
5 districts and one House district. Voter B
6 lives -- voter D lives at 13071 Southwest
7 Kanner Highway, and is in Congressional
8 District 23 and House District 82. And
9 finally, voter E resides at 15000 Southwest
10 Kanner Highway and in Congressional District 16
11 and 82.

12 What we want to remind you is that we are
13 only focusing on 2,901 people who are
14 registered voters who are split in three
15 districts. I would encourage you all as you go
16 back to make these decisions that you remember
17 that these residents of Indiantown deserve one
18 representative in Congress, one representative
19 in the State Legislature, that this is a
20 community that works together, that strives
21 together, and they deserve to be one community,
22 one voice and one vote.

23 I also would like to challenge you all
24 that as you go back to make these lines, that
25 you consider that this should not be about you,

1 but about the representatives and voters of
2 Indiantown, again, only 2,901 voters who are
3 split into three districts. Thank you for your
4 time.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
6 ma'am.

7 Next we have Ms. Thelma Waters, who will
8 be followed by Rose, and then if Denise White,
9 Eleanor Hanley and Linda Green could come get
10 in line, I would appreciate that.

11 Ms. Waters.

12 MS. WATERS: Yes, I am Thelma Waters, but
13 I support the sayings of Kherrri Anderson and
14 Debbie Dent. They said it so beautifully,
15 there is nothing I could say to make it better,
16 other than I am a 65-year resident of
17 Indiantown, and I have been there and I have
18 seen it and I know it.

19 I appreciate you all coming here, and the
20 gentleman who was talking about how you can
21 draw the lines, but sometime I feel like I am
22 not on the Treasure Coast, because we are in
23 Indiantown. We are close to Okeechobee and we
24 are in the farming community, but we want what
25 is best for Indiantown, and I hope you think

1 about that when you do your redistricting.

2 Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
4 much, ma'am. You did an excellent job of
5 adding comments to that. Thank you.

6 Are you Rose?

7 MS. WHITE: No, I'm sorry.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Is Rose here?

9 Okay. Next, Denise White.

10 MS. WHITE: Yes. Good evening, my name is
11 Denise White. I am a voter and a homeowner in
12 Martin County.

13 A lot of folks have already covered issues
14 I would have discussed, but I would just like
15 to ask you a few questions. Maybe somebody
16 else mentioned this, too.

17 I really feel like it is a conflict of
18 interest for y'all to be drawing your own
19 districts. That is something that seriously
20 needs to be revisited.

21 Also, many states, including Alabama,
22 Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa,
23 Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska,
24 Nevada and Oklahoma have already completed or
25 almost completed their redistricting. So this

1 is totally nonsensical to me that you can't
2 have maps for us.

3 Also, in Arizona, when the Legislature
4 redistricted, they came out with actual
5 proposed maps. Really that would be the
6 preferred process, propose something to the
7 voters and then we can move this process along,
8 because as it is now, it looks like we may not
9 even have maps by June, and that is when
10 candidates need to file. So, again, you are
11 really favoring incumbents, again, primarily
12 Republicans.

13 One thing I would also like to ask you
14 about is, okay, when I looked up the word
15 "gerrymandering" on-line, the examples I got
16 were U.S. Congressional District 16, Tom
17 Rooney's, okay. Again, people have mentioned
18 this, but it takes in a little piece of Palm
19 Beach County, then it is Martin County, then it
20 shoots over -- oh, Sebring, yes, we've got a
21 lot in common with Sebring, drops down to Port
22 Charlotte, over to Hendry, so we got LaBelle.
23 This is not compact. This is not contiguous.
24 We are not communities of interest.

25 Again, I would agree with the folks who

1 have spoken earlier that the Treasure Coast,
2 you know, what a radical concept. It doesn't
3 take a genius to figure out compact,
4 contiguous, the Treasure Coast, Indian River,
5 St. Lucie, Martin County.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
7 ma'am.

8 MS. WHITE: And I would also like to look
9 at --

10 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: I am going to
11 have to ask you to wrap it up. You are over
12 the -- well over the two minutes, and then
13 we've got Eleanor Hanley and Linda Green are
14 next. Is Eleanor --

15 MS. WHITE: Okay. Thank you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
17 ma'am. And your name is? Eleanor is yielding
18 her time.

19 Linda Green is next, followed by Richard
20 Learned, Jerry Brewer and Avron Rifkin.

21 Ms. Green.

22 MS. GREEN: Yes, I am Linda Green and I am
23 a native Floridian, and this is my second round
24 also talking to a committee on redistricting.

25 It is unfortunate that Congressman Rooney

1 is the poster child here, and it just speaks to
2 what the amendments were about, that we did
3 want representation. So I am not going to hone
4 in on the points that Denise White just
5 elegantly showed you with maps.

6 What I would like to plead with you is
7 what would it cost, what would your cost be if
8 you did fair districting? Would you lose a lot
9 of seats, you know? And what are you gaining
10 by having 75 percent control of our legislators
11 and you have the Governor's seat? Are we
12 better off? I think that maybe we need to
13 balance out. I think that it would be good for
14 Florida. And I guess -- you know, I don't -- I
15 think most of you might know my political
16 persuasion, but I don't believe that one side
17 is always right, I just don't. And I think --
18 and I guess I do believe in being an American
19 and having the process and having the
20 conversations.

21 So you guys are taking a lot of hits
22 because people are feeling disenfranchised, it
23 is their worst fear, that these lines are being
24 drawn behind closed doors. They are going to
25 be let out late and everybody is going to be

1 scrambling to try to get to their seat. I say
2 give it up, put out maps now, don't be attached
3 to them, get feedback, readjust them and do it
4 in a timely process. You get to look like the
5 good guys and you don't take all these other
6 hits, nobody is suspicious, we get more people
7 participating in the process and it is a
8 win-win for Floridians. Thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

10 Okay, folks, we are a little over -- we
11 are right about halfway through the list, and
12 we are advocating that everybody hit their two
13 minutes so we can get the last guy on the list,
14 Mr. Richard Bernard, up to speak. Later on,
15 Richard, you are number 68, we are on number
16 37.

17 So Richard Learned, you have the mike.

18 MR. LEARNED: I promise not to take the
19 two minutes. I have a couple of brief
20 comments.

21 I've followed this very closely and done
22 an awful lot of reading, and as a voter
23 representing myself, I am very disturbed. The
24 vast majority of this state passed two
25 constitutional amendments. I don't consider it

1 a democracy when the Legislature, however they
2 try to cover it over with wallpaper, is taking
3 money that should be spent on our schools and
4 opposing the will of the people. That is not a
5 democracy.

6 Also, the only other point I want to say
7 is that the proposed schedule is obviously --
8 and this is from a lot of reading I have done
9 -- is intended to eliminate as many voters as
10 possible, because it is going to be impossible
11 to get everyone able to vote, including the
12 military overseas, with the schedule that you
13 are keeping us on. Thank you very much.

14 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

15 Next we've got Jerry Brewer. He will be
16 followed by Avron Rifkin, and if Barbara
17 Learned, Janet, and she did not put her last
18 name down, and Adrienne Gardner would each come
19 stand in line, I would appreciate it.

20 Mr. Brewer, you have the mike.

21 MR. BREWER: Hi, my name is Jerry Brewer.
22 I have been a registered voter here in Martin
23 County since 1975.

24 At our last election, 63 percent of us
25 voted for Amendments 5 and 6 to stop the

1 gerrymandering in the state of Florida. Since
2 then, we have learned that over \$20 million of
3 our taxpayer money has been spent on litigation
4 to delay this process, the process that we
5 voted for. And why? Well, I believe that to
6 delay the Fair District maps that we voted for
7 is meant to favor the incumbents and
8 disenfranchise voters.

9 I think we can all agree that failure to
10 approve maps by January 2012 would delay final
11 approval of the new districts until close to
12 election day. This could cause massive voter
13 confusion and leaving little time for
14 candidates to qualify before overseas ballots
15 for August primary are even mailed out.
16 Supervisors of Elections from many counties
17 have testified at hearings that failure to
18 accelerate the timeline will impair their
19 ability to conduct elections and will create
20 havoc with absentee and military voters.

21 So my short message to you is, let's get
22 this done so the rest -- so the community can
23 have some more input on it. Let's get it done
24 before January. Thank you.

25 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

1 Avron Rifkin. He will be followed by
2 Barbara Learned.

3 Mr. Rifkin.

4 MR. RIFKIN: Ladies and gentlemen, I --

5 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: If you could
6 pull that mike down a little bit for you.

7 There you go.

8 MR. RIFKIN: I was born in 1929, moved to
9 Florida in -- three years later.

10 We have been gerrymandered to death. I
11 repeat that, because I only have a short period
12 of time, we have been gerrymandered to death.
13 There is not one person in this room that isn't
14 in there for their own benefit. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

16 Barbara Learned is next, and she will be
17 followed by Janet.

18 Ms. Learned.

19 MS. LEARNED: Thank you. I am not going
20 to take too much time, because I have noted one
21 thing: There are virtually no people in this
22 room who are happy with the system we currently
23 have for districting. To some extent, it would
24 sound quite true most of the people in this
25 room are not very happy with the people who

1 represent them, and really don't want it to
2 continue.

3 There's always both sides when it is time
4 to redistrict. There are the in's and the
5 outs, and the in's want to stay there. I can't
6 imagine why. Serving in your job is not easy,
7 it is not pleasant, but it sure makes you feel
8 good when you are out in public. And I think
9 it is time you thought about whether your
10 constituents feel good when you come up to
11 shake their hand and they really don't want to.

12 Do this right this time. Don't worry
13 about keeping your job. They don't pay you
14 enough even though you do get rich. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

16 Janet is next, followed by Adrienne
17 Gardner, and if we could have Francis Chicuine,
18 Betty Paterson and Gary Worth come get in line,
19 I would appreciate that.

20 Janet.

21 A VOICE: Janet first?

22 MS. KRATZER: I am Janet.

23 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: I have Janet --

24 MS. KRATZER: I am Janet Kratzer.

25 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: League of Women

1 Voters.

2 MS. KRATZER: League of Women Voters. I
3 am President of the League of Women Voters of
4 Martin County, and I wanted to emphasize
5 tonight that the voters have spoken. The
6 passage of Amendments 5 and 6 was to mean that
7 districts are to be contiguous and compact,
8 equal as possible in population, and are drawn
9 making use of existing city, county and
10 geographical boundaries.

11 There are common interests in communities.
12 Coastline communities are prevalent in Florida.
13 We have fishing and boating and related
14 businesses and motels and oceanic opportunities
15 for all ages, entertainment, restaurants, all
16 important to attract tourists. A resort area
17 for many, and a livelihood for residents.
18 Residents/voters see their diverse interests
19 best represented with city, county,
20 geographical boundaries being observed.

21 Drop the legal challenge. The amendments
22 were to see non-political standards for
23 redistricting. Voters want change. Do not let
24 this Legislature be known for placing obstacles
25 in the path of the voters' clear message.

1 Thank you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
3 Ms. Kratzer.

4 Next we have Adrienne Gardner, and she
5 will be followed by Francis Chicuine.

6 Ms. Gardner.

7 MS. GARDNER: I am very impressed. This
8 is my first time at one of these meetings. I
9 would like to stand here and talk to you about
10 why you don't think that changes in the voting
11 laws would not adversely affect a large
12 minority of people in this state, but then we
13 would be talking about voter suppression. Oh,
14 yeah, that is what we are talking about, isn't
15 it? Voter suppression. That is what fair
16 districting is all about, voter suppression.

17 Ladies and gentlemen, this is not the year
18 2000. This is 2010. The economy is very, very
19 bad, and unlike Europe and the Arab spring, in
20 my opinion, the American people are very, very
21 patient. My suggestion is that this is not the
22 time to try it. My question is, why don't we
23 just outsource drawing the maps to China,
24 because the way things are going, that is what
25 is going to happen anyway.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.
2 Francis Chicuine, followed by Betty Paterson.

3 MR. CHICUINE: Hi, my name is Frank
4 Chicuine, I live in Stuart, and I tried to
5 look at this objectively and I tried to come up
6 with some ideas that might make sense, and I've
7 heard some speakers here tonight that made a
8 lot of sense to me in terms of what is
9 happening in Indiantown, Ft. Pierce and in Port
10 St. Lucie and Martin County on the
11 representative side, and I look at it from the
12 point of view of a hundred thirty or forty
13 thousand people per State Representative with a
14 population of 18 million people and 120
15 Representatives. And I look at Martin County,
16 and I think we could solve that problem
17 relatively easy, because that is about the
18 number of people that live in Martin County.
19 And I have a great deal of respect for both
20 Representatives that work in Martin County, but
21 it would seem, based on everything I have heard
22 here tonight, that it would make a lot more
23 sense if we took Martin County, tried to
24 determine how many people there were in Martin
25 County, and I think it is around 140,000, which

1 coincides with the representative level of
2 140,000, and not confuse people.

3 Most of the people I know don't know who
4 their Representative is. It is terrible to say
5 that, but that is a fact. And if I travel to
6 Ft. Pierce, the situation gets progressively
7 worse. And, again, I don't have any disrespect
8 for the Representative that covers part of Ft.
9 Pierce, but he lives in Boca. And if you --
10 any of you spent anytime in Boca, it is not Ft.
11 Pierce. I had a granddaughter that went to
12 college in Boca, and I spent a lot of time
13 there, and people go to dinner there at eight,
14 nine o'clock at night, and the restaurants
15 close at 6:00 in Ft. Pierce. So you got a
16 whole different variety of people that live in
17 different parts of the Treasure Coast, if you
18 will. So I think you ought to look at those
19 kinds of things.

20 On the senatorial side, it is a little
21 different. You go 450,000 people. It seems to
22 me you ought to go east to west, but not all
23 the way across the way you did -- or you did
24 with Congressional 16. Again, respect for the
25 Congressman, but it is impossible for him to

1 come here on a week's recess and cover Port
2 Charlotte, Clewiston, the Highlands, Stuart.
3 He has a life in addition to being in
4 Washington and getting a recess.

5 So it seems to me that I have heard the
6 fact that you got to keep people on the coast,
7 but you can't do that either. When you go to a
8 -- it seems to me a Senator or a Congressman,
9 you got to take in the center of the state.
10 But I wouldn't suspect that you would want to
11 go beyond halfway across the state, which is
12 about 75 miles, which is a lot more reasonable
13 than going totally across the state.

14 So it seems pretty simple to me, and,
15 frankly, you all look very intelligent to me,
16 so I don't think it is very complex if you take
17 those kind of areas and dissect them and do it
18 on the basis that people would like to see it
19 done. Thank you for your time.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

21 Okay. Next we've got Betty Paterson, and
22 she will be followed by Gary Worth. Then if
23 Todd Bonlarron, Elizabeth Hall and Nathaniel
24 Burk could come get in line, I would appreciate
25 it.

1 Ms. Paterson.

2 MS. PATERSON: Betty Paterson, League of
3 Women Voters of Martin County. In light of all
4 these very insightful remarks, I have condensed
5 what I am going to say. Thank you.

6 The current timetable for drawing maps and
7 for voting at the end of session is likely to
8 create chaos. Change the timetable. You can
9 adopt a rule to expedite. The rule could
10 provide for redrawn maps to be readied by early
11 October, as soon as possible after this round
12 of meetings is completed. Get the consultants
13 and the computers going. Then change your
14 timetable to call for the vote of the
15 Legislature at the beginning of session early
16 in January.

17 Some of you have indicated willingness to
18 have the process expedited. Thank you. And
19 just don't create chaos for the elections
20 offices, the candidates and the voters. Thank
21 you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
23 ma'am.

24 Okay. Next we have Mr. Gary Worth, and he
25 will be followed by Todd Bonlarron.

1 MR. WORTH: Thank you. My name is Gary
2 Worth, and I came to Martin County about 56
3 years ago. When I was a young man, I must say,
4 coming back from California, there was a time
5 when we knew everybody. Now, hard to know
6 anybody.

7 In any event, I was amazed and shocked by
8 the gerrymandering of the current districts,
9 and I would like to echo what so many have said
10 here tonight, and I certainly hope that all of
11 you have felt the anger that is in this room at
12 our Representatives. But I would like to
13 recommend that you stay contiguous, that Martin
14 County should be one congressional district, or
15 part of one congressional district, and that
16 you should draw north and south and contiguous
17 east and west and take the congressional
18 districts and then break them up into the
19 smaller State Senate and House districts.

20 And I would also like to say that there is
21 a computer program, I am sure, that could do
22 this without any politics being involved,
23 because computers just don't think. Thank you.

24 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Okay. Next we
25 have Todd Bonlarron, followed by Elizabeth

1 Hall.

2 MR. BONLARRON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 My name is Todd Bonlarron. I am here on behalf
4 of the Palm Beach County Board of County
5 Commissioners. The county commissioners in
6 Palm Beach County have an adopted position on
7 redistricting of both our federal and state
8 legislative seats, and I wanted to just give
9 you two excerpts from that position.

10 One of them is to adopt an apportionment
11 plan that minimizes overlap of senatorial and
12 representative districts into counties adjacent
13 to Palm Beach County, and the other is to
14 support the adoption of an apportionment plan
15 in which Palm Beach County residents comprise
16 the majority of the constituencies in the
17 senatorial and representative districts created
18 such that -- and this is the most important
19 part -- no less than three Senate districts are
20 created with a majority of their district
21 within Palm Beach County. That is really our
22 one ask of the Legislature during this
23 reapportionment process.

24 Real quickly, as it relates to our
25 comments regarding northern Palm Beach County

1 and the Treasure Coast, the constitutional
2 amendments that you are going to be looking at
3 require that districts be compact and follow
4 certain political and geographical boundaries,
5 and those must be followed. But within those
6 legal parameters, we would ask that you would,
7 as the Legislature, consider the principle of
8 communities of similar interest in the northern
9 part of Palm Beach County when applying these
10 principles to redistricting. We believe that
11 some of the northern municipalities of Palm
12 Beach County share some very -- some
13 similarities with our friends in the Treasure
14 Coast, and we have enjoyed the representation
15 that we have had with some of the shared
16 representation between Martin and Palm Beach
17 County, such as Representative Will Snyder,
18 Senator Joe Negron, former President Ken
19 Pruitt, Congressman Rooney. We really enjoy
20 some of those relationships that we had in that
21 representation.

22 So we just are here to say so long as the
23 districts are compact and follow municipal and
24 geographical boundaries, it is okay if there is
25 certain overlap in some of these communities of

1 similar interests. Thank you very much.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

3 Okay. Next we have Elizabeth Hall,
4 followed by Nathaniel Burk, and then if
5 Frederick Thompson, Linda Spisak and Mark
6 Flomenhoft would get in line, I would
7 appreciate it.

8 Elizabeth Hall, you've got the mike.

9 MS. HALL: Good evening. I am Elizabeth
10 Hall, a ten-year resident here in Stuart. I'm
11 happy to be here.

12 I am also happy to tell you that I
13 disapprove of the gerrymandering that I have
14 seen here. I came from New York State, and was
15 not as bad there as it is here.

16 I think the State of Florida deserves much
17 of its bad reputation in that regard. Tom
18 Rooney's 16th Congressional District is totally
19 absurd. I feel very sorry for the young man.
20 He cannot possibly represent us well.

21 I hope that you will look at common
22 interests and compactness of our census for
23 your new district lines.

24 I would like to hear before we close this
25 evening why the Representatives here have

1 chosen to oppose those two state amendments,
2 and give us some solid reasons why. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you.

4 Next we have Nathaniel Burk, and he will
5 be followed by Frederick Thompson.

6 MR. BURK: Good evening, everybody. My
7 name is Nathaniel Burk, and I appreciate the
8 opportunity to be here tonight.

9 I am I guess what you would call a
10 Democratic attorney in the -- in the lines of
11 Kennedy, kind of civil rights movement, that
12 kind of thought. And it seems to me I have
13 learned a lot more from listening tonight than
14 thinking about what I was going to say.

15 The first comment that Senator Gaetz made
16 today was interesting to me and of some
17 concern, because he said, "I need to remind you
18 that the equality of fair distribution isn't
19 the only thing that is important here." And
20 one of the questions I asked is it may not be
21 the most -- to you the most important thing or
22 the only thing to consider, but is it not the
23 most important thing? And was that comment a
24 disclaimer as to -- as to fairness?

25 You know, you mentioned that if you go on

1 the computer and you check the statutes and you
2 look at the court cases, you can make a
3 difference and pitch in and -- you know, I
4 don't know about the rest of the people here,
5 but, you know, I think there's probably a lot
6 of people in east Stuart and Indiantown who
7 don't have access to computers or don't know
8 how to read a court case or shepardize it, and
9 I think that your assumption suggests that the
10 people who would be on this computer where they
11 could help more are educated and sophisticated,
12 and it is usually associated with wealth. And
13 I suggest to you that those people may not be
14 able to do what you think they can do, and that
15 indeed it is your job.

16 I have been surprised in this room from
17 what I have heard, because while -- you know --

18 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Folks, I hear
19 some talking here, if we could keep it down,
20 because if I can hear you, then the audience
21 can probably hear as well. We need to give
22 this man the respect. However, sir, you are
23 over the two minutes. I need you to wind up
24 your point.

25 MR. BURK: Okay. I will wind it up with a

1 rhetorical question of, what is your definition
2 of fair? Because I have been out to
3 Indiantown, and I have been to Port-au-Prince,
4 Haiti, on a volunteer basis, and I have never
5 seen two places that reminded me of the same
6 place. And I don't think that the Republicans
7 who are sitting here are concerned about that
8 district. Thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

10 Next we have Frederick Thompson.

11 Mr. Thompson still here? He apparently has
12 left.

13 Linda Spisak, followed by Mark Flomenhoft
14 and then if Patricia Metro-Patrick, David
15 Heaton and Marcy Pitkee could come up, I would
16 appreciate it.

17 Ms. Spisak.

18 MS. SPISAK: Linda Spisak is my name.

19 Thank you, everyone. I appreciate the fact
20 that we have such a wonderful audience here
21 tonight to let our Representatives know what we
22 are all thinking, so I thank the audience for
23 coming tonight.

24 My concern is that I have not heard the
25 word "compassion" at all. We need to be

1 compassionate. We need to thank about the
2 voters. We need to think about our
3 Representatives. If everyone would just care
4 about each other and we had fair and equal
5 districts that had compassion, that had
6 concern, that took care of the voters, that
7 took care of our Representatives, I think
8 everyone would be a lot better off. So that is
9 an important element that needs to be
10 considered in this. Thank you so much.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
12 ma'am.

13 Mark Flomenhoft. No Mark.

14 Patricia Metro-Patrick. Patricia has
15 gone.

16 David Heaton? Is Mr. Heaton here? No
17 David Heaton.

18 Marcy Pitker, Pitkin? Is Marcy here? No.

19 Okay. Michael Hofstee. Is Michael here?

20 Ed Hussey. Is Mr. Ed Hussey here? Come
21 on up. Then we will have James Harrell,
22 Dr. Thomas Fullman and James Rich. If you all
23 could come get in line, that will help.

24 Let's see, Mr. Hussey, right?

25 MR. HUSSEY: Yes.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: You have the
2 microphone.

3 MR. HUSSEY: Thank you. First of all, I
4 want to thank all of you for being here
5 tonight. I am sure you are not -- you have
6 given up a lot to be here, and thank you.

7 I just want to make a suggestion, it's
8 been said before, and you can tell by the
9 feeling that a lot of people here don't think
10 what you do -- what you are going to do can be
11 judged fair because of your jobs, because of
12 your districts, because of your status in the
13 Legislature. So I suggest that you go to an
14 outside firm to do the redistricting.

15 Number two that I wanted to mention is I
16 am registered no party, I cannot vote in the
17 primaries, and I would like to see Florida go
18 to an open election where we don't worry too
19 much about the radical right or the radical
20 left, we are more concerned about the best
21 candidate we can get. So you go to primaries,
22 the top two people win regardless of party
23 affiliation, and a general election decides
24 which one is the best. Thank you for coming.

25 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,

1 Mr. Hussey.

2 James Harrell.

3 DR. HARRELL: I am Dr. James Harrell, and
4 just to be fair to everybody here, I have been
5 married to that lovely lady up there, Gayle
6 Harrell, for 46 years. But I -- I am here
7 today speaking for myself and not for y'all or
8 anybody else in here, and certainly not for
9 Gayle. But there are several things I wanted
10 to mention first, and then I will go to my
11 recommendations.

12 First I heard a civics teacher talk about,
13 you know, three Senate and three House
14 districts and why was that a problem, and I
15 think you forgot to talk -- to teach the
16 students about the Federal Voters Act which set
17 minority districts, and that by definition is
18 gerrymandering. You cannot get more
19 gerrymandered than Alcee Hasting's seat that
20 goes from the Miami area all the way up to Ft.
21 Pierce, and that is the federal law that
22 brought that in.

23 And I also might point out that when the
24 Federal Voters Act went in and the first
25 election after that was in the 1990s, and that

1 is the first time in 140 years that Republicans
2 got control of the House and the Senate.

3 But what I want to say really was that
4 want to keep the Treasure Coast together. When
5 I got up here, I was going to say that I want
6 Okeechobee to be part of the Treasure Coast,
7 and the Treasure Coast to be together from all
8 the way up to -- from Vero all the way down to
9 southern Martin County. And I would want to
10 include Okeechobee, but they elected, as I
11 heard tonight, to have two Representatives, and
12 to me, that is fine, but at least include them
13 within the Treasure Coast when you do that.
14 And no area has been redistricted worse than
15 Indiantown. I mean, they just -- they just got
16 it better than anybody else from that point of
17 view. But remember the Federal Voters Act
18 required a lot of that to happen. And our
19 whole goal is to take the Treasure Coast, which
20 is one big, neat area, and keep it as much
21 together as you can, and you do have to
22 remember the Federal Voters Act, which
23 established minority districts, and that
24 accounts for the gerrymandering in the worst
25 way.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
2 Mr. Harrell.

3 Next we have Thomas Fullman. Mr. Fullman.

4 MR. FULLMAN: My name is Thomas Fullman, I
5 am from Jensen Beach, and that I also listened
6 today with intent, it was an excellent
7 educational program for everyone.

8 However, I came here to talk to you about
9 your challenges and responsibility. I have
10 listened to what they have said, and, of
11 course, what they are saying is do the right
12 thing. Also, they are bringing to your
13 attention the mandate brought to you by the
14 people of the state of Florida.

15 Now, what I am concerned about is how in
16 the world are you going to get this done,
17 because we -- over the last couple of weeks,
18 the people of America has gone through such a
19 traumatic experience of fighting among
20 politicians that we are no longer able to
21 handle that sort of stress, and for us, again,
22 in the state of Florida to go through what we
23 went through ten years ago would be an absolute
24 shame. I am asking you to find a way like the
25 corporations of the United States and around

1 the world now are doing what they can to put
2 aside their advocacies, to put aside their
3 advocacies and work together for the good of
4 the people, and that is all I am asking you to
5 do. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

7 Mr. James Rich is next, and he will be
8 followed by Tara Woodruff.

9 MR. RICH: Thank you, Chairman. Elected
10 officials, I want to thank you for being here
11 tonight, and more importantly, thank you for
12 the opportunity for all of us to speak. Jim
13 Rich, I am a citizen, resident of Port St.
14 Lucie, have been for 25 years. For the record,
15 I am not related to Nan Rich, although I would
16 claim you for the family.

17 I would like to see Port St. Lucie stay
18 intact. I am one of the few up here that's
19 actually ran for public office last year. Part
20 of my campaign message was fiscal
21 responsibility and creating a business
22 environment. I think we have done a wonderful
23 job to transform the Treasure Coast into the
24 Research Coast, and I would like to continue on
25 that track, and if we are efficient in the

1 lines, I think that is going to go -- do well
2 to further what we have done on the Treasure
3 Coast. And, Gayle, you know all about that.

4 Anybody remember the purple thumb? Iraq.
5 People were finally able to vote in the country
6 of Iraq. That is the power that we have. And,
7 unfortunately, people just simply don't come
8 out and vote, and we need to get the message
9 out to people and educate the people, make the
10 balance less confusing, and that is about it.
11 I appreciate the time very much.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

13 Next we have Tara Woodruff, and she will
14 be followed by Linda Gore.

15 Ms. Woodruff.

16 MS. WOODRUFF: Hi, my name is Tara
17 woodruff. I am a resident of Martin County.

18 In November, the citizens of Florida
19 overwhelmingly passed Amendments 5 and 6. I
20 would like to know why the Florida Legislature
21 has already spent \$1 million of taxpayer money
22 to pay for attorneys' fees to fight the will of
23 the Florida electorate. Additionally,
24 \$30 million has been set aside to pay for legal
25 fees to fight fair districting.

1 As an illustration of this waste for this
2 \$30 million, I have found in our budget cuts
3 that could have been offset, and these are just
4 a few: \$10 million for national veterans'
5 homeless center, \$6 million in economic aid to
6 the Florida Panhandle, nutrition centers in
7 Dade County cuts of \$300,000, Alapata
8 Community Center hot meals program, \$430,000;
9 senior citizens centers' grants for \$1.4
10 million; Glades County emergency operation cuts
11 of \$5 million; Knowledge is Power school cuts
12 of \$400,000; civil legal assistance cuts of \$1
13 million; Florida Alliance of Boys and Girls
14 Clubs cuts of \$1.7 million; statewide brain and
15 tumor registry, \$500,000 in cuts; \$1.9 million
16 in --

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Ma'am, it is an
18 interesting way of bringing it around to
19 redistricting, but --

20 MS. WOODRUFF: Okay, I will wrap it up.
21 That's fair enough.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: -- I do need to
23 have you focus your comments on the
24 redistricting process. Thank you.

25 MS. WOODRUFF: In the face of such severe

1 and heart-breaking cuts in the name of
2 austerity, how in good conscience can any of
3 our elected officials squander such a sum of
4 money in order to fight the will of the people?
5 Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
7 much.

8 Okay. Next I have Ms. Linda Gore. Is
9 Linda here? Thank you for being here,
10 appreciate it. Charles Winn, is he here? And
11 he will be followed by Thelma Waters and Doug
12 Bournique.

13 Mr. Winn.

14 MR. WINN: Yeah, good evening, ladies and
15 gentlemen. My name is Chuck Winn. I live in
16 the northeastern part of the unincorporated
17 part of Martin County. I am here tonight
18 because a good friend of mine, Eric Miller, who
19 lives out in Indiantown, asked me to pinch hit.

20 What I would like to do is outline the
21 concept for apportioning Martin County into two
22 state representative districts. Before I go
23 over describing the proposed boundaries, we
24 recognize reality the way things are. Number
25 one, population drives districting. Like the

1 Supreme Court said in the Reynolds versus Sims
2 decision of 1964, Representative -- or
3 legislators represent people, not trees or
4 acres. If it would have been a Florida case,
5 they probably would have said alligators, too.
6 So, number one, the legislators represent
7 people.

8 Number two, it is driven by population.
9 The framers of the Constitution recognized back
10 in 1789 population would change every ten
11 years. Reality of the situation, Port St.
12 Lucie has enough population to have their own
13 representative district. The days of Martin
14 County sharing a Representative with Port St.
15 Lucie are over, as they should be. They are
16 entitled to their own Representative.

17 What I propose for Martin County for State
18 House district are two districts. Use the
19 Turnpike as a western boundary; for the
20 northern boundary, use the St. Lucie County
21 line, go south down into Hobe Sound somewhere
22 in the vicinity of just north of Tequesta, that
23 would be one compact district.

24 Indiantown has rural districts in common
25 with Okeechobee and Highlands County. Go ahead

1 and combine that into a rural district of
2 common interest. That would make far more
3 sense than the way we are apportioned now.
4 But, again, like Dr. Harrell so accurately put
5 it, we are bound by Federal Supreme Court
6 decisions and Federal Voting Rights Acts.

7 I thank you very much for considering this
8 concept. I have submitted the verbal
9 descriptions of the two districts to my
10 legislators. I will follow it up with a sketch
11 of a map tomorrow.

12 And as far as Congressman Rooney goes, he
13 has been doing a good job. He even spoke out
14 against the unconstitutional military
15 involvement in Libya, and I really appreciated
16 that. That is good representation.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

18 Next we have Thelma Waters. Is Ms. Waters
19 here?

20 Doug Bournique, is he here still?

21 Mark Gotz. Is Mark here? Okay. And
22 after Mark, there will be Anthony D'Amiano and
23 Michael Salerno.

24 Mr. Gotz.

25 MR. GOTZ: Good evening. Thank you very

1 much for coming to St. Lucie County and
2 actually the Treasure Coast.

3 Would just like to say I don't know who
4 appointed you to this committee, but they owe
5 you one. I think I have read that for Senator
6 Gaetz.

7 Today after the United States Supreme
8 Court has wrestled with voting rights issues,
9 no less than on ten occasions the waters are
10 less cloudy, but no means crystal clear. Thus,
11 it is important to remember that
12 reapportionment remains a continuously
13 developing area of the law, and as new
14 decisions are issued, the law will be modified
15 and hopefully clarified to provide more
16 definitive guidance for the future. Those are
17 the words of the late Attorney General, Bob
18 Butterworth.

19 Article I, Section 2 of the U.S.
20 Constitution establishes the standard for
21 congressional districting. The command that
22 the United States Representatives be chosen by
23 the people of the several states means that as
24 nearly as practical, one man's vote is to be
25 worth as much as another's. The Equal

1 Protection Clause establishes the standard for
2 state legislative districts. States must make
3 an honest and good faith effort to construct
4 districts in both houses of its legislature as
5 nearly of equal population as is practical.
6 Thus, the goal of reapportionment is political
7 equality, which means one person, one vote.

8 The new constitutional amendments that
9 were passed basically create a situation where
10 they are requiring you to draw lines that need
11 to be drawn that neither favor nor disfavor a
12 political incumbent or a political party. I
13 think everyone sitting up there knows that that
14 is basically unachievable with a population of
15 18 million people in this state and 11 million
16 voters.

17 So I have a suggestion, and the suggestion
18 is this: You all know that either way, you are
19 going to court. I mean, even -- no matter what
20 you decide, you will end up in court. So my
21 suggestion is this: The new two congressional
22 districts that need to be drawn need to be
23 focused on -- and the U.S. congressional
24 districts are what you should focus on and
25 accomplish. I would suggest that you continue

1 using the existing districts as they are. That
2 will expedite the process so that everybody
3 knows who they are voting for and what their
4 voting is going to be. And you already have a
5 situation where the current districting maps
6 have already been approved by the Supreme Court
7 via ten years ago. So if the courts are going
8 to overturn it, they will have to overturn a
9 decision they have already made.

10 Thank you very much.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

12 Next we have Anthony D'Amiano.

13 Mr. D'Amiano.

14 MR. D'AMIANO: Good evening. I would like
15 to thank you for being here, but we really
16 shouldn't even be here tonight, because the
17 Amendments 5 and 6 were passed because the
18 people of Florida were disgusted with the
19 gerrymandering that had been going on in the
20 past, okay, to the point where they made an
21 amendment to the Constitution to stop it. So
22 if the previous legislators had been doing
23 their job fairly, this wouldn't be an issue
24 tonight.

25 So when you do draw your maps, just look

1 at your old maps and realize that the people
2 were dissatisfied with what was done in the
3 past and don't do it again.

4 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

5 Michael Salerno. Is Michael Salerno here?

6 Richard Bernard. Is Richard Bernard still
7 here? No, okay.

8 And I had one, Roger -- begins with an M,
9 Roger Messer, okay.

10 MR. MESSER: First of all, I want to thank
11 you for being here, and I hope you have
12 listened.

13 Ten years ago, the Florida Legislature
14 effectively disenfranchised St. Lucie County.
15 We have four State Representatives and we have
16 no resident State Representatives. We have
17 280,000 people. We have no State
18 Representative. We have 280,000 people, and we
19 have three State Senators, which means we have
20 no State Senators.

21 We have three congressional districts that
22 stretch -- one of them goes from Ft. Pierce to
23 Liberty City. Another one goes from Port St.
24 Lucie to Charlotte County. Another one goes
25 from Ft. Pierce to north of Titusville. And we

1 have no Congressman.

2 I can tell you that a school child in Ft.
3 Pierce can get on his bicycle and ride for 15
4 minutes in any direction and be in three House
5 seats, he can't quite get out west to the
6 fourth one, and three Senate seats and three
7 congressional seats.

8 When -- you know, politics is local. When
9 we were fortunate enough to have a State
10 Senator from Port St. Lucie, I was from a
11 different party than him, but he and I were in
12 the Little League Board of Directors together,
13 and when I needed to go to Tallahassee to talk
14 about an issue that was important to me and I
15 knocked on his door, he knew who I was, we
16 shopped at the same grocery store. Politics is
17 local. If you gerrymander us like you did last
18 time, the anger that will be there is amazing.

19 There's been some talk about minority
20 voting rights. We in St. Lucie County have a
21 20 percent black population. Two of our
22 constitutional officers are black, and they are
23 great Representatives. We vote -- we elect
24 people occasionally who are even Republicans.
25 I can tell you that the -- that the ability is

1 what the most important thing is. And we
2 should be able to elect our own Representative.
3 With 280,000 people, we should probably be able
4 to elect two. You should -- I have a map, I am
5 color blind, but I can tell that there are
6 lines all over this map. This is a House map
7 of St. Lucie County. It is ridiculous. The
8 gerrymander that was done to us ten years ago
9 was what's wrong.

10 People talk about Indiantown. The child
11 in northwest Ft. Pierce, the black vote in
12 northwest Ft. Pierce has been disenfranchised,
13 disenfranchised. Minority voting rights don't
14 mean that you pack 80 percent Democrats in one
15 black/Democratic district and let a person from
16 Broward County represent everybody. It means
17 that you make them fair so that everyone has a
18 shot. If everyone has a shot, we can elect
19 people like Gertrude Walker as our -- as our
20 Supervisor of Elections in St. Lucie County, we
21 can elect people like Joe Smith as our -- as
22 our county clerk, and we can elect a Republican
23 like Ken Pruitt as our property appraiser.

24 So I am just telling you don't do the job
25 you did ten years ago, that the Legislature did

1 ten years ago. Stop the gerrymander.

2 Someone had a question about what
3 compactness is. Compactness is not this.
4 Compactness is take 280,000 people and draw the
5 line down the middle and give them two House
6 seats. Thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, sir.

8 Okay. That concludes the list of people
9 that filled out a card. Did we miss anyone
10 that filled out a card that I didn't call your
11 name? Okay, great.

12 With that, Senator Gaetz, you are
13 recognized for comments.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
15 Mr. Chairman, and with your permission, I did
16 take eight pages of notes to go along with the
17 about 45 pages of notes I have taken at other
18 hearings. This has been extraordinarily
19 helpful to me, but before I attempt to provide
20 some factual information, not in any way to
21 argue with or dispute anybody's testimony on
22 either side of these issues, but just to make
23 sure that we all leave with the same set of
24 facts, I am wondering, Mr. Chairman, if you
25 would allow other members of the Committee who

1 might wish to offer any comments or ask or
2 answer any questions to do so, and
3 Mr. Chairman, would you be willing to begin
4 with the House?

5 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Absolutely,
6 Senator. My original intent was to give you
7 the courtesy of starting that off, but we will
8 go with the other members of the Committee.

9 Does anyone want to be recognized for a
10 brief comment? Representative Baxley, you are
11 recognized.

12 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thank you,
13 Mr. Chairman, and I really appreciate
14 everyone's participation. We do listen and we
15 do learn a lot at these meetings and a lot of
16 special, unique qualities of this region. But
17 one thing I think that would be helpful,
18 Mr. Chairman, to share is what a difference
19 term limits has already made on this process.
20 Invariably we hear remarks that indicate that
21 people feel like we are drawing our own maps,
22 when, in fact, almost everybody here was not in
23 the Legislature when these maps were drawn ten
24 years ago. Probably Gayle Harrell and I are
25 the only ones, because we left the Legislature

1 under term limits, had a situation where the
2 person we followed went on to do something else
3 and we ran again. But these people are not --
4 term limits has changed that dimension, and
5 Congressmen don't draw maps. So the
6 self-preservation concept has been greatly
7 altered already by eight-year term limits, and
8 I think sometimes people miss that dimension.
9 And so I would like -- I would hope it would
10 help resolve some of your cynicism to realize
11 that these people run on maps they did not
12 draw. Thank you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Are there any
14 other House members that would like to comment?

15 Chair Gaetz, do you want to recognize any
16 Senators?

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Any members of the Senate
18 who are here wish to make any comment?

19 Leader Rich, do you seek recognition? The
20 Chair recognizes the Democratic Leader.

21 SENATOR RICH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
22 actually will have to say that I was in the
23 Legislature, I think Senator Negron was in the
24 Legislature, a number of us were in the
25 legislature, Senator Siplin, when the seats

1 were drawn last time, and I can tell you that
2 it wasn't a transparent process at all, and I
3 was in the House at the time and ended up with
4 an incredibly gerrymandered district, for those
5 of you have talked about gerrymandering, that
6 took me up through the Everglades, from where I
7 lived up through the Everglades into an area
8 that really was at the northern end of Broward
9 County. And I think that some of what happened
10 ten years ago is what caused the people of this
11 state to decide that they wanted to do
12 something about the way the state was
13 gerrymandered.

14 And I think we have heard a lot of
15 testimony tonight, and I know that Senator
16 Gaetz and Representative Weatherford as the
17 Chairs are going to filter that, listen to
18 that, and as we meet, I hope that we will be
19 able to look at some of the things that were
20 points that have been brought over and over and
21 over again, and I just hope that the people
22 here and the people across the state who really
23 have had some of the same issues will be
24 listened to and that we will reflect it as we
25 move forward. The timeline has been mentioned

1 over and over and over again, the
2 gerrymandering process and so forth.

3 So I think the people here are willing to
4 listen, and I think we can do a better job than
5 we did ten years ago and I don't think it is
6 going to be easy. I think -- and I was a
7 supporter of Amendments 5 and 6. It is not
8 going to be easy, but I do think that we are
9 going to end up with a product that does have
10 the voters selecting their Representatives and
11 Senators and congressional people rather than
12 the other way around. So thank you.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Chairman, thank you
14 very much for allowing members to comment and
15 answer any points or questions.

16 I made some notes and wanted to just make
17 sure that we respond to a number of individuals
18 who asked questions or who made factual
19 statements that we would want to ensure that
20 the facts are settled matters.

21 First of all, as Leader Rich just
22 indicated, the timeline is a huge issue. We
23 heard about it a great deal tonight. Let me
24 speak on behalf of Chair Weatherford from the
25 House of Representatives, who has said this on

1 a number of occasions, and I share his view,
2 and that is there is absolutely no intent on
3 the part of either the House or Senate
4 committees to drag out any process at all. Let
5 me be clear as to the facts.

6 The facts are that the Florida
7 Constitution says we cannot vote until January.
8 Now, we can discuss maps. There are 21 maps
9 that have already been presented. What I think
10 a number of us wish could have occurred tonight
11 would have been someone commenting on the maps
12 that are presented by citizens, by interest
13 groups, by people who took this process very
14 seriously. I will tell you that one of the
15 maps from -- happened to be from a gentleman
16 named Henry Kelley, I think has a lot of value,
17 but there are other maps as well that I think
18 need to be looked at. But it will be our
19 intent, Chairman Weatherford's intent and my
20 intent, to move as quickly as we can in
21 September to have committee meetings so that we
22 can draw together all the input that we have
23 received, but then we need to give all of the
24 members of our Committee an opportunity to
25 express where they saw that input falling down,

1 how they believe that the legal standards ought
2 to be applied.

3 I wish it were the case, as one individual
4 said tonight, that all this could be done in a
5 weekend. If it can be, I would encourage him
6 to do it and send it in, because it will save
7 us a lot of time. But we need to make sure
8 when we begin in September, which is the first
9 time that we can begin having committee
10 meetings -- we have moved the committee process
11 up by two months, we moved the session itself
12 up by two months, as quickly as we possibly
13 could. It will be important to make sure that
14 Democrats and Republicans, House members and
15 Senators, have the opportunity to present their
16 ideas and have those ideas considered in public
17 and voted on in public so that we can move
18 forward.

19 There have been several comments tonight,
20 including comments from I think one individual
21 who represented a Supervisor of Elections
22 office, that if every single entity in the
23 process took all the time that they possibly
24 were allowed legally, that we could be at the
25 end of the session before we had maps. Let me

1 tell you as the Senate Chair, it is not my
2 intention to do that. My hope is that we will
3 move as quickly as we can while allowing
4 Democrats and Republicans, House members and
5 Senators, to present their ideas based on the
6 input we have received from the public. But
7 certainly there is no intent to move any slower
8 than that.

9 But we would point out that there are
10 other players in the process. The Attorney
11 General has a time period when she presents
12 what the Legislature has come up with to the
13 Supreme Court, and we hope the Attorney General
14 will take all the time she needs, but not all
15 the time possibly that she might be able to
16 take under the law. If she can get the job
17 done sooner, we hope she will.

18 The courts have an opportunity to take an
19 extended period of time to review the
20 Legislature's product. We hope they will take
21 all the time they need, but not all the time
22 that is possibly permitted under the law. The
23 same with the Justice Department in Washington.
24 So we hope that your encouragement that the
25 Legislature move as quickly as we can under the

1 Constitution would also apply and you would
2 encourage these other players to move as soon
3 as possible also.

4 A second comment, Mr. Chairman, and that
5 is I think several people said that the current
6 maps are hard to explain and that they show
7 gerrymandering. I will say this: The Senate
8 district that I am running in is a Senate
9 district that was drawn by people who were in
10 office before me, so there no pride of
11 authorship here. I agree, many of the
12 legislative districts and congressional
13 districts that we have certainly could stand to
14 be improved in terms of how they are drawn and
15 the communities that are included, and you are
16 pushing an open door with me as a Senator and
17 as a member of the Senate committee, I believe
18 that that is exactly true, and I believe that
19 Chair Weatherford would agree with that.

20 Then there was a comment made that all of
21 this that the Legislature is doing now, that
22 our committee is doing now, should have been
23 addressed in the last legislative session.
24 Again, just so we all have the same set of
25 facts, that is not permitted by the Florida

1 Constitution. The Florida Constitution says
2 that we can't vote until the even-numbered year
3 following the census, and that is 2012. So you
4 can't begin to consider in a legislative
5 session that which is constitutionally
6 prohibited to consider in that session.

7 The other thing is that we received the
8 census data -- a number of people said, well,
9 gosh, there are other states that are further
10 along in the process. And that is true.
11 Florida received its data from the census, not
12 -- we weren't the last state, but we were one
13 of the last states to receive our census data.
14 The Census Bureau in Washington does not give
15 out the census data all at once to all states.
16 They give it out in groups. And we weren't the
17 last, but we were one of the last. So that is
18 one consideration. And as soon as we got that
19 data, as quickly as we possibly could, we
20 placed it on-line, we made it available to all
21 members of the Legislature and all members of
22 the public.

23 Then there were those who said, well, but,
24 gosh, there are states like Illinois that got
25 it done. Well, Illinois is a one-party state.

1 Here is exactly what they did: They actually
2 did have a group of legislators who did go back
3 into a smoke-filled room, who came out with a
4 set of maps and said to the public, "Take it or
5 leave it," they voted on them and went home.

6 Now, our Senate President and our House
7 Speaker said that is not the way we are going
8 to do it. We were going to do the more painful
9 process of making sure that we took input from
10 groups who were on different sides of these
11 issues to try to find out if they could help us
12 with applying the legal standards. Now, if you
13 think this is easy, if you think it is like
14 falling off a log, we just could have sat in a
15 Tallahassee echo-chamber and done it, then
16 listen tonight to those people who came and
17 brought very specific information about
18 communities and neighborhoods like Indiantown,
19 other parts of this region of the state,
20 talking about where the fishing industries and
21 the tourist industries were, where the citrus
22 industries were and encouraging us to draw
23 lines that made sense for those communities.
24 We couldn't have done that sitting in an
25 echo-chamber in Tallahassee only listening to

1 each other. We had to get that information
2 from you. And as one lady pointed out tonight,
3 she couldn't afford to go to Tallahassee. So
4 the only way that we could get a lot of the
5 information we have gotten is by coming and
6 asking you for it.

7 Another comment that was made tonight is
8 that the 2002 -- in fact, I wrote it down, it
9 is a quote, "The 2002 redistricting process and
10 maps in Florida were riddled with mistakes and
11 corruption." Maybe that is the case, I wasn't
12 in the Legislature then, but I can tell you
13 that if the process in 2002 was riddled with
14 mistakes and corruption, Rod Smith, the
15 Chairman of the Democratic Party of Florida,
16 was a Senator then, he voted for those maps.
17 And Republicans who are in positions of
18 authority now were in the Legislature then and
19 voted for those maps. So it is not a matter of
20 Republicans or Democrats as much as it is a
21 matter of trying to apply the standards in a
22 sensible way. And I would be the first to
23 agree that some of the lines that were drawn
24 and some of the districts that were configured
25 in 2002 really make your head -- really make

1 you scratch your head.

2 And then someone said that the Senate had
3 \$9 million set aside to fight Fair Districts --
4 set aside for legal fees to fight Fair
5 Districts. Let me just say John Guthrie is
6 here, he is the staff director for the Senate
7 Reapportionment Committee. He has gone through
8 a lot of reapportionments, lots and lots of
9 them. I think Governor Andrew Jackson
10 appointed him originally. And as Senate Chair,
11 I went to John and I said, "John, what should
12 we budget for all of the costs," because we are
13 obliged to take all of these -- the maps that
14 we put together ultimately to the Supreme Court
15 of Florida and then to the Justice Department,
16 and as people on both sides of issues tonight
17 pointed out, no matter what anybody does, we
18 are going to be sued and we will have to defend
19 those lawsuits. I went to John and said, "Ten
20 years ago, what did the Senate spend?" And he
21 floored me, he said, "It cost \$10 million," and
22 that is before we had the requirements of the
23 Fair Districts amendments, which have never,
24 taken all together, been applied to any other
25 state before. So it is not a matter of

1 fighting the Fair Districts amendment. The
2 Senate hasn't spent a penny to do that.
3 Rather, it is a matter of having the funds that
4 are necessary to respond to the lawsuits that
5 are inevitable, to go to the Supreme Court and
6 work your way through the Justice Department in
7 Washington. And I hope we spend a whole lot
8 less than that, because I agree, the money
9 could be spent better.

10 And then someone else said that -- they
11 demanded a second round of public hearings.
12 Well, that just shows that we really don't have
13 a unanimous view here tonight, because that is
14 inconsistent with the call that was made by the
15 League of Women Voters to have early votes in
16 September and October and get done with these
17 hearings. So there are some who would like to
18 have more hearings after Senators and
19 Representatives have the opportunity to absorb
20 all of the input from the hearings, and there
21 are those who say, you know, you shouldn't be
22 having any hearings at all. All I am
23 suggesting is that Everett Dirksen was right
24 when he said, "When everyone is equally
25 dissatisfied, justice has been done."

1 Then there were several individuals who
2 said, you know, we really ought to -- we ought
3 to have somebody else draw these maps, we ought
4 to have computer programs, we ought to
5 outsource it, we ought to go get some
6 professionals, we ought to hire some experts.
7 The Florida Constitution, which only you can
8 change, the Legislature can't, the Florida
9 Constitution says that the Legislature is
10 obliged to draw the maps. Now, we can ask for
11 professional help, and we've got it. We can
12 hire experts to assist us, experts who have
13 been through these kinds of issues in other
14 states, and we will. And we can use computer
15 programs, and we do. In fact, the District
16 Builder computer program is on-line, and you
17 can see the computer program that we will be
18 using and you can, if you wish, manipulate it
19 yourself.

20 Then there was a suggestion that -- that
21 we need to somehow balance out the Republicans
22 and Democrats, that there won't be a fair
23 redistricting unless Republicans and Democrats
24 are balanced out. Here is the problem: I will
25 just give you an example from Senate districts.

1 There are 40 Senate districts. Twenty-eight
2 are currently held by Republicans, but eight of
3 the Senate districts held by Republicans voted
4 for President Obama. So here is what that
5 means: It means that the Democratic candidate
6 for President apparently had a better message
7 and a more convincing campaign than the
8 Republican candidate for President in eight
9 districts that elected Republican Senators.
10 Another way to look at it is eight districts
11 that voted for President Obama, the Republican
12 candidates for Senate were able to put together
13 apparently a more convincing campaign, a better
14 message or a message that resonated better, and
15 elect Republican Senators.

16 Here's the thing: You can't -- with a
17 secret ballot, we can't force Republicans to
18 vote just for Republicans. We had a lot of
19 Republicans in Florida vote for President
20 Obama, as I just demonstrated. We can't force
21 Democrats to only vote for Democrats. We had a
22 lot of Democrats vote for Republican candidates
23 for the Senate. And the fastest-growing group
24 of voters in Florida are those who are
25 independent or have no party affiliation, and

1 you can't force them how to vote, you can't
2 tell them how to vote. So as long as we have a
3 secret ballot, we can't guarantee that there
4 will be some kind of formulaic or numeric
5 result in Republicans and Democrats in those
6 districts. It is still up to the individual
7 voter. As I think you pointed out, sir, in
8 your testimony, it is more these days about how
9 voters see an individual candidate and less and
10 less about party affiliation.

11 There was an individual who said that he
12 was concerned, and rightly so, about making
13 sure that our military overseas would have an
14 opportunity to vote and cast their ballots.
15 Again, just so that we all have the same set of
16 facts, I joined several members of the Senate
17 in sponsoring legislation, which passed, which
18 provides the greater opportunity than ever
19 before for overseas military and overseas
20 citizens to be able to cast ballots and have
21 more alternatives to cast ballots, and those
22 actions were supported by our veterans'
23 organizations. So I would say that those of
24 you who have a proper concern for ensuring that
25 those overseas can vote look at the other

1 legislation that was passed this year,
2 supported by our veterans' organizations, that
3 give our overseas servicemen and women a
4 greater opportunity to vote than ever before.

5 The representative of the Palm Beach
6 County Commission spoke, as several people did,
7 about communities of interest, saying that, you
8 know, it is fine to talk about county lines and
9 city lines, those are important, we ought to
10 use them, but also you've got to make sure that
11 communities of interest are held together. I
12 would just say this: That we tried to place
13 into the Florida Constitution language that
14 would recognize communities of interest as a
15 legitimate criterion for districting, but the
16 Florida Supreme Court threw that out. So if
17 you look at Amendments 5 and 6, those who
18 proposed 5 and 6 did not want to include
19 communities of interest as a criterion for
20 districts, so that is not in the Constitution.
21 So there is a potential, potential tension
22 between those of you who wanted communities of
23 interest recognized and those who say a strict
24 adherence to Amendments 5 and 6.

25 And then finally, there was a gentleman

1 who was a -- the self-described civil rights
2 lawyer in the Kennedy tradition, and he was
3 concerned, he said that he heard me say that --
4 thought he heard me say that equality of
5 representation wasn't the most important factor
6 in redistricting. What I said was this, quote,
7 "Equality of representation isn't the only
8 legal requirement redistricting plans must
9 meet." Then I went on to say, "The laws and
10 important court cases that govern redistricting
11 are explained in detail on the House and Senate
12 websites." And those laws and court cases have
13 to do, as Dr. Harrell indicated, with the
14 Voting Rights Act of 1965, a primary sponsor of
15 which was Senator Robert Kennedy.

16 Thank you very much for your time tonight.
17 I learned a great deal. I can go back to
18 northwest Florida and say that I know much more
19 about how fair districts, equitable districts
20 and sensible districts ought to be drawn
21 because you took the time to be here tonight.
22 So thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: And thank you
24 very much, Senator Gaetz. He always does such
25 a great job of wrapping up the meetings with

1 all the questions, so I won't belabor the point
2 too much further.

3 The only other thing that I had in my
4 notes that I wanted to make sure that I noticed
5 was the point brought up about the distance or
6 the time traveled that people had to go to meet
7 with their Representatives. I want you to know
8 that we take that to heart and we will take
9 that into account when we are redistricting.

10 Thanks to everyone who came here tonight
11 for your contributions. If you had more to
12 add, please go on our website or e-mail us or
13 snail mail us, and we will get those comments
14 in the record and post them on-line.

15 All of the records from today's meeting
16 and video will be on the House and Senate
17 website shortly. I can see that no one wants
18 to stay here any longer than they have to, so
19 with that, this meeting is adjourned.

20 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
21 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 137 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 27th day of December, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2011
10:00 A.M.
FAU
BOCA RATON, FLORIDA

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 SENATOR GAETZ: Ladies and gentlemen,
3 please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance, led
4 by your Senator, Maria Sachs.

5 SENATOR SACHS: I pledge allegiance to the
6 flag to the flag of the United States of
7 America and to the Republic for which it
8 stands, one nation, under God, indivisible with
9 liberty and justice for all.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. The
11 Joint Senate House Committee hearing on
12 redistricting is called to order.

13 We are very pleased to be joined today by
14 members of the House of Representatives and
15 members of the Senate, the House of
16 Representatives redistricting Committee and the
17 Senate Reapportionment Committee, and in a
18 moment I will ask them to very briefly
19 introduce themselves just so that you will know
20 what part of the state they come from so that
21 you will see who you are talking to and who you
22 are addressing your opinions to.

23 We very much appreciate Florida Atlantic
24 University for allowing us to use this
25 wonderful facility today, and thank you all for

1 being here, especially members of the public
2 who have come to share your comments and your
3 recommendations to help shape Congressional
4 Senate and House Districts for the next decade.

5 My name is Don Gaetz. I am a member of
6 the Senate. I Chair the Senate Reapportionment
7 Committee, and along with my House colleague,
8 Representative Steve Precourt, who is
9 Vice-Chair of the House Redistricting
10 Committee.

11 I will be moderating today's hearing which
12 is being webcast statewide by the Florida
13 Channel over the Internet.

14 Our sole purpose today is to hear from you
15 about how you believe the legal standards with
16 which we are all familiar, at least many of us
17 are and many of us are becoming more familiar.

18 Our purpose is to hear from you about how
19 you believe the legal standards governing
20 redistricting should be applied in your
21 community so that you are represented in
22 Washington and in Tallahassee fairly, sensibly
23 and equitably.

24 Our procedures today are simple but they
25 are important. It is important that you sign

1 in so that we with can create an accurate
2 public record of all attendees and all
3 speakers, and also you may opt to join our
4 e-mail lists so that we can keep you informed
5 about how the redistricting process is going
6 forward over the next weeks.

7 If you have not signed in, please do so.
8 If you haven't signed in, if you will raise
9 your hand we will have a staff member come and
10 give you a sign-in card. There is a young lady
11 right in the front row. Anybody else who
12 hasn't signed in, and it is the same if you
13 wish to speak, the same card.

14 It is a sign-in for attendance or to
15 speak. So if you will raise your hand and keep
16 it raised, I apologize, we will have a staff
17 member get to you just as fast as possible
18 because we want to make sure that we have an
19 accurate record of your attendance and we want
20 to get to everyone today if we can who wants to
21 speak.

22 If you wish to speak today and you have
23 not filled out an attendance card you need to
24 do so, so that we can be sure that we won't
25 miss your testimony. It is the same attendance

1 card as I said whether you wish to speak or
2 whether you wish to sit in the stands and just
3 watch others express their opinions.

4 Before we begin today the Chair will
5 recognize Vice-Chair, Representative Precourt,
6 to explain how today's hearing fits into the
7 redistricting process and schedule.

8 Mr. Vice-Chair.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you,
10 Mr. Chair, and what a great crowd we have here.
11 I have a few notes that I want to go over just
12 to make sure that we cover all of the general
13 provisions of the process and a little
14 background for you as well.

15 Most of you that are here understand the
16 redistricting process, but still there are a
17 few amongst us that a little background will
18 help.

19 Every ten years our Legislature is
20 required by our Constitution to redistrict the
21 state based on increases, decreases and
22 movements of population.

23 The redistricting is really reapportioning
24 people so that every district has roughly the
25 same numbers. Because Florida has grown more

1 than any other state in the past ten years we
2 will also move up from 25 members of the U.S.
3 Congress, the House of Representatives, to 27
4 members, and because some parts of our state
5 have increased or decreased disproportionately
6 to one another in population, many of the
7 Senate and House Districts will change, either
8 adding population or losing population.
9 However, we are going to keep the same numbers,
10 40 Senate seats, 120 House seats.

11 When we are finished with our
12 redistricting, the Congressional Districts must
13 be equal actually in population and contain
14 696,345 people.

15 Now, the 40 Senate Districts must also be
16 nearly equal at about 470,000 people, and our
17 120 House Districts must also be nearly equal
18 at about 156,700 people.

19 There are a number of displays outside as
20 you may have seen as you came in showing the
21 current boundaries of the districts in this
22 area of the state and the number of people
23 which must be added or subtracted to from the
24 current district sizes to achieve this equal
25 representation.

1 Now, a point we made yesterday that was a
2 little bit misconstrued during the meeting, but
3 I want to make clear that everyone understands,
4 that equality in population for that
5 representation isn't the only legal
6 requirement.

7 It is one of the key ones that we have to
8 abide by, but it is not the only one. The laws
9 and important court cases governing
10 redistricting are explained in detail on our
11 House and Senate websites.

12 These websites are listed on the
13 Redistricting 2012 brochure that was available
14 when you came in, and if you need one our staff
15 is available in the back, you can get another
16 one at your convenience.

17 This brochure also summarizes the Federal
18 and State laws and outlines a number of other
19 topics that we hope you will discuss here at
20 today's hearing. If you didn't get a copy when
21 you came in, raise your hand and staff will get
22 you one.

23 The brochure also lists those House and
24 Senate websites and there is lots of
25 information on redistricting there, including

1 the explanation of those laws we just mentioned
2 and those important court cases.

3 The two websites are complimentary and
4 updated frequently. Most of the information is
5 similar on both websites, but you may want to
6 visit both just to see for differences in style
7 and the like, and check back with them often as
8 we update them.

9 It is a great way to stay current with how
10 our redistricting process is going and how
11 those Congressional Senate and House Districts
12 are taking shape.

13 The websites also provide you with direct
14 access to the demographic information that is
15 going to be used in drawing these districts,
16 and you have access to the exact same computer
17 programs that your Legislators and our
18 professional staff will be using to redraw
19 these lines.

20 Any member of the public can participate
21 in building plans or seeing maps submitted by
22 Legislators or other citizens. Again, that is
23 a tool right online for you to use to draw maps
24 if you would like to do that.

25 Before, during and after this hearing

1 Senate and House professional staff are
2 available to show anyone that is interested the
3 simple steps to getting online. There are some
4 computers outside, you can look right over
5 their shoulders. They will show you how to
6 build districts and submit plans and they are
7 available via phone or the like if you need
8 continuing ongoing help in the weeks to come.

9 All of the recommendations that we get
10 from citizens and groups of citizens will be
11 made publicly available. In fact, and we have
12 got some updated statistics as of this morning
13 right here for you.

14 As of this morning, 32 public submissions
15 of partial or complete maps and approximately
16 110 written ideas for maps are available on the
17 web for you to look at right now.

18 In fact, at yesterday's meeting in Stuart
19 a couple of Florida residents completed new
20 maps for submission right at the tables outside
21 the room before, during and after the meeting,
22 and after this meeting this week I am sure
23 those numbers will increase substantially.

24 One point we want to make very, very clear
25 is that the submission of proposed maps that

1 makes sense for your community is the single
2 most effective form of public participation in
3 the redistricting process.

4 I like to use the old saying, a picture
5 paints a thousand words. You can get up and
6 say a lot of things about what should be where,
7 but when you draw a line on a map, then it
8 becomes very, very clear to everyone looking
9 what you mean.

10 The redistricting schedule in which we are
11 operating is imposed by the State Constitution.
12 The Constitution does not permit our
13 Legislature to act on any legislative maps
14 before the second year after the census.

15 In other words, since the census was done
16 in 2010, we can't act on those state
17 legislative maps until 2012.

18 Now, we have accelerated the process as
19 much as possible by moving up the 2012
20 legislative session from when it is typically
21 held in March and April every year, to January
22 and February of next year, and we are
23 beginning, we have begun our statewide hearings
24 five months in advance of that 2012 January
25 session.

1 Now, it has been suggested by some that
2 the Legislature should draw maps first and then
3 ask you and the public to comment, and we
4 believe that that puts the answer ahead of the
5 question.

6 There shouldn't be any preconceived
7 notions by us, by the Legislators or
8 politicians as to what those maps should look
9 like, but it should start with public testimony
10 as to what the people who are going to be
11 represented by these maps think they should
12 look like and it should be free and
13 unrestricted and unbiased by our pre -- any
14 preconceived notions that might be out there.

15 In fact, one of the principle authors of
16 Florida's new redistricting standards and the
17 Chairperson for Fair Districts Campaign is on
18 record in agreement with the notion that the
19 new maps should not be drawn until after the
20 public has had an opportunity to comment.

21 Now, our intent is to use the
22 recommendations made at 26 public hearings
23 around the state and those that we receive
24 through our Internet sites and those that we
25 receive via mail as the basis for developing

1 one or more options for all of the district
2 maps.

3 We will discuss these options in open
4 public meetings before any votes are taken,
5 even in committee. In other words, what we are
6 literally saying is, if you look at those maps
7 in the back of the room, the ones that are
8 actually submitted to the Legislature by
9 Florida residents, we are literally starting
10 the legislative process with those maps and
11 other suggestions from the public.

12 So if you want to know where we will begin
13 our deliberations it is with those public
14 submissions that are available to you right
15 now, right here today and testimony from these
16 meetings, including today's and other public
17 input in many, many forms.

18 So throughout the process we will continue
19 to solicit additional public comment so that
20 proposed maps can mature and develop with the
21 public involved all before the Legislature
22 approves the final maps.

23 Whatever the Legislature passes will then
24 be submitted for judicial review to ensure that
25 the final plans meet every legal requirement

1 that we have, whether it is constitutional law,
2 Florida Law, Federal law.

3 Because our purpose here today is it hear
4 from you, the time between now and 1:00 p.m.
5 will be used to ensure that every member of the
6 public who is here and wishes to speak will
7 have the time to present the testimony that
8 they want to and be listened respectfully to
9 without interruption or argument.

10 If after every citizen has had his or her
11 say there is still some time remaining before
12 our scheduled adjournment, any member of the
13 committee may make a statement or offer any
14 observation.

15 Of course, any member of the Legislature
16 may today or at any time propose a map or a
17 plan and we will make it available to the
18 public. So those are all made public as well.

19 Mr. Chairman, I hope this description of
20 our schedule and the process that we are going
21 through helps to set the stage for a successful
22 hearing today.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
24 Representative Precourt. We have a large
25 number of people who have signed up to speak

1 today. So I am going to ask our members of the
2 House and Senate to quickly identify themselves
3 and what part of the state they represent so
4 that we can get right to testimony, and we will
5 begin on my right with Senator Maria Sachs, in
6 who's district we are delighted to meet today.

7 SENATOR SACHS: Thank you very much,
8 Mr. Chairman, and I would like to welcome all
9 of the members of the Committee here to my
10 district. My name is Maria Sachs and I proudly
11 represent parts of Palm Beach and Broward
12 County. Thank you for being here.

13 REPRESENTATIVE BERMAN: My name is
14 Representative Lori Berman and I would also
15 like to welcome you to District 86 and I
16 represent south Palm Beach County, Boynton
17 Beach, Delray beach and Boca Raton.

18 SENATOR SOBEL: Good morning, everybody
19 and thank you for being here. My name is
20 Eleanor Sobel, and I represent the southern
21 part of Broward County, Senate District 31.

22 SENATOR MARGOLIS: Thank you for being
23 here. My name is Senator Gwen Margolis, and I
24 represent the east side of Miami-Dade County
25 and part of Broward County.

1 SENATOR RICH: Good morning. My name is
2 Nan Rich, and I am -- I represent Senate
3 District 34, parts of Broward County and all of
4 the way down to the southern end of Miami-Dade
5 County and I also serve as the Democratic
6 Minority Leader.

7 REPRESENTATIVE NUNEZ: Good morning, my
8 name is Jeanette Nunez. I represent House
9 District 112, which consists of portions of
10 Broward, Dade and Collier County.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Good morning, I
12 am Kathleen Passidomo, I represent House
13 District 76, which is Naples, Marco Island,
14 Everglades City.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BURGIN: Good morning,
16 State Representative Rachel Burgin from
17 District 56, which is Tampa and eastern
18 Hillsborough County.

19 REPRESENTATIVE ROONEY: Hello, everyone,
20 Pat Rooney, House District 83, which is mainly
21 Palm Beach Gardens and Jupiter, as well as Palm
22 Beach. Good to be here.

23 REPRESENTATIVE CLEMENS: Good morning, I
24 am Jeff Clemens, State House District 89. That
25 includes Lake Worth, West Palm Beach and nine

1 other municipalities in central Palm Beach
2 County.

3 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Good morning, I am
4 Dennis Baxley, Florida House District 24,
5 serving Ocala, Marion County. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Good morning,
7 thank you for having us here. I am Trudi
8 Williams, and I represent District 75, which is
9 on southwest coast, Lee and Collier Counties.

10 REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: Good morning, I am
11 Representative Dana Young, and I represent the
12 city of Tampa and parts of Hillsborough County.

13 REPRESENTATIVE FRESEN: Good morning, Erik
14 Fresen, representing Miami Dade County,
15 District 111, Florida House.

16 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good morning,
17 Mack Bernard, State Representative District 84,
18 representing West Palm Beach.

19 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Good morning,
20 Dorothy Hukill, State Representative, District
21 28, representing parts of Volusia County.

22 SENATOR BOGDANOFF: Ellyn Bogdanoff, State
23 Senator from District 25, which goes from Juno
24 Beach on the coast all of the way down to Ft.
25 Lauderdale and shoots over to Wellington.

1 SENATOR BENACQUISTO: Good morning,
2 Lizbeth Benacquisto, representing Senate
3 District 27, which is comprised of portions of
4 western Palm Beach County, Lee County, Glades
5 County, Charlotte County and Hendry County.

6 REPRESENTATIVE JENNE: My list is much
7 shorter. State Representative Evan Jenne. I
8 represent southeast Broward County. Basically
9 if you are being my neighbor to the north, you
10 probably realize, the southern 595 corridor and
11 thank you all for being here and having us.

12 SENATOR BRAYNON: State Senator Oscar
13 Braynon, and I represent the north central area
14 in Miami-Dade.

15 SENATOR SMITH: Good morning, and first,
16 Mr. Chair, I want to welcome you. Actually,
17 you are sitting in my district, Senate District
18 29 represents this building.

19 I represent Broward, Broward and Palm
20 Beach County connected by the I-95 corridor.
21 Thank you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE ABRUZZO: Good morning,
23 Joseph Abruzzo, House District 85, it is
24 primarily a western and central Palm Beach
25 County district.

1 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good morning, my
2 name is Dwayne Taylor. I represent House
3 District 27 which is in Volusia County.

4 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Good morning, Mike
5 Horner. I represent state House District 79 in
6 Orange, Osceola, Okeechobee and Polk County.

7 REPRESENTATIVE PAFFORD: Good morning, I
8 am Mark Pafford, House District 88, West Palm
9 Beach, Royal Palm Beach, Green Acres and the
10 crossroads of Florida Haverhill.

11 REPRESENTATIVE STEINBERG: Tough act to
12 follow. Richard Steinberg, State House
13 District 106, northeast Miami-Dade County.

14 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good morning, John
15 Patrick Julien, representing State District
16 104, which is in Miami-Dade County, North Miami
17 Beach, North Miami, Miami Gardens, Opa Locka,
18 City of Miami, Unincorporated Miami-Dade and a
19 small chunk of Hialeah. It is a pleasure to be
20 here.

21 REPRESENTATIVE HAGER: Good morning, Bill
22 Hager, Boca Raton, House District 87, and this
23 great University that you are at which kicks
24 off its inaugural home football game in mid
25 October, is inclusive in my district.

1 My district begins at Deerfield Beach,
2 captures the coastal communities, all of the
3 way up to Manalapan, just south of West Palm
4 Beach. Welcome. Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE THURSTON: Good morning, I
6 am Perry Thurston, and I represent House
7 District 93, Ft. Lauderdale, Broward County,
8 Florida, your neighbor to the south, and thanks
9 for being here.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WALDMAN: Good morning, I
11 want to first welcome the Mark Pafford fan club
12 in the back. It is great to have you here.
13 And, oh, some have moved into the front. My
14 name is Jim Waldman. I am the State
15 Representative from District 95.

16 District 95 is northwest Broward County,
17 primarily Coconut Creek, Margate, north
18 Lauderdale, Coral Springs, a little bit of Ft.
19 Lauderdale and Pompano Beach, and my daughter
20 graduated from FAU here last year. So I have a
21 very good connection to this area also. Thank
22 you for having us.

23 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good morning, my
24 name is Betty Reed. I represent District 59
25 which is in Tampa, the eastern part of Tampa,

1 and I want to thank you for being here this
2 morning and welcome. Enjoy.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PERMAN: Good morning,
4 Mr. Chair, fellow Legislators and neighbors. I
5 am Steve Perman, House District -- take that,
6 Pafford. I represent House District 78, which
7 is west Boca, west Delray and west Boynton,
8 also portions, in addition to Palm Beach
9 County, of Martin County, Okeechobee County and
10 St. Lucie County, including Indiantown, the
11 city of Okeechobee and the city of Ft. Pierce.
12 Welcome.

13 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good morning, I am
14 State Representative Gwyndolen Clarke-Reed,
15 representing -- thank you, thank you.
16 Representing House District 92, which is just
17 across the Palm Beach County line starting in
18 Deerfield Beach and going south, Oakland Park,
19 Wilton Manors, Pompano Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, a
20 little bit of Tamarac, a little bit of north
21 Lauderdale. Thank you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good morning, I am
23 State Representative Hazelle Rogers from
24 Broward County, Broward County, the House,
25 central, Broward County representing eight

1 cities; Lauderdale Lakes, Lauderhill, north
2 Lauderdale, Margate, Tamarac, Oakland Park,
3 Plantation and Sunrise.

4 It is good to be here this morning, and of
5 course, Broward County, one of the most diverse
6 counties representing 1.8 million residents.
7 So it is good to be here.

8 REPRESENTATIVE MORAITIS: Good morning, I
9 am George Moraitis, I represent House District
10 91, that is east Broward County, east Palm
11 Beach County. I suppose if I were to say I
12 were a Democrat I would have gotten some
13 applause, but I am looking forward to the
14 hearings this morning.

15 REPRESENTATIVE HOLDER: Good morning, I am
16 Doug Holder. I represent south Sarasota County
17 in the Florida House.

18 SENATOR SIPLIN: Good morning, Gary
19 Siplin, District 19, State Senate, Orlando,
20 Florida.

21 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Good morning, I
22 am Steve Precourt from way up north just west
23 of Orlando, House District 41, west Orange
24 County, south Lake County and parts of Osceola
25 County.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: And my district, my Senate
2 District is coastal northwest Florida from
3 Pensacola to Panama City, and Senator Smith, I
4 just want to apologize to you and tell you that
5 you and Senator Sachs will be meeting
6 separately later to sort this out.

7 We have a large number of people who want
8 to speak today and we want to hear from as many
9 people as we can.

10 We will adjourn promptly at 1:00 and we
11 have literally over 100 people who have signed
12 up to speak.

13 Now, we can do this any number of ways,
14 but in order to give everyone a fair chance we
15 are going to impose a time limit. Is Bill
16 Diamond here? Bill, are you here?

17 MR. DIAMOND: Right here.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Bill, sit down. The
19 reason why I asked you to stand up for a
20 second, Bill, is because I am an advocate for
21 you. You are the last person who signed up to
22 speak, and I want to hear from Bill Diamond,
23 but in order to hear from him, everybody else
24 is going to have to be courteous and kind.

25 Now, you are welcome to applaud. You are

1 welcome to emote, you are welcome to do most
2 anything that is legal and not unethical or
3 fattening, but remember that any time you take
4 is time you are taking away from people who
5 have come here, your friends and neighbors who
6 would like to speak.

7 So we are going to keep everybody to two
8 minutes. That is the only way we can get
9 through all of the individuals who signed up.

10 Now, if someone has already made your
11 point we will give you extra credit for saying,
12 I agree with that person and you can still
13 submit your written comments which will be part
14 of the record and available to all members of
15 the committee.

16 But if you feel the need to speak, even if
17 somebody else has made your point, we want to
18 hear you for the time that you have available.

19 With that said I am going to call several
20 people forward so that we can kind of keep it
21 moving.

22 Joan Karp with the League of Women Voters
23 will be first, followed by Thomas, I think it
24 is Sliney, Sliney, and Tom, if you will please
25 come forward, please, as well. And then Carol

1 Porter and then Florence Fidell.

2 And so if we could begin, please, if those
3 individuals would come forward and we will
4 begin with Joan Karp. You are our first
5 testifier. We are glad to have you here this
6 morning and you are recognized.

7 MS. KARP: Good morning, I am President of
8 the Palm Beach County League of Women Voters.
9 During previous hearings many testifiers have
10 emphasized the same map criteria that we voted
11 into the Constitution last year. There are
12 only six more hearings after this morning's.

13 Still we are asking, in spite of what
14 Senator Precourt said, why aren't we seeing
15 drafts of maps at any of these hearings so that
16 the public can make comments on the product
17 instead of the criteria and we can judge if the
18 listening tour was effective.

19 By the time maps are presented there will
20 be little time for public comment. In this
21 tight budget environment these expensive
22 hearings shouldn't be wasted on merely
23 listening.

24 By now many other states have released
25 actual proposed maps for citizens' comments.

1 Arizona for one will allow 30 days of public
2 hearings.

3 The current timeline seems to be only
4 three days in Tallahassee for public comments
5 after the vote. How can we, hundreds of miles
6 from Tallahassee, analyze and comment in that
7 length of time?

8 The software, My District Builder,
9 provided to the public to draw their maps
10 doesn't provide the tools necessary to draw
11 real statewide maps that fit the criteria
12 written into the Constitution.

13 Consequently the league is not drawing
14 sample maps. The lack of timely maps impacts
15 the work of the league educating the voters.
16 How can we plan and execute candidate forms
17 without knowing where the districts fall?

18 How can we answer questions for your
19 constituents when they ask, who is running in
20 their district? Our written publications need
21 the maps as well.

22 In just one year the State Primaries will
23 already have been held, which means that
24 absentee ballots would have been mailed weeks
25 before and all ballots for early voting created

1 many weeks earlier, making the work of the
2 Supervisors' office with its limited staff
3 extremely difficult.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
5 very much, Ms. Karp. We really appreciate your
6 testimony, and next we will have Thomas Sliney,
7 please.

8 MR. SLINEY: Good morning, I am Tom
9 Sliney. I am a long time resident of Boca
10 Raton and an attorney in Boca and have been in
11 the political process for a long time.

12 I am here to speak on District 87 which I
13 am very familiar with. You can't see it, but
14 here is a map. If you can see the tan part,
15 this is District 87.

16 It is Boca Raton based. It is presently a
17 pretty compact district. If you need to make
18 some changes in the district I would suggest
19 based on the compactness theory and also the
20 county line theory, that you take one portion
21 of the district which is in District 91 and
22 bring that up into Boca Raton, take off the
23 Broward County part of the district and have
24 that go back to Broward County.

25 Also, if you need population increased and

1 I am not sure which way the district is, to
2 have the balance of the city of Boca Raton be
3 placed in the district and I would also suggest
4 that you keep the coastal cities in the
5 district. Thank you very much.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
7 Very helpful testimony. Next we will hear from
8 Carol Porter and following Ms. Porter, if
9 Florence Fidell is here and then Steven Laine
10 and then following Mr. Laine, Corrine Miller.

11 Carol Porter, you are recognized.

12 A VOICE: No, she is not here.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: She is not here, well, we
14 will pass her and go next to Florence Fidell.
15 Carol is here.

16 A VOICE: Okay.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: All right, Carol, are you
18 here?

19 MS. PORTER: Yes.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Carol Porter. Ms. Porter.
21 Is Carol Porter here? Do you wish to testify?

22 MS. PORTER: Can I use this microphone,
23 please?

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, ma'am, you certainly
25 may.

1 MS. PORTER: Okay. Just that we, the
2 Florida voters, would like the process to go
3 smoothly and please take all input and we would
4 like the districts to be drawn fairly for fair
5 representation, too, and I think that is all I
6 can think of right now.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: That is a lot. Thank you
8 very much, Ms. Porter. And next is Florence
9 Fidell, and then Steven Laine, if you can be on
10 deck.

11 MS. FIDELL: I am Florence Fidell, the
12 United Federation of Teachers as well as a
13 million other positions I hold, and please, I
14 say this with all due respect, please, but your
15 job is to carry out the will of the voters, and
16 I am one of those 63 percent of the Florida
17 voters actually that was more than 3,150,000
18 Floridians who voted for fair districts.

19 Your responsibility is certainly to listen
20 to us, but by your ploy, sorry, but by your
21 ploy of giving us the opportunity of drawing
22 the lines as you alluded to before, instead of
23 presenting what you think is fair and legal, I
24 find it unconscionable.

25 At these 26 hearings around the state we

1 would then have had an opportunity to comment
2 and react to your plan. I, like others, have
3 done my research, and know that you have had
4 the necessary data to draw district lines.

5 You have had it since March, and by doing
6 it this way it limits the time that prospective
7 candidates can file, to speak to us and allow
8 us to make clear decisions on who we think
9 should represent us.

10 I will end on this comment. Do you
11 honestly think it is fair for us, for me to
12 give up my work day as I did today and our time
13 and our money to prospectively travel to
14 Tallahassee months from now when you finally
15 present your maps? I absolutely do not.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
17 Ms. Fidell. And next we have Steven Laine and
18 then following Mr. Laine, Corrine Miller, and
19 following Ms. Miller, Margie Walden.

20 Mr. Laine, you are recognized. Thank you
21 for being here today.

22 MR. LAINE: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman,
23 for all of your work and all of your co-workers
24 here making this possible, and after doing 25
25 or more of these I can see where you would get

1 a little weary of this effort but we all
2 appreciate your service.

3 A point of personal privilege,
4 Mr. Chairman. 1997 I was part of the second
5 World Food Summit in Rome, Italy. The first
6 one was in 1974, and what I suggested, I was an
7 Assistant Secretary of Agriculture.

8 We had 150 speakers that three days and
9 what I suggested was that everybody get a
10 microphone, get up at one time and give their
11 three minutes and then send out a press
12 release. It would save days and hours and so
13 forth, so maybe this is something for the
14 future.

15 At any rate, I am a displaced prune
16 picker, a little bit wrinkled, a little bit
17 nutty. That means I am from California.

18 I was in Washington in 1974, three days
19 later the President quit. I didn't realize
20 there was a Ford in my future, and after 37
21 years last week, many of you will recognize the
22 37th anniversary of Gerald Ford being made
23 President of these United States.

24 Well, I have been active in civic groups
25 and so forth. I won't bore you with all of

1 that, but very active with the Boca Highland
2 Beach Condominium Association which has 62
3 condominiums that we represent in Palm Beach
4 County and Highland Beach, Boca Raton actually,
5 and we have interests such as beach
6 re-nourishment firearm issues, sea grapes
7 challenging blocking views and all of the rest
8 of this. So these are the things that we deal
9 with.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Anything on redistricting
11 before you finish?

12 MR. LAINE: Yes. I am going to get to
13 that, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your --

14 SENATOR GAETZ: You have five seconds.

15 MR. LAINE: Well, the way I did this, I
16 followed the instructions and I put this
17 altogether in two pages for three to five
18 minutes, and of course, we are down to two and
19 I am exceeding my time and I apologize to you.

20 But anybody ever heard of the Rorschach
21 Inkblot Test, you know, a psychologist shows a
22 patient and inkblot and asks what the patient
23 sees in it?

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Laine, I apologize.

25 We have got 98 people behind you.

1 MR. LAINE: Good.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: If you could please wrap
3 it up.

4 MR. LAINE: Yes, and every patient sees
5 the --

6 SENATOR GAETZ: We would be happy to take
7 your written testimony.

8 MR. LAINE: I will give it to you right
9 now, sir. And every patient sees something
10 different. We each look at the district and
11 see it from our various perspectives.

12 My District 91 has special interests in
13 the beaches of our community. Our immediate
14 district to the north of us is analogous in
15 many respects. It has just six or so
16 precincts.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Laine, I am sorry, I
18 am going to have to ask you to conclude,
19 because we do have so many other people, we
20 really appreciate it.

21 Next is Corrine Miller.

22 MR. LAINE: And in conclusion I would like
23 to thank you for all of your efforts on our
24 behalf. Got bless you and thank you for making
25 Florida such a beautiful place in which to

1 live.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
3 Corrine Miller. Corrine Miller and then
4 following Ms. Miller is Margie Walden, and then
5 Jean Craft, if you will be on deck and Tom
6 Whatley, and there are microphones on both
7 sides, whichever is most convenient.
8 Ms. Miller.

9 MS. MILLER: Yes, speaker after speaker in
10 prior hearings of this committee reminded you
11 that over 63 percent of the voters supported
12 Amendments 5 and 6.

13 A committee member said that voters often
14 don't understand the Amendments on which they
15 vote. I would like to point to a number of
16 facts that come to that assumption.

17 A citizen sponsored amendment on
18 redistricting has made the rounds four times in
19 the last decade. Hundreds of thousands of
20 people have signed on only to face
21 disappointment as the first three attempts did
22 not reach the ballot.

23 By the time 5 and 6 were placed on the
24 ballot millions of Florida citizens had all had
25 a personal civics lesson in gerrymandering.

1 I remember a Fourth of July celebration on
2 this campus where volunteers raced to keep up
3 with the number of voters anxious to sign a bid
4 for fairness in our election system.

5 During the entire campaign virtually every
6 newspaper in the state supported the effort.
7 The coalitions members addressed civic
8 organizations throughout the state. In Palm
9 Beach County alone over 120 groups heard about
10 redistricting.

11 There were public debates and explanations
12 from groups like the Collins Center and the
13 Brandon Center. The National media got into
14 the act with comments even from the New York
15 Times.

16 In the process the Legislature changed the
17 threshold for approval to 60 percent from a
18 simple majority. Undaunted by the higher
19 hurdle, the public education campaign included
20 distribution of several hundred thousand
21 non-partisan explanations of the ballot issue
22 that reached voters through libraries,
23 newspaper inserts and distribution at civic
24 meetings and events.

25 If you work with voter education for 50

1 years as I have, you learn that when people
2 choose not to vote it is because they lack
3 sufficient information and do not want to make
4 a mistake.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: And Ms. Miller, we thank
6 you. We thank you for your time.

7 MS. MILLER: I have two more sentences.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay.

9 MS. MILLER: The voters who did vote have
10 spoken with understanding and determination.
11 They will remember those who have not heard the
12 message.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
14 Ms. Miller. And next is Margie Walden with
15 Alliance of Delray, and then following
16 Ms. Walden, Jean Craft and Tom Whatley, and Jim
17 Watt, if you will be on deck, please.

18 Ms. Walden, thank you for coming, and we
19 look forward to your testimony.

20 MS. WALDEN: Good morning, Honorable
21 Representatives and Senators of the great state
22 of Florida. The Alliance of Delray is a
23 community-based organization comprised of 81
24 condominium and homeowners associations in
25 Delray Beach representing more than 100,000

1 residents and voters from the Everglades to the
2 ocean.

3 We have a great concern about the
4 following. One, that the lesion of the
5 compactness and geo-spacial analysis from the
6 My District Builder software.

7 Two, the lack of proposed plans and maps
8 distributed to the public for comment prior to
9 these public meetings.

10 Three, only allowing comments from the
11 public on proposed maps during committee
12 meetings that will be held in Tallahassee
13 during session.

14 Four, utilizing taxpayer funds in a
15 pending lawsuit to overturn Fair Districting
16 Amendments that were approved by 63 percent of
17 the population.

18 Five, establishing an unrealistic timeline
19 for approval that will prevent the completion
20 of the entire process in time for all incumbent
21 and new candidates to declare their candidacy
22 and for the Supervisor of Elections to prepare
23 ballots.

24 So as we are facing extremely high
25 unemployment and services are being cut, we are

1 counting the millions of dollars being spent on
2 holding these meetings and suits pending on the
3 constitutionality of these amendments. This is
4 not good governance and the waste the is
5 unconscionable.

6 The Alliance -- The alliance, the Alliance
7 of Delray members will be watching very closely
8 and we are prepared to make our voices heard
9 through every possible channel during this
10 entire process to ensure --

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Walden, thank you.
12 Thank you very much.

13 MS. WALDEN -- the enactment of fair
14 districts.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Your testimony was very
16 helpful. And now Jean Craft. Ms. Craft, you
17 are next, followed by Tom Whatley and Jim Watt
18 and then Ed Sol.

19 Ms. Craft, thank you for being here, and
20 we look forward to anything you have to share
21 with us.

22 MS. CRAFT: I, even though there has been
23 other people that have said the same thing I am
24 going to say, this would -- the voters have
25 already spoken.

1 We want fair districts and for you to come
2 to here and, I mean, I appreciate your service,
3 but for you to come and to spend the money when
4 things are so tight right now when we don't
5 even have maps to look at, to, you know, to
6 comment on and then when you go there and do
7 vote on the maps, how are people going to get
8 all of the way up to Tallahassee?

9 I mean, this is -- this should be already
10 done. You have got the software. There is
11 already procedures for doing it and I just
12 don't understand, that it seems to me as though
13 even though we have spoken clearly about fair
14 maps, fair districts, that now we are going
15 through this.

16 It is not our job to draw the maps. It is
17 your job to draw the maps. That is what the
18 Constitution says. It is our job to say
19 whether we like it or not. Right now we are, I
20 mean, it sounds nice that you are giving us the
21 software, but that is not our job. It is your
22 job to do that. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. Very
24 helpful testimony. And next, Tom Whatley, and
25 then after Mr. Whatley, Jim Watt and then Ed

1 Sol, and then if Harry Raucher will be on deck.
2 Tom Whatley.

3 MR. WHATLEY: Mr. Chair, ladies and
4 gentlemen of the panel. Thank you for taking
5 the time out to do this. I do have to disagree
6 with the previous speaker that, I appreciate
7 even Senator Sachs putting on like a little
8 hometown meeting last week to get our input on
9 this, and it is a tedious task that you all are
10 going through.

11 It could be political suicide for a few of
12 you, depending on how the maps are drawn up.
13 So I appreciate that, but, you know, I am a
14 native Palm Beach, one of the few people over
15 50 years of age that is actually born in this
16 county.

17 But I live in and probably if you look up
18 gerrymander in the definition, you might see
19 Senator Benacquisto has District 27, while if I
20 walk a quarter mile left or right, I am in
21 Senator Sachs' district.

22 I am all of the way at the very bottom,
23 and I was a little disappointed, Senator
24 Benacquisto, when you moved over to Ft. Myers
25 and I actually, anything I need I actually go

1 three miles over to Congress Avenue and go see
2 Senator Sachs.

3 So it is very gerrymandered, but you all
4 have a tough task and I would encourage you,
5 there is a time issue here, because many people
6 can't run for office. They can't file and if
7 they can't file they can't collect funds, and
8 if they suddenly as the residents requirement
9 they get moved out of another district, what
10 happens is, well, you know, they have collected
11 money, they are going to have to change up. It
12 loses confidence in the voters.

13 So that my issue is, it is a timing, you
14 have to get this done quick, but it is probably
15 the most important decision that you all are
16 going to make while your tenure in office, is
17 this tenure, every ten years.

18 This is the most important one and many of
19 you all are freshmen in your perspective seats,
20 but this is going to make a difference of what
21 happens in the state of Florida. The whole
22 nation is watching, so keep that in mind.

23 The nation is watching what Florida is
24 going to do after redistricting in the
25 Constitutional Amendments and I appreciate each

1 and every one of you for the jobs that you all
2 have done and please continue to do, contrary
3 to what some people have said, the quorums out
4 in the public because I think this is novel,
5 you guys need to do this more often, thank you.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
7 And next, Jim Watt, and following Mr. Watt, Ed
8 Sol, and then Harry Raucher and then George
9 Weiss.

10 Mr. Watt, thank you for being here, we
11 look forward to your testimony, sir.

12 MR. WATT: Good morning, Senators and
13 Representatives. For the record, my name is
14 Jim Watt from Palm Beach Gardens. My remarks
15 concern the House District in northern Palm
16 Beach County.

17 Prior to 1982, our county's House
18 delegation consisted of a multi membered
19 district with six State Representatives.

20 However, in 1982, that changed to six
21 single member districts, which we continue to
22 have today, 30 years later. For these 30 years
23 the north county district, currently District
24 83, the cornerstone of that district has been
25 the municipalities of north Palm Beach, Palm

1 Beach Gardens, Juno Beach and at certain times
2 Lake Park.

3 Therefore, there is a consistent
4 historical basis for that district. Also,
5 there is a substantial community of interest,
6 including the beaches and the area that is
7 commonly referred to as the northern Palm
8 Beaches. We even have our own Chamber of
9 Commerce.

10 I urge the Legislature to continue this
11 commitment to the northern Palm Beaches by
12 maintaining this cornerstone of the cities in
13 the districts, adding adjacent unincorporated
14 areas which have a similar community interest.
15 Thank you very much.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
17 Mr. Watt, and I would like to just mention that
18 because everyone is being so respectful of
19 those who have signed up behind you, if you
20 have extended remarks, we want those notes or
21 any kind of information that you have.

22 You can pass them to our staff members and
23 they will be included and the record made
24 available to all members.

25 And next we will have testimony from Ed

1 Sol and, Ed, thank you for being here.

2 MR. SOL: Thank you for inviting me. My
3 name is Ed Sol from Delray Beach. The
4 legislative's timeline for drawing districts is
5 unfair to Florida voters.

6 Under the present timeline for
7 redistricting, it is highly unlikely that the
8 districts will be finally approved before the
9 date candidates must sign up to run for
10 reelection. And it is unlikely that the
11 ballots will be finalized by the deadline for
12 sending absentee and overseas ballots.

13 Districts may not be finalized until
14 August. Florida's maps will be approved later
15 than most every other state in the nation, and
16 according to the Legislature's own attorney,
17 this will cause massive voter confusion.

18 Voting officials will not have time to
19 prepare for the elections. Challengers or new
20 candidates will have little or any time to
21 mount campaigns and voters will be voting for
22 candidates they will have little opportunity to
23 know. Thank you very much for the opportunity.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Sol. And
25 next is Harry Raucher and then Gregg Weiss and

1 then Karen Burke.

2 Mr. Raucher, thank you for coming today.

3 MR. RAUCHER: Thank you, thanks and good
4 morning and thanks for the opportunity to
5 address the Redistricting Committee.

6 I -- when I got my confirmation it came
7 from a gentleman named, I believe Jay Ferrin
8 who said that this would be a most open
9 transparent and interactive redistricting ever.
10 And I am hoping.

11 Timelines for maps should really be
12 September, October, I think, and we should all
13 be given a time to know what our districts will
14 be, but if they are not publicly released until
15 June, which is what our indications are, it
16 will cause many anxious moments as well as we,
17 the public, not knowing who our Legislators
18 might be and who is running.

19 At the least they should be available at
20 the very beginning of the next session in
21 January. My guess is they have already been
22 drawn or at least some lines have been drawn
23 and I think as many will say they should be
24 contiguous and compact.

25 My State Representative, Representative

1 Perman, I think represents either four or five
2 counties and I think that is wrong.

3 Filings should be greatly affected as I
4 indicated so I won't go into that and many
5 other people have said the same thing.

6 The lawsuit that is being brought is
7 unfair and unjust. A lot of taxpayer money is
8 being spend to hire lawyers and pursue the
9 lawsuit over amendments that were 63 percent of
10 the voters in the last election voted for.

11 We were led to believe that our tax money
12 was being spent more wisely and the creation of
13 jobs and the economy was the most important
14 thing in the past session.

15 I as well as most of the other citizens of
16 Florida hope you will do the right thing and
17 truly make this redistricting transparent, open
18 and interactive. Thank you very much for
19 hearing me.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir, for your
21 very useful testimony. Thank you.

22 Next is Gregg Weiss and then following Mr.
23 Weiss, Karen Burke, Rick Neuhoff and then Henry
24 Kelley.

25 Mr. Weiss, thank you for coming today and

1 we look forward to your testimony.

2 MR. WEISS: Well, thank you very much.
3 Glad to be here. Gregg Weiss, for the record.
4 You asked me to tell you my story and my story
5 is, if you have a pen, you might want to write
6 this down.

7 I am from Precinct 2066 in Palm Beach
8 County, and we -- my block, we have nine homes
9 on the block and we are pulled out of our
10 neighborhood and we are placed in a precinct a
11 quarter of a mile away.

12 So my neighbors all vote for different
13 people than the nine houses on my block. This
14 is -- we are -- we are the poster children for
15 what goes wrong sometimes in redistricting, and
16 Mack Bernard is my Representative, no offense
17 to you, Mack, but my neighbor across the street
18 has Representative Clemens.

19 And we live in the city of West Palm Beach
20 and I see we have four Representatives
21 representing our city of 100,000 people, so we
22 are split up.

23 So if you can fix my personal district or
24 my personal precinct I would think that this
25 would have been a successful event.

1 The only other things I really want to say
2 is, if you could look and see, you know, try to
3 put the city together so that we are, we are a
4 community of interest, and also save our
5 Supervisor of Elections from having to spend so
6 much money to print up all of these different
7 ballots as we are cut up in all of these
8 different ways.

9 And then lastly, I also would have liked
10 to have seen some maps, some ideas of where you
11 thought the line should be drawn, because I
12 think together we can come up with much better
13 ideas when we all put our thoughts together.
14 So thank you very much.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, Mr.
16 Weiss. That is exactly the kind of input we
17 need.

18 Next is Karen Burke and following
19 Ms. Burke, Rick Neuhoff and then Henry Kelley,
20 following Mr. Kelley, Allen Robbins.

21 Ms. Burke, thank you for being here.

22 MS. BURKE: Thank you. I would like to
23 defer to Tom Sliney's plan who spoke already
24 regarding District 87 and 91, to help identify
25 like communities of interest and geographic

1 areas that could form the basis of a district
2 or part of a district or identify unique
3 attributes of a given area that the Legislature
4 must be keenly aware of.

5 An example of this could include, but is
6 by no means limited to keeping coastal
7 communities in Palm Beach County together is
8 critically important, because they comprise a
9 community ever interest with special needs and
10 concerns from the rest of Palm Beach County.

11 Coastal communities must be kept together
12 because there are issues such as property
13 insurance and tourism, require these
14 communities to have a strong representation at
15 the State and Federal levels. Thank you.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
17 Ms. Burke. That is very helpful testimony.
18 Rick Neuhoff, then Henry Kelley, then if Allen
19 Robbins will be ready and then Mark Allen
20 Siegel. Mr. Neuhoff.

21 MR. NEUHOFF: My name is Rick Neuhoff. I
22 am running for Palm Beach County Commission in
23 District 5 and I have a lot -- I have a lot of
24 respect for you as Florida's Legislators.

25 Over the years gerrymandering has been

1 used to stack partisan votes and give dominance
2 to one party or another, but the times have
3 changed and more than 3,150,000 Floridians have
4 called for fair districts.

5 Technology has radically changed our
6 election process, and because of that today's
7 vocabulary words are geo-spacial analysis. I
8 agree with the Delray Alliance, you can either
9 fix My District Builder software to include
10 geo-spacial analysis or replace it with the
11 Esolvvia Seserio software.

12 We are sick and tired of gerrymandering.
13 Election results must represent the actual
14 votes that we cast. It is ridiculous that
15 Floridians are paying attorneys and law firms
16 to argue both sides for and against the
17 redistricting process.

18 Don't you know what side the redistricting
19 issue we are on? We voted for Amendments 5 and
20 6. Now it is up to you to draw the lines in a
21 prompt fashion so that the new fairly drawn
22 compact and contiguous non-partisan districts
23 are in place in plenty of time for the 2012
24 elections.

25 We want fair districts and fair elections

1 now. The last time I heard a Florida
2 politician say they wanted to keep the voting
3 process simple, Florida wound up with a
4 butterfly ballot and we all know the sad ending
5 to that story.

6 So please stop playing games with
7 redistricting. By now you fully understand the
8 meanings of the words compact and contiguous.
9 What part of non-partisan districts don't you
10 understand? I am sure you do.

11 With all due respect I agree with the
12 League of Women Voters and the United
13 Federation of Teachers. These meetings are
14 theatrical and misleading, giving you the
15 opportunity to tell us to produce our own maps
16 for you to consider. Really? Are you serious?
17 You can't expect us to become redistricting
18 software experts and then present our --

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Neuhoff.

20 MR. NEUHOFF -- amateur attempts for your
21 consideration.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Neuhoff, all of those
23 people, Mr. Neuhoff, all those people you want
24 to have vote for you, they are waiting to speak
25 and you have used up your time. Thank you very

1 much for your testimony.

2 MR. NEUHOFF: Thank you for all of the
3 help that you are being today, sir.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Absolutely. Now we are
5 all going to be nice, we are all going to be
6 nice, and let's -- no, no, no, no, no. Let's
7 not -- let's not boo any of the people who
8 speak. Let's instead, okay.

9 A VOICE: You, you.

10 A VOICE: You guys aren't doing a good
11 job.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Ladies and gentlemen,
13 ladies and gentlemen, we have two choices. If
14 you would like to emote, you are welcome to, it
15 is your time. If you would like to hear your
16 friends and neighbors' concerns and testimony,
17 we can do that.

18 But as long as I am Chairing I am going to
19 be helpful and try to get to the last person
20 who signed up to speak, notwithstanding your
21 down sign, ma'am.

22 Now, Mr. Henry Kelley, you have the
23 testimony that you would like to bring to the
24 Committee, we are anxious to hear you.

25 MR. KELLEY: Thank you, Senator, and I

1 would like to thank the members of the
2 Committee for their hard work in attending all
3 of these meetings.

4 I have attended several meetings already
5 and I have watched a few on the Internet, and
6 in the interest of sparking more booing, there
7 is a recurring theme of you guys being told to
8 do your job.

9 On behalf of the Tea Party statewide we
10 believe that in the republic --

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Ladies and gentlemen,
12 please -- we are going to be -- we are going to
13 be kind and courteous to everyone who speaks,
14 regardless of their point of view.

15 MR. KELLEY: The reason why I bring that
16 up is because we believe in a republic the
17 citizens have an obligation to participate and
18 to tell you how we think on a given issue.

19 As such I have personally drawn two
20 Congressional maps, a full Senate map and a
21 full House map for your review.

22 I am here to express my disappointment in
23 the professional groups who stand before you
24 and complain, but haven't lifted a finger to
25 draw their own maps to show you what they want

1 and to put their agenda on display.

2 I received no money from my Tea Party
3 work. I drew these maps in my own spare time.
4 It can be done by anyone with a minor bit of
5 effort of watching the U-Tube video which is
6 five minutes long and a few minutes of
7 experimenting with the software.

8 In fact, there was an editorial today in
9 the Miami Herald from the League of Women
10 Voters and I put it to you, that time could
11 have been better spent taking ten minutes to
12 draw a new district.

13 However, I would like to ask the Committee
14 to consider adding to your calendar. I know
15 you have already had 26 meetings or will have,
16 but I would like the opportunity to present my
17 maps in detail at a committee hearing and I ask
18 that you open up an opportunity for people who
19 have done full maps to explain to you the lines
20 that I have drawn, why I drew them and why I
21 place them where I have and how I view, we
22 should adhere to the Fair Districts Amendment.

23 I will point and I am afraid my eyes
24 aren't what they used to be. The reason I drew
25 two Congressional maps was to show the impact

1 of the minority district and how that
2 gerrymandered district ordered by a Federal
3 Judge affects millions of Floridians and I
4 can't see which map is --

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Kelley, I would -- if
6 you could bring it in for a landing.

7 MR. KELLEY: My point is that we believe
8 in the Fair Districts Amendments as well. I
9 have put my money where my mouth is. I would
10 be glad to discuss what I call my good
11 congressional map that has nine Congressional
12 Districts and how I believe this will help the
13 state of Florida.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

15 MR. KELLEY: Thank you.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
17 And next we will hear from Allen Robbins and
18 following Mr. Robbins, Mark Allen Siegel, then
19 David Torgerson, and then Tami Donnally.

20 Mr. Robbins, thank you for being here and
21 we are delighted to have your testimony.

22 MS. ROBBINS: My name is Allen Robbins. I
23 am from Boynton Beach. Can you map that poster
24 that I requested earlier from your staff to be
25 put on screen, please, before I start?

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Of course.

2 MS. ROBBINS: Okay. That was the reason
3 that we are all here today and if you scroll
4 down a little further down you will see that
5 the -- we are here to do fair districting, and
6 I am here to talk about the software, both the
7 House and the Senate software.

8 I found some serious problems in the
9 software, itself, and I am going to read you
10 what I have. I have a full document of roughly
11 about 60 pages documenting some of the
12 problems.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Can you leave that with
14 us?

15 MS. ROBBINS: Your staff already has that.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, thank you.

17 MS. ROBBINS: I am just going to read a
18 short version of what is in here.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Please.

20 MS. ROBBINS: My District Builder and the
21 Senate District Builder directly relate to the
22 success of the Amendments 5 and 6. There is a
23 national public web-based mapping project, that
24 uses a version of District Builder that used
25 geo-spacial formulas.

1 The other versions of the District Builder
2 have failed to include this vital component and
3 other versions of District Builder will not
4 deliver compact and contiguous non-partisan
5 district scores.

6 The Florida House has been notified of
7 this serious problem on several occasions. The
8 Florida State House responded by saying they
9 would not include shell plan summary explaining
10 we do not plan to include a compactness
11 measuring tool.

12 The Florida House Senate's position is
13 completely unacceptable. The words compact and
14 -- is in the language of both Amendments 5 and
15 6 and again we call for the state of Florida to
16 use the version of District Builder that has
17 geo-spacial analysis.

18 We know that no mathematical formula is
19 likely to adequately correct for all of the
20 geographical and social variabilities that can
21 result in irregular district shapes.

22 However, when the authors wrote Amendments
23 5 and 6 they clearly called for a geometric
24 measure of compactness as part of the process.

25 When Florida State House told me that you

1 do not need Reocovia Hall Palsway Popper and
2 Schwartzberg scores to know what makes sense
3 for creating compact districts.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Sir, could I ask you to
5 conclude, please? You have gone over time.

6 MR. ROBBINS: Okay, then I will end it
7 with this paragraph. We want fair districts
8 drawn. Therefore, we demand that My District
9 Builder and the Senate District Builder
10 software either be fixed, replaced so that the
11 mandate of the people is followed to the letter
12 of the law to make sure that the DOJ and the
13 Florida Supreme Court have full access to
14 geo-spacial analysis to measure relative
15 compactness which is a mandate.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

17 MR. ROBBINS: For the people.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: And you are going to leave
19 your information with the staff, thank you so
20 much. That is very helpful.

21 Next, Mark Allen Siegel with The Autobot
22 Group, then David Torgerson, Tami Donnally, and
23 Susan Bucher, who is the Supervisor of
24 Elections. Mr. Siegel.

25 MR. SIEGEL: That is for Susan, not for

1 me. I served in another Legislature in another
2 galaxy far, far away, and went through a couple
3 of reapportionment processes and generally it
4 is pretty disgraceful.

5 However, the state of Florida adopted the
6 Fair District Amendments. In this county
7 70 percent of the people voted for fair
8 districts, which is why you have such anxiety
9 about it not being followed.

10 There are several things which you must
11 keep in mind. First of all, the absolute
12 integrity of county and city boundaries. There
13 is no excuse for crossing a county boundary
14 more than once or for dividing a city up among
15 four legislative districts.

16 Even the requirements of the Voting Rights
17 Act would require no city to be divided into
18 more than two districts.

19 So the number one thing we will be looking
20 at is how our Palm Beach municipalities are
21 treated. Don't cut up the cities, keep them
22 whole. Don't make our county partners of four
23 or five counties. Give us one or two partners
24 and keep the districts whole.

25 Second, there have to be objective

1 standards. Mr. Robbins mentioned several of
2 these standards. If you don't have objective
3 standards to measure the varying and
4 compactness and contiguity of your districts,
5 you are intentionally flying blind. Don't do
6 that.

7 It is not, it shouldn't be a subjective
8 matter when someone looks at the map and say,
9 well, geez, that looks compact. There are
10 well-established mathematical tools to
11 determine these things. Include them in your
12 software. There was no harm in that.

13 Finally, the schedule that you have
14 developed discriminates against our fighting
15 men and women. They vote, they vote overseas.

16 As Supervisor Bucher will tell you, the
17 schedule that is projected will make it
18 impossible to give our soldiers, seamen and
19 airmen the opportunity to vote in our primaries
20 and our general elections. Thank you for your
21 attention.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, sir.
23 Next we will hear from David Torgerson and
24 after Mr. Torgerson, Tami Donnally, then
25 Supervisor Bucher, and then Bill Martin.

1 Mr. Torgerson, thank you for being here,
2 sir, and we look forward to your testimony.

3 MR. TORGERSON: I am just -- everything
4 has been covered pretty much. I am just here
5 and wondering why I don't have a couple of maps
6 in my hand of what you are proposing, that I
7 think it would be much more effective at this
8 stage if you already had something you were
9 proposing for us to look at and figure out what
10 is going on. So where are the maps?

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Sir, thank you very much,
12 and next, Tami Donnally, Ms. Donnally, thank
13 you for being here. We look forward to any
14 testimony you might have for us.

15 MS. DONNALLY: Thank you, good morning.
16 My name is Tami Donnally, and I have lived in
17 Palm Beach County since 1966. I appreciate the
18 openness in which you are holding these
19 hearings and I think it is very important to
20 solicit citizen input and listen first before
21 drawing the maps.

22 I certainly don't envy the job that you
23 have ahead of you. I want to speak briefly
24 about the new Constitutional redistricting
25 requirements, Amendments 5 and 6. I have some

1 concerns that these Amendments and their
2 potential impact on the outcome of the process.

3 I am concerned many of the key words and
4 phrases of the Amendments are not sufficiently
5 defined to prevent confusion. Words like
6 compact, practical and feasible all sound easy
7 enough to understand, but what do they actually
8 mean?

9 Are there specific definitions of these
10 terms? What factors determine whether or not a
11 district meets the compactness requirements of
12 the Amendments, for example?

13 Similarly, what is practical and feasible
14 to one person may not appear to be so to
15 another person. What legal definitions of
16 these words exist to clarify their meanings?

17 What qualifies existing legal boundaries
18 under Amendments 5 and 6? Couldn't there be
19 many types of political boundaries that could
20 be used to draw district lines, and, if so, how
21 do we know which boundary lines to follow or
22 which not to follow?

23 I would also ask that you consider the
24 commonality issues between communities. For
25 example, many people use Lake Worth as their

1 home city. While eastern Lake Worth
2 communities identify with coastal issues and
3 other coastal cities, the western Lake Worth
4 communities have similar issues closer to those
5 of Wellington.

6 Again, I want to say thank you very much
7 for allowing us an opportunity to be here today
8 and express our concerns. I appreciate your
9 time and I hope you will be able to draw good
10 maps for the state of Florida. Thank you
11 again.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Ms. Donnally. Next, Ms. Susan Bucher,
14 Ms. Bucher, it is good to see you again, and
15 thank you for your service to the people of
16 Palm Beach County.

17 MS. BUCHER: My name is Susan Bucher and I
18 am the Supervisor of Elections in Palm Beach
19 County, and I am here this morning to, number
20 one, thank you for coming, but to explain to
21 you that the time frame is not workable for the
22 Supervisors of Elections throughout the state
23 of Florida.

24 As everyone in this room knows, Florida is
25 considered a swing state and a very important

1 2012 Presidential election next year. The eyes
2 of the world will be focused on the state of
3 Florida, and there is always special focus here
4 in Palm Beach County on elections.

5 I have had 20 elections in my first 30
6 months as a Supervisor of Elections and let me
7 tell you, it is not easy to put together voting
8 sites, over 450 of them and 790 precincts and
9 get the ballots printed and packaged and
10 shipped and delivered here in time to give each
11 voter the ballot that they deserve and they
12 should have. It all takes time.

13 We should be working on a schedule right
14 now for what needs to be done for next year.
15 However, we can't, because we don't have the
16 district lines, and we can't even schedule a
17 Presidential preference primary because the
18 date is not set.

19 You are sending our state into a perfect
20 storm of disaster. Take a look at your own
21 calendar. The process shows that without
22 lawsuits we get the information as Supervisors
23 on June 1st. We start qualifying candidates on
24 June 4th. That is simply impossible.

25 To conduct elections efficiently and

1 accurately, election officials need time to
2 adjust precinct lines to new districts, gain
3 approval of those precincts by the Board of
4 County Commissioners and notify all of our
5 voters well in advance of election day.

6 Even though I am considerate of the hard
7 working non-incumbent candidates who don't know
8 where their station campaign because they don't
9 know where the districts will be, you are
10 placing our voters in the worst possible
11 position and this entire process is supposed to
12 be for the voters.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: And Ms. Bucher, just out
14 of respect for your constituents, if you could
15 submit us your remarks in writing and then
16 conclude if you can, please, just in a few
17 sentences.

18 MS. BUCHER: I am your election partner.
19 I would like to complete.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am, you have got about
21 -- you have got a number of people, almost 100
22 people behind you who would like to speak.

23 MS. BUCHER: I understand, and they are
24 giving me their time. Thank you.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: I will be happy to grant

1 you another 15 seconds, but please try to
2 conclude.

3 MS. BUCHER: Given your timeline, voters
4 will have little time to get to know their
5 candidates running in their areas. If you
6 follow your current timeline, something that
7 was created by you and can be changed by you, I
8 believe you are setting our state up for
9 massive voter confusion in a very important
10 election year and that is entirely unnecessary.

11 If the Legislature or the Attorney
12 General, the Supreme Court and the Justice
13 Department complete their work on schedule,
14 election administrators will have less than two
15 weeks to adjust the records for Florida's
16 11 million plus voters before the absentee
17 ballots must be mailed to our military
18 overseas.

19 During the 1992 redistricting election --
20 schedule there were 13 lawsuits and in '02,
21 there were five. Your own staff analysis for
22 Amendment 7 stated that due to Amendments 5 and
23 6 the Office of the State Administrator
24 believes there be an impact at trial and
25 appellate levels as they assume litigation will

1 increase.

2 Why doesn't your calendar reflect what you
3 know or expect to happen this year? The
4 Supervisors have seen the long path potential
5 and it puts us after the 2012 election. I have
6 a copy here. You are not recreating the wheel
7 here.

8 The wheel of redistricting is well worn
9 and full of case law and traditional
10 districting principles. All that is being
11 asked of this Committee is to follow the
12 already established Federal and State laws.

13 The language of Amendments 5 and 6 passed
14 by 71.2 and 71.56 percent respectively here in
15 Palm Beach County and over 63 percent
16 statewide. The voice of our voters is very
17 clear.

18 The only thing that is being asked of this
19 Committee is to do your job in a timely manner
20 to ensure that there is enough time set to
21 properly establish election standards in place
22 for a smooth election.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Bucher, I apologize,
24 but we have given you twice as much time as --

25 MS. BUCHER: Rushing our Supervisors in

1 order --

2 SENATOR GAETZ: -- we have given your
3 constituents.

4 MS. BUCHER: -- to accommodate some made
5 schedule can cause errors and mistakes and we
6 all just want Florida to have successful
7 elections.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Bucher,
9 thank you very much. Next we will hear from
10 Bill Martin, if Mr. Martin is here, you are
11 recognized.

12 Following Bill Martin will be Peter
13 Feaman, and following Mr. Feaman, Philip Ward
14 and then John Smith. Mr. Martin.

15 MR. MARTIN: Do I get this much applause?

16 SENATOR GAETZ: If you earn it. If you
17 earn it.

18 MR. MARTIN: I don't think I will. Thanks
19 for coming and giving us an opportunity to
20 listen to our comments of how we want our
21 districts to look for the next ten years.

22 For the record, my name is Bill Martin. I
23 have lived in Palm Beach County for 18 years.
24 It was until recently the principle owner and
25 CEO of Estee Microwave. I am sorry, is that

1 better?

2 A VOICE: Yes, sir.

3 MR. MARTIN: Okay, thank you. We employed
4 135 people who live in the county, the
5 opportunity to acquire this company is why I
6 came to Palm Beach County originally.

7 We survived three major hurricanes and
8 kept manufacturing. The company continues to
9 manufacture here in Palm Beach County today and
10 I remain active in business through my firm,
11 Martin & Associates.

12 I would like to talk to you a bit about
13 preserving coastal communities. I think our
14 area has when well-served by having coastal
15 districts that are separate from the inland
16 areas of our county.

17 Districts going along the coast from
18 northern Palm Beach County through Boca Raton
19 and then south make a lot of sense because we
20 have unique needs and interests.

21 My wife and I live in a marina just off
22 the Intercoastal, concerns like property
23 insurance cost, protecting ourselves and our
24 homes from hurricane storm surges, exposure to
25 wind and water damage, are particularly

1 important to us, we live along the coast.

2 Therefore, I think it is important that
3 coastal communities be kept together in state
4 legislative and Congressional Districts so that
5 we have the opportunity to let people who
6 understand our unique and specific concerns.

7 I would ask you to strongly consider that
8 in drawing your districts. I think this will
9 ensure that our coastal families will be
10 well-represented in the years to come.

11 Again, I want to thank you for allowing me
12 to speak today.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
14 We appreciate your testimony. And next is
15 Peter Feaman, followed by Philip ward and then
16 John Smith and then Susan Litchfield.

17 Mr. Feaman.

18 MR. FEAMAN: Thank you, my name is Peter
19 Feaman.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Feaman, I apologize, sir.

21 MR. FEAMAN: That is okay. Everybody does
22 it. I have been a resident -- I live in Boynton
23 Beach. I have been a resident of eastern Palm
24 Beach County for almost 30 years.

25 I am here not to complain, criticize or

1 posture. I do have some specific
2 recommendations that may help the Committee in
3 their deliberations in driving and creating
4 districts.

5 However, I have seen the League of Women
6 Voters speak here today. I have seen their
7 website where they posted talking points for
8 these hearings.

9 They demand you produce maps now. They
10 criticize the process. That is posturing. It
11 was the League of Women Voters, itself, that
12 first publicly proposed maps when we did this
13 ten years ago.

14 It is in the redistricting archives of the
15 Florida Senate. I looked it up. With
16 Amendments 5 and 6, however, this time around
17 you must take public input first because the
18 wording of these Amendments clearly is so
19 difficult to comprehend, such as existing
20 political boundaries, compactness. There is --

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Now, ladies and gentlemen.
22 Excuse me, this is not included in your time.
23 Ladies and gentlemen, if you interrupt a
24 speaker, you can applaud later after somebody
25 speaks or you can show your emotions, but while

1 someone is speaking we are going to listen and
2 we are going to be respectful. We are
3 Americans. Please go ahead, sir.

4 MR. FEAMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It
5 would seem that the language in Amendments 5
6 and 6 as a lawyer myself for over 30 years are
7 so subjective that the League of Women Voters
8 perhaps doesn't want to show their hand by
9 drawing their own districts this time around.

10 They want the House and Senate to go first
11 and then they can say, huh, got you, but, you
12 know, in today's political climate there will
13 be lawsuits.

14 Finally, before I get specific
15 suggestions, it is a shame that a group once
16 founded on principle of civic participation is
17 not taking advantage of these public hearings
18 by giving you specific ideas and what you can
19 do.

20 This is a process they had no problem with
21 10 or 20 years ago. Now, two points with
22 regard to this area.

23 First, there is no question that in Palm
24 Beach County there are two distinct economic
25 communities, number one, agriculture. It

1 drivers the economy in the western half of our
2 county, and then the beach communities and that
3 drives the economic engine east of the Florida
4 Turnpike, two distinct economic concerns.

5 Our maps should keep our eastern beach
6 communities whole as they have similar economic
7 interests.

8 Our western agricultural community should
9 be connected to others with the same interest,
10 and finally, because I see my time is almost
11 up.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: It is.

13 MR. FEAMAN: And I want to be respectful
14 of that. We also have diverse population in
15 this county which should be pointed out which
16 nobody has said anything yet.

17 Our African-American neighbors in Rivera
18 Beach, Pahokee, Belle Glade and South Bay are
19 all now represented in a minority/majority
20 district.

21 I know that you cite Sections II and V of
22 the Federal Voting Rights Act on your website
23 and I would like you to keep that in
24 consideration as well so can draw --

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

1 MR. FEAMAN -- districts that represent all
2 Floridians and not special interest groups.
3 Thank you very much.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Feaman,
5 appreciate it. And next we will hear from
6 Philip Ward and then following Mr. Ward, John
7 R. Smith and then Susan Litchfield with the
8 League of Women Voters, and then Michael
9 Barnett.

10 Mr. Ward, thank you for being here. We
11 look forward to your testimony.

12 MR. WARD: Thank you, my name is Philip
13 Ward. I have lived along the Jupiter Beach,
14 the dog friendly Jupiter Beach since 1984, and
15 I am a managing partner of a law firm in West
16 Palm Beach with 35 employees.

17 I want to echo the comments of Mr. Feaman,
18 but also the gentleman from the Tea Party. I
19 think those were worthy comments. I also
20 believe strongly that historically our
21 districts have been drawn in a way that unite
22 large coastal communities.

23 I urge the Legislature to continue this
24 tradition because voters have grown accustomed
25 to these districts, and most importantly, they

1 make great sense at many levels.

2 Whether dealing with issues like
3 insurance, tourism, transportation, emergency
4 preparedness and more, coastal residents
5 greatly benefit from representation from
6 leaders who live in these areas and know these
7 issues firsthand.

8 Many Florida districts have been drawn
9 with a goal of uniting distinct communities of
10 interest, such as agricultural districts,
11 suburban districts and inner city districts,
12 and in our case, our unique coastal areas, both
13 along the intercoastal and the beach side.

14 We need and deserve the same type of
15 representation that only be preserved through
16 fair redistricting. Thank you again.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
18 Mr. Ward, and next, we will hear from John R.
19 Smith and then following Mr. Smith, Susan
20 Litchfield with the League and then Michael
21 Barnett and then Loretta Jacobson.

22 Mr. Smith.

23 MR. SMITH: Nice to see everyone. My name
24 is John R. Smith. I own a financial services
25 company here in the county and I am Chairman of

1 the Business Political Action Committee of Palm
2 Beach County. I will be quick.

3 The business community here in this county
4 is very aware that communities of interest
5 exist in Palm Beach County.

6 We believe their interests must be
7 recognized, must be preserved by the
8 Legislature, and we believe this can be
9 accomplished without violating the new
10 standards from fair districts.

11 We have communities here that have more in
12 common with each other than they do with other
13 geographic or demographic interests. Your goal
14 must be to unite distinct communities of
15 interest, such as the large coastal community
16 of interest, the agricultural districts in the
17 west, and inner city or minority districts.

18 These three communities need and deserve
19 representation which reflects their unique
20 needs. The coastal communities especially must
21 be considered.

22 It is important they be kept together in
23 State Legislative and Congressional Districts
24 so that they have the opportunity to elect
25 people who understand their unique and specific

1 concerns. They have different concerns than
2 the inland parts of the county.

3 Likewise, the agricultural communities in
4 the western part are the engine that drives
5 their local economy, as Peter Feaman said.
6 They are the primary source of jobs.

7 They are a community of interest with a
8 completely different economic makeup than
9 coastal communities.

10 Joining both the agricultural communities
11 in the west and the coastal communities into
12 the same district would ultimately
13 disenfranchise both in Tallahassee. The
14 community or the county also has thriving
15 African-American communities, such as in Rivera
16 Beach, Pahokee, Belle Glades, South Bay, which
17 is a third community of interest you must
18 honor.

19 Those cities should remain in the
20 majority/minority House District 84 that they
21 have today. Also, African-Americans in Rivera
22 Beach should remain in the majority/minority
23 Senate District, 29, Chris Smith, as they are
24 today.

25 This is necessary in order to ensure that

1 the minority citizens in these communities
2 don't lose their voice.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Smith.

4 MR. SMITH: My pleasure.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: We appreciate your
6 testimony very much.

7 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Senator.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: And next is Susan
9 Litchfield, also with the League of Women
10 Voters. Thank you for coming today and we look
11 forward to your testimony.

12 MS. LITCHFIELD: Yes, good morning. I
13 want to thank you all for being here and I am
14 very -- I think it is a big job you have to do,
15 but I am going to speak just as a citizen.

16 In talking to my neighbors I am very
17 concerned about representative government. I
18 have been walking around for maybe three years
19 signing petitions to get these Amendments on
20 the ballot.

21 I live in the city of Delray, and my
22 mother, who lives a mile and-a-half from me,
23 has a different Representative although we have
24 a similar interest, and the city of Delray,
25 well, we all want good schools, we all want a

1 good ocean, we all want things for our
2 children, transportation and whatever, and all
3 of us do work together.

4 So I had no one in my community to show a
5 map to and say where these lines are going to
6 be drawn, but in representing the people that I
7 live with, we like to be all drawn together,
8 because that is what we are. We are citizens
9 and we want to be represented by people that
10 help us to make a better community. Thank you.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Litchfield,
12 very useful testimony. Next, Michael Barnett
13 and then Loretta Jacobson, Michael Coleman, and
14 then Shirley Herman.

15 Mr. Barnett, thank you for being here.
16 You are recognized, sir.

17 MR. BARNETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
18 members of the panel. My name is Michael
19 Barnett, and I have been a resident of south
20 Palm Beach County for most of the last 24
21 years.

22 I would like to speak today with regards
23 to the importance of ensuring that minority
24 African-Americans in Palm Beach County have a
25 chance to elect candidates of their choice in

1 the House, Senate and Congressional maps.

2 I know that over the last few decades this
3 body has made great strides in the
4 representation of racial and language
5 minorities in the state's Legislature and
6 Congressional Delegation and my hope today is
7 that this progress will continue, but my fear,
8 however, is that with the new redistricting
9 standards before you today, that there will be
10 a danger, a danger to the progress we have
11 made.

12 Now that our Constitution contains a
13 requirement for the districts to be
14 geographically compact and to follow political
15 boundaries where feasible, it seems quite
16 possible that these minority districts in our
17 county may fall victim to these new standards.

18 I hope you would understand that the
19 minority, majority/minority districts sometimes
20 are not compact. Take, for example, Chris
21 Smith's Senate District 29, which stretches
22 from Broward County all of the way in Ft.
23 Lauderdale, to Rivera Beach up here in Palm
24 Beach County.

25 This district is not pretty looking but it

1 does ensure that minority citizens of Rivera
2 Beach do have the chance to elect a candidate
3 of their choice.

4 If this particular district were to be cut
5 in any other way the result would silence the
6 voice of these citizens, a result which is not
7 good for our county.

8 And I would also like to point out there
9 are still other disparities within our House
10 delegation, in African-American residence in
11 neighborhoods like Lake Worth, Lantana,
12 Boynton, Delray Beach still do not have a
13 chance to elect a candidate of their choice in
14 the House. So I would urge you to rectify the
15 situation as required under Federal law.

16 In closing, my purpose again is to remind
17 you, please, to preserve minority access
18 districts in Palm Beach County and throughout
19 Florida. We have come too far to see the vague
20 new standards which are open to much
21 interpretation, roll back the progress we have
22 made in this state.

23 We have worked too hard for too long to
24 allow this to happen. So I would ask you to
25 please continue the work we have accomplished

1 together as Republicans and Democrats.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

3 MR. BARRETT: Thank you.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Appreciate it very much.

5 Next, Loretta Jacobson is recognized, and
6 following Ms. Jacobson we will hear from Mike
7 Coleman and then Shirley Herman from the
8 National Organization for Women, and then
9 Roger, I am sorry, Robert Ganger, I believe it
10 is.

11 Ms. Jacobson, you are recognized and thank
12 you so much for taking time out of your day.

13 MS. JACOBSON: Thank you all for
14 listening. I am speaking as a private citizen,
15 not as a political activist.

16 I hope you all listened when you were
17 introducing yourselves and to the laughter at
18 some of your districts which are geographically
19 spread all over the map. This is not what we
20 wanted when we voted for Fair Districts.

21 Most of the people have already addressed
22 my concerns. Our taxpayer dollars being spent
23 for a lawsuit that we don't want, geographic
24 contiguous areas.

25 However, I must address the coastal

1 communities. Those of us that live in other
2 parts of the state, not along the coast, such
3 as west Boca where I live, we also have wind
4 damage, water damage, all types of the same
5 concerns.

6 We need to have a logical geographical
7 contiguous fair districts in a timely manner,
8 and I think you are hurting yourselves by
9 giving the appearance of deliberate delay.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much for
11 being with us today, Ms. Jacobson. And next we
12 will hear from Mike Coleman, then Shirley
13 Herman, then Robert Ganger, and then Silvia
14 Hall.

15 Mr. Coleman, thank you very much for being
16 here.

17 MR. COLEMAN: Thank you very much for
18 having the opportunity to speak before this
19 group today.

20 A couple of things that I have noticed
21 during the conversations. There are buzz
22 words, there are people that have come in and
23 they have discussed things and they have talked
24 about one side having talking points and the
25 other side obviously, they don't have talking

1 points, but they all know what a coastal
2 communities is, and it must be just maintained
3 and kept because it seems to be very, very
4 important to them.

5 Obviously we are here for political
6 reasons and that is something that we all need
7 to consider. There are two maps that are out
8 right now on the -- as of last night on your,
9 on your board.

10 These maps, one of them is completely
11 contiguous. Another is completely contiguous.
12 They are within one voter and the maps are
13 vastly different.

14 That is what I really wanted to talk to
15 people about. One map shows that there is 17
16 communities in Broward County that have been
17 split up to achieve what zero has to be done.

18 One of the entire maps, a fellow named
19 Sean Phillipi, put it together.

20 It has no communities torn up. It matches
21 all of the way down to the single vote, and it
22 is something that needs to be considered. It
23 would have been nice to have collaboration as
24 in ya'll bring in maps so we could see what you
25 were thinking, but nobody did.

1 So all I see is somebody is trying to play
2 out a game, run out the clock and get two more
3 years in old districts and put self into the
4 court.

5 I do appreciate the time and thank you
6 very much.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir. Thanks
8 for pointing out the value of that map by
9 Mr. Phillipi.

10 Next is Shirley Herman with the Palm Beach
11 National Organization for Women. Then Roger, I
12 think it is Ganger, I apologize if I
13 mispronounced that, and then Silvia Hall and
14 then following Ms. Hall is Margaret Mackey.

15 Shirley Herman.

16 MS. HERMAN: Hi, I am Shirley Herman from
17 Palm Beach County, National Organization for
18 Women.

19 I had other remarks prepared but I kept
20 hearing coastal community and when I sit on my
21 deck I see the intercoastal and I guess that is
22 a coastal community.

23 But my district, one of my districts is a
24 half mile wide and 150 miles long, but, you
25 know, I love my coast, I love the water that I

1 am looking at, but I have more in common with
2 my neighbors to the west in Northwood where I
3 go to eat, or in downtown West Palm Beach where
4 I go to play, than I have with people living on
5 the coast 75 miles north or south of me.

6 So I am not sure that it really means the
7 connection with people who live on the coast.
8 I think it may have to do with other issues,
9 and I think that contiguous, contiguous
10 boundaries that include your neighbors who
11 don't have the same view out their window as
12 you is the right way to do it.

13 So that we all have a say in what happens
14 around us in the blocks that we -- where we
15 live.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
17 Ms. Herman, very helpful. Next, Roger, Robert
18 Ganger, did I mispronounce that?

19 MR. GANGER: Yes, sir, four times. It is
20 Robert Ganger. I apologize, I have a frog in
21 my throat.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: No, it is my eyesight and
23 it is not your writing.

24 MR. GANGER: No, it is usually Granger, by
25 the way. I am speaking on behalf of the

1 Florida Coalition for Preservation which is a
2 local non profit corporation headquartered here
3 in Delray Beach.

4 Our mission is to champion responsible
5 development on Florida's barrier islands and
6 coastal communities. And although I don't want
7 to have a debate with the lady who just spoke,
8 we are an A political organization, concerned
9 primarily with preserving the fragile land and
10 marine environment on the state shorelines, and
11 enchancing the quality of life for millions of
12 people who enjoy our fabulous beaches and
13 waterways.

14 So think of us as a local organization
15 that really is statewide in scope, and I am
16 here today to propose that the Legislature make
17 no major changes to Senate District 25 and
18 House District 87 as a part of your 2012
19 redistricting process.

20 The website says that one of the
21 principles guiding definition of a compact
22 district is, quote, "How the communities relate
23 to one another in order to promote the creation
24 of effective representational units."

25 And as a practical matter, there are close

1 to 20 individual jurisdictions, the front of
2 the ocean in Senate District 25, and among them
3 seven jurisdictions within House District 87.
4 Everyone of those districts is on the
5 shoreline.

6 Our coalition is focused primarily on a
7 handful of these jurisdictions that basically
8 go from Delray Beach to Lake Worth, and what we
9 are finding is that these municipalities
10 increasingly want to work together to deal with
11 the shared issues that are unique to coastal
12 communities, and particularly to the
13 populations who are located on the barrier
14 island and the intercoastal waterway.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: And, sir, could I ask you
16 to conclude, please?

17 MR. GANGER: You certainly may. All I am
18 asking you to do is to consider the coastal
19 communities, 1,300 miles of coast line in
20 Florida as kind of a one big district and keep
21 the districts as close together as you can so
22 that there is some representation at the state
23 level on issues that we all share. Thank you.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
25 Appreciate it. Andn next is Silvia Hall, and

1 following Ms. Hall will be Margaret Mackey and
2 then Toni Rosenberg, I believe.

3 Ms. Hall, are you here?

4 MS. HALL: I am here.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Great, thank you so much
6 for coming and we look forward to your
7 testimony, and who do you have with you?

8 MS. HALL: My daughter, Martha.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Hi, Martha, how are you?

10 MS. HALL: And -- hi, I live in east Boca,
11 and I would like to say just one thing. I do
12 not understand why we have to divide towns or
13 cities between like three or four different
14 Congressional Districts. I don't get it.

15 I would like to see east Boca, west Boca
16 just one district. I would like to see this to
17 be redrawn according to city limits and
18 boundaries, and for one simple reason, because,
19 you know, if our Representatives have to
20 represent the whole city, they have to deal
21 with like seniors, parents with children like
22 me, okay, who would like good schools and we
23 don't like the educational cuts going on in
24 Tallahassee.

25 They have to deal with minorities because

1 Boca has minorities. They have to deal with
2 other issues, and that means common sense
3 politics, and that is not what we have right
4 now. Okay. That is all I would like to say.

5 I would like to keep east Boca, west Boca
6 one district, period. That is it. It makes
7 sense to keep the cities and towns together.

8 I live just around the corner from here,
9 but Maria Sachs, my State Senator, is
10 (inaudible). I mean, that is so how bad it is.

11 When it really was, it really was insane,
12 you know, who they represent, it was
13 ridiculous.

14 Another reason, whenever a Representative
15 lives in Boca, like they live in Boca Raton,
16 you can walk down to the office and say, excuse
17 me, what is going on in Tallahassee right now.
18 Here is my opinion.

19 When you have to drive like three times
20 over, you never do anything, because you have
21 to drive. It is better, it is more -- it is
22 better democracy to have everything keep
23 together tight, because we are a community,
24 okay.

25 The schools are a community. The citizens

1 are a community. They are our community. One
2 town, one district, period.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, and
4 thanks for bringing your daughter today. Next
5 we will hear from Margaret Mackey, and then
6 following Ms. Mackey, Toni Rosenberg and then
7 Ken Lassiter.

8 Ms. Mackey? Ms. Mackey, are you here?
9 Okay, we will pass Ms. -- are you Ms. Mackey?
10 All right, next then, is it Toni Rosenberg?

11 MS. ROSENBERG: Yes.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Rosenberg, thank you
13 for coming and the floor is yours.

14 MS. ROSENBERG: Thank your, thank you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: And would you step a
16 little closer to the mike so everybody can hear
17 you.

18 MS. ROSENBERG: Sure. Thank you. Thank
19 you all for being here. My name is Toni
20 Rosenberg and I live in Boca Raton which is
21 Palm Beach County.

22 I am just here to make a short statement,
23 stating that the Libby map violates which
24 everyone has said the 5 and 6 Amendments
25 because it breaks up Broward and Palm Beach

1 counties.

2 This map creates a continuous district,
3 currently the 20th Congressional from Palm
4 Beach County to Collier. This does not, and I
5 repeat, does not fairly represent the people of
6 the community within the same district and is
7 not a fair district.

8 I am asking all of you to put your
9 political feelings aside, come together with us
10 as Floridians and make it a fair district for
11 everybody.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
13 Ms. Rosenberg. Next we will hear from Ken
14 Lassiter, following Mr. Lassiter, Tom Whatley,
15 and then Ken Reinhardt, following
16 Mr. Reinhardt, Gloria Reinhardt.

17 Mr. Lassiter.

18 MR.LASSITER: Yes.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much for
20 being here.

21 MR. LASSITER: Good morning and thank you
22 for this opportunity to speak to you today. My
23 name is Ken Lassiter and I have the honor of
24 serving as the president of the Coalition of
25 Boyton West Residential Associations. That is

1 a non profit civic organization. It is
2 non-partisan and we represent 94 residential
3 communities and about 110,000 people.

4 Our area serves the area west of the city
5 of Boynton Beach, north of the Delray line,
6 which is Lake Worth Vintage District, L-30
7 canal, north up to Lantana and we go as far
8 west as the Loxahatchee National Wildlife
9 Preserve.

10 If you look at a map it is a nice compact
11 sensible area. However, our compact sensible
12 area has four State Representatives, two State
13 Senators and two Congressmen.

14 Senator Benacquisto and Representative
15 Perman are two of our Representatives, and they
16 have two of the worst examples of poor
17 districting that you can find on a Florida map.

18 You are making it difficult for them to
19 give us good representation when they have a
20 district that covers half, all of the way
21 across the state or cuts across wide swatches
22 of Lake Okeechobee up into counties, two or
23 three counties north.

24 It is very hard for them to give us a good
25 representation. So were are asking you to

1 please consider us a community of people who
2 are very similar, because we, half of us are
3 family communities and half are retirement
4 communities and give us Representatives that
5 cover our area fairly.

6 Also I would like to say that we agree
7 with the comments of the League of Women
8 Voters, of the comments of Ms. Walden from the
9 Alliance of Delray Residential Associations and
10 the comments of our Supervisor of Elections.
11 Thank you very much for giving us an
12 opportunity to speak.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, sir,
14 thank you, Mr. Lassiter. Next we will have Ken
15 Reinhardt and then Gloria Reinhardt and then
16 Bunny Steinman and then Linda Johnson.

17 Ken Reinhardt, thank you for coming. We
18 appreciate your being here.

19 MR. REINHARDT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman
20 and members of the Committee. I appreciate the
21 opportunity to express our views here and
22 engage in this transparency.

23 I am a 20-year resident of Coral Springs,
24 so I have been following the ins and outs of
25 our state for that period of time and I think

1 now is an opportunity to write something that
2 has been woefully out of wack for a long time.

3 Many people have already eloquently
4 expressed my concerns, one of which is the
5 timing of this process.

6 I appreciate the transparency and the
7 opportunity for citizen input now. I am more
8 concerned about having adequate citizen input
9 after a final plan has been devised.

10 And I am not running for anything, but it
11 has been, apparently there is a three-day
12 window for citizens of Florida to respond to a
13 final plan and that is woefully inadequate.

14 It takes time to distribute the plan out,
15 let us see what the final plan is, provide time
16 for review, time for you all to massage that
17 and respond accordingly and three days very
18 obviously won't accomplish that.

19 It is imperative that a plan is devised
20 early in the session rather than later so that
21 we all have an opportunity as well as the
22 Supreme Court, the Department of Justice and
23 everybody for adequate input.

24 I am also concerned about the transparency
25 involved. I appreciate the opportunity here to

1 get our ideas out. The Florida Statutes
2 apparently indicated until this becomes a Bill,
3 that redistricting is exempted from public
4 review.

5 It looks like it is exempted from but not
6 prohibited. So is there an opportunity before
7 this becomes a Bill for citizen input? This
8 would certainly short-circuit the process and
9 help us come together to reach a mutual agreed
10 solution. Thank you very much for your time.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
12 Mr. Reinhardt, good points, and Ms. Reinhardt,
13 we just heard from your junior partner, and you
14 are recognized.

15 MS. REINHARDT: And I want to dispute
16 everything he said.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: It sounds like my house.

18 MS. REINHARDT: Actually, I am only
19 mirroring comments made earlier today, maybe a
20 little different spin.

21 If any of you remember your college days,
22 and you had homework due the following morning
23 or you had a paper due and you didn't start
24 writing it until around 10:00 the night before,
25 when you didn't get the grade you expected on

1 that paper you said, oh, I just didn't have
2 enough time.

3 I might have used that excuse on occasion,
4 but my point today is that planned
5 procrastination for political purposes is,
6 should not be a goal of Florida.

7 We appreciate this opportunity to speak
8 today. We don't want to infer that this is not
9 important that we speak ahead of time, but the
10 earlier that you produce the finished product
11 so we have an opportunity to assess it, to
12 analyze it, to talk to our Representatives and
13 our Senators.

14 This is a very important political
15 process, and as you can see, there are very
16 interested people in this community. So the
17 earlier the better, and less procrastination
18 the better, thank you.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Reinhardt,
20 thank you very much. Bunny Steinman is our
21 next speaker, and following Ms. Steinman, Linda
22 Johnson, with the NAACP, and then Mae Yates,
23 and then Charles Shane, if you will be ready,
24 please. Bunny Steinman.

25 MS. STEINMAN: I am right here.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank your, Ms. Steinman,
2 for being here. We appreciate your testimony.

3 MS. STEINMAN: Thank you for having me.
4 Okay. I wear many hats but today I represent
5 the Teachers Retirees in Florida. I am part of
6 NICF and the AFT and I agree with your earlier
7 speaker, Florence Fidell, my colleague of the
8 UFT.

9 We the people voted overwhelmingly for
10 Amendments 5 and 6. I heard your explanation
11 about drawing your own maps. However, I
12 believe it was your responsibility to have the
13 maps drawn for us to react to, and it seems to
14 me you have heard the suggestion over and over
15 and over again, and I hope you will listen and
16 act on our suggestions. Thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
18 Ms. Steinman. And next is Linda Johnson with
19 the Florida State Conference of the NAACP.

20 Ms. Johnson, thank you for coming today.

21 MS. JOHNSON: Good evening, well, good
22 afternoon now. I am one of the Vice-Presidents
23 for the Florida State Conference of the NAACP.

24 I want to extend a thank you to the
25 Attorney Feaman and Mr. Smith and others, the

1 Supervisor of Elections for her comments.

2 On behalf of the Florida State Conference
3 of the NAACP we are requesting that the state
4 of Florida should ensure, of course, that it is
5 the tone of many, transparency, fairness and
6 compliance with the Voters Rights Act with
7 equal protection.

8 You should ensure one person, one vote.
9 You should redistrict in a way that avoids
10 minority vote dilution. You should avoid
11 drawing district lines so that the minority
12 population is over -- the minority population
13 and my eyes are jumping, population is over
14 concentrated or packed into election districts.

15 You should also be careful to avoid
16 cracking, drawing district lines so that an
17 area of concentrated minority population is
18 divided and spread among several districts that
19 are predominantly white.

20 You should be careful to avoid stacking,
21 drawing district lines so that a large minority
22 population concentration is included with a
23 larger white population with the purpose or
24 effect of depriving minority voters of a voting
25 majority.

1 We also respectfully request that you
2 avoid drawing plans that erode minority rights
3 related to the status quo, that it is -- that
4 if this is done, this would -- this could
5 possibly stop the creation of the -- of
6 retrogressive redistricting plans.

7 It was a lot of conversation regarding the
8 mapping piece. I am not going to go over that,
9 but one thing that we did note and I want to
10 bring to your forefront.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: And if you could conclude,
12 ma'am, I would be grateful.

13 MS. JOHNSON: Yes, that you have
14 additional meetings to discuss those maps,
15 because it is imperative that we have a visual
16 of that and I agree with the comments regarding
17 that.

18 So with that being said, because of the
19 sake of time.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

21 MS. JOHNSON: I want to submit to staff.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Please.

23 MS. JOHNSON: The additional talking
24 points so those areas could be addressed by the
25 House and the Senate members, if you don't

1 mind.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, ma'am.

3 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you for your time.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Please do, we would
5 appreciate your testimony. And next is Mae
6 Yates with the Democratic Executive Committee,
7 then Charles Shane and then, I think it is
8 Albert Shalhoub, and I apologize, sir, if I
9 mispronounced your name.

10 Mae Yates, are you here? Ms. Yates, thank
11 you for coming. Could someone help Ms. Yates
12 with the microphone, please, to make sure we
13 all hear her? Just a moment, Ms. Yates.

14 MS. YATES: This is Mae Yates.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: There you go.

16 MS. YATES: I live in Palm Beach County,
17 Boynton Beach and I just wanted to say that I
18 have -- I already agree with most of the people
19 in this audience has already said to you. So
20 repeating it is not going to be very
21 beneficial.

22 But I want you to really, really respect
23 my Supervisor of Elections, Susan Bucher, and
24 the Cobra organization, the Alliance
25 organization, the League of Women Voters and

1 really keep these things in mind when you draw
2 the lines and not be political.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Ms.
4 Yates. Thank you for coming today. Charles
5 Shane is next and then Albert, I believe it is
6 Shalhoub, and then Patricia O'Conner with the
7 League of Women Voters and then Pamela Goodman
8 with the League of Women Voters.

9 Charles Shane. Yes, okay. Mr. Shane, we
10 will pass on him. And I apologize, Albert, if
11 I have mispronounced your name. I am sure I
12 have, Albert Shalhoub. Sir, are you here? At
13 351 Club Circle, Number 209? He apparently has
14 left.

15 Patricia O'Conner with the League of Women
16 Voters, and then following Ms. O'Conner, Pamela
17 Goodman with the League, and then that Nazario,
18 I am sorry, Benjamin Nazario.

19 Ms. O'Conner, you are recognized, and
20 thank you for coming.

21 MS. O'CONNER: Thank you, good morning,
22 Florida Legislators and staff. My name is
23 Patricia Lynch O'Conner. I am a voting
24 resident of Palm Beach County, the city of
25 Boynton Beach.

1 I am only one of approximately 72 percent
2 of the Palm Beach County voters who
3 affirmatively said we want fair districts. We
4 voted for 5 and 6, quote, "Standards for
5 Legislature", and I say Legislature, not League
6 of Women Voters, "to follow in legislative
7 redistricting."

8 I am here with the hope a member of the
9 House on this Committee can provide me with
10 some clarification of the documents from the
11 United States District Court, Southern District
12 of Florida Litigation, Mario Diaz Balart, et.
13 al, and the Florida House of Representatives,
14 Plaintiff, versus the State of Florida,
15 Defendant.

16 In intervening in the House litigation,
17 against the constituents they represent and who
18 overwhelmingly voted for the provisions now
19 contained in Article III of our Florida
20 Constitution, places the citizens of the state
21 in the position of being both the Plaintiff and
22 the Defendant.

23 It is truly disingenuous or perhaps
24 dishonest for members of this body to assert
25 that the intervention is to seek a

1 clarification. When the first paragraph of the
2 introduction states, quote, "This section
3 challenges the constitutionality of a recently
4 adopted provision of the Florida Constitution",
5 and the last paragraph states, "Accordingly,
6 the House seeks and is entitled to a
7 declaration that the Amendment violates the
8 election clause of the United States
9 Constitution."

10 Every day this action goes forward
11 Floridians continue to incur legal fees to
12 argue for and to argue against constitutional
13 reapportionment.

14 Well over a million dollars has already
15 been spent on this process, with another
16 30 million set aside for fair districts,
17 including litigation.

18 I ask you to withdraw the House as a party
19 in respect of the voters of Florida and the
20 fiscally responsible thing to do. Please put
21 an end to the unnecessary legal fees.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: May I ask you to conclude,
23 because you have gone over time, ma'am?

24 MS. O'CONNOR: The League of Women Voters
25 as well as the citizens of Palm Beach County

1 will follow this through. We voted for in a
2 majority and we want to see it done.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, ma'am.
4 And next is Pamela Goodman, also with the
5 League of Women Voters, and then Benjamin
6 Nazario and then Clifford, I believe it is
7 Shay, and then Karen Wilkerson.

8 Ms. Goodman, thank you for coming today
9 and you are recognized.

10 MS. GOODMAN: Thank you, Senator, very
11 much. It is a pleasure to see you. I have
12 been talking to you for over 50 hours online,
13 watching all 17 of the hearings that have
14 progressed so far.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: I am so sorry for you.

16 MS. GOODMAN: It was a pretty much one way
17 conversation. I am the first Vice-President of
18 the League of Women Voters of Florida. I am
19 the Redistricting Chair and have held that
20 position since the Fair Districts Florida
21 campaign began over five years ago.

22 I will keep my comments very pointed and
23 that will be responding to you in person,
24 Senator Gaetz, finally, for some of your
25 comments last night at the close of the Stuart

1 hearing.

2 Senator Gaetz, you said last night that
3 the timeline is a huge issue and that you have
4 no intent to drag out this process. You will
5 try, you will try to make sure that this
6 process is as expedient as possible.

7 Well, trying isn't good enough. The only
8 thing good enough is a commitment. You have
9 all received the letter sent last week by the
10 League of Women Voters, Common Cause, NAACP and
11 Democracia.

12 I hope that you have all had a chance to
13 review that proposed revised extremely
14 constitutional correct timeline that was
15 included in that letter. And please note that
16 it is consistent with the request of all of the
17 Supervisor of Elections in the state of
18 Florida. I will summarize.

19 It will allow time for meaningful citizen
20 input into the maps that will actually be
21 considered by the Legislature. Additional
22 public hearings after maps have been through
23 the Committee process.

24 Secondly, it will allow for orderly
25 preparation for elections in the new districts.

1 Thirdly, it will allow citizens to have
2 the opportunity to get to know their candidates
3 and allow challengers time to mount very
4 credible campaigns.

5 Please show us the respect, the respect of
6 a response. How many of you Legislators here
7 today would be willing to vote to adopt a new
8 proposed timeline, have additional public
9 hearings after the maps, go through the
10 committee process and take up the maps as the
11 first order of business when the Legislature
12 convenes in January? Can I please have a show
13 of hands?

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
15 ma'am. Appreciate it. And following
16 Ms. Goodman is Benjamin Nazario.

17 MS. GOODMAN: Senator, you said last night
18 that these committees could have taken the easy
19 way of doing the process in back smoked filled
20 rooms.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Goodman, you have gone
22 over your time limit.

23 MS. GOODMAN: You chose this to be a
24 painful process.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Goodman, Ms. Goodman,

1 Ms. Goodman, your time has elapsed. Next we
2 will hear from Benjamin Nazario. Mr. Nazario,
3 are you here, sir?

4 Mr. Nazario, you have the floor. And
5 following Benjamin Nazario is Clifford Shay and
6 then Karen Wilkerson.

7 Mr. Nazario, you have the floor.

8 MR. NAZARIO: Good morning.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Good morning, sir. Let's
10 give Mr. Nazario our attention. He is a
11 citizen of Florida just as everyone else who
12 has testified.

13 MR. NAZARIO: Thank you for the
14 opportunity to speak at this event. My name is
15 Benjamin Nazario and I live in a developed
16 community, Wynn Moore and the Coconut Creek.
17 My Representative is Representative Waldman
18 and I respect him very much.

19 My thoughts on the proposed 2011, 2011
20 redistricting efforts are, developed community
21 Wynn Moore should remain whole within the
22 district and the district for the state level
23 should remain within Broward County boundary
24 lines and the district for the Federal level
25 should be as compact as best as possible.

1 Thank you very much.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Nazario.

3 Next is Clifford, I believe it is Shay, is that
4 correct, Clifford Shay? Mr. Shay, all right,
5 we will pass you.

6 Then Karen Wilkerson, then Iris Scheibl
7 and then Fred Scheibl, and then Maria Cole.

8 Ms. Wilkerson, thank you for coming and we
9 are delighted to have you here today.

10 MS. WILKERSON: Thank you, I am from West
11 Palm Beach. Fortunately, unlike previous
12 years, your committee of the Florida
13 Legislature has clearly defined standards which
14 have become part of our State Constitution, and
15 since these standards are clear I don't know
16 why you are having these hearings.

17 You are wasting our government's money in
18 a time of fiscal problems. Because of your
19 designed time frame and I am using number eight
20 here, your map that you handed out, how can we
21 expect Election Supervisors to meet the
22 deadlines for mailing ballots to overseas
23 military personnel?

24 The deadline is the 21st of September,
25 while the proposal is still being reviewed by

1 the State Supreme Court. Your timeline is
2 unrealistic in preparing candidates to qualify.

3 The deadline is June 4th through 8th, next
4 year, while redistricting is before the State
5 Court.

6 Even with the speediest review, the
7 Supervisor of Elections will have three days to
8 qualify candidates. The primary for candidates
9 is August 14, while the Florida Supreme Court
10 is still reviewing your proposals, and election
11 day is November 6th of next year.

12 This is why the Department of Justice will
13 be reviewing the proposal. Your calendars
14 don't even recognize the fact that many court
15 challenges are expected, and you decided before
16 the adoption of the maps.

17 These time frames you are operating under
18 almost ensure the state of Florida will be
19 facing the situation where the United States
20 Supreme Court will question whether our votes
21 count in the next Presidential election.

22 You must change this timeline. Be
23 responsible and save us some money. Stop these
24 hearings, publish the map proposals as was done
25 ten years ago. Hold hearings on the maps

1 throughout the state and pledge yourself to
2 vote on the issue during the first week of
3 January.

4 Don't underestimate the residents and the
5 voters of Florida. We do not think these
6 hearings are offering transparency to the
7 process.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. We
9 appreciate your testimony.

10 MS. WILKERSON: May I just -- please stop
11 playing with our votes.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Ms. Wilkerson. Next we will hear from Iris
14 Scheibl, is it Scheibl?

15 MS. SCHEIBL: yes.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Scheibl, thank you for
17 coming today. We appreciate you being here and
18 giving of your time.

19 MS. SCHEIBL: Iris Scheibl. I live in
20 Palm Beach Gardens. I would like to echo what
21 a lot of other people have said about the end
22 of the timeline, that it is really far out.

23 As a citizen activist who is trying to
24 encourage people to run for office, they don't
25 know where they would be running for and that

1 is really an issue.

2 But I also would like to speak as a
3 resident of a coastal community. I arrived in
4 Florida 11 years ago on a sailboat.

5 We lived in Palm Beach County for a year
6 in Boynton Beach and now up the county in Palm
7 Beach Gardens. I have lived in states all
8 across the country, inland, agrarian
9 communities, big cities, coastal communities
10 and I have got to say that coastal communities
11 have more in common anywhere in the country
12 than they would with the inland communities.

13 And we have got tourism, port issues,
14 marine industries, environmental issues,
15 hurricane issues, border issues and that ties
16 into homeland security.

17 And so while a compact district may not
18 result in a coastal community being contiguous,
19 we really need a contiguous coastal community
20 and I urge you to do so. Thank you.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much,
22 Ms. Scheibl. And now Mr. Scheibl, having heard
23 from the Captain of that sailboat, we will hear
24 from you, sir.

25 MR. SCHEIBL: Yes, we actually live on

1 land now, but --

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Either way, ashore or
3 afloat, we are glad to have you here.

4 MR. SCHEIBL: Thank you, Palm Beach
5 Gardens as Iris said. I just wanted to make
6 the point that a lot of the folks who have
7 spoken very strongly in favor of the passage of
8 the Fair Districts Amendments, kind of look at
9 this as getting us to a blank sheet of paper
10 where you can sit down and basically write all
11 of the wrongs over the last 100 years.

12 I hope you don't look at it that way,
13 because the main reason for redistricting
14 really is to come into line with the census and
15 there are an awful lot of districts in the
16 state where you are already where you need to
17 be.

18 And so I hope that you work on the margins
19 and not try to disrupt a lot of the
20 relationships that already exist by trying to
21 draw the districts in a radical manner.

22 By that token I would also like to see the
23 coastal communities considered as well as the
24 agricultural communities as communities of
25 interest, kept together because their interests

1 are the same, and if you do change the
2 boundaries I hope you try to align the state
3 boundaries with the Congressional Districts
4 because a lot of people have a hard time
5 keeping track of what district they are in.
6 Thank you.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much,
8 sir. Very useful testimony. Maria Cole is
9 next and then Linda Rosenthal with the Boca
10 Delray Democratic Club, then Todd Bonlarron
11 representing Palm Beach County and then Lynne,
12 and I apologize, I think it is Hubbard with the
13 Rivera Beach Citizens Task Force.

14 Ms. Cole, thank you for being here today,
15 and you are recognized.

16 MS. COLE: Good afternoon, I am a resident
17 of Juno Beach and I have lived in Juno Beach
18 for the last 14 years and I am about ready to
19 make your day.

20 I stand in agreement with Margie Walker
21 who spoke earlier, Mr. Robbins who spoke
22 earlier, and I prevail upon all of you to take
23 into consideration what our Supervisor of
24 Elections completely and most articulately
25 expressed to you. Thanks.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.

2 Linda Rosenthal. Is Ms. Rosenthal here?

3 Ms. Rosenthal, thank you for coming today.

4 MS. ROSENTHAL: You are welcome and I
5 would like to thank all of you who are
6 representing us today, all of you who serve the
7 people of Florida, whether I agree with your
8 policies or not, you are still serving us and I
9 think that is really great.

10 And I would just like to say representing,
11 I am the President of the Boca Delray
12 democratic Club and I just want to reiterate
13 that we feel that the issues of the timeline
14 need to definitely be addressed and addressed
15 immediately.

16 We also need maps and we also want the
17 lawsuits to discontinue immediately. Thank
18 you.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
20 Ms. Rosenthal. Next is Todd Bonlarron,
21 representing Palm Beach County. It is good to
22 see you, Todd.

23 MR. BONLARRON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
24 Todd Bonlarron here on behalf of the Palm Beach
25 County Board of County Commissioners. I want

1 to thank you for joining us in Palm Beach
2 County today.

3 I really wanted to take a couple of brief
4 moments to just really talk about a big picture
5 issue from our Board of County Commissioners
6 that we think is important to redistricting in
7 our area.

8 And that is that it is our position to
9 focus on the big picture of our current
10 representation that we have in Palm Beach
11 County based on the numbers.

12 We have 11 members of the State House, six
13 members of the Senate, four members of
14 Congress. We have kept pace with growth in the
15 state of Florida and our main issue is that we
16 ask for nothing more, but we ask for nothing
17 less.

18 And most specifically, the one thing that
19 we do ask of you is that we would like at least
20 three of our State Senate seats to have a
21 majority of their districts in Palm Beach
22 County.

23 We enjoy that today. We enjoy that with
24 the representation from Senator Sachs, from
25 Senator Bogdanoff and Senator Benacquisto. We

1 would love to keep them as part of our
2 delegation of our hometown base.

3 We also share great representation in the
4 Senate from our other members and I pointed out
5 Senator Smith also, while his district is not
6 wholly in Palm Beach County, a majority here,
7 his main office is located in Palm Beach County
8 as well and we appreciate his work as well as
9 Senator Negron's.

10 So thank you for being here and we
11 appreciate your consideration as you continue
12 these deliberations.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Todd.
14 We appreciate your testimony, and Lynn, is it
15 Lynn Hubbard? Thank you very much,
16 Ms. Hubbard, and after you are finished with
17 your testimony we will hear from Brittany
18 Bruce, and then Lawrence Wanderman and then
19 Joyce Salomon.

20 Ms. Hubbard, you are recognized. Thanks
21 for coming.

22 MS. HUBBARD: Good afternoon, I am Lynn
23 Hubbard, citizen of Riviera Beach,
24 representative of the Riviera Beach Citizens
25 Task Force, yes, a predominantly

1 African-American community.

2 It is important that Rivera Beach is not
3 splintered into a manner where there will not
4 be fair representation. Rivera Beach is
5 presently the victim of rape and pillage of its
6 resources.

7 I, too, live off the marina and in a
8 coastal community. We need to make sure that
9 the will of the people for fair districting is
10 upheld.

11 As difficult as it may be, it is important
12 that our Representatives fight to see that we
13 have equal representation. We are not just
14 throwing around the term of coastal community.
15 Living inland, the coastal community that we
16 enjoy belong to us as residents in Rivera Beach
17 and we want to make sure that we are able to
18 take part in our resources. Thank you.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
20 Ms. Hubbard. Next, Brittany Bruce and then
21 Lawrence Wanderman and then Joyce Salomon.
22 Following Ms. Salomon, Mark Schneider.

23 Ms. Bruce? Are you here, Ms. Bruce? Ms.
24 Bruce is right behind you there.

25 Ms. Bruce, thank you so much for being

1 here and you are recognized.

2 MS. BRUCE: Thank you for having me.

3 Every time I have heard the word fair being
4 mentioned today it seems to be synonomous with
5 politics. So all politic, political biases and
6 redundant complaints aside, I am here to bring
7 some common sense regarding this matter to the
8 surface.

9 State Senate Seat House and Congressional
10 Districts are just that. Districts drawn meant
11 to represent a group of constituents and their
12 common interests.

13 So, hello, mixing both inland and coastal
14 areas isn't fair and obviously doesn't
15 represent constituents with common interest.
16 It only mixes the physical and political
17 interest, but more importantly it combines a
18 number of conflicting interests to the citizens
19 residing there.

20 Specific primary concerns we get lost in
21 the shuffle if you draw new interest, new
22 district lines that combine coastal and inland
23 parts of Palm Beach County together. It is
24 hard to represent -- it is hard for
25 Representatives to be experts on every issue,

1 and by lumping coastal and inland areas
2 together, I don't believe citizens' concerns
3 can be represented as well as they could be if
4 you preserve coastal communities of interest.

5 State Representatives and Senators already
6 have enough on their plate with a number of
7 individual and specific concerns their
8 constituents bring to the table. That is not
9 fair to them or to me. That is not fair to
10 anybody.

11 Anyway, having too many conflicting
12 interests leads to nothing being accomplished,
13 as evidenced by some existing district lines
14 presently mixing land and coastal communities.

15 Please note that the rude interruptions
16 and the hems and haws don't accurately
17 represent the vast majority of concerned
18 working citizens that aren't able to be here
19 today.

20 The point is I want to be represented
21 fairly and that is why I am here today, to
22 remind you of common sense facts that have been
23 lost. Thank you for allowing me to speak.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
25 ma'am. And next is, next is Lawrence

1 Wanderman. Mr. Wanderman, thank you for coming
2 and you are recognized before the Committee.

3 MR. WANDERMAN: Thank you for recognizing
4 me, Mr. Chairman. I am from Coconut Creek and
5 Winmore Village as the gentleman before.

6 And I know most of us would like to see
7 villages or would like to see the districts all
8 set up in a compact area according to the
9 mathematical formula just to be sure that
10 everything is reasonable or close together. We
11 have -- we share common interests.

12 And the other thing that I would like to
13 mention is the statements by the Superintendent
14 of Elections, because we hear it in any county
15 that it goes, to have the timeline.

16 We need that to be sufficient to allow
17 Representatives to prepare, Senators to
18 prepare, for everyone to be able to handle the
19 outcome of election. Thank you.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
21 We appreciate your testimony. Joyce Salomon,
22 Ms. Salomon, thanks for coming today and giving
23 us your time.

24 MS. SALOMON: I give in Coral Springs in
25 Broward County. Our medium size city is

1 divided into two Congressional districts and
2 three House Districts, 95, 96 and 97. Why?

3 With your own voices, your own words
4 listing your gerrymandered district lines you
5 have condemned the current situation. The only
6 reason I can see for it is that you folks in
7 Tallahassee are trying like hell to protect
8 your jobs and save seats.

9 You are picking your voters, not letting
10 us pick our Representatives, and that is not
11 democracy.

12 And then there is the issue of the suits
13 against Amendments 5 and 6.

14 What gave you the gall to use \$30 million
15 of our taxpayer money to fight implementation
16 of something that 63 percent of Floridians
17 voted for.

18 When the budget is in free fall you choose
19 to throw our hard earned funds into a fight
20 where we are funding both sides. The Attorney
21 General is by law charged with fighting against
22 you, again, with our money. It is a disgrace.

23 Are you all so afraid of the voters that
24 you won't let us vote in fairly drawn
25 districts? Can't you defend your records in an

1 open forum?

2 And now we come to the timeline. I agree
3 with the League of Women Voters representatives
4 and I can't believe that you have not already
5 drawn preliminary maps. That is what you are
6 getting paid for, drawing those maps. Show us
7 your efforts.

8 The timeline you have offered, not showing
9 your maps until the end of the session is
10 unworkable. Not allowing time for adequate
11 review by the courts and the Supervisors of
12 Elections will be hard pressed to get ballots,
13 correct ballots out to our service men serving
14 overseas.

15 How will candidates have time to file if
16 they don't know what their district lines are?
17 Again, you are in self protect mood trying to
18 present fair opposition. The only --

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Speaking of timelines, if
20 you could conclude, please.

21 MS. SALOMON: Yes. The only reason for
22 your actions is that I can see is that you are
23 afraid of us, the voters of Florida. That you
24 fear running on your records and that you can't
25 defend your actions and it is a disgrace.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much. Next
2 we will hear from Mark Schneider and following
3 Mr. Schneider, Dennis Grady and following
4 Mr. Grady, I think it is Janne Goodwin, and
5 then if Wanda Francis will be on deck.

6 Mr. Schneider, thank you for coming today,
7 and we appreciate your testimony.

8 MR. SCHNEIDER: Members of the Florida
9 House and Senate, I would like to address the
10 impact of redistricting on the representation
11 of racial minorities and on the implementation
12 of policies addressing the needs of minority
13 communities.

14 In the previous Senate, not this one,
15 three of 15 Senators from southeast Florida
16 were black, as were four of 23 members of the
17 House.

18 Two of the black Senators were elected
19 from majority/minority districts, while one was
20 elected from a majority/majority district.

21 Three of the black House members were
22 minority/majority district representatives,
23 while one was from a majority/majority
24 district.

25 The ability of minority Legislators to be

1 elected from majority/majority districts argues
2 that the redistricting process should not
3 cluster minorities heavily in specific
4 districts as they are currently.

5 Black minority/minority districts are
6 comprised of an average of 60 percent black
7 voters and blacks electorate outside these
8 districts average around 10 percent.

9 The latter districts are commonly called
10 bleached because of the effect of clustering
11 minorities in specific districts.

12 The process of bleaching districts in the
13 redistricting process may guarantee
14 representation by minorities in the
15 Legislature. This representation I suggest
16 would be preserved were the bleaching reduced.

17 Further, the domination of the Legislature
18 by highly bleached districts more or less
19 guarantees that the legislative process ignores
20 the needs of minority communities.

21 As a case in point, consider the failure
22 of the current Legislature to support penal
23 reforms that would have lessened the
24 disproportionate impact of incarceration on
25 minority communities, despite these reforms

1 having impeccable conservative backing from
2 Florida Tax Watch and from the Governor's Law
3 and Order Transition Task Force.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir. We
5 appreciate your testimony, and we are delighted
6 you were here today.

7 Next is Dennis Grady.

8 MR. GRADY: Good afternoon, Senator.
9 Welcome to you and your colleagues to Palm
10 Beach County. I am here to really commend you
11 and your colleagues for the process you are
12 engaged in.

13 Far too often we concerned citizens
14 approach our elected officials and chastise
15 them for not listening to us first before they
16 act.

17 In this process you are doing exactly the
18 opposite. You are listening first and then you
19 will go to Tallahassee and you will act. We
20 appreciate that process.

21 It reminds me of my youth, when I spent
22 every summer on my grandfather's farm, and far
23 too often he reminded me -- he had to remind
24 me, remember why God gave you two ears and one
25 mouth, son.

1 You have learned that the wisdom of that
2 saying and you are here to listen, not only to
3 us here in Palm Beach County, but you started
4 in the panhandle, you are going to finish in
5 the Keys. You have taken time and effort to
6 allow all citizens who are concerned to come in
7 here, express the districts that they would
8 like to see, the concerns they have for you to
9 keep close at hand when you are engaged in the
10 process.

11 Probably the most important thing that we
12 haven't touched on is that 11 years later the
13 population in the state of Florida is
14 17 percent greater than when we went through
15 this process before.

16 Florida continues to be a growth state
17 with a growing population and as we hope in the
18 future, a growing economy. This process is
19 important to us. You have provided us an open
20 transparent and citizen friendly process.

21 And now I am going to remember what
22 Grandpa said I am going to sit back down. I am
23 going to continue to listen and wish you well
24 as you conclude this very important political
25 process.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
2 Mr. Grady, for your testimony. Next we will
3 hear from, I believe it is Janne or Joanne
4 Goodwin.

5 MS. GOODWIN: Joann Goodwin.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Goodwin, would you
7 please come forward?

8 MS. GOODWIN: Joann Goodwin, Pompano
9 Beach, Florida. I would like to defer my time
10 to Pam Goodman from the League of Women Voters.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: I am sorry, ma'am. We
12 aren't deferring time. Instead what we are
13 doing is taking people in the order in which
14 they signed. If you would like to speak we
15 would love to hear your testimony.

16 MS. GOODWIN: Oh, can you tell me where
17 you left off?

18 SENATOR GAETZ: You are certainly welcome
19 to do that.

20 MS. GOODWIN: Senator, you said last night
21 these committees would have taken the easy way
22 of doing this process in back smoke room
23 filled, in back smoke filled rooms and you
24 chose this painful process over that.

25 It doesn't have to be so painful, sir. It

1 can be productive. After a start tonight in
2 Ft. Lauderdale, begin the hearing with the
3 commitment from the Committee to adopt our
4 proposed timeline.

5 After 50 hours of listening, take 60
6 seconds to announce the one decision by you and
7 this group, will you stand and will you all got
8 together and produce maps and present them to
9 us so we don't have to continue with these
10 hearings and we can actually look at maps that
11 you are willing to produce.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank your, Ms. Goodwin,
13 we appreciate your testimony.

14 MS. GOODWIN: That was actually a
15 question, will you?

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, ma'am, if we have
17 time at the end Representative Precourt and any
18 member of the Committee can answer any
19 question, make any statement or offer any map.

20 MS. GOODWIN: Will you?

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am, your time has
22 elapsed.

23 MS. GOODWIN: Will you commit to -- no, it
24 hasn't. Will you commit to --

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am.

1 MS. GOODWIN -- drawing maps and showing
2 them to us?

3 SENATOR GAETZ: We will answer questions
4 if we have time.

5 MS. GOODWIN: Can't you just say yes or no
6 to that question?

7 SENATOR GAETZ: The answer to the question
8 is your time is elapsed. I have given an
9 answer before and I will continue to give the
10 same answer if we have time at the end, but
11 let's be respectful of all of these other
12 people who want to speak.

13 Next we will hear from Wanda Francis and
14 then Henry Salomon, although I think didn't
15 Henry speak before and then Anthony Barbar and
16 then Natalie Andre.

17 Ms. Francis.

18 MS. FRANCIS: Yes, my name is Wanda
19 Francis. I live in Ft. Lauderdale, and I just
20 want to make a comment. My district runs from
21 south Broward all of the way to Jupiter Beach.
22 So I think that the issues maybe are not quite
23 the same in Broward County as it might be in
24 Jupiter Beach.

25 I would like to second Ms. Goodwin, Pam

1 Goodwin's comments and also Joy Salomon's
2 comments and I would like a commitment from you
3 all to stop spending taxpayer monies so that
4 you can fight amendments that were passed by
5 63 percent of the Florida citizens, and please
6 stop making Florida look and the laughing stock
7 of this country. Thank you.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
9 Ms. Francis. Next, did Henry Salomon speak
10 before? Did he sign up twice just to make
11 sure? I think Henry --

12 MR. SALOMON: I defer my time.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: You defer your time.
14 Okay. Thank you very much, sir. We will hear
15 from Anthony Barbar, if Mr. Barbar is here and
16 then Natalie Andre and then Marie Davis and
17 then Elinor Williams, if you can be ready.

18 Mr. Barbar, thank you for being here
19 today, and you are recognized.

20 MR. BARBAR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
21 welcome to Boca Raton and to south Palm Beach
22 County. Thank you for, each of you for your
23 service to our community and for what you are
24 doing for our state.

25 I would just like to say that I concur

1 with what Mr. Sliney and Ms. Burke said
2 earlier. I live in Representative Hager's
3 district, which is District 87, and I hope that
4 as you look at that and you look at compact
5 communities that you also consider communities
6 that have compatible interests.

7 And thank you for all of our hard work. I
8 know this is a thankless job, but we appreciate
9 you doing it. Thank you.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
11 We appreciate your testimony. Natalie Andre.
12 Ms. Andre, thank you for coming and sharing
13 your views today.

14 MS. ANDRE: Yes, good morning, maybe it is
15 afternoon already, yes.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: It is afternoon.

17 MS. ANDRE: I am Natalie Andre. I live in
18 Delray Beach. I have been involved in a lot in
19 women's issues. I am a League member as well
20 as a NOW member.

21 I have been living in Florida for 30
22 years. My children grew up here, and I am
23 thankful when I have grandchildren that will
24 not be living here when I see all that is going
25 on.

1 I agree with the League's position. I am
2 very upset over the points that Ms. Bucher has
3 made. I think that they should be listened to,
4 and saying all of that I would like to talk
5 about what I did personally.

6 Last week being underemployed, I took the
7 time to make a map, a Congressional map just
8 for Palm Beach County. Palm Beach County has
9 exactly enough people if you throw in Deerfield
10 and Parkland to have two Congressional
11 Representatives.

12 I tried the map two ways, dividing it
13 north and south and east and west. It made
14 sense mostly north and south with Lake Worth
15 being the cut off.

16 So I would like to suggest that as an
17 idea. I have here the map, this, the current
18 Congressional Districts are in blue and you can
19 see, you probably can't see from where you are,
20 all of the squiggly lines here, that is our
21 current Congressional Districts.

22 You can't even see the inside of some of
23 those districts, and the green and orange ones,
24 that is Palm Beach County the way I proposed
25 it. So that is my suggestion.

1 It is a very amateur one, but apparently
2 you are not trying to give us any professional
3 ones, so.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, Ms. Andre, I want to
5 just let folks know that the maps that you have
6 submitted, and we are very grateful for that,
7 are on the House and Senate websites.

8 So if could not see what Ms. Andre was
9 showing you, you can go to the House or Senate
10 websites and see her maps.

11 Next we will hear from Marie Davis, and
12 then following Ms. Davis, from Elinor Williams
13 and then from Ed chase. Marie Davis, thank you
14 for coming today.

15 MS. DAVIS: Yes, you are welcome. Thank
16 you for permitting all of us to make our
17 opinions known whether you like it or not.

18 My name is Marie Davis. I am here as a
19 private citizen. I reside on Singer Island and
20 I have been in Palm Beach County since 1960.

21 First I would like to say I worked at the
22 polls for off and on for the last 30 years and
23 I echo the comments of Ms. Bucher. Even on a
24 good day it is a long tired day and I was part
25 of the pregnant Chad. So I would rather that

1 Palm Beach County not be the eye of the storm
2 again.

3 In any event, I do have a couple of things
4 I would like to comment on today. First, I
5 live on Singer Island which is part of Rivera
6 Beach which is a coastal community and I urge
7 you to keep the coastal and beach communities
8 together in the State and Congressional
9 Districts.

10 As a resident of Singer Island I have far
11 more in common with the people who have places
12 on the intercoastal and we are more concerned
13 with less the view and more problems such as
14 beach erosion and hurricanes and that sort of
15 thing.

16 I have much more in common with Palm Beach
17 Shores than I do with the most inland areas of
18 Palm Beach County being cow country, although I
19 love cows, I just don't have that much in
20 common with them, but I do eat beef.

21 You know, we have, we have problems that
22 are unique, such as the property insurance and
23 beach erosion and a lot of other issues, for
24 Singer Island and Rivera Beach is the Break
25 Water Project.

1 We have 9 million -- the State of Florida
2 set aside \$9 million for the Beach Water
3 Project, and we have -- we are having problems
4 getting that money released.

5 I think it is very important that the
6 beach and the coastal communities be adequately
7 represented, and if we lose the ability to have
8 coastal communities of interest represented in
9 Tallahassee and Washington, I think that our
10 voices will count much more now than it will be
11 at some other time.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much for
13 your testimony and thanks for all of your years
14 of working at the polls. That is tremendous.

15 Next, Elinor Williams and then following
16 Ms. Williams, Ed Chase, and then Dimitry Levin,
17 and then Ilene Gross.

18 Ms. Williams, thank you for coming today
19 and you are recognized.

20 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you. Well, I am just
21 hoping in ten years when we do this again that
22 when everybody introduces themselves, that
23 everybody doesn't laugh like you just told a
24 really funny joke when you told us which
25 districts you represent or which areas you

1 represent, because they cover so many different
2 counties.

3 And I just think it is very important for
4 local governments to, well, for you, our
5 Representatives, to work closely with our local
6 governments, and you can do that when you are
7 majority Palm Beach County or maybe even a
8 couple of counties, but when you have -- when
9 you have a district that majority Palm Beach
10 County and then there is a little tad in
11 Broward or there is, you know, there is a
12 little bit that snakes over here and picks up a
13 few more counties, but not even the whole
14 county, just a part of the county, it is very
15 hard to represent those people at.

16 And it is very hard for your local
17 governments to work with you. We would like
18 our local governments to be able to make sure
19 that their legislative priorities are addressed
20 and recognized in Tallahassee and in
21 Washington, and I think so if you can, if you
22 can do your best to try to keep the counties
23 integral, especially the counties, local
24 governments in general, but the counties in
25 particular, I think that would be ideal.

1 And again, the timeline is very worrisome,
2 if during this October to December timeline you
3 could draw the maps and have them ready to vote
4 on the first week in January, I think that
5 would be great. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you very
7 much. That was Elinor Williams, right?

8 Next we have Ed Chase, Mr. Chase.

9 MR. CHASE: Thank you, Representative
10 Precourt. My name is Ed Chase. I am the
11 President and CEO of the Northern Palm Beach
12 County Chamber of Commerce.

13 First of all, thank you for being here and
14 listening to us first. Two things I wanted to
15 agree with so I don't have to go on to any
16 length about them.

17 Number one, I do agree with former State
18 Representative Jim Watt's theory on House
19 Districts in north Palm Beach County.

20 Secondly, I would agree with Palm Beach
21 County's request that three Senate Districts
22 should have the majority of their precincts in
23 Palm Beach County.

24 The Committee encouraged testimony
25 directed toward the desire to preserve the

1 proper placement of communities of interest in
2 the districts.

3 I want to talk about two of our Senate
4 Districts about that. First of all, Senate
5 District 28, northern Palm Beach County shares
6 that Senate District with the Treasure Coast.
7 Actually, it is a majority Treasure Coast
8 district that extends into northern Palm Beach
9 County, and we feel that north Palm Beach
10 County has been served very well by that
11 configuration.

12 Senator Negron, Senator Pruitt before him,
13 they have shown northern Palm Beach County
14 great attention. We think that we share
15 communities of interest with the Treasure Coast
16 that involved population, economic with a focus
17 on the life science and especially in the
18 environment both we do share the north and
19 south fork of the Loxahatchee River and both of
20 our counties have worked together for the
21 restoration of that river.

22 Secondly, on Senate District 25, it is a
23 very long coastal district. I would encourage
24 you to adjust this district to include more of
25 Palm Beach County to preserve the communities

1 of interest that includes similar population.

2 Also environmental concerns because of the
3 beach issues which those communities share as
4 well as the Lake Worth lagoon issues. And
5 Senator Bogdanoff, if it helps, we are very
6 happy that you are our State Senator.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
8 Mr. Chase. And next we have Dimitry Levin and
9 then following Mr. Levin, Ilene Gross and then
10 Cara Capp and then Pam Bergsma.

11 Is Dimitry Levin here? Dimitry Levin, we
12 will pass then to Ilene Gross. Ms. Gross, are
13 you here? Ms. Gross?

14 Then we will go to Cara Capp, with Clean
15 Water Action. Ms. Capp, you are recognized.
16 Thank you for coming.

17 MS. CAPP: Thank you, I am a little short
18 for this mike. Hi, again, I am Cara Capp. My
19 husband and I are new homeowners in Delray
20 Beach with Lori Berman and today I am here on
21 behalf of Clean Water Action.

22 We are a national non profit organization
23 with 19,000 members and supporters here in
24 Florida standing by us today.

25 I definitely appreciate the opportunity to

1 comment. I am especially happy to be here
2 because I am a proud double alum of FAU,
3 undergrad and grad, so always happy to be in
4 owl country.

5 Though I am unhappy to say that I think my
6 input today could surely have been more
7 meaningful if this Legislature had prepared
8 maps in advance of these public hearings. We
9 want maps drafted with your experience and
10 expertise and not based on my novice efforts
11 with some simple online software.

12 Clean Water Action is concerned by the
13 repercussions of not having these maps
14 available, and of the delayed timeline for
15 finalizing these maps, especially the fact that
16 has been repeated over and over again, that the
17 election managers won't have time to finalize
18 their absentee ballots.

19 People over and over again have mentioned
20 the brave men and women who serve overseas. I
21 would also like to bring up the handicapped,
22 the elderly and college students like those who
23 study here at FAU who rely on absentee ballots.

24 We would like to ensure that each of their
25 votes is counted equally and fairly and we are

1 asking you to make that happen by hastening
2 your timeline for this process to make sure the
3 maps are done in a reasonable manner.

4 Our members are also concerned with
5 efforts by the Legislature to oppose Fair
6 District standards voted on by an overwhelming
7 majority of Florida's residents. Money is
8 being spent to oppose these Amendments, while
9 Florida's teachers, social services and public
10 employees are forced to shoulder debilitating
11 financial hits.

12 This Legislature should be working to
13 uphold the standards approved by 63 percent of
14 our voters, not spending time and effort to
15 defend longstanding party seats.

16 To conclude, Clean Water Action is urging
17 this Legislature to work diligently to enforce
18 the Fair District standards that Florida's
19 residents are asking for.

20 Please bring forward a draft map for
21 consideration as soon as possible, a map that
22 will evenly, fairly and logically redraw
23 district boundaries with a blind eye to voting
24 trends within individual communities. Thank
25 you.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, Ms.
2 Capp. Pam Bergsma is our next speaker and
3 following Ms. Bergsma is Sue Gardner, and then
4 David DiCrescenzo, thank you, Senator Sachs,
5 and then Carolyn O'Brien.

6 Pam Bergsma, thank you for coming today,
7 and you are recognized.

8 MS. BERGSMA: Well, thank you, Chairman
9 Gaetz and all of the Legislators, especially
10 the ones who have traveled so far.

11 Speaking as a grandmother who for the past
12 decade has been taking that grueling drive from
13 South Florida all of the way to Tallahassee so
14 that my voice could be heard, I only know how
15 hard that drive is. So welcome to the hood.

16 Now, I was very delighted, very delighted
17 that these meetings were taking place all
18 across the state of Florida. But needless to
19 say, I am very, very disappointed today and to
20 tweak a line from an old movie, show me the
21 map.

22 I thought I was going to be discussing
23 your input today. My input was voting for
24 Amendments 5 and 6. I was hoping at this point
25 that I would see a map that I could discuss

1 with you before we get into the nitty gritty of
2 making that the district lines, and the fact
3 that it looks like I am now going to have to
4 take that trip all of the way to Tallahassee to
5 see your map, this meeting really wasted my gas
6 and my time.

7 Speaking as a mother, a grandmother, my
8 only child was born here in the state of
9 Florida. I came from D. C. as a young woman to
10 this state almost 40 years ago, and I made this
11 my home, and in Alexandria, Virginia, where I
12 grew up with my two wonderful parents and my
13 other siblings, both my parents are buried in
14 Arlington Cemetery, we used to be able to just
15 cross the bridge in 15 minutes and make our
16 voice heard.

17 It is hard in this state to be heard. We
18 are long, very long, and it is a hard drive
19 getting up there to the Capitol. So this is a
20 wonderful thing that is being done here, but
21 let's do it the right way.

22 I encourage all of you to go back and make
23 that map and the rest of these meetings be able
24 to present it so that we can get the citizens
25 in Florida's input, and I am speaking as a very

1 concerned voter and citizen of my state.

2 I would like the rest of my nation to be
3 proud of where I live. I would like my
4 siblings to look down from Alexandria, Virginia
5 at me and say gee, Pam, you are in one hell of
6 a state.

7 So you have an opportunity to do this.
8 You can lead, and I encourage you to do that.
9 Thank you very much.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Bergsma,
11 and Ms. Bergsma, thank you for the service of
12 your family members to our country. Thank you
13 very much.

14 Sue Gardner is next and following
15 Ms. Gardner is David DiCrescenzo, and then
16 Carolyn O'Brien, and then I think it is Terrie
17 Rizzo. Ms. Gardner.

18 MS. GARDNER: Yes.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for coming.

20 MS. GARDNER: Thank you. Sue Gardner. I
21 have been a resident of west Boca for more than
22 20 years. Going all of the way back to the
23 beginning of these hearings I want to support
24 what was said by the first speaker.

25 I am unaffiliated, but the woman from the

1 League of Women Voters made important points.
2 I particularly urge this group to provide a
3 proposed legislative map, set of maps that the
4 voters can review in advance and provide input
5 for the State Legislature when it goes into
6 session in January. Thank you.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, ma'am,
8 for your being here today. And David, are you
9 here? If not, we will go to Carolyn O'Brien
10 and following Ms. O'Brien, to Terrie Rizzo, and
11 then to Henry, I think it is Strouss, and then
12 to Rachelle Lipman.

13 Ms. O'Brien.

14 MS. O'BRIEN: Hi, thank you all for doing
15 this. I have never done anything like this
16 before in my life, so bear with me.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: You are doing fine.

18 MS. O'BRIEN: I want you to know I am a
19 member of the Palm Beach County --

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am, could you speak
21 right into the microphone, please?

22 MS. O'BRIEN: I am sorry. I am a member
23 of the Palm Beach County REC, the Boca Raton
24 Republican Club and a Tea Party member and I
25 just want to tell you one thing.

1 There were a million people in Palm Beach,
2 in Washington, D. C., not 70,000. The next
3 thing I want to say, we talk about fairness.
4 In August of '08, they had a Town Hall meeting.
5 Bill Nelson, Ron Klein, Alex Hastings, not one
6 Republican was allowed.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am, ma'am, let's try to
8 keep our comments to redistricting. Okay.

9 MS. O'BRIEN: Okay, I live in Palm Beach
10 County. I live one block north of Palmetto
11 Park Road and I feel that my district was -- it
12 was Adam Hass was my Representative, now, Bill
13 Hager is mine.

14 I feel like Boca Raton is split right down
15 the middle and I live east of Fourth Avenue and
16 I would like to see all of Boca Raton and the
17 east, eastern part of Boca all in one district,
18 and Alan West is my Congressman and he knows
19 how to hold a Town Hall meeting.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 ma'am. Next is Terrie Rizzo and then following
22 Ms. Rizzo, Henry Strouss and then we will hear
23 from Rachelle Lipman with the Kings Point
24 Democrat Club and then from, our next speaker
25 will be Sean Phillippi or Phillippi.

1 Ms. Rizzo, thank you.

2 A VOICE: Terrie Rizzo had to leave. She
3 asked me just to speak on her behalf.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: I am sorry, ma'am. We
5 have to take people who have signed up.

6 A VOICE: Okay.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: So therefore, I beg your
8 pardon, if you would like to speak, sign up and
9 we will sure try to get to you.

10 Next, Henry Strouss. Henry Strouss?
11 Rachelle Lipman from the Kings Point Democrat
12 Club, and then Sean Phillippi and I apologize
13 if I mispronounced that and then Morris Levine.

14 MS. LIPMAN: I am Rachelle Lipman and I
15 agree with the Supervisor of Elections and Mark
16 Siegel and Mr. Robbins.

17 I am a resident of Kings Point Delray
18 Beach and our concern is that they keep
19 District 90 the same.

20 We that live in Kings Point do not want
21 our community split. We have the same concerns
22 locally and statewide and they are being
23 addressed by our current local and district
24 Legislators.

25 I also am very, very upset that you don't

1 have the maps. I originally am from the state
2 of Delaware. Maybe it is because it is the
3 second smallest state in the United States and
4 they are always accurate and they always have
5 maps and everything else when we come to
6 hearings, and I am very, very discouraged with
7 this hearing that you are not, you don't have
8 maps here.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Lipman.
10 Well, good news, because the next testifier has
11 maps. Sean Phillippi.

12 MR. PHILLIPPI: A map. A map.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: A map.

14 MR. PHILLIPPI: So about 36 hours ago I
15 was the second person to submit a Congressional
16 map that was both contiguous and complete, and
17 I did so without breaking up a single
18 municipality in the entire state, except for
19 Jacksonville, which has a population greater
20 than that of a single municipality.

21 And the thing that I would encourage the
22 Legislators to do is to get a clarification
23 from the Justice Department and work together
24 to get a hard definition of majority/minority
25 districts, because some of the feedback that I

1 got from a very nice gentleman with the House
2 Redistricting Committee is that a district that
3 has a total of 82 percent minority
4 representation is not considered a
5 majority/minority district which honestly
6 baffled me.

7 So I would encourage Democrats,
8 Republicans to work with the Justice Department
9 to get one uniform standard for
10 majority/minority districts, and just say that
11 it is possible to go ahead and create
12 Congressional maps without harming municipal
13 boundaries, because I have done so and if
14 someone like me can do so, anyone can do it.
15 Thank you for your time.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Amen, thank you so much.
17 Next we will hear from Morris Levine and then
18 David Hyde. Following Mr. Hyde, Hillary Keyes,
19 and after Ms. Keys, Helen Goldenberg.

20 Mr. Levine, are you here, sir? Are you
21 here, sir? Then we will pass him for the
22 moment.

23 David Hyde, Mr. Hyde? While you are
24 coming down, if Hillary Keyes would get on
25 deck, as well as Helen Goldenberg and Glenn

1 Joseph.

2 Mr. Hyde, we are delighted that you are
3 here today and look forward to your testimony.

4 MR. HYDE: Thank you very much, and it is
5 wonderful to see everyone here to listen to us.
6 I am a recent Floridian. I came from San
7 Francisco. I left my suit there.

8 But I have been active in political arenas
9 in various places, and I consider myself a
10 Floridian, and I think as people who represent
11 us, that you can think of both the concerns of
12 the coastal units and the inland environment.

13 I use the beach a lot. I also don't live
14 on the beach. I live in Boynton, and the
15 Commissioners there represent the whole town,
16 and I think you can, too, although we are
17 elected as Democrats and Republicans, et
18 cetera.

19 So I really want to encourage you to think
20 in that direction. I want to definitely agree
21 with the League of Women Voters and their
22 concerns. I want to also agree with the
23 Supervisor of Elections and their concerns, but
24 I really want to think of us as non-partisan,
25 and I want you to think that way.

1 I want you to put together the best
2 possible redistricting you can possibly do in a
3 non-partisan way and move forward fast. Thank
4 you.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, Mr.
6 Hyde. Hillary Keyes is our next speaker, and
7 after Ms. Keyes, then Helen Goldenberg and then
8 Glenn Joseph.

9 Ms. Keyes, thank you for coming.

10 MS. KEYES: Hi, I am Hillary Keyes, and I
11 am a resident of Boca Raton. I want to thank
12 you for having this meeting, but I also am very
13 concerned with the fact that, A, we do not have
14 maps which would not be a problem, except for
15 the timeline.

16 And I think it is so important that we
17 listen to our Supervisors of Elections because
18 they are the ones that are going to have to
19 make this work, and if you are not listening to
20 them and giving them enough time to do their
21 jobs, this is not going to fly, and again, I
22 don't want to be butterfly ballot seen.

23 I would also like to ask, the Florida
24 House has joined the Brown lawsuit and is
25 trying to get Federal Court to declare

1 Amendment 6 unconstitutional, even though
2 63 percent of voters supported it.

3 Are any private funds being collected or
4 used to fund the House's position in this
5 lawsuit?

6 SENATOR GAETZ: And time permitting we
7 will certainly ask a House member to respond to
8 that when we are finished. Anything else,
9 Ms. Keyes?

10 MS. KEYES: That will do it.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much. Helen
12 Goldenberg, are you here? Ms. Goldenberg?
13 Then we will go to Glenn Joseph from the
14 Caribbean American Complete Count Committee.

15 MR. JOSEPH: Mr. Chairman, Legislators,
16 good morning. Good afternoon, actually. We
17 know what we have. We know everyone has an
18 idea of what they want. What we don't know is
19 what we will get.

20 This process looks transparent and
21 inclusive, however, that was the same process
22 seemingly in the last Legislature. Leadership
23 party always makes the decisions and because of
24 that we had those draconian pieces of
25 legislation that exists today.

1 I guess because of that you will
2 understand why we are so skeptical. The
3 process can be transparent, yet recommendations
4 may not be accepted or will not be accepted.

5 We are here in support of the Voting Right
6 Act and Amendments 5 and 6, the latest
7 Amendments to the Florida Constitution.

8 Communities of interest might not have
9 been included in Amendments 5 and 6. However,
10 if we draw compact districts without stacking
11 and cracking we will produce districts that are
12 fair. Compact districts are the best way to
13 keep naturally formed districts together.

14 Voters need to select elected officials,
15 not the elected officials using redistricting
16 to cherrypick who their voters are.

17 Gerrymandering districts drawn for a
18 powerful few don't manipulate any community.
19 Give us compact contiguous districts within
20 counties and city boundaries and we will
21 consider that fair.

22 We want to ensure the districts are not
23 drawn to dilute a compact area that in the next
24 two to five years will be a strong voting block
25 based on the census. We are aware that every

1 elected official took the oath of office to
2 uphold the Constitution, 5 and 6 was passed.

3 People choose where they live. Businesses
4 choose where to locate based on the
5 demographics that will support goods and
6 services. We operate primarily within Broward
7 County and Miami-Dade County. We have our own
8 doctors, lawyers, et cetera.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: May I ask you to see if
10 you can conclude, sir?

11 MR. JOSEPH: Sure, sure. We want to make
12 sure that you hear what we are saying and
13 comply with what the law says.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, sir.
15 We appreciate your testimony. And I apologize
16 to Annette Evans, I didn't give you any
17 warning, but Annette Evans would be next and
18 then Starla Brown and then Carol Osno and then
19 Kenneth, and I apologize, it is my eyes, not
20 your writing, Kenneth, I think it is Kenneth
21 Sommer with the Democratic Club of Greater
22 Boynton, on Montrose Bay Avenue.

23 So Annette Evans, thank you so much for
24 being here and you are recognized.

25 MS. EVANS: Thank you. I want to say one

1 positive thing first, the staff for the
2 website, they are excellent. They are
3 professional and I appreciate what they do. I
4 wanted to say that.

5 Otherwise, I echo so much of what has been
6 said eloquently here by various members of the
7 League of Women Voters, the Supervisor of
8 Elections, Margie Walden.

9 The basic message I have is that the
10 timeline that you have established ensures that
11 incumbents will benefit. This means that the
12 will of the people is not being carried out.
13 The 63 percent who voted for Amendments 5 and
14 6.

15 Some here have said that -- seem to think
16 that public participation means that they all
17 submit their own maps and they seem to think
18 that those of us who want maps here are lazy or
19 something, that we want the government to do
20 things for us or something. That is not it.

21 If you understand what public
22 participation is, usually public hearings that
23 are held by government, they present a plan for
24 the public to review and comment on. That is
25 how it works.

1 And someone also said that what you hear
2 today doesn't represent the working people who
3 are not here. Well, plenty of the people here
4 are retired and they worked a lot their whole
5 lives. There is a lot of people who took off
6 work, too.

7 Don't assume that we all here on welfare
8 or something. I don't like that connotation.
9 Also, the last thing I want to say is I am
10 offended that my Representative has been absent
11 about half of the time and when he was here he
12 was reading, because like you said, we should
13 have respect here for everybody, everybody that
14 is here.

15 Lastly I want to say that partisan line
16 drawing marginalizes moderate voters which
17 exacerbates our fractured politics.

18 Eliminating gerrymandering is important to
19 maintaining true democracy. Our democracy is
20 precious, not having geographically cohesive
21 contiguous districts disenfranchises voters.

22 Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
24 Ms. Evans. Next we will hear from Starla Brown
25 and then Carol Osno and then Kenneth something,

1 and I apologize, Kenneth. Starla Brown, are
2 you here? Starla?

3 Okay, Carol Osno, Carol, is that you?
4 Thank you for coming and you are recognized.

5 MS. OSNO: Osno, O-s-n-o.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Osno.

7 MS. OSNO: Thank you.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: All right, I apologize,
9 ma'am.

10 MS. OSNO: Okay. Well, being we are at
11 the end, so much has been said so I am going to
12 make this very personal then for me, about me.

13 I live in Congressional District 22, and
14 my Representatives are here. I haven't gotten
15 much eye contact, but I think they are
16 listening.

17 I feel categorized. I feel labeled. I
18 don't feel like you are an American. I am seen
19 as a Caucasian, a woman, a Jew, a person over
20 50. I am put into a computer to figure out how
21 to best use me, where will my vote go.

22 I feel that the candidates choose me and I
23 do not get to choose them, and I just have to
24 add, I find it appalling that an unemployed
25 individual must follow frustrating and highly

1 impossible regulations to collect a maximum of
2 \$250 a week for unemployment while Tallahassee
3 spends millions to fight the will of the
4 people.

5 None of you are unemployed sitting there
6 and I don't wish it on you, but you have no
7 idea. Governor Scott will get the numbers down
8 because people are throwing their hands up and
9 saying, forget it, I can't even bother, I am so
10 frustrated, the heck with my unemployment
11 check. Thank you.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am. And I
13 apologize to Kenneth who lives at 10616. Do
14 you know.

15 A VOICE: Kenneth Sommer.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Kenneth Sommer,
17 Mr. Sommer, I am so sorry, sir, it is my eyes,
18 not your writing if you are here. Not here,
19 okay, then we will move on.

20 Our next speakers will be in this order,
21 Mildred Cook, Maggie Davidson, Harold Muller,
22 or Muller, and Kenneth Thomas.

23 Ms. Cook, thank you for coming, and you
24 are recognized.

25 MS. COOK: Thank you. I appreciate you

1 being here and I appreciate you hearing me. I
2 do think it is disgraceful that the Republican
3 lead Legislature has spent, is preparing and
4 has spent so much money fighting the will of
5 the people.

6 A technical audit performed by the Palm
7 Beach County Democratic Executive Committee
8 found the My District Builder software
9 mysteriously deleted an entire section on
10 compactness and geospatial analysis.

11 The missing section was designed to
12 calculate ratios of compactness and make an
13 overall scoring of compliance with the
14 redistricting requirements under Amendment 5.

15 The Palm Beach County DEC Chairman Allen
16 Siegel has raised legitimate questions regarding
17 why the Speaker's Office had ordered the
18 removal of the compactness analysis.

19 Those questions have not been answered.
20 Although contained in the Legislature's initial
21 release of the My District Builder software,
22 the compactness and geospatial analysis
23 components were deleted by House Redistricting
24 Committee staff soon after they appeared.

25 Splitting city and county lines and

1 grouping minorities into minority districts
2 causing the bleaching of adjacent districts
3 unlike compactness were characteristics to be
4 avoided under the Fair Districts Amendments.

5 By removing the compactness and geospatial
6 analysis from the software, new district lines
7 drawn on party or incumbent lines are not as
8 detectable without the geospatial analysis
9 numerical ratings.

10 And regarding these public hearings, it
11 would be informative to get an answer as to why
12 the geospatial analysis section was removed by
13 the legislation -- legislative leadership.

14 Unfortunately, the committee members have
15 already been instructed not to comment on any
16 aspect of the process. The Legislature's
17 current redistricting software without the
18 compactness statistical component flaws the
19 process and stacks the deck in favor of the
20 incumbent.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Cook, you have gone
22 quite a ways over time. Thank you very much.

23 MS. COOK: Republican leadership.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, and
25 you will get an answer to that question about,

1 about the spacial feature on the redistricting
2 software time permitting. Next, Maggie
3 Davidson.

4 A VOICE: I am sorry, Maggie had to leave.
5 She sends her apologies, but if you would like,
6 I can speak on her behalf.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: No, sadly, Maggie gets
8 only to speak for herself.

9 Harold Muller. Please come forward,
10 Mr. Muller, and then Kenneth Thomas and Daniel
11 Goldstein will be our final speaker.

12 MR. MULLER: Good afternoon, my name is
13 Harold Muller, I am not representing anybody
14 and please excuse if you hear my stomach
15 growling, I guess you know what I am talking
16 about.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: If you will speak into the
18 microphone directly, sir, then everybody can
19 hear you.

20 MR. MULLER: Is this better?

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, sir.

22 MR. MULLER: First, I want to congratulate
23 the people who are in charge of managing the
24 website. I think they do an excellent job.
25 Unfortunately I cannot say the same thing for

1 the people who designed the portions of the
2 redistricting.

3 Frankly, it looks like the basic idea of
4 people who don't have anything better to do, to
5 spin their wheels designing maps and providing
6 comments, but the inside designs what they
7 want.

8 Then at the end they dump all of this
9 stuff in a black hole and spring the official
10 plan on the public as late as possible. To
11 minimize -- this minimizes in the feelings and
12 the process by people and organizations outside
13 the power structure.

14 How do you know who looks at the maps that
15 have been laboriously created and all the
16 proposals and requests? How do we know who
17 uses the material in what way? Who -- what
18 impact it has on the official map? You don't.

19 If the intention had been to give people a
20 role in the process, the time plan would look
21 more like that. On April 30th the
22 redistricting committee would have published
23 their initial draft and would have heavily
24 publicized it so that people and colleagues to
25 look at.

1 Ideally this proposal would have been
2 created by an independent entity and not the
3 existing district map.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir,
5 your time has elapsed and we are just about out
6 of time. We want to get as many people in as
7 we can. Thank you very much.

8 Next is Kenneth Thomas. Mr. Thomas? And
9 following Mr. Thomas, Daniel Goldstein, and we
10 will try mightly try to get Bill Diamond in,
11 because I am an advocate for you, Bill. Fire
12 away.

13 MR. THOMAS: Good afternoon, my name is
14 Kenneth Thomas and I am a resident of west Boca
15 Raton, and after being here for almost three
16 hours there is very little left that needs to
17 be said.

18 I think so many eloquent speakers have
19 already covered most of the material. So I
20 could use the time to stand here and talk about
21 my wonderful kids, my grandkids and all of
22 those things, but that has nothing to do with
23 the work of redistricting that has to be done
24 every ten years.

25 And from what I have gathered today there

1 has been, I haven't seen very much
2 redistricting work done and I keep wondering
3 why, because we have talked about so many
4 different things, about what is wrong with the
5 system, what is right with the system, but we
6 haven't accomplished any work today.

7 And so I keep going back trying to figure
8 out what will it take to get us to do the work
9 of redistricting. All my life I have been
10 taught to assume positive intent, and as I look
11 at this wonderful group up here in front of us,
12 I have to assume that you are really here to do
13 the very best for the voters who voted you into
14 office and who also voted for Amendments 5 and
15 6.

16 So I think that maybe if I can, maybe to
17 help get this thing back on track and get to
18 doing some of the voting work, I think first we
19 need to make sure that your constituents
20 realize that you do have positive intent, that
21 you intend to enact their will, and I think the
22 best gesture you can do at this time is to
23 probably drop the lawsuits against Amendments 5
24 and 6.

25 The next thing I would ask of you is to

1 review the timelines that you have imposed upon
2 this process, because as you have heard from
3 Supervisor Bucher and others, this all can't be
4 accomplished within the time that is remaining.

5 So you need to look at a process that is
6 going to allow everything to fall in place on
7 time. I think you would be better served and I
8 am working hard, I am trying to keep my two
9 minutes down.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Four seconds.

11 MR. THOMAS: Four seconds, okay.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: As I am for Bill Diamond.

13 MR. THOMAS: Provide examples, I think
14 Mr. Ortez provided --

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much for
16 your testimony.

17 MR. THOMAS -- as well as Mr. Phillippi.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Appreciate it, our next
19 speaker is Daniel Goldstein. Is Mr. Goldstein
20 here? If not, Bill Diamond, you are my man.
21 You are my man.

22 MR. DIAMOND: Clean up hitter, right?
23 Thank you very much, honorable members of the
24 State Legislature. My name is Bill Diamond, I
25 am Town Councilman in the town of Palm Beach.

1 I am speaking here on my own behalf, but I
2 think my sentiments are shared by a good number
3 of members of my community.

4 Very frankly, the coastal communities in
5 Palm Beach County have an important common
6 interest when it comes to Federal, State and
7 County actions to replenish their severely
8 eroded beaches.

9 For example, the town of Palm Beach has
10 worked closely with the towns of Palm Beach
11 Shores and the town of South Palm Beach to
12 secure permits and reimbursement of millions of
13 dollars spent by them on beach replenishment of
14 our common ocean fronts.

15 Whatever is done to replenish one
16 community's ocean front beach almost always
17 affects another community's beach because of
18 the literal north to south flow of ocean
19 currents which carries precious sand down all
20 of our ocean front communities.

21 Therefore, it is best to keep these
22 coastal communities together as one.
23 Governmental units so that they will continue
24 to have more strength in petitioning the
25 Federal, State and County governments for

1 assistance after storms, hurricanes, et cetera,
2 which destroy their most valuable natural
3 resources, which is our great beautiful
4 beaches.

5 Thank you, again, for your patience, your
6 kind necessary and this magnificent exercise in
7 popular democracy.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
9 Mr. Diamond. We do have a number of other
10 people who signed up late. I wish that we
11 could, we could have accommodated everyone.
12 Some folks went a little bit overtime, but we
13 tried to accommodate as many people as
14 possible.

15 Senator Sachs and Senator Sobel, Senator
16 Smith and your Representatives are all
17 available to you if you didn't have a chance to
18 speak to the Committee, that you can have a
19 chance to speak with them.

20 As well, if you have information that you
21 wanted to share, you certainly can provide it
22 in writing. It will be part of the Committee's
23 record and every member of the Legislature will
24 have access to that record.

25 We do have just, I did reserve about two

1 minutes at the end because I think there was
2 someone who mentioned that people had been
3 instructed not to speak at every single meeting
4 of this Committee.

5 We have had I guess 15 or 16 of them. We
6 have had members who have spoken. There is a
7 free will to do that. Did any members of the
8 Committee have anything that they wished to say
9 at this time?

10 We will start with House members. Any
11 House members have any comments you might like
12 to make in brief, in brief?

13 A VOICE: Thank you, thank you. I just
14 want to let those of you out here who keep
15 criticizing the system to understand that we,
16 though we are the Florida Legislature, we
17 didn't all agree with each other.

18 And I for myself want to let you know that
19 I agree with 99 percent of the people who spoke
20 today. I specifically agree with Supervisor
21 Bucher, and I want you to know that many of my
22 colleagues feel the same way.

23 We want the answers and we also want the
24 maps, too. Thank you.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,

1 Representative. Any other members of the House
2 wish to speak? Any Senators wish to make a
3 brief comment before we leave?

4 Senator Sachs, could you do a brief
5 comment and then I am going to defer to
6 Representative Precourt?

7 SENATOR SACHS: Thank you very much,
8 Mr. Chairman. And I want everyone here, all of
9 the Legislators, House members and Senate
10 members to know that the people of Broward and
11 Palm Beach County have spoken loud and clear.

12 I think everyone here has expressed
13 exactly what they feel. I know that I am very
14 proud to be a part of this community. You have
15 been courteous, they have been professional but
16 they have been vocal, and we have been
17 passionate about what we want and what we as
18 citizens want the Legislature to do.

19 So thank you very much, the people of
20 Broward and Palm Beach County. We have heard
21 you, we have heard your words, we have heard
22 your feelings, we have heard your passion and
23 now we need to get to work, Mr. Chairman.
24 Thank you very much.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. The Chair

1 recognizes Representative Precourt to answer a
2 couple of factual questions that were raised by
3 folks who deserve factual answers.

4 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Thank you, Chair
5 Gaetz, and one misconception out there that has
6 been perpetuated in part of this conversation
7 is that any member of this Florida Legislature
8 can submit a map at any time.

9 So don't get the idea that it is just the
10 Republicans or just the House members that are
11 sitting here and listening to you first, any of
12 the members can submit maps at any time.

13 Now, there is a couple of other factual
14 errors that have been brought up here. There
15 have been a number of comments about the
16 compactness tools being used in the My District
17 Builder, in the District Building software,
18 particularly from a gentleman by the name of
19 Alan Robbins.

20 First, I want to thank him for working
21 with our staff and communicating these issues
22 to them and I hope that he will continue to
23 work with them. However I do need to add that
24 the response that the House has given on this
25 issue, that Mr. Robbins read in part, the House

1 as was stated in some of our committee meetings
2 during this past session will at a minimum give
3 its members compactness measurements and other
4 measurement tools to judge and deliberate the
5 maps.

6 As our staff conveyed to Mr. Robbins and
7 others, we developed the best product we could
8 in order to get many members of the public
9 involved in the district building software.

10 As is evident in the hallway, we are
11 receiving maps from the public, many maps, so
12 that My District Builder is more than just a
13 functional application, but begin, Mr. Robbins,
14 we appreciate your good work and intentions and
15 your willingness to continue to work with
16 staff.

17 There are also a couple of other comments
18 about that measurement tool from the Florida
19 House's My District Builder application, in
20 particular. It is simply just not accurate
21 that the measurement tool was in there, in the
22 My District Builder.

23 Unfortunately that is a point of confusion
24 that was raised by an opinion column published
25 in the Sun Sentinel that the Sentinel later ran

1 a correction to because it simply wasn't true.

2 There are multiple district building
3 softwares out there. The House's application
4 is called My District Builder. The Senate's is
5 called District Builder and there are also a
6 number of private vendors who make these
7 applications and there apparently is some
8 confusion.

9 A couple of other very quick points. The
10 statement that there was no good work done here
11 today. I think the people sitting here can say
12 is factually false. There was a lot of good
13 information provided here today and a lot of
14 good work.

15 In particular related to things and just a
16 few of the comments related to the northern
17 Palm Beaches community, related to the coastal
18 communities, related to agriculture in this
19 area, related to the African-American
20 communities in Palm Beach County and it went on
21 and on. Very good input that we will take into
22 account in dealing with these districts.

23 The point that the Legislature should draw
24 the maps first and the statement that that is
25 just not the process is factually incorrect.

1 If you, if any of you are involved in the
2 Federal NEPA, National Environmental Policy Act
3 process, it requires that you reach out to the
4 public with no solutions initially so you get
5 information back first before then presenting
6 for further public comment which we will do in
7 this process, alternative solutions to that.
8 So we will be doing that.

9 The question related to the use of
10 taxpayer funds to litigate and joining in a
11 lawsuit. We are doing what we are obligated to
12 do. We are sworn to uphold the State
13 Constitution and the United States
14 Constitution, and there are allegations that
15 there are conflicts between the law that we
16 have passed and the State Constitution and the
17 U.S. Constitution that we need to have that
18 resolved as soon as possible.

19 That is our obligation and we are using
20 funds available to the House from a contingency
21 fund that we use for everything, whether it is
22 replacing the carpet or buying new computers.
23 That is our contingency fund that they have
24 been referred to. Any statements to the
25 contrary are factually incorrect.

1 We are scheduling time -- there was a
2 question about scheduling, allow time for
3 people to run and for the elections process to
4 proceed while locally you hear from your
5 Supervisor of Elections that she doesn't have
6 the process.

7 I assure you, it is in the record that
8 other Supervisors of Elections have said that
9 they will have enough time to work on the
10 process, that they will be working on their
11 positions and their systems concurrent with the
12 elections process.

13 So please feel free to contact them. I
14 will give you a name, Supervisor Ortel in
15 Seminole County for one, please contact some of
16 these other folks.

17 And with that I think I have covered most
18 of those. I haven't covered all of the
19 comments, but we do appreciate your time being
20 here and the constructive input that we have
21 had from you today. Thank you.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: And we would encourage you
23 to stay involved in the process. This is not
24 your last effort or your last opportunity.
25 This is your first opportunity.

1 At every stage of the game from this point
2 forward you will have the opportunity to have
3 your input and there will be public meetings
4 and public hearings held before any votes are
5 taken, and with that Representative Precourt
6 moves we rise.

7 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
8 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 175 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 26th day of October, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2011
6:00 P.M.
BROWARD COLLEGE GYM
DAVIE, FLORIDA

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: Good evening,
3 everyone. My name is Will Weatherford, and I
4 have the distinguished pleasure of chairing
5 this hearing this evening.

6 This Joint Senate/House Redistricting
7 Hearing is called to order right now.

8 We are pleased to be joined by many
9 members of the Florida House and Senate, and
10 before we get started, I would like to just
11 take a few moments to allow each one to
12 introduce themselves briefly to the audience
13 and let them all know which community they
14 represent.

15 I also think that since we are here in
16 Broward County, we would also start with our
17 distinguished Senator, Senator Sobel.

18 SENATOR SOBEL: Thank you very much,
19 Representative Weatherford. We are in my
20 district, which is District 31. This is Davie,
21 Florida, and this is -- we got some Davie
22 people here, and I will try to be brief, but
23 many years ago I taught special ed at this
24 college to adults, and Rivka Spiro, I want to
25 -- is she here?

1 I want to thank Broward Community --
2 Broward College for hosting this tonight, which
3 has had a 30 percent increase in enrollment.
4 And I -- yes, it has. And they represent
5 66,000 students here on this campus. And they
6 told me that law enforcement has a
7 hundred percent pass rate on the exams that
8 they take, and they have students from 150
9 countries.

10 I believe that they purposely had it in
11 this gym so we would get some capital money to
12 help Broward College, and I hope you will take
13 note of it.

14 So welcome to Broward County. I
15 absolutely love living here. Let me tell you
16 some fun facts that make up -- that make our
17 county special.

18 It is the second-largest county in the
19 state, 18th-largest county in the country.
20 There are 31 cities in Broward County, the
21 sixth-largest school system with 263,000
22 students.

23 Broward County was created out of parts of
24 Dade and Palm Beach Counties in 1915. It was
25 named for Florida Governor Napoleon Bonaparte

1 Broward, who pledged to drain the Everglades
2 for development.

3 Jeff Atwater, current CFO, is a Napoleon
4 Bonaparte Broward's great-grandson. The county
5 was founded in 1915, almost 100 years ago,
6 1,200 square miles, roughly the size of Rhode
7 Island, 787 square miles devoted to
8 conservation, 23 miles of beaches. Population
9 in 1920 was a little over 5,000, and today it
10 is almost two million.

11 The Broward County Library is one of the
12 largest public library systems in the country.
13 Home of the Florida Panthers. Snow fell in Ft.
14 Lauderdale in 1977, the first time in recorded
15 history.

16 Pompano Beach Festival Flea Market is the
17 largest indoor flea market in the country.
18 Broward -- Plantation Golf Course was the site
19 for the famous "Caddyshack" pool scene, and
20 Hollywood Beach featured Demi Moore in "Body
21 Heat," so welcome to Broward County and thank
22 you for being here.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: That is a warm
24 welcome from Senator Sobel. Thank you,
25 Senator.

1 SENATOR MARGOLIS: Good evening and
2 welcome. My name is Senator Gwen Margolis. I
3 represent District 35. I've represented a very
4 small part of Broward County for many years,
5 probably over 30 years, and I am delighted to
6 represent the east side of Miami-Dade County.

7 In Broward County, I represent the area
8 between I-95 and the Turnpike, south of
9 Hollywood Boulevard. So I am very pleased to
10 be here with you all. It is a little bit of --
11 a little bit of everything in the district, but
12 we -- I am delighted to be here with you. I
13 can't really beat what Senator Sobel said, so I
14 am going to pass the mike over.

15 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good evening,
16 Hazelle Rogers, Representative for District 94,
17 representing eight cities in Broward County.
18 They are Lauderhill, Lauderdale Lakes, Margate,
19 North Lauderdale, Plantation, Sunrise, Tamarac,
20 and I hope I did not leave any of my cities
21 out.

22 And I was boasting all over this state
23 that we are 1.8 -- approximately 1.8 million
24 residents, the most diverse county in the state
25 of Florida.

1 Welcome. We are glad to see you. I am
2 thrilled that you're all here. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good evening,
4 everyone. My name is John Patrick Julien,
5 representing House District 104, which
6 encompasses North Miami Beach, North Miami,
7 Miami Gardens, Opa-Locka, a large chunk of
8 unincorporated Miami-Dade County, and a small
9 sliver of the City of Miami and Hialeah.

10 It is an honor and a privilege to be here,
11 and I look forward to hearing what you have to
12 say.

13 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good evening
14 everyone. Good evening, everyone, and welcome.
15 My name is Betty Reed, I represent District 59
16 in Tampa, Florida. That is the eastern part of
17 Tampa and Hillsborough County.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WATSON: Good evening. My
19 name is Barbara Watson. I represent District
20 103. It incorporates the southern part of
21 Miramar, Miami Gardens and Opa-Locka. Those
22 are three large areas of our Dade area, and we
23 are very much diversified in our community.
24 And I thank you all for coming out this
25 evening, and we look forward to your questions

1 this evening.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Thank you. My
3 name is Kathleen Passidomo. I represent House
4 District 76, which is in Collier County, and it
5 includes the City of Naples, the City of Marco
6 Island and the City of Everglades City. Thank
7 you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good evening,
9 everyone. My name is Dwayne Taylor. I serve
10 in the House of Representatives in District 27,
11 which is Volusia County.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Good evening.
13 Thanks for allowing us to come this evening.
14 My name is Trudi Williams, I am a House member
15 from District 75, which is on the west coast of
16 Florida, Lee and Collier Counties.

17 REPRESENTATIVE MORAITIS: Good evening, I
18 am George Moraitis. I represent the east part
19 of Broward County, a little bit of southeast
20 Palm Beach County, and I look forward to the
21 hearing tonight. Thank you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: You've got some
23 fans, George.

24 My name is Mike Horner, District 79 in
25 Osceola County.

1 REPRESENTATIVE HUKILL: Dorothy Hukill,
2 District 28, parts of Volusia County.

3 REPRESENTATIVE FRESEN: Thank you for
4 coming out. Erik Fresen of central Miami-Dade
5 County, House District 111.

6 SENATOR BOGDANOFF: Ellyn Bogdanoff,
7 Senate District 25, goes from Ft. Lauderdale
8 all the way up to Juno Beach, Broward and Palm
9 Beach Counties.

10 SENATOR BRAYNON: Good evening. State
11 Senator Oscar Braynon, I represent north
12 central Miami-Dade, the 33rd Senate district.

13 REPRESENTATIVE NUNEZ: Good evening, my
14 name is Jeanette Nuñez. I am State
15 Representative for House District 112, which
16 consists of portions of southwest Broward,
17 including Miramar and Pembroke Pines, portions
18 of Dade County and portions of Collier County.
19 Thank you for coming.

20 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good evening,
21 State Representative Mack Bernard from West
22 Palm Beach, Florida.

23 REPRESENTATIVE THURSTON: Good evening, I
24 am Perry Thurston, House District 93, Ft.
25 Lauderdale and Plantation, and this is our only

1 meeting in Ft. Lauderdale -- in Broward County.
2 So we are glad to see so many of you have come
3 out and we look forward to your questions.

4 REPRESENTATIVE STEINBERG: Good evening, I
5 am Richard Steinberg, District 106, northeast
6 Miami-Dade County.

7 REPRESENTATIVE FULLWOOD: Good evening,
8 Reggie Fullwood, District 15, Jacksonville,
9 Florida.

10 REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: Welcome. I am
11 Representative Dana Young, District 57, which
12 is the City of Tampa.

13 SENATOR SMITH: Good evening. Senator
14 Chris Smith, 29th Senate district, which is
15 Palm Beach, and in Broward, it is Ft.
16 Lauderdale and Lauderhill, Lauderdale Lakes,
17 Plantation, Wilton Manors, Pompano Beach,
18 Deerfield Beach and parts of unincorporated
19 Broward County. Thanks for coming out.

20 SENATOR SIPLIN: Gary Siplin, State
21 Senate, District 19, Orlando, Florida.

22 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: State
23 Representative Gwyndolen Clarke-Reed, House
24 District 92, Broward County, Deerfield Beach,
25 Pompano Beach, Oakland Park, Wilton Manors, Ft.

1 Lauderdale, Lauderdale-by-the-Sea, North
2 Lauderdale and Tamarac.

3 REPRESENTATIVE JENNE: State
4 Representative Evan Jenne, District 100, where
5 we all currently sit and stand right now. So
6 thank you so much for coming and visiting.

7 I would encourage you to stay, have
8 dinner, have drinks afterwards and give some
9 money back to the local economy, so I
10 appreciate that.

11 Thank you all so very much. It's been a
12 long trip for a lot of these folks here, been
13 around the state, so thank you all for being
14 here.

15 And as any of you have heard me speak on
16 this subject before here, District 100 through
17 the decades has been gerrymandered. So I would
18 like your input in making sure that we correct
19 that situation, so thank you.

20 SENATOR RICH: Good evening, I am Nan Rich
21 and I am State Senator for District 34,
22 mostly -- mostly western -- western Broward
23 County, but one of the gerrymandered districts
24 that goes all the way down to the southern tip
25 of Miami-Dade County, and I do also serve as

1 the Senate Democratic Minority Leader.

2 SENATOR SACHS: Good afternoon, my name is
3 Maria Sachs and I am State Senator from this
4 district, actually -- no. I have parts --
5 beautiful parts of Palm Beach County and part
6 of Broward County is right around Deerfield
7 Beach and the northern parts of Broward County.
8 Thank you for inviting us here today.

9 REPRESENTATIVE ABRUZZO: Thank you. Good
10 evening, Joseph Abruzzo, State House District
11 85, which is primarily a western and central
12 Palm Beach County district.

13 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: I am Dennis
14 Baxley, serving Florida House District 24,
15 Ocala/Marion County. I am a former resident of
16 Hollywood and graduated from Miami-Dade College
17 Funeral Service program. Great to be back home
18 and visiting and to hear from you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right.
20 Well, thank you. As you can see, we have many
21 members from different parts of the state, and
22 we appreciate them being here, but more
23 importantly, we appreciate you being here and
24 the tremendous turnout that we have had.

25 Again, my name is Will Weatherford, and I

1 am chairing today's hearing, along with my
2 Senate colleague, Don Gaetz, and today's
3 hearing will be webcast statewide by the
4 Florida Channel over the Internet.

5 Our sole purpose here is to hear from you,
6 and it is to hear from you about the legal
7 standards and the governing when it comes to
8 redistricting that should be applied to your
9 community so that you are represented in both
10 Washington and Tallahassee fairly, equitably
11 and sensibly.

12 Our procedures today are extremely simple,
13 but they are also very important, and it is
14 important that you sign in so that we create an
15 accurate public record of the attendees and
16 speakers.

17 Also, you may opt to join our e-mail list
18 so that we can keep you informed about the
19 redistricting process as we move forward.

20 If you wish to speak today and you have
21 not filled out an attendance card, please raise
22 your hand and we will get you a card and so you
23 can be called upon to give your testimony. It
24 is the same attendance card whether you want to
25 speak or just sit and listen. So when you fill

1 it out, you just check the box to say that you
2 would like to speak.

3 Before we begin today, I would like to
4 turn it over to my colleague, Senator Gaetz, to
5 walk us through as what we are here to do
6 today, what the process will be and maybe a
7 little bit of background in regard to the
8 redistricting process in Florida.

9 Senator Gaetz, you are recognized, and
10 thank you for being here, sir.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
12 Mr. Chairman. I am Don Gaetz. My Senate
13 District is in far northwest Florida, from
14 Pensacola to Panama City.

15 Every ten years, the Legislature is
16 required by our Constitution to redistrict the
17 state based on increases, decreases and
18 movements of population within the state. And
19 because Florida has grown more than other
20 states in the last ten years, we pick up two
21 additional members of the U.S. House of
22 Representatives; in fact, we get two more
23 electoral votes as well.

24 Because some parts of our state have
25 increased or decreased disproportionately to

1 others, many Senate and House districts will
2 change, either by adding or losing population.

3 And when redistricting is complete,
4 Congressional Districts must be equal, and they
5 must be equal in population and contain 696,345
6 people. That is the magic number, 696,345
7 people, and federal case law means that that
8 has to be pretty exact.

9 The 40 Senate Districts, we have 40
10 Senators in the state, the 40 Senate Districts
11 must be nearly equal at about 470,000
12 population each, and our 120 House Districts
13 must be nearly equal at about 156,700 people.

14 There are displays that you saw when you
15 came in, they are over on that side of the
16 room, showing the current boundaries of
17 districts in this area of the state, and also
18 showing the number of persons which must be
19 added to or subtracted from current districts
20 to achieve equal representation.

21 Equality of representation is important,
22 but it isn't the only legal requirement that
23 redistricting plans have to meet. There are
24 other requirements, and the laws and important
25 court cases that define those other

1 requirements are explained in detail on the
2 House and Senate websites.

3 Those websites are listed on the
4 Redistricting 2012 brochure that was available
5 when you came in. If you didn't get one of
6 those, you can get it during the hearing or you
7 can get it on the way out.

8 That brochure, "Redistricting 2012,"
9 summarizes federal and state laws and outlines
10 topics and issues that we really need your
11 input on at today's hearing. If you didn't get
12 a copy, please pick one up before you leave.

13 The brochure also lists the House and
14 Senate websites, which are packed with
15 information about redistricting, including an
16 explanation of laws and important court cases
17 governing this topic.

18 The two websites, the House and Senate
19 website, are not exactly the same. They are
20 complementary, and they are updated frequently.
21 They have been updated today, for example.

22 And please visit both and check back
23 often, because it is a great way to stay
24 current about the additional submissions we
25 receive, the new maps that are posted, and will

1 help you understand how Congressional and State
2 Senate and State House Districts might be
3 taking shape.

4 The websites also deliver to your
5 fingertips all of the demographic information
6 that will be used in drawing districts. Let me
7 say a word about that.

8 The United States Bureau of the Census
9 does the census and then releases census
10 information to the states. Florida didn't get
11 its census information last, but we were one of
12 the last states to get it.

13 And as soon as we got that information, we
14 posted it as rapidly as possible on these
15 websites so that you can see the same
16 demographic information defining and describing
17 the people of Florida and of your community,
18 the same information that policymakers and
19 courts would use in drawing districts.

20 We also have provided you with the
21 computer programs that the Senate and House
22 will be using in drawing districts so that you,
23 if you wish, can draw districts, or you can
24 observe how districts that are presented by
25 other people or by interest groups would work,

1 and that -- those computer programs are
2 available to you for your use before, during
3 and after the hearing.

4 Senate and House professional staff are
5 available to show anybody the simple steps to
6 getting online and building or moving lines
7 around for districts, and if you wish,
8 submitting a plan now or in the weeks to come.

9 Recommendations from citizens and
10 citizens' groups will be made publicly
11 available to everybody. So if you submit your
12 ideas, those ideas will be made available to
13 everyone in Florida who wants to tune in.

14 In fact, as of today, there are 32
15 submissions of partial or complete maps. So
16 there are 32 maps for you to review. Some of
17 those maps are from special interest groups,
18 some are from individuals, some may contain the
19 ideas that members of the Legislature have.

20 And there are approximately 110 written
21 ideas for maps, all available on the web so
22 that you can see them on the House and Senate
23 websites. And after this week, I am sure those
24 numbers will increase.

25 In fact, in the last couple of days,

1 attendees at the meetings that we have had just
2 like this have drawn districts for submission
3 with the help of our staff at the display
4 tables, and that is -- those staff members are
5 available to help you as well.

6 Now, the submission of proposed maps that
7 makes sense for your community is a very
8 effective form of public participation in the
9 redistricting process.

10 The redistricting schedule under which we
11 are operating is imposed by the State
12 Constitution. The Constitution does not permit
13 the Legislature to act on state legislative
14 maps before the second year after the census.

15 In other words, the census was in 2010,
16 and under our Constitution, we can't vote on
17 the floor until 2012. However, we can discuss
18 maps, we can present maps, we can debate maps,
19 just like the public is doing now and like
20 members of the Legislature are free to do
21 yesterday, today and tomorrow.

22 It has been suggested by some that the
23 Legislature should draw the maps first and then
24 ask the public to comment. Now, certainly that
25 is one way to do things. We believe that puts

1 the answer ahead of the question.

2 We believe there should be no
3 preconceptions created by politicians, but
4 rather, public testimony should be free and
5 unrestricted, and we have had hundreds of
6 people provide that kind of testimony.

7 In fact, Ellen Freidin, the Chairperson of
8 the Fair Districts campaign, is on record in
9 her testimony before the Senate and House
10 Committees as stating that no new maps should
11 be drawn until after the public has had an
12 opportunity to comment, and in that regard, we
13 certainly agree with Ms. Freidin.

14 Our intent is to use the recommendations
15 made at these 26 public hearings and the
16 recommendations and input we get through our
17 Internet sites and through regular mail and
18 through your conversations with your elected
19 representatives as the basis for developing
20 options for district maps.

21 We will then discuss those options as soon
22 as we possibly can in open public meetings
23 before any votes are taken. There will be open
24 public meetings before any votes are taken even
25 in committee.

1 In other words, what we are saying is, if
2 you look at the maps that are here today, the
3 ones that are actually submitted to the
4 Legislature by Florida interest groups and
5 residents, we are starting the legislative
6 process, not with preconceived maps drawn in
7 Tallahassee, but rather, we are starting the
8 process with the input that we are receiving
9 from residents, and you are able to look at
10 that online and also here with the displays
11 today.

12 So if you want to know where the
13 Legislature will begin its deliberations, it is
14 with those public submissions and the testimony
15 from these meetings and other public input.

16 Throughout the process, we will solicit
17 additional public comment so that proposed maps
18 can mature with the public involved, all before
19 the Legislature votes even in committee on any
20 maps.

21 Whatever the Legislature passes is then
22 submitted for judicial review. We don't get to
23 decide what the maps are. We get to make a
24 proposal. We get to vote and say, "Here is our
25 idea," and then the Florida Supreme Court must

1 review our proposal, and also the proposal that
2 we make from the Florida Legislature must be
3 submitted for federal review as well.

4 Because our purpose today is to hear from
5 you, all the time between now and adjournment
6 will be used to ensure that all of the members
7 of the public who are here and wish to speak
8 will have the time to present testimony and be
9 listened to respectfully.

10 If after every citizen has had her or his
11 say there's time remaining before our scheduled
12 adjournment, and I hope there will be some,
13 then any member of the committee, Democrat or
14 Republican, House member or Senate, may make
15 any statement, answer any question, offer any
16 proposal or show you any map that they might
17 like.

18 Of course, any member of the Legislature
19 may today or at any time propose a map or a
20 plan, and as soon as they do, we will make it
21 available to the public.

22 Mr. Chairman, I hope this description of
23 our schedule and our methodology helps set the
24 stage for a successful hearing this evening.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you

1 very much, Chairman Gaetz.

2 We will adjourn, as the Chairman said, at
3 9:00 this evening. There are approximately
4 about 50 people who have signed up to speak,
5 and so to ensure that each person is heard, we
6 are going to try to limit the comments to two
7 to three minutes.

8 And you've got a lot of folks here, we are
9 going to give you our undivided attention. We
10 would ask that you just be concise and be
11 respectful. This is a passionate issue, and
12 certainly we hope to hear that passion and hope
13 to hear your thoughts and comments, but we
14 would ask that you keep them respectful, and we
15 want to give everyone an opportunity to have a
16 chance to speak today.

17 And so with that, our first speaker today,
18 or tonight, is going to be Ms. Beverly
19 Williams, followed by Ed Wujciak. I hope I
20 said that right, Ed. And after Ed will be
21 Carol Smith.

22 And so, Ms. Beverly, as you are making
23 your way, we are going to try to announce three
24 names at a time so we can keep it moving and
25 kind of get you in the queue and get prepared

1 to speak.

2 And with that, Ms. Williams, you have the
3 floor. Thank you very much for being here this
4 evening.

5 MS. WILLIAMS: Good afternoon. Just one
6 second.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: We will make
8 sure that mike is working for you. Speak
9 directly into the mike, too, if you could.

10 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay. Good afternoon. I
11 am Beverly Williams. My city is Lauderdale
12 Lakes, which recently celebrated 50 years this
13 past June.

14 I have been a resident for 37 of those
15 years. I reside in the Eastgate section of
16 Lauderdale Lakes, an area that consists of
17 single family homes, recently new townhomes and
18 Somerset Condominiums. Today I represent my
19 community of 34,000.

20 In 2000, our Legislators decided to split
21 our community, which created mass confusion.
22 Election time is a disaster, trying to explain
23 to our residents why and how it happened, why
24 they can't vote for certain people, why do they
25 take this little area out of District 94 and

1 move us to 93. It doesn't make sense, and
2 which I do agree.

3 Our kids attend the same schools, we share
4 community backgrounds. Over the years, I have
5 fought to keep our children within our school
6 boundaries. We are neighbors, and splitting
7 districts negatively impacts our community.

8 The area I am speaking of is located
9 between Oakland Park Boulevard, 31st Avenue,
10 State Road 7 and Northwest 19th Street.

11 We feel like a stepchild, cast aside. We
12 are asking that our community is put back in
13 District 94 where we belong. Representative
14 Perry Thurston, we want to go home.

15 I have drawn my map of what we think our
16 district should look like. I will send it in.

17 Thank you for allowing me to speak. I am
18 also an Escambia County transplant. Thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right.
20 Thank you very much, Ms. Williams, we
21 appreciate that.

22 Next up is Ed, and I'm sorry if I
23 butchered your last name there, sir, and then
24 following Ed is Carol Smith and then Timoli
25 Ross -- I'm sorry, Timothy Ross.

1 You are recognized.

2 MR. WUJCIAK: Actually, you did a
3 wonderful job.

4 I thought long and hard about how to share
5 with you my citizen's perspective on
6 redistricting. I considered objecting to the
7 lack of timely maps or the timeline clearly
8 intended to favor incumbents or the arrogance
9 of spending our tax money to thwart us. Na,
10 too obvious.

11 I think I will comment on the behavior of
12 politicians, and I certainly have a lot here,
13 more than I expected. I decided to borrow an
14 idea from our neighbors in the 12-step
15 movement.

16 I imagined an officeholder standing in
17 front of his or her constituents and saying, "I
18 admit that I am powerless over personal
19 political ambition and partisan advantage."

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ed, I hope
21 the direction you are going is related to
22 redistricting, because that is what we are here
23 to talk about tonight. So please keep it
24 focused on redistricting only, if you could.

25 MR. WUJCIAK: Yes. Okay.

1 "I have -- I entered politics for
2 idealistic reasons, but I have allowed this
3 culture to interfere with my actual job, to
4 honestly serve the best interests of my
5 constituents and the people of Florida."

6 Well, Mr. and Mrs. Politician, the voters
7 of Florida have done you a great favor. By
8 passing Amendments 5 and 6, the voters have
9 freed you from the apparently irresistible
10 temptation to follow your worst impulses.

11 By voting to remove political
12 considerations from the redistricting process,
13 the people expressed their fervent hope and
14 belief that if temptations are removed, the
15 Florida Legislature can do the right thing, can
16 actually do an honest job of redistricting.

17 The Legislature should be deeply grateful
18 to the voters for giving them the freedom and
19 opportunity to act like statesmen, not partisan
20 political hacks. Take this gift from the
21 electorate and make us proud we elected you.
22 Don't insult our intelligence, don't betray us.
23 We are watching. Thank you.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
25 very much, Ed. Thank you for those comments.

1 Next up we have Ms. Carol Smith.
2 Following Carol, we have Timothy Ross and then
3 J. Field.

4 You are recognized, ma'am.

5 MS. SMITH: Thank you. Good evening,
6 Legislators. Thank you for scheduling these
7 public hearings to allow the public to discuss
8 this extremely important issue, and you have
9 heard volumes.

10 You have standards in place in the Florida
11 Constitution approved by 63 percent of Florida
12 voters at the last election.

13 Now I urge you to continue this public
14 process by drawing prospective maps and
15 releasing them to the public in the fall, say
16 by October 3rd. As these maps work through the
17 committee process, the public would then have
18 several months to comment, critique the maps,
19 if you will, and adopt a rule that the maps
20 will be voted on in the first week of session
21 so they will have adequate time for required
22 judicial review. There is precedence for
23 voting on Bills early in the session, so let's
24 do this.

25 Do not allow these hearings to become just

1 charades, because they have been vital. Please
2 demonstrate that you are above partisan
3 politics.

4 The approved maps must be in place so
5 candidates know their districts before the
6 June 4th to 8th filing deadline. I urge you to
7 keep the interests of voter uppermost in your
8 minds.

9 The House districts in Broward County have
10 the strangest wiggly boundaries, one connected
11 by the Sawgrass Expressway, several crossing
12 county lines with just several blocks in
13 Broward, the balance in neighboring counties,
14 one connects Broward and Collier through the
15 Florida Everglades.

16 Many Senate and Congressional Districts
17 are just as bad. My own Congressional District
18 19 ends in Broward with a big C-shape cutting
19 across parts of seven cities just in Broward,
20 not to mention all that goes up through Palm
21 Beach County.

22 Congressional Districts 20 and 23 are
23 gerrymandered worse than the name's sake from
24 1812. We know you can do better. Use the
25 standards the voters approved, consider

1 municipal and county boundaries, communities of
2 common interest, put blinders on with regard to
3 party and incumbency, make them as compact as
4 possible, and, of course, maintain minority
5 protections. It can be done. You have in your
6 possession several suggestions.

7 Again, I urge you, draw the maps by
8 October 3rd, release them for public comment
9 during the committee process and be ready for a
10 vote in early January. Think of the voters
11 first. Thank you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
13 very much.

14 Next up, Mr. Ross, followed by J. Field
15 and then Jim Wolfe.

16 Mr. Ross, you are recognized, sir.

17 MR. ROSS: Thank you, Representative.
18 Redistricting in Florida has traditionally been
19 a tool that elected officials used to choose
20 who votes for them rather than the voters
21 choosing who represents them.

22 This gives incumbents an advantage that is
23 almost impossible for a challenger to beat.

24 Over the past 20 years, less than two
25 percent of incumbents have been defeated in the

1 state of Florida. I believe that the voters
2 should be allowed to fairly choose their
3 elected officials rather than elected officials
4 choosing their voters.

5 I urge you to adopt a same timeline for
6 redistricting. Florida has one of the latest
7 redistricting timelines in the nation.
8 Otherwise, we run the risk of final approval
9 for the redistricting occurring so close to the
10 election that it engenders mass confusion of
11 voters and does not allow for a thoughtful or
12 organized election.

13 I recommend a deadline of October 3rd,
14 2011, for Legislators to file all proposed
15 redistricting plans. All committee review
16 should be completed by December 2011. There
17 should be a requirement that any amendments
18 have sufficient notice to allow citizens to
19 review and travel to Tallahassee to testify
20 before the committee vote.

21 The Legislators should -- the Legislature
22 should vote on final plans no later than
23 January 13th, 2012.

24 Over 62 percent of voters approved
25 Amendments 5 and 6 in 2010. Contrary to

1 Senator Alan Hays' statement, you have
2 allocated over 30 million to oppose the will of
3 the voters, verified by Politifact.com. Stop
4 lying to us and do what we elected you to do.

5 Use that money for education or creating
6 jobs, and stop wasting it on opposing the will
7 of the voters. Draw districts that observe
8 city and county boundaries.

9 In my hometown of Wilton Manors, we have a
10 population of about 11,000. We have three
11 Congress people, two State Senators and two
12 State Representatives. We should have one
13 Congress person, one Senate Senator and one
14 State Representative.

15 I am upset that you would waste our tax
16 money on having these hearings before you even
17 have maps of the redistricting proposals. That
18 tells me that you really don't care what the
19 voters think about redistricting.

20 The ability to offer substantive comments
21 is severely diminished without the presentation
22 of maps at these public meetings. I ask that
23 an additional set of meetings be established
24 throughout the state in order to allow for
25 effective comment on proposed maps.

1 In closing, I reiterate that we must use
2 the same timeline for implementation of
3 redistricting, that you stop opposing the will
4 of the voters in regards to redistricting and
5 that you set up an additional set of
6 redistricting meetings with public comment
7 around the state once maps are available.
8 Thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

10 Ladies and gentlemen, we want you to feel
11 free to express yourself, but also recognize
12 we've got about 60 people that -- we are now up
13 to 62 people, so we got to move quick. We want
14 to give everybody the chance to speak.

15 And with that, Mr. Field, or J. Field, you
16 are recognized, sir. I'm sorry, there is no
17 first name, it just says "J.," and after
18 Mr. Field, we've got Jim Wolfe and Judie Wolfe.

19 MR. FIELD: Okay, thank you very much for
20 allowing me to speak. I am a resident of Dania
21 Beach. I'd like to refer to an earlier
22 document in our history, the Declaration of
23 Independence, where it talks about the consent
24 to be governed and the consent to be taxed, and
25 this is done through elections. But we have a

1 system nowadays, it seems, where people can
2 waltz into office without no election
3 whatsoever, because there is no opposition, or
4 there is only token opposition.

5 We should have a system that does not --
6 with these crazy lines drawn all over the
7 place, we should try and keep municipalities
8 and counties together as much as possible in
9 districts who have a common goal, common
10 concerns. And that is about all I have to say
11 about it. Thank you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
13 very much.

14 Next up we have Jim Wolfe, followed by
15 Ms. Judie Wolfe and then Jean Hansen.

16 Mr. Wolfe, are you here?

17 Mrs. Wolfe is here. Thank you very much
18 for being here.

19 MS. HANSEN: They have decided not to
20 speak. I am Jean Hanson.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I'm sorry,
22 okay. Well, Jean, thank you very much for
23 being here. You are recognized.

24 MS. HANSEN: There's been a lot of
25 controversy about the Legislature doing the

1 redistricting and they're picking their own
2 districts, et cetera, but nothing is ever said
3 about the county commission and the school
4 board districts.

5 And I would like the Legislature to do
6 something about that so that they are fair,
7 because they are not fair, and as we know by
8 all of the corruption and all of the lawsuits
9 which we are having to pay for. We now have
10 two people who've just resigned from the School
11 Board.

12 So I ask you to, please -- yes, we want
13 fair districts, but we all know that the
14 Supreme Court has given you the start of a
15 plan, and then you have to follow that, and
16 that is why the districts are long and skinny,
17 and nobody is taking that into consideration.

18 I would also like you to pass a law that
19 there would be term limits for everybody who is
20 in elective office.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Jean, I
22 promise you, we are very happy to hear all your
23 thoughts, and there are some really good ones,
24 but we want them to be focused on the state
25 redistricting. That is what we are here to

1 talk about today.

2 MS. HANSEN: Well, I think you are doing a
3 good job, and I thank you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
5 Thank you very much.

6 Next up we have Alfred DiMaio and I
7 believe Elizabeth DiMaio, I apologize if I said
8 that wrong, sir. After the DiMaio's, we have
9 Arthur Joseph.

10 You are recognized to speak, sir.

11 MR. DIMAIO: Thank you. I have the
12 material that your House Committee passed out,
13 and it is Article III, Section 2, where there
14 is no apportionment plan, or a district shall
15 be drawn with the intent to favor or disfavor a
16 political party or an incumbent. This is
17 before Amendments 5 and 6, that was in our
18 Constitution. So I --

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Actually,
20 sir, that is amendments. That is Amendments 5
21 and 6.

22 MR. DIMAIO: Okay. How is it though that
23 we are in a situation where we have a
24 Legislature that is so unrepresentative of the
25 complexity of the population that. In fact, we

1 have the erosion of the confidence of the
2 citizens in this Legislature?

3 This is the crisis I think we are in, and
4 so I ask you, as you go about this critical
5 work, go back to things we have learned in
6 elementary school, those fundamental ideas and
7 ideals, that dignity of the individual who
8 referred to the Declaration of Independence,
9 but the idea that your job is to make this a
10 better democracy.

11 Your job is to keep your eye on that
12 problem, how every day can we make this a more
13 effective democracy. Instead of caucusing, how
14 can my Republican, Democrat or whatever caucus
15 make sure that we keep power.

16 Power is delicious, power is intoxicating.
17 I know that once you taste it, you are going to
18 want to keep it and go on and on, and you've
19 figured out how to do that for all sorts of
20 wiggles and twists and turns. But it is
21 undermining the confidence of citizens in our
22 government.

23 And you have the power to stop this, to
24 change this, to make an effective development
25 so in fact every day is a better democratic day

1 from our population.

2 I ask you to go to your consciences, go
3 back to that, not just your party bosses who
4 tell you how to act one way or the other, and
5 when you bring up those maps, which we must
6 have by October, at least the beginning of the
7 process of discussion, it is ridiculous to talk
8 about this kind of problem without some kind of
9 proposed maps, that you talk to each other, not
10 your one caucus here and your other caucus
11 there in the back room or pull -- but you start
12 to talk to each other, because you have got to
13 make this a better place.

14 And finally, how in the world can you
15 explain to this population, how can you spend
16 money to fight these amendments when you have
17 cut money to the public schools and to public
18 -- it is --

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
20 Mr. DiMaio.

21 Next up we have Mrs. DiMaio, followed by
22 Arthur Joseph and then Marty Ireland.

23 You are recognized, ma'am.

24 MS. DIMAIO: Good evening. I have three
25 comments. First, I am disappointed at the

1 elongated timeline to design and approve the
2 maps. I encourage you to accelerate that
3 timeline to enable voters to get to know the
4 candidates that are looking to represent them.

5 Second, I am very angry that you would
6 spend our taxpayer dollars to fight against the
7 will of the voters who voted for the Fair
8 District Amendments.

9 And, lastly, you asked what we wanted to
10 see in the maps. I specifically want to see a
11 separation of the east coast and the west coast
12 counties. Broward and Collier Counties are not
13 communities of common interest.

14 Voters from these two counties do not
15 belong in a single district. Thank you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much.

18 We have Mr. Arthur Joseph up, and then
19 Marty Ireland, followed by Kevin Cerino.

20 You are recognized, sir.

21 MR. JOSEPH: I could probably do this
22 without a mike, but, anyway, my name is Arthur
23 Joseph, and I am a retired air traffic
24 controller. I controlled traffic at the Miami
25 Air Traffic Control Center for 36 years, and

1 probably handled many flights that you folks
2 have flown on safely and without falling asleep
3 at the job.

4 Anyway, I am representing the American
5 Civil Liberties Union of Florida, more
6 specifically the Broward Chapter, and we
7 believe, unlike Senator Gaetz has said, we want
8 to see the maps as soon as possible, as
9 expeditiously as possible.

10 We can't talk intelligently until we see
11 the maps and then give our input. You have had
12 the information for months. Still no maps.

13 If a person wants to run for office, how
14 will they know what district they are in? I
15 want to meet and start talking to the people
16 that will represent me. How can I do it?
17 Possibly via a crystal ball or a Ouija board.

18 The new rules, Amendments 5 and 6, were
19 overwhelmingly approved by the voters, but
20 according to my investigation, there's a number
21 of people sitting up there, including the
22 Representative Weatherford and Senator Gaetz,
23 that voted for Amendment 7, which was the
24 poisoned pill that would have killed Amendments
25 5 and 6. I don't think the people appreciate

1 that, and I know the ACLU doesn't appreciate
2 that.

3 I have heard there is a gag order on
4 Legislators not to talk to the public about
5 redistricting. If this is true, why?

6 After you have redrawn the maps, will you
7 hold the real hearings so the public can give
8 you the real input on the real data? This
9 Florida process is one of the slowest and most
10 secretive in the country.

11 We, the people, are suspicious and feel
12 you are trying to keep us in the dark about the
13 real task at hand.

14 Why are you spending Florida taxpayers'
15 money to challenge the Fair Districts process?
16 Why did Governor Scott slow the process by
17 withdrawing the paperwork that former Governor
18 Crist had forwarded to the Department of
19 Justice in an expeditious manner?

20 In summation, I believe that Amendments 5
21 or 6 are clear enough in their message so that
22 even Stevie Wonder could see them. The people
23 of Florida have spoken loud and clear that they
24 want to see the good 'ol boy process of the
25 past cease.

1 They want fair districts and they want to
2 see the new maps ASAP in order to voice their
3 satisfaction or lack thereof. There is a Latin
4 phrase that should become your motto, *acta non*
5 *verba*, which stands for action, not words.

6 Thank you very much, and I would like to
7 thank all the people that have worked hard and
8 had voted for Amendments 5 and 6.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
10 sir.

11 Next up we have Marty Ireland, who is a
12 retired letter carrier, followed by Kevin
13 Cerino, and then finally, Adrienne Kaltman with
14 the League of Women Voters of Broward County.

15 Mr. Ireland, you are recognized, sir.

16 MR. IRELAND: Thank you very much. My
17 name is Marty Ireland. I am a retired letter
18 carrier, and I have been a resident in south
19 Florida for over 60 years. I got you beat by
20 13 years, Representative Taylor.

21 And I have seen gerrymandering from both
22 sides, the Democrats and the Republicans.
23 However, last year when we had the run for
24 Governor, our Governor Rick Scott put on a lot
25 of advertising.

1 At the each -- at the end of each
2 advertising, he said, "Let's get to work." You
3 haven't got to work. You failed to listen to
4 Governor Scott. We want to see maps. We don't
5 see maps.

6 Senator Gaetz, you said we have
7 approximately 32 submissions. Where is yours?
8 That is what we want to discuss tonight. We
9 want to discuss yours. We want to see what you
10 are going to come up with.

11 And you said you wanted to get the impact
12 from the public. I watched a Daytona Beach
13 hearing. There was a gentleman by the name of
14 John Hoyt. He took the time. He took the time
15 to draw a couple of maps for his area.

16 He wanted to explain what he felt might
17 need some adjustments. He was cut off by
18 Representative Dorothy Hukill. I don't know,
19 why would she cut him off? He was giving you
20 what you wanted, but apparently you did not
21 want to listen as a committee. Shame on you.
22 Shame on you.

23 You said that Ms. Friedman stated that you
24 shouldn't draw it, that we should speak first.
25 Well, we all make mistakes. Now, I haven't

1 made one, because I have been married to my
2 wife for 41 years, so, you know, I did the
3 right thing there. But Ms. Friedman is wrong.
4 She is totally wrong. And she has a right to
5 her own opinion.

6 And the interesting fact that is going to
7 happen in Broward County, and this is going to
8 be your challenge, it is in the Senate seats
9 29, Senator Smith's seat, and Senate seat 25,
10 Senator Bogdanoff's seat.

11 Now, there is supposed to be some type of
12 levitation or an evening of the thing, but I
13 noticed in Senator Smith's districts, 42
14 non-Hispanic whites, 45 -- excuse me, I'm
15 sorry, 45, and this is based on two thousand --

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Ireland,
17 I am going to have to ask you to be quick here,
18 because we are running out of time.

19 MR. IRELAND: I am almost finished, I am
20 almost finished.

21 Forty-five percent non-Hispanic whites,
22 45 percent non-Hispanic Afro-Americans. In
23 Ellyn Bogdanoff, I saw it was about 90 percent
24 -- 90 percent non-Hispanic whites.

25 My point is, they both went up and down

1 the east coast. Why can't we have them in
2 Broward County? That is what Broward County
3 wants.

4 You Republicans don't have to worry about
5 losing control of the House. The Democrats are
6 here tonight. And we just want to have fair
7 representation and we want equal
8 representation. And I do have some -- a good
9 Senator in Senator Sobel, and I thank you very
10 much.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
12 very much, Mr. Ireland, thank you.

13 Next up we have Kevin Cerino. Kevin, you
14 are recognized, sir. Thank you for being here.

15 After Kevin, we are going to have -- I
16 hope I say this right -- Adrienne Kaltman, and
17 then David Brundage.

18 Sure, we will pass these maps out. Thank
19 you for bringing them with you. You are
20 recognized, sir.

21 MR. CERINO: Thank you. My name is Kevin
22 Cerino, and I really don't envy any of you
23 people here, because you really have an
24 impossible task.

25 The two amendments that made it to the

1 Constitution last year were very contradictory.
2 They said that the districts need to be
3 compact, but they also said that they need to
4 recognize -- they shouldn't split up cities,
5 but in order to do that, sometimes you are
6 going to need to necessarily do that.

7 What is being passed out right now is a
8 map. That is not a map of a proposed district.
9 That is not a map of an existing district.
10 That is a map of the city right here in Broward
11 County, the City of Dania Beach.

12 That city is made up of four
13 non-contiguous parts. It looks like somebody
14 took a tomato and threw it up against the wall
15 and splattered.

16 There is no way that you are going to be
17 able to -- and there are many other cities in
18 Broward County and in other parts of the state
19 that are made of all kinds of zigzag lines, and
20 I didn't know how you are going to make compact
21 districts and also not split up these areas.

22 Now, the one thing in this amendment it
23 does say is that districts shall be feasible
24 using existing political and geographical
25 boundaries.

1 A very simple solution to that is when
2 redrawing the lines for the State House and the
3 State Senate, use the existing maps, because
4 those are political -- existing political
5 boundaries, and if the district is too small,
6 you add a precinct from a neighboring district
7 that has too many. Very simple. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
9 very much. We appreciate your comments.

10 Adrienne Kaltman, or Adrienne Kaltman,
11 followed by David Brundage and then Steve
12 Moyer.

13 You are recognized. Thank you for being
14 here.

15 MS. KALTMAN: Good evening. My name is
16 Adrienne Kaltman. As a native Floridian and
17 President of the League of Women Voters of
18 Broward County, I welcome you to Davie and
19 thank you for this opportunity to speak on
20 behalf of the League.

21 Once every ten years, every state in the
22 country redraws its districts for Congress,
23 State Legislatures and local government. Often
24 this redistricting process fails, marked by
25 secrecy and legislative self-dealing,

1 regardless of which political party controls
2 the Legislature.

3 In 2010, 63 percent of Florida's voters
4 and 73 percent of voters here in Broward County
5 approved Amendments 5 and 6, yet congressional
6 Representatives Corrine Brown and Mario
7 Diaz-Balart, joined by the Florida House, filed
8 suit to prevent implementation, asking the
9 court to strike Amendment 6 from the Florida
10 Constitution.

11 That is over \$1 million of taxpayer money
12 has been spent hiring attorneys to fight
13 voter-mandated redistricting standards does not
14 inspire confidence that our elected officials
15 are actually serving their constituents.

16 I urge you to stop using taxpayer dollars
17 to invalidate this constitutional provision,
18 dollars which would be better used to create
19 employment in this challenging economy.

20 Not one Legislator's map has been
21 presented for public comment or review. Thus,
22 unlike what has occurred in public hearings in
23 other states, Floridians have been unable to
24 publicly comment on Legislators' proposed maps.

25 I urge you each to make

1 legislatively-drawn district maps available in
2 a reasonable manner and in a reasonable time so
3 that the good citizens of Florida have as
4 equally a meaningful opportunity to make our
5 voices heard as do citizens of other states.

6 Having just two or three days to review,
7 analyze and comment on statewide maps is both
8 unrealistic and unduly burdensome.

9 Instead of voting on final maps at the end
10 of session next March, I ask you to draw them
11 now, discuss them in this fall's committee
12 hearings and vote on them during the first week
13 of session in early January 2012.

14 The timeline will allow time for court and
15 the Justice Department reviews, while adding
16 transparency and openness to the redistricting
17 process.

18 Thank you all for this opportunity to
19 speak. I wish you a safe journey back to
20 Tallahassee. Thank you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
22 very much.

23 David Brundage. David Brundage, you are
24 recognized, sir, followed by Steve Moyer and
25 Bernard Seeman.

1 MR. BRUNDAGE: Good evening. Thank you
2 for letting me speak.

3 I live in a small town called Cooper City.
4 We pride ourselves in being a small family
5 town, and we pride ourselves in our schools.
6 We are divided. I voted for 5 and 6 because I
7 want to see Cooper City one district. Thank
8 you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
10 very much. By the way, I should have pointed
11 this out earlier, but you get bonus points for
12 brevity, sir, so you are leading the charge
13 right now. Thank you very much for that.

14 Next up we have Steve Moyer. After
15 Mr. Moyer, we have Bernard Seeman and then Alan
16 Ehrlich.

17 You are recognized.

18 MR. MOYER: Thank you for the opportunity.

19 I also live in Cooper City, which is just
20 a little south and just a little west of here
21 in District 97. District 97 also goes past 75,
22 picks up a piece of Weston, goes through the
23 Everglades to the north, comes back in at the
24 county line and takes a piece of Parkland. Big
25 C-shaped district.

1 Between Cooper City and where we are now
2 in Davie, the two cities together would just
3 about make a House district, and they share a
4 lot in common. There is a common Chamber of
5 Commerce. Here in Davie, it is an equestrian
6 community. You will find a hitching post for
7 the horses at the McDonald's. And in Cooper
8 City where my daughter just graduated high
9 school, they are the Cowboys.

10 One time when I lived down in the Keys, it
11 was Senate District 97, I believe. Senate
12 District 97 picks up five counties. It would
13 take five and a half hours to drive from Key
14 West at one end to Immokalee at the other.
15 That would make a lot of sense, five counties,
16 if we were up in the north central part of the
17 state, but it also picks up pieces of Dade and
18 Broward. We're in south Florida, the most
19 densely populated counties in the state. These
20 kind of districts are what we like to see as
21 one of the people who voted for 5 and 6 to
22 become more compact and more reasonable, and we
23 would appreciate that.

24 I also appreciate the fact that you guys
25 have to satisfy the Constitution, the state,

1 the federal Constitution, the Voting Rights
2 Act, Amendments 5 and 6, the Supreme Court, the
3 Department of Justice. I don't envy your jobs
4 at all, but that is why we elected you. We
5 appreciate your efforts, and thank you all very
6 much.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
8 very much, Mr. Moyer.

9 Next up, Mr. Seeman, followed by Alan
10 Ehrlich and Eddy Edwards.

11 MR. SEEMAN: Thank you. My name is
12 Bernard Seeman. I don't have a prepared
13 speech. I thought I would just come and
14 listen, and then I decided maybe I should say a
15 few words.

16 I want to say, first of all, that it was
17 very enjoyable listening to all the prior
18 speakers, I agree with just about everything
19 that they have said, and the message here is, I
20 believe, keep our communities intact, don't go
21 dividing it with two and three different
22 Representatives so we don't know running around
23 who to find and who to speak to in getting
24 anything done, because when you divide it with
25 two and three different Representatives, that

1 really means nothing is going to get done.

2 So you, as the Representatives, really
3 have a unique opportunity now to set an example
4 for the rest of the country, in fact, because
5 the whole country is looking at you to see if
6 Florida is going to rise above petty politics.
7 Whether you are a Democrat or Republican,
8 doesn't make any difference, you are both
9 guilty of doing the same thing, you want to
10 stay in office. Let's think of us, the voters,
11 and the community who sent you here.

12 So what I will do if I see my district is
13 gerrymandered in the same old way, I will know
14 that the incumbent did it, and I will vote
15 against the incumbent to send a message, we
16 don't want it done this way.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

18 Alan Ehrlich, you are recognized, sir,
19 followed by Eddy Edwards and Scott McCluskey.

20 MR. EHRLICH: My name is Alan Ehrlich, and
21 I represent house number 9411 on Northwest
22 Tenth Street in Plantation.

23 In the local section of yesterday's local
24 newspaper, *The Sun Sentinel*, an article talked
25 about these public hearings and the new

1 constitutional standards attempting to, quote,
2 curb gerrymandering. I hate to disagree with
3 the author of the article, but last year when
4 the voters of Florida overwhelmingly voted and
5 approved the Fair Districts amendments, they
6 weren't trying to just curb gerrymandering, our
7 state's shameful history of gerrymandering;
8 rather, they were trying to end it.

9 Floridians don't want districts that
10 protect those currently in power. They want
11 you to draw districts that do not favor an
12 incumbent or one political party or the other.
13 They want districts that are compact and
14 contiguous and are designed so that people of
15 all races and ethnicities are fairly
16 represented.

17 You have asked the public to testify and
18 offer suggestions on this process, but you have
19 not shown us any maps proposed by the
20 Legislature. Where are the maps?

21 It is clear to me that in order for the
22 citizens of Florida to intelligently comment on
23 this process, they must have a meaningful
24 opportunity to comment on actual proposed maps
25 before final passage by the Legislature.

1 Without actual proposed maps for the public to
2 comment on, it is no surprise that so many
3 people view these hearings as meaningless and a
4 sham. You could do much better.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
6 sir.

7 Next up, Eddy Edwards, followed by Scot
8 McCluskey and Rose Marie Rauschkolb.

9 MR. EDWARDS: Thank you. My name is Eddy
10 Edwards. I am from the Caribbean-American
11 community. We have population throughout the
12 state of Florida.

13 I am here in support of the Voting Rights
14 Act and Amendment 5 and 6, the latest
15 amendments to the Florida Constitution. We are
16 asking that you set the dates and time certain
17 to have legislatively-drawn district maps
18 available for the public to comment before the
19 vote of the House and the Senate.

20 Communities of interest might not have
21 been included in Amendments 5 and 6; however,
22 if we draw compact districts without stacking
23 and cracking, we will produce districts that
24 are fair. Compact districts are the best way
25 to keep naturally formed districts together,

1 not splits in streets and neighborhoods, just
2 keep the neighbors that are a member of the
3 same homeowner's association, have students
4 attending the same elementary and middle
5 schools, attend the same church and play in the
6 same community centers.

7 Compact geographic districts, contiguous
8 boundaries, are the intent of the Voting Rights
9 Act and Amendments 5 and 6. We must not draw
10 districts that will disenfranchise voting
11 patterns in the community.

12 People choose where to live. Businesses
13 choose where to locate based on the
14 demographics that will support goods and
15 services they provide. The Caribbean-American
16 community operate primarily and mainly within
17 Broward County, with a focus on central
18 Broward. We have our own doctors, lawyers,
19 financial institutions that hire from within
20 our communities so that they can service
21 language diverse, ethnic and culturally diverse
22 community that is naturally compact with a
23 strong Caribbean population.

24 We need to have the timeline moved, and we
25 need to be mindful of Amendments 5 and 6.

1 On behalf of the community, I want to
2 thank you for listening to the community, and
3 we trust that you will give us another
4 opportunity to look at the Legislature-drawn
5 map outside of Tallahassee somewhere more
6 access and less costly to travel before you
7 begin your vote. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
9 very much.

10 Next we have Scot McCluskey, followed by
11 Rose Marie Rauschkolb, and Karin Hoffman.

12 MR. McCLUSKEY: Thank you, Legislators,
13 for coming down this evening. I am a native
14 Floridian, life-long Democrat, public sector
15 worker, Union member. So as such, the majority
16 members may not like some of what I have to
17 say, but I will keep it short anyway.

18 Problems with the current districts are
19 known and have been articulated well by many
20 people. I would simply like to ask the
21 majority members to have the courage of your
22 convictions. If your policies are the will of
23 the people, you will be re-elected.

24 Regardless, it is real simple, follow the law.

25 Thank you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

2 Next up we have Ms. Rose Marie Rauschkolb,
3 and after that, Karin Hoffman and Sergio
4 Escobar.

5 You are recognized, ma'am.

6 MS. RAUSCHKOLB: Good evening. My name is
7 Rose Marie Rauschkolb, and I have lived in
8 Broward County for nine years. I would like to
9 thank this committee for being here in Davie
10 today and for listening to input from the
11 public before drawing the new maps.

12 I have a few questions, but first I just
13 wanted to say I think it is very important when
14 you draw the new lines, that you keep the
15 coastal parts of our county separate from the
16 more inland parts. The coastal parts are very
17 different from the more inland portions of the
18 county. They have specific interests and
19 problems, and they should have more
20 coastal-based representation and coastal
21 legislative districts. The same idea would go
22 for the more agricultural and urban areas
23 within the state.

24 I read an article recently in *The Sun*
25 *Sentinel* newspaper that the reason that some of

1 the Florida maps look so funky was that they
2 were drawn to accomplish two interwoven
3 objectives: One, to maintain majorities for
4 the party in power; and two, to boost the
5 number of minority lawmakers elected. It went
6 on to say that the new 2012 maps will have to
7 demonstrate that the plans will not reduce the
8 number of legislative and congressional
9 districts likely to elect minorities.

10 It seems to me that the district maps, as
11 directed by law, should reflect a certain
12 number of voters, regardless of skin color or
13 ethnicity of those voters. We don't need
14 gerrymandered districts representing quotas for
15 certain skin colors or ethnicities. We are all
16 Americans. Dr. Martin Luther King said, "Judge
17 not by the color of their skin, but the content
18 of their character." Elections recently here
19 in Florida have shown that people of every skin
20 color and every ethnicity can be elected when
21 they reflect the wishes of the voters within
22 that district.

23 Having said that, I have a few questions
24 about Amendment 5 and 6. As I understand,
25 these amendments were meant to stop

1 gerrymandering, and make district lines more
2 compact. But there are some words in these
3 amendments that are confusing and can be
4 interpreted different ways; for instance, "Make
5 the district lines more compact." "Compact"
6 can mean different things to different people.
7 Currently, U.S. Congressional District 23
8 meanders over five counties, certainly not
9 compact unless you are seeking to select a
10 certain group of voters.

11 What does it mean that incumbents can't be
12 disfavored? Does that mean if two incumbents
13 are in the same seat and thus forced to run
14 against each other, they can sue each other for
15 being disfavored?

16 What does the word "practicable" mean?
17 What does the word "feasible" mean? And under
18 what circumstances is following existing
19 political boundaries feasible or not? And,
20 finally, what are existing political
21 boundaries? Amendments 5 and 6 say that they
22 need to be utilized, but what qualifies as
23 these boundaries? Are these boundaries the
24 current legislative seats? If those are
25 gerrymandered, then why use them? If those

1 boundaries aren't the current district lines,
2 then what else could they be?

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms.
4 Rauschkolb, I am going to have to ask you to
5 wrap it up here, we are over three minutes.

6 MS. RAUSCHKOLB: I am done. It seems to
7 me that there are many different types of
8 political boundary lines, which makes the term
9 confusing. I raise these questions because it
10 appears there is a lack of clarity in
11 Amendments 5 and 6 and could mean more lawsuits
12 over the new maps that are approved by the
13 Legislature. We don't need more lawsuits.

14 Again, I want to thank you for listening,
15 and I wish you good luck with this truly
16 difficult task ahead.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
18 very much, ma'am.

19 Next up we've got Karin Hoffman, followed
20 by Sergio Escobar and Allan Barsky.

21 I am also going to try to remind folks,
22 we've got over 80 people who have signed up to
23 speak now. It continues to grow, and that is a
24 good thing, but because of that, we are going
25 to have to limit everybody. I said two to

1 three minutes in the beginning. We are going
2 to try to stick closer to two. So please bear
3 with us.

4 And you are recognized, and thank you for
5 being here.

6 MS. HOFFMAN: Thank you so much for making
7 this time available. You have a challenge
8 ahead of you because of the way that the
9 wording is, and as she alluded to earlier,
10 you've almost head up a whole framework that
11 you are not able to abide by. You are either
12 going to favor or disfavor, there is no other
13 way around it. An incumbent or a political
14 party, there is no other way around it.

15 Racial or minority groups, what
16 constitutes a racial or minority group? Is it
17 a racial minority group within a district
18 because some are not represented?

19 The best tool is to really focus on
20 communities of interest, because there are --
21 and another gentleman mentioned earlier, you've
22 got Caribbean groups, you've got Hispanic,
23 you've got the Cuban, you have Central
24 American, you've got the suburban, you've got
25 the coastal communities. They are like

1 interests. That is the best way to be able to
2 design a district so that you have fair
3 representation of that district.

4 Representative Ron Klein knew the benefit
5 of having a coastal community up along the
6 coast, because there is a similar interest,
7 being able to take his constituents' concerns
8 to Washington, DC.

9 Also, because of this, beware of the
10 challenges of the time frame. There are people
11 within this organization that are here tonight
12 that are ready to challenge you in the courts.
13 Do not let this be the debacle that happened in
14 the year 2000, the election process. Be
15 careful how you are doing this, you can rise
16 above it, but with this wording, you know the
17 challenge that lies ahead of you. Thank you so
18 much.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
20 very much. We appreciate your comments.

21 Sergio Escobar, followed by Allan Barsky
22 and Carlos Verney, Jr.

23 You are recognized, sir.

24 MR. ESCOBAR: Thank you very much. First
25 of all, I really feel very happy having you

1 here, because it is a very important tool and a
2 very important opportunity.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Excuse me, sir, could you
4 move your mike up?

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: There we go,
6 yeah, get closer to the mike.

7 MR. ESCOBAR: Sure. Better now? Okay,
8 good.

9 As I was telling you, that I think it is a
10 very important tool that we -- having you be
11 here. I think it is a very good way in order
12 to have an exchange of ideas between your
13 voters, as we are citizens and you are our
14 representatives in Tallahassee.

15 My name is Sergio Escobar. I live in
16 Weston, a very nice city here in Broward
17 County, and one of the most diverse communities
18 that we have in this county. I do believe that
19 the census has done a very interesting job,
20 because we are looking for new political
21 boundaries and we are facing a new political
22 map.

23 That is why I really want to call your
24 attention for that community that people used
25 to call Hispanic or Latino, it doesn't matter

1 the name, but it is a very growing community
2 that is in Broward County, and I do believe in
3 Miami-Dade County as well. So I don't want to
4 see -- you see us as the numbers. We are
5 people, too. We are here for building -- to
6 keep on building the future of the -- our
7 generations.

8 It is very important that in the new map
9 that we are going to see in the future, that
10 not only the majority or the minority will be
11 there. We want to see that everyone has each
12 one a position and deserve the best in that
13 community. Thank you very much.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much, sir.

16 Allan Barsky? Come on down, you are
17 recognized, and after Allan, we have Carlos
18 Verney, Jr., and Jaemi Levine. And also, if I
19 could, I know we've got a large group over here
20 to the right of me. If we could, as many
21 people as we could get to grab a seat, it is
22 hard for people to get to and from the restroom
23 and to make their way, so we would like to
24 clear that out as much as possible, and we're
25 back to you, Allan, so you are recognized, sir.

1 MR. BARSKY: Thank you. Allan Barsky, I
2 am a registered voter in the districts of
3 Senator Bogdanoff and Representative Moraitis.
4 We have heard a lot about fair districting
5 tonight, so I am not going to repeat all of the
6 things that people have said. We may disagree
7 somewhat on what fairness actually means in
8 this effort, but, you know, have any of you
9 received anything, any comments, from any
10 member of -- any person in Florida saying that
11 we want -- we want you to delay the process,
12 we'd like you to have lots of lawsuits, we'd
13 like you to spend lots of money on lawsuits,
14 we'd like you to gerrymander in favor of
15 incumbents? I don't think you have heard any
16 of those things. And as someone two speakers
17 ahead of me had mentioned, there is a real
18 concern about lawsuits. You know, even if
19 there is a decision on redistricting in
20 January, how many months is it going to take
21 until it goes through the court review
22 processes and the federal review process? And
23 we have primaries that are supposed to take
24 place next -- next August. I just don't see
25 how all of this is going to be done.

1 So what I am asking for is, you know,
2 whatever efforts you can, not just have fair
3 districts, but to have court-proof districts,
4 have your map in such good shape and have both
5 sides and all of your colleagues and all of
6 your supporters behind these maps so strongly
7 that we are not going to be fighting court
8 cases right up to and even after the primaries
9 and the major elections. I fear that we are
10 going to be again a laughingstock. We are
11 supposed to be, you know, a light unto the
12 nations in terms of our electoral process and
13 democracy, and it is really up to you to
14 prevent us from being embarrassed.

15 Thank you very much for all your efforts.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much.

18 Next up, Carlos Verney, followed by Jaemi
19 Levine and John Ziegler.

20 MR. VERNEY: Good evening, Legislators. I
21 reside in District 96 and also Congressional
22 District 19. Congressional District 19 extends
23 from northwest Broward all the way up to
24 central Palm Beach. Now, District 96 is a more
25 compact district, except for the southern part

1 of that district that encompasses cities where
2 there's only five precincts in that district.

3 I would strongly urge you to -- that the
4 maps of these districts, whether they be
5 congressional, State Senate or State Rep, match
6 across the lines and not have the case what --
7 such as myself, where I live in District 96, in
8 Congressional District 19, that are not
9 compact, that stretch across county lines and
10 actually divide parts of certain cities like my
11 own Coral Springs into two, District 96 and
12 District 95. Thank you very much.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
14 sir.

15 Next up, Jaemi Levine, followed by John
16 Ziegler and Jose Lopez.

17 MS. LEVINE: Just take this down for the
18 short people.

19 Hi. Thank you all for being here. I am
20 having a lovely time at the pre-party. I
21 haven't seen anything that has been indicative
22 of an event. I am glad that you here and that
23 you want to visit with us, but I really would
24 appreciate it if next time you would bring some
25 maps that we could look at.

1 I seem to remember a commercial from the
2 '80s. It very much fits the situation. Ladies
3 and gentlemen, where is the beef?

4 MR. ZIEGLER: I am John Ziegler from
5 Plantation. First of all, I would like to
6 address Mr. Cerino's concerns about Amendments
7 5 and 6 conflicts, particularly with the shape
8 of Dania. I am familiar with Dania's shape,
9 and a lot of Dania's -- the boundaries of Dania
10 are influenced by Port Everglades, an
11 industrial zone. So I wouldn't be too
12 concerned about the shape of Dania.

13 I am concerned, though, about a couple of
14 the plans I saw over there, particularly the
15 Libby plans. I don't understand them. They
16 look like they are fracturing communities.
17 There's a lot of gerrymandering going on with
18 those -- with that -- those particular plans,
19 there is a lack of contiguousness and
20 compactness, and I don't see where Amendments 5
21 and 6 are even paid attention to with
22 Mr. Libby's plans.

23 Anyway, I want to reiterate, don't
24 splinter communities, don't delay the process,
25 have the maps ready by the fall for public

1 review. Don't blind-side us with eleventh-hour
2 maps. We need -- and if you do, we need an
3 additional set of hearings quickly. Don't use
4 these hearings as a rubber stamp for
5 last-minute gerrymandering and playing out the
6 clock, which only favors incumbents.

7 Thank you very much for this chance to
8 speak with you. Thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

10 Next up, Jose Lopez, followed by Nicholas
11 Steffens and Robert Muniz.

12 Mr. Lopez? Okay, I don't see Mr. Lopez.
13 We will put him to the side and move on to
14 Nicholas. After Nicholas, we have Robert
15 Muniz, and after Robert, we have Alice Levy.

16 You are recognized, sir.

17 MR. STEFFENS: Thank you very much.

18 Again, since we don't have old maps to
19 talk about, I just want to talk about the maps
20 we have now and their effect on Broward County.
21 There are some cities that are so gerrymandered
22 that I feel genuinely bad for those residents.
23 I am fortunate to live in Parkland, which is in
24 District 97, and while it was discussed
25 previously, Parkland is in Representative

1 Kiar's district, and he lives in Davie, in
2 Cooper City, and for those of you not familiar,
3 those areas, while contiguous by design through
4 the Everglades, are not really naturally
5 contiguous through people, so to speak.
6 Fortunately, Representative Kiar is a hard
7 worker and we see him all the time in Parkland,
8 in northern Coral Springs, so I have no
9 complaints. But if we had a lazier legislator,
10 I would have many more complaints, I am
11 certain.

12 But we have cities like Plantation with
13 five House members and Miramar with five House
14 members, Sunrise and Deerfield Beach and
15 Pembroke Pines with four House members, and
16 then we have the City of North Lauderdale,
17 which has 41,000 residents and it has four
18 House members. That is not acceptable anymore.
19 In the past, you were able to get away with
20 that, and I understand why you did that, but
21 that is not going to pass muster anymore.
22 These districts, especially a city like North
23 Lauderdale with 41,000 people in it, should be
24 in one district. A city like the city I live
25 in, Parkland, which is a relatively small

1 district, should be in one district, and it
2 should be with Coral Springs, which is just to
3 our north and we share many of the same
4 schools, we go to the same hospitals, we have
5 the same community, we go to the same Chambers
6 of Commerce, those types of things that bind
7 those communities. While the people in Davie
8 and Cooper City and Weston are very nice
9 people, in Parkland, I don't have a whole lot
10 in common with them, I don't go to the same
11 schools, we don't do a lot of the same things,
12 because we are geographically disbursed.

13 So I hope that in the future you will take
14 a look at that and really abide by these Fair
15 Districts. Although I am very much afraid that
16 this is what some people have referred to as a
17 dog and pony show, that this -- that you wanted
18 the answers before the questions, or the
19 questions before the answers. In my opinion,
20 this is just going to go in a binder so you can
21 send it to the Supreme Court and say, "Hey, we
22 really tried, we went out there and spoke to a
23 lot of people and took a lot of input, and this
24 is what we got," and that is not going to pass
25 muster if the maps you produce do not comply

1 with Fair Districts. So I hope that you do
2 that, that you look at the cities and the
3 communities of interest, keep them together,
4 and let's avoid a court fight, expensive court
5 fight that this state cannot afford, and we can
6 have these maps done on time and then people
7 can run in the next election. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

9 Next up, Robert Muniz. Robert? Raise
10 your hand if you are here, Robert. Okay,
11 Robert I don't think is here right now.

12 After Robert, we had Alice Levy.
13 Ms. Levy, you are here, and following Ms. Levy,
14 we have Margaret Delmont-Sanchez and then John
15 Voss.

16 You are recognized, ma'am.

17 MS. LEVY: Good evening. I, like everyone
18 in this room, am dearly committed to the
19 democratic process. I, like many people here,
20 am a transplant. Twenty-four years ago, I
21 moved to what I thought was a sleepy, small
22 community. It was a choice I made to invest in
23 a new homestead, a new community, a sharing of
24 aspirations, joys, difficulties, successes.

25 Over the 24 years, this has involved a

1 determination to meet, accept, celebrate an
2 expanding and enriching diversity. I embrace
3 my community's diverse cultures, their needs
4 and their talents. So should my government.

5 The U.S. Census and its sequelae,
6 redistricting, are tantamount to the democratic
7 process. These events should assure that we as
8 a nation, we as a state, ensure that not only
9 are all our citizens represented, but they are
10 guaranteed a loud and confident and equal voice
11 in our governance.

12 Floridians have spoken, clearly spoken,
13 with a 63 percent passage of Amendment 5 and 6.
14 It is now well past time that our state take
15 action. Citizens need to be supplied with
16 probable district maps. Citizens need
17 something concrete to evaluate. Citizens need
18 assurance that viable candidates have an
19 opportunity to identify districts, raise funds
20 and introduce themselves to their voting
21 public.

22 I have read in the guidance that the
23 committee has put out that the discussion
24 should not show an intent to favor or disfavor
25 an incumbent or party. As an aside, all of you

1 are incumbents and may feel under attack
2 tonight.

3 I must say as past President of the League
4 of Women Voters, I have worked with and spent
5 time with many in my delegation. I respect and
6 like them all, and I appreciate what they do
7 for our communities.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Levy, I
9 am going to have to ask you to wrap it up, we
10 are getting at the end there.

11 MS. LEVY: I was intrigued on the emphasis
12 about favoring and disfavoring, that they used
13 the word "intent." I want to make sure that
14 not by sense of omission that the intent to
15 favor occurs, and that is going to occur if we
16 continue to delay these hearings and map
17 drawings. We need to go forward. October 3rd
18 has been mentioned repeatedly. I implore you
19 to do that. Five and 6 have been reviewed by
20 the Supreme Court. That was mandated because
21 Florida has a history of disenfranchising
22 voters. We don't want to be known for that.
23 Let's step forward, let's draw our maps, let's
24 show the nation that we enfranchise our voters.
25 Thank you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

2 Next up, Ms. Margaret Delmont-Sanchez,
3 followed by John Voss and Norm Grad, I may be
4 saying that wrong, but Norm Grad.

5 You are recognized.

6 MS. DELMONT-SANCHEZ: Good evening. I am
7 Margaret Delmont-Sanchez, resident of Broward
8 County since early 1970s. I grew up here, and
9 I have experienced the growth of the Hispanic
10 community. I still remember when we only had
11 one building in downtown Ft. Lauderdale and you
12 couldn't go any farther than University Drive.

13 Thank you so much, members of the
14 Legislature, for making this time to hear the
15 facts. I have served my community without
16 thinking about ethnic backgrounds or any types
17 of population. One of the first ones to impel
18 Latin women, empower Latin women, in the
19 southwest area of Broward County, even though I
20 live in Pompano, and it is a ten-year
21 organization which educates women and their
22 families about the U.S. culture, the health and
23 the financial systems in the U.S.
24 Consequently, we teach them how to contribute
25 back into the community, as we are socially

1 responsible, as we live in this country that
2 gives many to us, we are responsible to give
3 back. I am also former Vice-President and
4 Chief Development Officer for Hispanic Unity of
5 Florida in the past ten years, and today I
6 serve as one of the Directors of the National
7 U.S. Venezuelan-American Chamber of Commerce,
8 and volunteer to educate at Youth Leadership
9 Broward. I have served previously and
10 volunteered in numerous organizations, and as I
11 said, I did not look at ethnic or any type of
12 population to serve my community.

13 Today I am here, because since we will be
14 impacted by the redistricting. Note that the
15 question is and knowing how do we make it work.
16 Hispanic population continues to grow.

17 One out of every four people in Broward
18 County is Hispanic, as I am Hispanic-American.
19 Twenty-five percent of the population in
20 Broward County is Hispanic. One out of five
21 people in West Palm Beach is Hispanic. And if
22 we truly say that we are Americans, we have the
23 responsibility to bring everybody together.

24 How do we make more Hispanic elected
25 officials in our system? How do we work

1 together --

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Sanchez,
3 I am going to have to ask you to wrap it up. I
4 apologize for interrupting.

5 MS. DELMONT-SANCHEZ: Let's make it
6 all-inclusive for everyone, teach our
7 generation -- our new generation and kids in
8 this society. Just wanted to make a point that
9 out of the 458,247 Hispanics from which all of
10 those are over 18 years of age here in Broward
11 County. So let's think about it. Florida is
12 the top five states of the fastest Hispanic
13 growth in the U.S. So include us, make us
14 participate, show us how we can make a
15 difference and get us involved. Reflect our
16 growing population and its need. We are great
17 consumers and we also pay our taxes. Thank you
18 very much.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
20 very much.

21 Ladies and gentlemen, we are now to John
22 Voss. This is our 33rd speaker. We have 80
23 speakers so far, and growing. So, please, I do
24 not want to be rude, but at the same time, I
25 just want to make sure that -- let's see, our

1 81st speaker is Nathaniel Wilkerson. I want to
2 make sure Nathaniel gets an opportunity to
3 speak, so let's try to be quick.

4 Mr. Voss? Okay, well, that is quick, too.
5 Mr. Voss is not here. Next up we have Norm
6 Grad. I hope I am saying that right. Norm? I
7 can't read the third letter, I am sure it is my
8 eyes, but --

9 MR. GRAD: Thank you for coming to Broward
10 County.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thanks for
12 being here. After Norm, we've got Kathy
13 Aterno, and after Kathy, we have former
14 Congressman Ron Klein.

15 You are recognized.

16 MR. GRAD: Right, okay, Norman Grad,
17 right. Listen, I have been in Broward County
18 35 years, and I am going to mention two
19 political names, because I know this should not
20 be partisan. We don't care about partisanship,
21 right? Right. I am going to mention -- I
22 don't know how many old people -- elder
23 statesmen we have here. I am going to mention
24 Dempsey Barron. Hands, anybody remember him at
25 this table? Oh, okay, sure. Were you born,

1 Evan? Okay, all right, Dempsey Barron. How
2 about -- in Broward County, how about John
3 Lamello, hands? Oh, okay, those were the days,
4 right?

5 Okay. Listen, get on with -- I appreciate
6 what you are doing. Thanks for coming to
7 Broward County. I firmly believe that at I-4
8 we should have a north Florida and a south
9 Florida. Perry wanted to do it in Texas.
10 Maybe when he becomes President, he can do it,
11 all right, but that is what I honestly believe.
12 We have a two-state situation here, and that is
13 what we are going to have to live with. So
14 let's get through this, do it, and we
15 appreciate you all coming down here. I know
16 you had to pay for it out of your pockets,
17 okay. And then let's get to the courts, let
18 the courts decide. Hopefully, they will do the
19 right thing. And to quote our House of
20 Representatives in Washington, I am watching
21 C-PAN, you are going to love this, "I reserve
22 the balance of my time."

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
24 Norm. Bonus points for Norm.

25 Next up, Kathy Aterno, who is coming up,

1 and then we've got Mr. Ron Klein, following,
2 Randy Fleischer.

3 Kathy, thank you for being here. You are
4 recognized.

5 MS. ATERNO: Thank you very much. I won't
6 repeat what a lot of speakers said before me.
7 What I brought here is obviously the existing
8 congressional district map. I am sure it sat
9 on the back of my wall with all of your maps
10 for the past eight years, and I look forward to
11 getting a new one.

12 I came here because I was hoping that you
13 would provide maps for us to comment on, and it
14 is unfortunate, because we all know if anyone,
15 20 percent of the Legislature sitting before
16 us, you all know what your districts look like.
17 You know that streets that are cut in half, you
18 know that communities are divided, and I
19 believe with all the modeling, and you probably
20 all have done your individual maps already for
21 your future districts, I am just asking you to
22 expedite the process, put maps out there
23 seriously for public input this fall. I am
24 concerned about the timeline, and particularly
25 what this will have the impact on the Divisions

1 of Elections in the various counties, and
2 jamming them running into the summer of next
3 year would impact getting out absentee ballots,
4 and those individuals that are impacted are
5 seniors since -- our service people abroad,
6 people that can't, students and everything
7 else. So please move forward. Give us this
8 fall some serious maps.

9 Also, please don't make us all have to go
10 to Tallahassee. It is not as if it is next
11 door for a lot of people in south Florida.
12 Provide us another opportunity for real input.
13 Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much.

16 Next up we have former Congressman Ron
17 Klein. Thank you for being here, sir, and for
18 your service to our state and our country. You
19 are recognized.

20 MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
21 Thank you. It is great to be here. Beautiful
22 blue tie, Mr. Gaetz, Senator Gaetz, nice to see
23 everyone. A lot of friends up here, and it is
24 wonderful to see everyone, and thank you for
25 your service of doing this.

1 Ten years ago, I was in your shoes and in
2 your seats, and I ran around the state like you
3 did, so thank you for taking the time to do it.
4 It is a tough job. We all know there are some
5 new rules in place this time around. I happen
6 to remember ten years ago, one of the
7 newspapers in Florida said that it looked like
8 the maps that were drawn as approved by the
9 Supreme Court, because it was very limited
10 guidance, looked like they were drawn by a
11 drunk monkey. That's what it said. That sort
12 of left an impression on me. If you think
13 about the map that you just saw a minute ago,
14 certainly the districts that I served and many
15 of you serve in really are doing exactly what
16 the people here said, they divided up
17 communities. And they did it in a way which
18 has really diluted the impact of the
19 communities coming together.

20 Now, I think it is very important that you
21 talk about the fact that we now have the
22 opportunity to do it in a positive way. I feel
23 like a little bit of a historian here, because
24 the term limits, they are only a handful of you
25 that were actually in the Legislature ten years

1 ago. So it is really a small number of people.
2 But certainly we all know that what you came
3 here with today and what the opportunities to
4 make it better are something that can
5 acknowledge that there are cities and counties
6 and geographic lines that can be honored to the
7 best that we can do.

8 We also know that the notion of when you
9 have a significant number of seats that are
10 either drawn hard Republican or hard Democrat,
11 as most of the districts in the state are, that
12 disenfranchises a whole lot of people. The
13 first time I ran for State House, there was no
14 Republican -- I was a Democrat. There were no
15 Republicans that ran at all. So the entire
16 Republican community in that district never got
17 a chance to vote for four years, because there
18 was nobody running. It is the same thing on
19 the other side when Republicans have total
20 control of the district. That is not what is
21 in the best interest of this state. We want
22 good, quality people to run from whatever
23 background and have that competition.

24 It's already been talked about, about the
25 timeline, and I want to suggest a couple of

1 things. Number one, having been through this
2 before, the notion of coming forward is fine,
3 and listening, that is great, but also the
4 notion of dragging this thing out, because
5 there will be court challenges all the way
6 until June or maybe even longer.

7 When I ran in 1992, I started running a
8 year ahead of time in a district that I thought
9 was going to be what was the 89th district. It
10 didn't even get resolved until July of that
11 following year, and the primary was in the end
12 of August. Now, that is not good for the
13 process, it is not good for the community, not
14 to know where you are running, it is not good
15 to run a campaign that way. Most importantly,
16 the constituents, these are the people that we
17 all answer to, did not have a chance to really
18 even get involved in that campaign.

19 So the notion that you have already heard,
20 I am not going to repeat it, of moving it all
21 up, you have plenty of time after you complete
22 this process to get these maps out there, go
23 through the whole process. If you can do some
24 more hearings around the state, I think that
25 would be useful, but give the public plenty of

1 time. I know there were some comments early on
2 about two or three days before voting. I hope
3 you are not -- that is not the consideration.
4 What you need are weeks and maybe even a couple
5 months.

6 The other thing is with the congressional
7 districts, folks, the Constitution does not
8 speak to that same timeline on the Legislature.
9 You could actually get to the congressional
10 seats very quickly and move that along so at
11 least as the members of Congress are running,
12 wherever they are running from, they will have
13 an opportunity and the public will know what
14 those -- what those timeframes are.

15 So, in summary, I think that you do have a
16 great opportunity, obviously, to get it right.
17 Your integrity, the legitimacy of the process
18 and the future of our state really are at stake
19 here. And I know that you want to get it
20 right, and the constituents, the citizens of
21 Florida really want you to get it right so they
22 can have more confidence in the work that you
23 do in Tallahassee and the work in Washington.
24 Whether you are a Democrat, Republican or
25 Independent, everyone should know that their

1 vote counts. Thank you very much.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
3 very much, sir.

4 Next up we have Randy Fleischer with the
5 Broward County Executive Committee, Democratic
6 Executive Committee, followed by Lon Clay Hill
7 and Alanna Mersinger.

8 MR. FLEISCHER: Thank you. It is an honor
9 to follow Ron Klein. I know that while Ron was
10 representing our people, Florida was known as
11 the Sunshine State. It is even in the State
12 Constitution, government in the sunshine. But
13 with all due respect, I fear that we no longer
14 live in the Sunshine State. We live in a
15 fascist state, a state that has been bought and
16 paid for, and the Governor acts like he owns
17 the state --

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sir, we are
19 not here to talk about the Governor or any
20 political philosophy. If you want to talk
21 about redistricting, we will talk about that.

22 MR. FLEISCHER: Well, I am concerned -- I
23 will tell you, Mr. Chairman, I am concerned
24 that those supporting it have no interest in
25 Government in the Sunshine, that people are

1 hiding like cockroaches, waiting until the end
2 to foist their maps on us. There is no
3 interest in working for the people. They are
4 only interested in hiding their maps until the
5 last minute, denying Fair Districts, because
6 the majority is only interested in the
7 preservation of power.

8 Ten years ago, I testified at these
9 hearings on this campus, and I testified that
10 the majority was interested in drawing
11 districts for personal pleasure, and I compared
12 the majority to dogs pleasuring themselves,
13 dogs licking their balls because --

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sir, this is
15 completely inappropriate, I'm sorry --

16 MR. FLEISCHER: Ten years -- I will tell
17 you, ten years later --

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You are done.

19 MR. FLEISCHER: I'm not done.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you for
21 coming tonight. You are done. That is
22 inappropriate. That is inappropriate. Thanks
23 for coming.

24 Next up -- next up we have Lon Clay Hill,
25 followed by Alanna Mersinger and Marilyn

1 Soltanipour.

2 Ladies and gentlemen, again, we will give
3 everyone the time that they deserve, but we
4 just ask that you be respectful. A lot of
5 people came a long way to hear and be a part of
6 this process, and we would ask that you'd be
7 respectful.

8 Sir, you are recognized. Thank you very
9 much for being here.

10 DR. HILL: My name is Dr. Lon Clay Hill.
11 I will try to speak in some constitutional and
12 lofty terms, but I intend to have a bite. I
13 speak with a hillbilly accent, partly modified
14 by experience, but just because I am a
15 hillbilly doesn't mean I am dumb.

16 I have been in this state now for 22
17 years. I came to this campus when it was
18 called Broward Community College. My work, for
19 the most part, was teaching mathematical
20 science, and my dissertation was on
21 visualization, because it turns out that deep
22 and abstract principles can sometimes be
23 understood with a few simple images.

24 So the first thing I have to say is acting
25 in all deliberate speed, you have an obligation

1 to make the visual messaging debate begin.

2 Now, other than my strong support for most
3 but not all of what's been said today, I have
4 only two things to offer. One is a deeper
5 perspective as -- it turns out I am a
6 descendant of John Hancock, but I learned
7 recently that it is not the John Hancock of
8 Massachusetts, but be that as it may, our
9 country has had its debates, and these debates
10 have revolved around voting, voting for women,
11 voting for the descendants of slaves. I
12 actually was fortunate enough to have my first
13 vote cast for John Kennedy in 1960, because in
14 Kentucky, we were ahead of the curve for
15 18-year-olds.

16 Now we are in another wave that is coming.
17 It is probably not the biggest, but I want a
18 meaningful vote. I don't want my vote
19 distorted by the interest of an incumbent.
20 Now, to be --

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Hill, I
22 need you to wrap it up for me.

23 DR. HILL: Yes, it will get there, but in
24 any case --

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: It needs to

1 get there, please. Thank you.

2 DR. HILL: Yes, you want to listen, listen
3 good.

4 The incumbent, if he or she does a good
5 job, has a natural advantage, and you need no
6 other.

7 Secondly, the personal issue, when I came
8 back from the summer of 1964 when I had been
9 working in some voter registration in a sister
10 southern state, I had, it turns out, my last
11 truly meaningful discussion with my
12 grandfather, and anyone who wants to talk, I
13 can talk 30 minutes about things that I am very
14 glad my grandfather did, but, unfortunately, my
15 grandfather in really the last significant
16 conversation with me, instead of being glad
17 that I thought the Constitution should apply to
18 all Americans, said he was worried that I
19 will -- and I will change the language -- that
20 I might marry a colored gal. Now, each --

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Hill, I
22 need you to wrap it up.

23 DR. HILL: It is a sentence or two. Each
24 of us has a history, and we will remember it
25 for the totality of what we do. I am not proud

1 of that part of my grandfather's history, and
2 you are choosing now how you will be remembered
3 and not just in the press of the day. Thank
4 you very much.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
6 sir.

7 Alanna Mersinger. After Alanna, we have
8 -- Alanna, I apologize, Alanna Mersinger, and
9 following Alanna, we have Marilyn --

10 MS. SOLTANIPOUR: Soltanipour.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Soltanipour,
12 thank you very much, and then we have Bob and
13 Carolyn Kinnard. You are recognized, ma'am.

14 MS. MERSINGER: Hi. Welcome to my
15 friends. It says up there to tell us your
16 story, so I will do the quick story. I won't
17 be long, sir, I swear.

18 I came to the last redistricting and I
19 said, "Please make it contiguous, compact, and
20 communities of interest together." So my city,
21 the fabulous City of Miramar, has five
22 Representatives and three Senators, because we
23 are cut up like a little jigsaw. Now, my
24 Representative, who is a lovely man, but he
25 lives in Collier County. I don't. In between

1 myself and my Representative is 110 miles and
2 about 18 alligators. Why? What do I have in
3 common with these alligators? Nothing.

4 All I am asking for is this time, when you
5 do it, don't take my power and disburse it.
6 You have taken the power of Miramar where we
7 can really not have an impact on any of these
8 races. We are almost a side bar. And give us
9 back our power. We are entitled to our power.
10 This is a democracy, I want a republic, let me
11 have my power back and my republic. Thank you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
13 very much. And thank you for teaching me how
14 to say Ms. Soltanipour's name, who is next, and
15 following her, we have Bob and Carolyn Kinnard
16 and then Edward Leuchs.

17 You are recognized, ma'am.

18 MS. SOLTANIPOUR: Hi, I am Marilyn
19 Soltanipour. That was Alanna Mersinger.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, you are
21 next, right?

22 MS. SOLTANIPOUR: Yes.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I'm sorry.

24 MS. SOLTANIPOUR: I'm sorry.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Kinnard,

1 you are after that.

2 You are recognized, Marilyn.

3 MS. SOLTANIPOUR: My name is Marilyn
4 Soltanipour, and ten years ago I spoke before a
5 committee very much like this one. I came to
6 voice my concerns as to the way gerrymandering
7 only serves to suppress concerns common to
8 contiguous communities, cities and counties.
9 And it seems like lines are drawn to benefit a
10 particular party, a group or an individual, as
11 opposed to protecting the very democracy you
12 all swore to protect.

13 I am here because, frankly, I, like
14 Alanna, although I live in Pembroke Pines, I am
15 also tied to Collier County. We do not have
16 any power whatsoever. My community cannot be
17 heard, because as far as, you know, our numbers
18 are concerned, we would never get someone from
19 Pembroke Pines elected into that seat. The
20 numbers are not there.

21 I urge you when you draw maps, please give
22 voice to all citizens of Florida, not just one,
23 not just another, but everyone should have a
24 seat at the table. Thank you.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

1 Okay, Ms. Kinnard, now you are recognized,
2 and following Ms. Kinnard, we have Edward, I
3 believe it is Leuchs, I apologize if I am
4 saying that wrong, followed by Lenys Klumpp and
5 Peter Tingom.

6 You are recognized.

7 MS. KINNARD: Thank you very much. My
8 name is Carolyn Kinnard. My husband, Bob, and
9 I are citizens of the City of Ft. Lauderdale,
10 which has 32 to 37 distinct neighborhoods which
11 are bound by natural boundaries, such as
12 rivers, streets, highways and, of course, the
13 ocean.

14 About ten years ago or so, my husband and
15 I were precinct chair people, and as we were
16 walking our precinct, we found out that only
17 three-fourths of our Tarpon River neighborhood
18 was included. We had to get into the car, go
19 down to Davie Boulevard, drive up over the New
20 River into Shady Banks, and we found out that
21 we were only doing half of that neighborhood.

22 So when we are doing the redistricting, at
23 least in Ft. Lauderdale, we would like to keep
24 it to the neighborhoods. They are pretty much
25 similar, and we would appreciate that.

1 Also, in Ft. Lauderdale, those of you
2 people who are from Ft. Lauderdale, we are
3 going to have a city meeting Thursday,
4 August 25 at 5:30 in which we will do
5 redistricting for our city itself. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

7 Mr. Klumpp, you are recognized, sir, and
8 following Mr. Klumpp, we have Peter Tingom,
9 followed by Richard Hoyer.

10 MR. LEUCHS: Hi, I am Edward Leuchs.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I'm sorry,
12 did I skip you? You are right, I did, I'm
13 sorry about that, Edward. You are recognized.

14 MR. LEUCHS: No problem.

15 I want to address something that hasn't
16 been fully addressed, and that is the
17 relationship between the Fair Districts and the
18 Voting Rights Act. I will be very brief.

19 The one good thing that I would say about
20 the 2002 redistricting is it did preserve three
21 African-American congressional seats, which is
22 an important legacy to our state. It also
23 created three Hispanic majority districts.

24 I have looked at -- people say there are
25 no maps, but you can go on the Internet, and I

1 have looked at partisan Republican maps and
2 partisan Democratic maps, and I am pleased that
3 both maps show a new Hispanic majority seat.
4 So both Republicans and Democrats seem to be in
5 agreement that there is a new Hispanic majority
6 seat in Orlando and Orange County. And that is
7 a good thing, I think that is good for our
8 state.

9 I am disappointed to see that both
10 Republican maps and Democratic maps are
11 eliminating Corrine Brown's seat, the Third
12 District in Jacksonville.

13 I have come up with my own maps, I don't
14 know who I should give them to, but it is clear
15 to me as a -- I am a geographer, a former
16 geography teacher, land use planner for 19
17 years, certified by the AICP as a mapmaker
18 who's worked all my life with maps and followed
19 congressional districts as a hobby. I can
20 assure you, you can create a close to
21 50 percent African-American district going from
22 Jacksonville, only -- only splitting up Duval
23 County, including Baker, Columbia, Madison,
24 Jefferson, Leon, Gadsden County, which is
25 60 percent African-American, and Alachua

1 County. I don't know why this isn't being
2 contemplated. That is not a violation of Fair
3 Districts, it's whole counties. They are all
4 contiguous, they are all along the border with
5 Georgia.

6 So my point is I don't see any need to
7 reduce our African-American delegation due to
8 Fair Districts.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
10 sir. We will have staff -- you can give it to
11 staff right here -- right there.

12 Next we have Lenys Klumpp. Thank you.
13 I'm sorry, I am probably not saying that right,
14 I apologize.

15 MS. KLUMPP: No, you have. Thank you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay, good.
17 And after Ms. Klumpp, we've got Peter Tingom
18 and Richard Hoyer.

19 You are recognized.

20 MS. KLUMPP: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
21 members of the committee. I am Lenys Klumpp,
22 and I have lived in Davie for eight years now.

23 First I want to thank you for the
24 opportunity to speak here, and for you coming
25 out here and not drawing the lines before you

1 have received public testimony, enough of it.

2 I am a Hispanic in this community. I was
3 born and raised in the United States, but come
4 from Cuban decent. And where I understand the
5 concerns of my colleagues, my friends, my
6 neighbors, it concerns me that we will limit,
7 if not cripple, the ability for minorities,
8 including Hispanics, to participate in this
9 process. And I won't give you a long story to
10 tell you my story, but I have lived abroad and
11 I have witnessed the inability of minorities
12 living abroad not being able to represent their
13 beliefs, their groups, and it has been
14 devastating, and I think that I am proud of my
15 country and my community for being able to send
16 members that represent their communities. And
17 I hope that as you take a look, you keep in
18 mind that -- I understand the points that the
19 others have made, but I disagree in that I
20 think that you will hurt minorities if you
21 don't keep in mind these lines and how you draw
22 them. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much.

25 Peter, you are recognized, followed by

1 Richard Hoyer and Henry Kelley.

2 MR. TINGOM: Thank you. My name is Pete
3 Tingom, I am an elected city councilman, City
4 of Plantation. How many people up there
5 represent Plantation? One, two, three, four,
6 five, six, seven.

7 We are divided because of the way the
8 lines are drawn. And we are a small, compact
9 community of about 86,000 people, and we would
10 like the Legislature to respect that.

11 I would like to say just a few principles.
12 Number one, accelerate the process, accelerate
13 the process and get things to people soon
14 enough so that we won't be tied up in litigious
15 acts in June and July and August.

16 Number two, avoid spending unnecessary
17 taxpayer dollars.

18 Number three, accelerate the process.

19 Number four, try to reason without having
20 backroom meetings where you draw your
21 districts. If you don't do this, we will be in
22 the same situation as many speakers have said
23 ten years from now when we redistrict again.

24 We would like to be represented in a
25 close, compact, fairly small city of 86,000

1 people, and I hope that you can accelerate this
2 process -- get the message? -- so that we do
3 have things to look at, we can look ahead to
4 selecting our Representatives.

5 And I will close with a small quote from a
6 British Lord Acton: "Absolute power tends to
7 corrupt absolutely." Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
9 sir.

10 Next up we have Richard Hoye with Broward
11 Young Democrats. I'm sorry if I am saying that
12 wrong, man.

13 MR. HOYE: Yes, sir, you are.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay. What
15 is your name? We'll at least get it out once
16 that is right.

17 MR. HOYE: It is pronounced Hoye.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Hoye, I'm
19 sorry. Okay. I think I did say that once, but
20 I messed it up.

21 You are recognized, and then we've got
22 Henry Kelley and Ana Valladares.

23 MR. HOYE: Thank you all for coming out
24 tonight. I will be brief, but necessarily
25 redundant.

1 The real discussion cannot begin until we
2 have an idea as to what the actual maps
3 resemble in order to ensure compliance with
4 standards as mandated by the Justice
5 Department. Please present the maps as soon as
6 possible so that the proposed plan can be
7 properly vetted by the public. The money that
8 has been set aside to conduct these hearings
9 pose ridiculous legal challenges to the will of
10 the voters can be better utilized by further
11 funding public education, jobs initiatives and
12 generally improving the lives of those that
13 cannot help themselves.

14 Finally, I ask that you be diligent in
15 drawing fair districts so that they are truly
16 representative of the population. Thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
18 Thank you, Mr. Hoye.

19 Next up we've got Henry Kelley, followed
20 by Ana Valladares and then Michael Francis.

21 And, Mr. Kelley, I believe you have a map
22 that you have brought with us that you are
23 going to be pointing to over here to our left
24 and the audience's right, is that correct, sir?

25 MR. KELLEY: Yes. Thank you,

1 Mr. Chairman.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: If we could
3 get that pulled up.

4 MR. KELLEY: As he is pulling it up, I
5 will use a moment of my time to comment. I was
6 at the meeting earlier today in Boca Raton, and
7 I was very disappointed to hear Representative
8 Waldman quoted as saying that these hearings
9 are a joke. I notice he is not here this
10 evening. I took my work seriously in creating
11 the maps that I've submitted to the committee,
12 and I am very disappointed to have my work
13 characterized as a joke.

14 Secondly, the League of Women Voters asked
15 a trick question to a lot of Representatives.
16 They asked who wanted to vote on the first week
17 in January met in session, and a number of the
18 committee members raised their hands. So I say
19 to you, if I've had the time to create maps in
20 my spare time, where are your maps? And I
21 direct that directly to the people who raised
22 their hands to say they would vote the first
23 week in January. Show us your maps and show us
24 what your agenda is so we can comment on it.

25 Now, having said that, I believe this is

1 map number four. I wrote and drew two
2 congressional maps, and Representative Klein
3 made some spot-on comments that I would agree
4 with. This map I drew -- it is hard to see on
5 here, but I took the existing U.S.
6 Congressional District 3, which is labeled
7 "number one" on this one because of the way a
8 federal judge has determined it, that is where
9 we have to start with. And I would say if you
10 look in the central Florida area and all the
11 way down, you will see the counties and the
12 districts are fractured. They are not nice,
13 neat and contiguous -- they are contiguous, but
14 they are not whole counties.

15 The other map that I've drawn that is
16 sitting over there, map number five, over
17 80 percent of the counties in the state of
18 Florida I managed to fit whole counties into my
19 congressional districts. But when you start
20 with that majority-minority district, it
21 affects nearly seven million Floridians in the
22 adjoining counties around it. And I say I
23 agree with the Fair Districts voters. We voted
24 for tight, compact districts, and when we have
25 to start with a court-ordered district that

1 supports one special interest group, it affects
2 millions of Floridians, and ladies and
3 gentlemen of the committee, that is unfair, and
4 I ask that you stand up for states' rights
5 under the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution.
6 The voters of Florida have spoken for tight,
7 compact, contiguous districts, and that is
8 what, you know, the -- I have gone through the
9 exercise of drawing the maps, I am familiar
10 with the software. Despite what people have
11 said, I found the software very easy to use.
12 There is a five-minute YouTube video that makes
13 it very understandable, and I think that -- you
14 know, as I said, I will be glad, in the balance
15 of my time tomorrow, Representative
16 Weatherford, because I will see you in Miami,
17 that I have additional comments about some of
18 the methodology that I went through to achieve
19 these maps, but this map represents everything
20 that is wrong when a federal court tells us
21 what a district has to look like. Thank you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
23 very much, Mr. Kelley.

24 Next up we've got Ana Valladares, followed
25 by Michael Francis and then Michael De Gruccio.

1 MS. VALLADARES: Good evening, my name is
2 Ana Valladares, and I am a resident of the City
3 of Weston in Broward County. I am a Hispanic
4 of Cuban decent and a U.S. citizen. I have
5 been a Broward County resident for 28 years,
6 and I have lived in the U.S. for almost 40
7 years. I am co-owner of two small businesses
8 based in Weston that provide jobs and services
9 through the design, architecture and
10 construction industry.

11 I want to thank the panel, the members of
12 the House and Senate here today, for allowing
13 us, the citizens of Broward, the opportunity to
14 hear our voices in regards to the redistricting
15 efforts for our Florida communities.

16 As an active, engaged member of my
17 community, and a child advocate, I have the
18 honor over the years of serving in and being
19 involved in numerous organizations, initiatives
20 and boards representing our community at large,
21 most recently as a Governor appointee to
22 Governor Bush and Governor Crist to the
23 Childrens' Services Council of Broward County.
24 In that capacity, I constantly remind -- I am
25 constantly reminded of the diversity of our

1 community and the many issues, needs and
2 services that all our Broward children and
3 families require.

4 However, I am here today as a member of
5 the Hispanic community to remind you the
6 Hispanic community in Broward is large, it is
7 spread throughout the county, and it is also
8 rich in diversity and a complex community, made
9 up of hard-working families, and our members
10 make significant contributions to our local
11 economy and the state. The Hispanic community
12 is an important, vibrant component of the
13 fabric of this community and of our beautiful
14 state of Florida, and is still growing.

15 Therefore, it is imperative that the
16 redistricting process meets the basic
17 objectives that define the Constitutional
18 Amendment 5 and 6 approved by 63 percent of
19 Florida voters in 2010. The new districts
20 should not be designed to further interests of
21 incumbents or political parties. We demand
22 that the districts are compact, contiguous,
23 mindful of city boundaries and mindful of the
24 rights of the minorities. We will be watching
25 with attention as you begin to draw the maps so

1 that you adhere to those standards set forth by
2 Amendment 5 and 6. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

4 Michael Francis is up next, and you are
5 recognized, sir, followed by Michael De
6 Gruccio, or De Gruccio, I apologize if I say
7 that wrong, and Cheryl Duckworth.

8 MR. FRANCIS: Hi. I want to thank you for
9 the opportunity to speak today, and I want to
10 add my voice to those who have called for an
11 acceleration of the process. I am having a
12 hard time understanding how delaying the
13 process helps any of you in your re-election
14 campaigns for next year, and I think that -- I
15 would like to see the maps set by October 3rd,
16 also to ask you that you do add statewide
17 hearings once maps are set so that those of us
18 down here in south Florida don't have to travel
19 to Tallahassee, and I thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
21 very much.

22 Michael? Michael is next. Following
23 Michael, we have Cheryl Duckworth and then
24 Joseph Wagner.

25 MR. DE GRUCCIO: Good evening. I thank

1 you for the time. I became a voter here in
2 1998, and my current district, House District
3 97, didn't exist. Parkland was always the
4 forgotten child. I think we were a part of
5 Palm Beach or just a forgotten annex to
6 Broward, and we had two State Representatives
7 at the time, Mr. Rayson and Mr. Ritter.
8 Luckily, the last legislative redistricting
9 combined our great city into one.
10 Unfortunately, the County hasn't done that yet.

11 But as we move forward, I would like to
12 see that. I understand everybody is very testy
13 and very upset with their own opinions here.
14 As the prior Hispanic, I would also like to see
15 some district like that, but I also understand
16 the complexity of that happening.

17 The other thing is, no matter where you
18 stand, Republican, Independent, Democrat, it is
19 just I see a rhetoric happening, and I hope
20 every part -- member of the committee, the
21 legislate and so forth, remember that it is the
22 will of the voters -- grant you, the voters
23 have voted for things like the pigs -- fetal
24 pigs and so forth, but I would really like for
25 the voters and the Representatives and Senators

1 to understand and not do the rhetoric. I read
2 in *The Miami Herald* under the blog that
3 Chairman Smith of the Florida Democratic Party
4 decided to start attacking his own previous
5 stance, saying that he wasn't involved, there
6 were no maps involved when he was a part of the
7 process. I know Chairman Bitner has sent
8 letters back and forth. I hope this process is
9 open and fair, and thank you and have a great
10 evening.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
12 very much. We appreciate your comments.

13 Cheryl Duckworth. Cheryl, thank you for
14 being her, you are recognized, followed by
15 Joseph Wagner and Alejandro Casas.

16 DR. DUCKWORTH: I thank you, good evening.
17 My name is Dr. Cheryl Duckworth, and I am happy
18 to teach international conflict resolution
19 right next door at Nova Southeastern, and I
20 think that there -- one of the things that you
21 teach when you teach international conflict
22 resolution is elections, elections monitoring,
23 and what constitutes an election being free and
24 fair. And, of course, we all know it is not
25 the people who cast the votes many times, it is

1 the people who count the votes. Perhaps no
2 state knows that better than Florida.

3 One of the things that can happen
4 socially, not just from a voting fairness
5 standpoint, but socially is serious, serious
6 conflict when people lose faith in the system.
7 And what I am hearing here tonight is that a
8 lot of people are beginning to lose faith in
9 the system.

10 We will be watching. Thank you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

12 Next up, Joseph Wagner. Joseph, are you
13 here, making your way down? Raise your hand.
14 If you are not, going once, going twice.

15 Okay. Moving forward to Alejandro Casas,
16 and following Alejandro, we'll have Matthew
17 Isbell and -- I will come back to that name.
18 You are recognized.

19 MR. CASAS: I would like to thank the
20 Legislators for organizing this open forums
21 where private citizens can express their views.
22 I realize this hearing is mostly about
23 redistricting the state of Florida, but I would
24 like to put in my two cents for Broward County.

25 My name is Alex Casas. I was born in

1 Cuba, and I came to this wonderful country when
2 I was ten years old, and I have been a
3 tax-paying U.S. citizen for over 50 years and I
4 wouldn't have it any other way. For the last
5 seven years, I have been living in the great
6 City of Miramar where I have been quite active
7 in the City's affairs as a Chairman of the
8 Economic Development Advisory Board, and now as
9 a member of the Budget Advisory Task Force.
10 What I'm trying to say is that I am what is
11 defined as a Hispanic, and I am also very much
12 involved in local civic affairs.

13 As per data from the 2010-2011 Census
14 Bureau, the number of persons of Hispanic or
15 Latino origin in Broward County is 25.1
16 percent. That is one quarter of the total
17 residents of Broward County. Again, as per
18 census data, as of 2007, owned businesses of
19 Hispanics make up about 22 percent of the total
20 firms in Broward County, and I am sure it is
21 much higher now in 2011.

22 The dynamics of the present district
23 boundaries in Broward County make it almost
24 impossible for elected officials to really
25 represent the present and ever-growing Hispanic

1 community.

2 In another thought, Broward County is
3 well-known for the voter apathy shown during
4 local elections. Most people choose not to
5 vote because they don't know or can't identify
6 with the candidates. Maybe, just maybe, the
7 voters could be more closely identified with
8 the candidate, perhaps share similar family
9 values, whatever those may be, or be very
10 familiar with events in the country where they
11 came from, whatever that may be, then maybe,
12 just maybe, voters will become more
13 enthusiastic about participating in one of the
14 greatest freedoms the United States offers, the
15 freedom to vote.

16 I hereby ask the Legislature to take
17 seriously into consideration whatever proposal
18 is presented to them that would increase the
19 chances of Hispanics being voted into office.
20 It not only makes sense, it would be the right
21 thing to do. Thank you very much.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
23 Alejandro.

24 Next up, Matthew Isbell. Matthew, you are
25 recognized, followed by -- I think it is Elroy

1 John. I apologize if I am saying that wrong,
2 Elroy John, followed by Paul Fealk.

3 You are recognized. Good to see you
4 again.

5 MR. ISBELL: Hi, thank you. Yes, I am a
6 student, I currently am going to Florida State
7 University. I actually had the opportunity to
8 speak at these hearings back in -- I think it
9 was June or July when you guys started in
10 Tallahassee, and I am visiting family here now,
11 so I figured I would talk again.

12 I actually grew up in Broward County. I
13 lived here for 19 years until I went up to
14 college, living in Cooper City and Davie most
15 of my life.

16 And basically I want to talk about what a
17 lot of other people are talking about, which is
18 the issue of the way a lot of these
19 communities, Davie, Cooper City, Plantation,
20 Miramar, are divided across several different
21 districts, even specifically talking about
22 something like District 37, or 97, the one that
23 hits Davie, goes through the Everglades and
24 then goes up into Parkland in north Broward.

25 I think a good idea would be to make it

1 where any district -- yes, it is technically
2 compact through the Everglades, but it
3 shouldn't count as compact if it is going
4 through nothing but federally protected
5 wetlands that have literally zero population in
6 them. I should be able to walk across any
7 district that exists if I wanted to, just walk
8 across. Did anybody here walk across the
9 Everglades and get into Parkland? Not unless
10 you want to become alligator meat.

11 Basically we need to have districts that
12 are compact via population and not just through
13 saying, oh, well, it is compact via land. And
14 cities -- like Cooper City has 30,000 people in
15 it, Davie is like about 90,000, Plantation is
16 about 80,000 and so on. These are not big
17 communities, and these are communities that are
18 similar. Davie and Cooper City have almost no
19 real difference between them. I have lived
20 here all my life, and I can tell. Pembroke
21 Pines has no difference between us. There's no
22 difference between Davie, Pembroke Pines,
23 Cooper City or Plantation. They could be one
24 district, nice, little, square, rectangle style
25 district. They should be compact, and they

1 should -- you know, the Everglades, that's --
2 the Everglades has to be in some district, but
3 it shouldn't be some sort of connector.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Matthew, I am
5 going to need you to wrap it up for me.

6 MR. ISBELL: Sure, sure, no problem.

7 Just also the issues of things like we
8 know a lot of these districts right now are
9 gerrymandered. The Florida 22nd, which
10 stretches all the way from here to West Palm
11 Beach, looks like a freaking comb. It goes
12 along the coast and it eats in here, here or
13 here. It is not compact, and it just has to
14 change.

15 Just one last thing: Broward County voted
16 over 73 percent for Fair Districts. Only five
17 out of 700 precincts voted against it. That
18 says -- that is why we see everyone here saying
19 the same thing. We want them compact and we
20 need them compact now. Thank you very much.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

22 Elroy, did I stay that right?

23 MR. JOHN: Yes.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Elroy John,
25 all right, thank you very much. Thanks for

1 being here. Next up after Elroy, we have Paul
2 Fealk and then Angelo Castillo, Castillo who is
3 a commissioner from Pembroke Pines.

4 You are recognized, Paul -- or I mean you
5 are recognized, Elroy.

6 MR. JOHN: Elroy. Thank you for the
7 opportunity to speak.

8 I wanted to start by giving credit where
9 credit is due, because I think it is important
10 that you guys have had this meeting for us, but
11 I would say it's partial credit, because I
12 think it is just part of your responsibility to
13 us in this process. Your meeting is missing
14 some key elements. You are here ostensibly to
15 listen to what we have to say, and you look
16 like you are listening, but we really don't
17 know, because there's no back and forth,
18 there's no real discussion, there's no exchange
19 of ideas between -- there's no exchange of
20 ideas between the Representatives and the
21 represented. So we are left to assume that you
22 are going to go back and implement some of the
23 ideas that we're giving you here. We are
24 assuming that. You are asking us to buy what
25 you are selling, which is that you are going to

1 do what is right based on trust. I think that
2 is a big leap for a lot of us to take, as you
3 are hearing tonight.

4 So if you feel like you are getting beat
5 up on the same points, I hope you recognize
6 why. It is because we are frustrated, and we
7 are frustrated, and I don't think I am speaking
8 for myself only here based on what I have
9 heard, we are frustrated, we are frustrated
10 because this feels like we are being humored
11 more than we are really being listened to and
12 represented.

13 So I would call on you to do some of the
14 same things others are calling you to do.
15 Release your versions of the map early,
16 October, so that we have a chance to review
17 them, so that candidates have a chance to
18 review them and can really learn the issues
19 that they are going to be speaking to us about
20 when we have to vote for them next year. So
21 hopefully you will implement those ideas.
22 Thank you for your time.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
24 Elroy.

25 Paul, you are recognized.

1 Following Paul will be Angelo Castillo,
2 Commissioner from Pembroke Pines, and I believe
3 it is Caryl Hattan, Vice-Mayor from the town of
4 Davie. I hope I got that right.

5 You are recognized, sir.

6 MR. FEALK: Thank you. Senator Gaetz, I
7 believe in your opening remarks you said
8 something about a requirement that the
9 Legislature not propose maps until 2012. If I
10 heard that correctly, I just want to say I give
11 the Legislators credit for more intelligence
12 than you give yourself, because if you wanted
13 to propose maps, you could just call them
14 tentative maps, you could call them discussion
15 drafts. When you guys want to do something,
16 you usually find a way.

17 With that caveat, I want to associate
18 myself with the position of the Fair Districts
19 organization. I want to propose to you that in
20 a country and in a state where we really have
21 two viable parties, that political elections
22 are only truly democratic if we have electoral
23 democracy, and that means the districts are
24 drawn in a way to make it possible that either
25 side might win, not technically, but as a

1 practical matter. And when you do that, you
2 make the system really work. Ron Klein talked
3 about districts where they didn't even have an
4 opponent running. I am saying just because you
5 have an opponent running is not sufficient if
6 they don't have a meaningful chance to win.

7 Finally, I want to mention that most of
8 you probably decided to run for office with
9 some idealism and some belief that the public
10 interest is what you wanted to serve. You
11 probably are learning or have learned in office
12 that along with that belief, there are some
13 powerful interests and forces that come to work
14 upon you, and the need to be re-elected and the
15 need to run costly elections. And I would hope
16 that you will look at the long view of history
17 and stand up and be heard and put aside those
18 powerful interests and become a hero to the
19 people. Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

21 Angelo Castillo, Commissioner?

22 Commissioner, thank you for joining us. Thank
23 you for your public service.

24 And following Mr. Castillo, we have Caryl
25 Hattan, I hope I am saying that right, the

1 Vice-Mayor of the Town of Davie.

2 COMMISSIONER CASTILLO: Mr. Chairman,
3 members of the committee, thank you very much.
4 Welcome to Broward County. My name is Angelo
5 Castillo. I am a City Commissioner of Pembroke
6 Pines, Florida. It is the tenth-largest city
7 in the state. I want to thank all of you for
8 your service and for the difficult chore that
9 you have ahead of you. I know that this will
10 not be easy.

11 Many of the things that I wanted to say
12 have indeed been covered, and so I will very
13 quickly leave you with this thought, if I can:
14 Those of us who are privileged to serve in
15 elected positions do so in our democratic --
16 representative democracy, because the people
17 give to us not just the opportunity to serve
18 them, but they also give us their proxy. When
19 we become elected officials, we -- we vote on
20 their behalf, and that is a very, very high and
21 important duty to follow. Every once in a
22 while, the people tug at the leash of
23 government and they say, "We want it to heel at
24 this line," and that limits our authority.

25 Now, in a state where increasingly we see

1 Republicans and Democrats not getting along,
2 not finding a way to be statesmen, not just at
3 the state, but also at the national level,
4 there is one thing that we should be very, very
5 clear about. It is impossible in a state like
6 Florida to get a 63 percent agreement on any
7 one thing and not have Republicans, Democrats
8 and Independents supporting that thing. It is
9 just mathematically not possible. And so for
10 the Legislature to fail to address this issue
11 in the exact manner that the people of this
12 state have commanded you to address it would be
13 not just an affront to your responsibilities as
14 elected officials, but worse than that, it
15 would be an affront to every citizen of the
16 state of Florida.

17 I believe it is very, very important for
18 you to come as -- come back to us with a map or
19 some set of options that people can actually
20 look at and review and give you substantive
21 input as quickly as possible so that the task
22 before you can be achieved sooner rather than
23 later, so that the people have more rather than
24 less input into that decision-making, and I
25 urge you to do that on behalf of the good

1 people here in Broward County who are rooting
2 for the success, not just of Broward County and
3 the state of Florida, but also the United
4 States. Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
6 Commissioner.

7 Next up we have our Vice-Mayor from Davie.

8 VICE-MAYOR HATTAN: Yes, sir, good
9 evening.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mayor, thank
11 you very much for being here.

12 VICE-MAYOR HATTAN: I would like to
13 welcome you to the Town of Davie.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

15 VICE-MAYOR HATTAN: Senator Sobel, I have
16 to just make a quick correction, unfortunately.
17 "Caddyshack" was done at Rolling Hills in
18 Davie. "Caddyshack," the movie, was done at
19 Rolling Hills in Davie, our golf course. Just
20 a little correction. We don't want to give
21 Plantation credit for that, although they are
22 very nice.

23 Anyway, I am speaking here today as a
24 member of the Broward Teachers Union, and the
25 30,000 -- \$30 million that you set aside to

1 fight the citizens' directive to make fair
2 districts could have well been used for
3 education.

4 Secondly, gerrymandering. I have heard
5 that word so many times, and I looked it up,
6 and, of course, I waited and waited and waited,
7 so now it is not on here, but it had all kinds
8 -- the synonyms, look them up when you get a
9 chance. As a teacher to tell you,
10 gerrymandering is trade-off, it is -- I am
11 going to take the time to look it up, because
12 it was very well done, and I'm probably not
13 going to be able to find it right now, but --
14 dictionary, here we go. Sorry, gentlemen and
15 ladies. Anyway, I had it -- I was sitting
16 there so long with it, it just went off my
17 phone. Anyway, it has a lot of synonyms that
18 are not very pleasant to hear, not very good
19 things, and I've heard that all night about
20 gerrymandering.

21 My point is this: We can't go back. I
22 was here ten years ago in the theater when you
23 did the ten-year redistricting last year --
24 last ten years ago. And we can't go back. We
25 can't change what the Democrats did, what the

1 Republicans did. We can go forward, we must go
2 forward and you must do what you have been told
3 to do by the people of this state, your
4 constituents. They certainly gave you a
5 mandate to make fair districts, and that is
6 what they are expecting you to do, and
7 transparently, not behind closed doors, it
8 needs to be transparent.

9 The other thing I would like to suggest is
10 we can't get to Tallahassee. It is not easy
11 for us to get up to Tallahassee. It is
12 expensive, it is a big trip, a long trip to
13 drive. It's -- you know, my suggestion is that
14 you put out the maps and then you have
15 videoconferencing, allowing people like all the
16 people that are here tonight to come in and
17 give their testimony to you in Tallahassee.
18 With the technology we have today, there is no
19 need for us to have to travel to Tallahassee
20 when we have -- go to meetings, we have
21 videoconferencing. You could set it up. You
22 could be sitting right up in Tallahassee
23 listening to the same things, because we get no
24 feedback, so it is just a matter of listening.
25 We could give you our testimony there about

1 what we think of the maps that are drawn.

2 And thirdly and finally, please do it in a
3 most timely manner. It is very important that
4 you do the timeline and you push it up and do
5 what you've got to do. Thank you, and welcome
6 to Davie.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
8 Mayor.

9 Next up we have --

10 VICE-MAYOR HATTAN: I am Vice-Mayor.
11 Don't let the Mayor hear you call me Mayor.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Vice-Mayor,
13 all right. We don't want to get you in
14 trouble. Thank you for hosting us here in
15 Davie.

16 Next up we have Marsha Ellison, with the
17 NAACP, followed by Roosevelt Walters and then
18 Diego Martini.

19 Marsha, thank you for being here. You are
20 recognized.

21 MS. ELLISON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My
22 name is Marsha Ellison. I am President of Ft.
23 Lauderdale/Broward NAACP, and I'm also
24 representing the Florida State Conference
25 NAACP, and our position is the following: The

1 State of Florida should ensure transparency,
2 fairness and compliance with the Voting Rights
3 Act with equal protection. You should ensure
4 one person, one vote. You should redistrict in
5 a way that avoids minority vote dilution. You
6 should avoid drawing district lines so that the
7 minority population is over-concentrated or
8 packed into election districts.

9 You should also be careful to avoid
10 crackling or fracturing, drawing district lines
11 so that an area of concentrated minority
12 population is divided and spread among several
13 districts that are predominantly white. You
14 should also be careful to avoid stacking,
15 drawing district lines so that the large --
16 that a large population concentrated is
17 included with a large white population with the
18 purpose of or effect of depriving minority
19 voters of a voting majority.

20 We also respectfully request that you
21 avoid drawing plans that erode minority rights
22 relative to the status quo, that you avoid
23 creating retrogressive redistricting plans.

24 A key traditional redistricting principle
25 is respect to communities of interest. These

1 are defined by three characteristics: The
2 extent to which non-members identify members as
3 a distinct community, the extent to which
4 members identify themselves as a distinct
5 community and the extent to which members are
6 similarly affected by governmental action.
7 African-American citizens form one of the
8 strongest communities of interest in the state,
9 and the redistricting plans should have a
10 priority -- as a priority the fashioning of
11 districts that accord appropriate
12 representation to the communities of interest.

13 We are aware and request adherence to
14 redistricting principles outlined in Section 20
15 and 21 of the Florida Constitution. Districts
16 shall not be drawn with the intent --

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Ellison,
18 I am going to have to ask you to wrap it up.

19 MS. ELLISON: Yes, absolutely.

20 -- of denying or abridging the equal
21 opportunity of racial or language minorities to
22 participate in the political process or
23 diminish their ability to elect a
24 Representative of their choice. In addition,
25 districts should be compact and contiguous.

1 Map production by precinct and voter age
2 population -- in producing the data for the
3 maps, we ask that you include precinct and
4 district voting age population desegregated by
5 race and national origin. We ask that the data
6 also include voter age population of citizens
7 who can vote. And finally, we find the absence
8 of prospective maps at redistrict public
9 hearings very troubling. The ability to offer
10 substantive comments is severely diminished
11 without the presentation of maps at these
12 public halls.

13 We ask that an additional set of meetings
14 is established throughout the state in order to
15 allow for effective comment on the proposed
16 maps. Given the population of Broward County,
17 we question the establishment of one meeting in
18 Broward County. Multiple locations would
19 result in a more interactive process by
20 allowing more voices to be heard. Thank you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
22 very much, Ms. Ellison. And for those of you
23 -- if you have a script that you are reading
24 from, or prepared notes, and I know we are
25 trying to get it in two minutes and you are

1 having a tight time, feel free to turn those
2 over to us, or a copy of them. We will make
3 sure they are admitted into the record. We
4 want to make sure that all of your comments are
5 heard. So, Ms. Ellison, thank you very much.

6 Next up we've got Roosevelt Walters,
7 followed by Diego Martini, Lynn Simon and Carol
8 Tollefsen.

9 MR. WALTERS: I say good evening to the
10 committee, and thank you for being here, and I
11 am sure that you are not hearing anything here
12 that you have not already heard in other places
13 in the state or will hear as you travel around
14 the state, because I think all of us have a
15 common interest in making sure that good, right
16 and just things is done as we go through this
17 redistricting and reapportionment process.

18 Having stated that, I am not going to
19 testify. I am just simply going to put forth
20 some questions that I hope that you will
21 consider when you want to do the good, right
22 and just things when drawing these maps. And
23 that is, in an effort to redraw the districts
24 as the citizens have asked you to do, please
25 keep in mind the Voting Rights Act and Civil

1 Rights Act, because sometime when we are trying
2 so hard to follow our new directions, we forget
3 that we also had old directions, and the Civil
4 Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act is --
5 sometime is conflicting, maybe 5 and 6 is
6 conflicting with those acts. So we want to
7 make sure that you be aware of those laws that
8 we have to follow.

9 Secondly, if there is a conflict between
10 the Amendment 5 and 6, and Section 20 and 21 of
11 the Florida Constitution, which set of rules
12 will this committee use? And I will tell you,
13 I am -- I went to an all-black school, so you
14 don't expect me to be up there with most of
15 you, but I can read a little bit, and I know
16 they are conflicting languages in what you
17 would have to deal with when you are drawing
18 these lines.

19 And the last thing I want to say is, how
20 much of our money have you used, the House, to
21 fight us with? I have checked your websites,
22 and it is not there. So the next time you
23 update your website, I would ask that you
24 please put that amount up there so that we will
25 know how well you are spending our money to

1 fight us.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

3 Next up we have Diego Martini. After
4 Diego, we have Lynn Simon and Carol Tollefsen.

5 Diego, you are recognized for two minutes.
6 And just so everybody knows, it is 8:25 right
7 now. We've got to have a few minutes. There
8 have been some questions that have been asked
9 tonight by the audience. We are going to make
10 sure that Senator Gaetz has an opportunity to
11 address some of those questions while you are
12 still here, and we also want to give a few
13 minutes to members on the committee, so we are
14 going to keep going all the way up until about
15 8:45 or 8:50, and then we are going to move
16 into some comments from the committee.

17 But with that, Diego, you are recognized,
18 sir. Thanks for being here.

19 MR. MARTINI: Thank your, sir. Welcome,
20 and thank you for allowing me to speak.

21 The leadership in the Florida House and
22 Senate has committed itself to supporting
23 unscrupulous corporations over working class
24 people, undermining cultural participation and
25 education, and dividing our communities by

1 stigmatizing Hispanics regardless of their
2 legal status in the United States. Let's
3 counter this by continuing to build a more
4 inclusive, educated and just America. This is
5 what is great about America. People speaking
6 up, courage to stand up and say, "Value my
7 career, value my family."

8 Our congressional leaders are diluted as
9 far as knowing what makes this country great.
10 A strategically divided line to keep incumbents
11 in office is a form of diluted intelligence,
12 lack of cultural sophistication, and most of
13 all, inadequate common-sense thinking.

14 To your question, what I want to see in
15 these maps is justice. Millions of immigrants
16 -- millions immigrate to this country for the
17 promise of equal opportunity and justice,
18 justice that this country is responsible for
19 delivering to its citizens. I and all the
20 people behind me want to be represented justly.
21 Show us that you are capable of getting this
22 done, and not capable of spending the majority
23 of your time in office answering and making
24 calls to big corporate wealthy bulldogs.

25 You were sent to Tallahassee to do a job

1 for the working people of this state. Why is
2 that hard for you to understand that hassle and
3 -- why is it hard for you to understand that
4 basic principle? Let's see a greater
5 collective American good in action from here on
6 out. Let us start tonight. Thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
8 Diego.

9 Lynn Simon, you are up. Lynn, is that you
10 coming down? All right. We've got Lynn Simon
11 coming down, Carol Tollefsen, followed by
12 Stephanie Shimko, I believe. You are
13 recognized.

14 MS. SIMON: Hi, I am Lynn Simon. Just
15 really quick, I had heard maybe that you might
16 possibly be thinking of dissolving District 97,
17 and I just hope that you don't do that. We
18 have been together now for quite some time, and
19 I would like to see that District 97 stays
20 together. Thank you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
22 very much.

23 Carol Tollefsen, followed by Stephanie
24 Shimko and then Phil -- I believe it is Burg,
25 but I am not positive.

1 You are recognized, ma'am. Thanks for
2 being here.

3 MS. TOLLEFSEN: Good evening. I am a
4 life-long Florida resident and of southwest
5 Hallendale, I am a Democrat and I vote in every
6 single election, no matter how small. My area
7 is currently, I believe, District --
8 Congressional District 17, which is located
9 almost entirely in Miami-Dade. We are pretty
10 much ignored in our little slice of Hallendale.
11 The VA Hospital is in our district. I don't
12 even know where that is.

13 Formerly I was in a congressional district
14 mostly in Broward. We were represented by a
15 Republican, E. Clay Shaw. His constituent
16 service was excellent. He didn't care about
17 political party or ethnicity.

18 Now, in closing, I would like to state
19 that quality representation does not need to
20 worry about political party or anything else.
21 There is no need to gerrymander. If you are a
22 good Representative, a good Senator, you will
23 be re-elected or elected. It depends on how
24 your constituents service.

25 Now, I also would like to say one last

1 point. Don't just consider east and west
2 Broward. Consider separating east and west
3 Florida. Leave them over there. We are here.
4 Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
6 very much. Coming from Pasco County, I know
7 how you feel.

8 Next up we have Stephanie Shimko, followed
9 by Phil Burg and then Barbara Laxon.

10 Stephanie, thank you for being here. You
11 are recognized.

12 MS. SHIMKO: Thank you. I recognize that
13 you have a very large task ahead of you and
14 that probably no matter what, you are going to
15 have people that are dissatisfied. So I would
16 make the recommendation that you do everyone a
17 favor and any maps that you present, and
18 hopefully they will be presented in an
19 extremely timely manner, you make comments as
20 to why the districts were drawn the way they
21 were drawn. If they cannot be contiguous, if
22 they cannot keep communities together, there
23 should be a reason why. I think you are seeing
24 a lot of anger here, and that would probably
25 help to quell some of it.

1 As someone who deals in international
2 business, I spent the last three years in the
3 Middle East. I would tell people about
4 Florida, and I would hear, "Oh, hanging chads.
5 How can you tell us about democracy when you
6 can't run it yourselves?" I don't want to see
7 you fight. I want to see you build. Please
8 make me proud instead of embarrassed, and you
9 have that power. Thank you very much.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
11 Phil, you are recognized.

12 MR. BURG: Thanks.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Following
14 Phil will be Barbara Laxon and Franco Ripple.

15 MR. BURG: Welcome again to Davie. My
16 name is Phil Bucie, and Davie is the largest
17 city in Broward County based on land area, and
18 it is nice to have you here. I want to
19 compliment you on the job that you have
20 started. The process that I have seen as far
21 as transparency, public involvement, all of
22 that is really, really good. But, of course,
23 it is really the outcome that is going to be
24 the kind of measure of whether we can stand
25 proudly together with the maps that are finally

1 adopted or not.

2 And a couple of things that would really
3 help, one is to move the process along with
4 maps that we can look at, and the other is to
5 take away the cloud of this lawsuit. Frankly,
6 it questions the intentions of what is
7 happening, and although we want the outcome to
8 be good no matter what, I don't think the
9 lawsuit is a helpful thing, because Amendments
10 5 and 6 provide us multiple beneficial goals,
11 including protection of minority-majority
12 districts, compactness. Those are not always
13 going to go perfectly well together. As was
14 said earlier with the state congressional
15 districts, the compactness is going to suffer a
16 bit in order to protect minority-majority
17 districts. That's just the way it is. But
18 when we get into the State House and Senate
19 districts, we can have much more compact
20 districts, and we can also have a definition or
21 an understanding of what we mean by
22 compactness.

23 And I know one lady earlier raised the
24 question about protecting the beach areas. I
25 don't know if I necessarily agree with her or

1 disagree with her, but if you could get an
2 outside third party to look at what we define
3 as "compactness," and give the State of
4 Florida, including the Legislature and the
5 communities of interest, some ideas what we
6 mean by compactness that we can actually
7 measure these maps with, it would be very
8 helpful.

9 So, anyway, I would say try to -- you
10 know, we are going to trust but verify, at
11 least I will. I will trust but verify that
12 this will have an optimistic outcome. But
13 please move the maps along. You know, we want
14 to talk, and it is easier to talk about
15 something that we can look at, and I will try
16 not to throw stones at things, but you need to
17 get out there with some ideas. And, please --
18 you know, someone said put up how much money
19 the Legislature is spending on this lawsuit.
20 You know, I think it would be better just to
21 end it. Then we don't have any question about
22 the goodness of your intentions. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much.

25 Barbara Laxon. Following Barbara, we have

1 Franco Ripple and Sean Phillippi.

2 MS. LAXON: Yeah, I am not going to go
3 over all the things that everybody has said,
4 which I agree with most of them, but one thing
5 that I noticed that was not brought up in terms
6 of redistricting, when they were talking about
7 different counties -- now, when you go into
8 different counties, you have different laws,
9 you have different procedures that handle
10 different things. How can a Representative
11 represent the voters in more than one county
12 when the issues are -- by law are different and
13 are not equal. So that -- this confuses -- has
14 always confused me.

15 And also I would like to talk about the
16 setting up districts on an adversarial manner.
17 "Us," "them," as Republicans, Democrats, okay,
18 or minorities or different ethnicities or
19 whatever, it is always "us" or "them." Why
20 can't we stop being "us" or "them" and be "we"?
21 And the Constitution was -- the founders of the
22 Constitution wrote numerous times that they
23 wanted to avoid factions. So why are we
24 gearing everything in order to humor these
25 factions? We need to get rid of political

1 parties all together. Thank you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

3 Franco Ripple? Is Franco here? After
4 Franco, we have Sean Phillippi, and then Ira,
5 but I don't see a last name -- Ira Shear, I
6 think, maybe or --

7 MR. RIPPLE: Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You are
9 recognized.

10 MR. RIPPLE: Thank you. Good evening,
11 Senators and Representatives of reapportionment
12 committee. Thank you for doing these hearings
13 all across the state. I know you are probably
14 ready to go home for the evening, and you will
15 be soon.

16 I do have some questions that I would like
17 to ask. They are rather pointed questions. I
18 appreciate your answers to these questions at
19 the end.

20 The Fair Districts guidelines prohibit you
21 from drawing maps with the intent to favor an
22 incumbent. That means that your intent and why
23 you drew a map a certain way will be relevant
24 to whether the map complies with the Fair
25 Districts criteria. Have you or any Florida

1 Legislators entered into an attorney/client
2 relationship or a joint defense agreement with
3 regard to redistricting such that the public
4 will not be able to know what discussion you
5 had with lawyers and consultants regarding the
6 drawing of the maps? There is a bill this year
7 that was introduced to require that drafts of
8 the maps in bill drafting be available to the
9 press and public and not be considered as
10 confidential. The bill was abandoned and never
11 received a hearing. Please raise your hand if
12 you will commit to allowing the public to see
13 what drafts of maps have been submitted into
14 bill drafting. Thank you.

15 Have any members of the committee
16 consulted with outside experts regarding the
17 drawing of maps? If you have not engaged
18 consultants, please raise your hand. Thank
19 you.

20 You have been asking the public to draw
21 maps and post them on My District Builder, yet
22 we have not seen a single map on the website
23 offered by any member of the Legislature. It
24 is hard to believe that none of you are at
25 least experimenting with maps that might be

1 offered. Please tell us, the public, has any
2 legislator prepared a draft of a final map, or
3 a final map, and, if so, where are the maps
4 being prepared and what software is being used
5 for each map and where is this software housed?

6 Is any private entity contributing funds
7 to help in the preparation of any maps by any
8 legislator?

9 And finally, public records show that you
10 have spent at least \$1 million hiring lawyers
11 to oppose the Fair Districts amendments, which
12 I will remind you were supported by roughly
13 63 percent of the population. Now that you are
14 spending our tax money to have our amendments
15 held unconstitutional, please raise your hand
16 if you think that the House of Representatives
17 should drop its involvement in the legal
18 attacks on Amendment 6.

19 Thank you, Legislators, for your time.
20 Have a good evening.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

22 Next up we have Sean Phillippi. Sean, you
23 are recognized. Thanks, I think it is my
24 understanding you maybe have a map you want to
25 point our attention to, is that right?

1 MR. PHILLIPPI: I did create a map. If
2 you want to bring it up, that is fine.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay. Yes, I
4 think staff is going to pull that up for us.
5 And while we are waiting, the next speaker we
6 have is Ira Shear and Burnadette Norris-Weeks.

7 And just to remind everyone, it is about
8 8:38. We've got about eight to ten minutes,
9 and then we are going to come and have some
10 reactions from the members on the committee.

11 You are recognized, sir.

12 MR. PHILLIPPI: Thank you. I started
13 drawing a map just to see if it was possible to
14 draw congressional districts without breaking
15 up municipalities, which is the ideal standard
16 set forth in Amendments 5 and 6. And I was
17 able to go ahead and draw a map without
18 breaking up the population of any municipality
19 throughout the state.

20 There is only one other map that has been
21 submitted that is both contiguous and complete,
22 and that other map has six Congressmen in
23 Broward County, and they currently have six
24 Congressmen in Broward County, even though,
25 after the population shifts, we're entitled to

1 a little over two and a half Congressmen. None
2 of the congressional districts now, nor in
3 Mr. Libby's map, have any Representatives
4 completely encompassed within Broward County,
5 and Mr. Libby's map has 17 municipalities
6 broken up. Since I was able to draw a map with
7 just my own two hands, without breaking up any
8 municipalities, you are able to do so, and this
9 proves it.

10 And, also, to the people who said that
11 they want coastal communities kept together, I
12 would encourage them to move to strictly
13 coastal communities like Lighthouse Point, like
14 Hillsborough Beach, like Lauderdale-by-the-Sea,
15 like Manalapan, like several others throughout
16 the state of Florida. You should not be able
17 to break up municipalities, and you choose
18 where you live.

19 So I would just encourage of the House of
20 Representatives and the State Senate to go
21 ahead and keep south Florida intact, because
22 south Florida is about 6,000 people short of
23 eight congressional districts. So I would
24 encourage you to keep the community of interest
25 of south Florida together, give us our eight

1 Congressmen, and have those Congressmen have
2 communities of interest intact.

3 And I would also encourage you lastly to
4 go ahead and have your maps released by the
5 first of the year, have your committee meetings
6 this year, so when you get the legislative
7 session started, you hit the ground running
8 instead of starting from scratch. Thank you
9 for your time.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

11 Ira, thanks for being here, sir, you are
12 recognized, followed by Burnadette Norris-Weeks
13 and then Lori Moseley.

14 MR. SHIRE: Ira Shire, but it's okay,
15 Hollywood, 34 years. I just want to be added
16 to the list, number one, agreement with 5 and
17 6; number two, stop wasting money on the
18 lawsuits; number three, get the maps out;
19 number four, please do your job. And by the
20 way, while you are up there, I noted texting,
21 talking, et cetera, during this. And, finally,
22 I voted in the primary for Frederica Wilson
23 proudly, but I also knew it was important for
24 me to follow that primary, because my district
25 was clearly -- the primary was the winner, the

1 fact that I am a Democrat, there are many
2 Republican districts the same way, which means
3 10,000 votes represented my congressional
4 district of 650,000 votes. We have to stop
5 this. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

7 Burnadette, thank you very much, and
8 following Burnadette, we have Lori Moseley.

9 MS. NORRIS-WEEKS: Thank you. Good
10 evening. I am Burnadette Norris-Weeks. I am
11 the attorney for the Broward County Supervisor
12 of Elections office. While I have no authority
13 to speak this evening on behalf of Dr. Brenda
14 Snipes, I will say that from a timing
15 perspective, the plan failure of the
16 Legislature not to produce maps in a timely
17 manner is unfortunate.

18 I see firsthand the complexities of
19 putting on good elections. There are so many
20 moving parts to elections. Assuming there are
21 no problems, absolutely no problems, which is a
22 rarity with putting on elections, the
23 Legislature's timetable projects final
24 districts will get final approval just days
25 before candidates are due to start qualifying

1 for their seats. It is not fair for the SOEs
2 who already have such a challenging job as it
3 stands. And due to the sweeping legislative
4 changes that were passed in this last
5 legislative session, which many of the people
6 in the audience probably don't even have a clue
7 about, and I believe, in my personal opinion,
8 it makes voting more difficult, this added to
9 the redistricting process where you will have
10 qualifying just days before is unconscionable.

11 Broward County has a huge voting
12 population. We teeter back and forth with
13 Miami-Dade County in terms of the largest
14 number of voters in the state.

15 In November 2010, Florida voters approved
16 two amendments, as you all know, to protect
17 voting rights and prevent political
18 gerrymandering of voting districts. While
19 there is little love shown by the Legislature
20 to south Florida communities, if you all create
21 a process that is due for major problems,
22 Florida could again be the laughingstock of the
23 country. We have come too far since 2000.
24 This process needs to be transparent, maps need
25 to be drawn.

1 Finally, I would like to also say that I
2 worked for the Legislature as an attorney about
3 15 years ago. It is interesting to see that
4 some of the people who were there drawing maps
5 at that time, I saw one gentleman passing out
6 maps was walking around passing out the
7 brochures this evening. So it is very easy --
8 if in good faith this body had good faith
9 intentions of allowing the public to understand
10 and see a transparent process, it is very easy
11 to do. You have very competent staff. Let's
12 face it, many of you already have ideas about
13 what you want to see. Not to share those ideas
14 with your constituents is simply not fair.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I am going to
16 have to ask you to wrap it up. We are running
17 out of time. Thank you.

18 MS. NORRIS-WEEKS: The public is not being
19 provided an opportunity to speak about a real
20 map as opposed to generalities related to
21 redistricting principles.

22 Finally, the voters have asked tough
23 questions tonight. There have been no answers
24 from this body. I understand that you will do
25 that in a moment, and that is great. This is a

1 public hearing so that you all can hear from
2 the voters. Now that you have heard that we
3 want to see maps, what will you do with this
4 information? Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

6 Lastly, but certainly not least, we are
7 going to have the Mayor of Miramar, Lori
8 Moseley. And ladies and gentlemen, I know
9 there's probably about 14 or 15 people that had
10 signed up to speak that we are going to run out
11 of time, unfortunately. That being said, we do
12 value your input. There are many ways that you
13 can communicate with us, and Senator Gaetz will
14 talk about that at the end, but, Mayor, thank
15 you for being here, and you are recognized.

16 MAYOR MOSELEY: Thank you, my pleasure,
17 and thank you all for being here and thank you
18 for taking the time, and I know how it feels, I
19 will be short and sweet.

20 I am the Mayor of the fourth-largest city
21 in Broward County, and I have four
22 Representatives and three Senators.

23 I want you to remember when you take into
24 consideration that it is very important to have
25 communities of interest. Miramar happens to be

1 one of the most culturally diverse cities in
2 Broward County. It is not necessary for us to
3 have Representatives from Collier County, nor
4 is it necessary for us to have Representatives
5 from Dade County. And many of my
6 Representatives are sitting right here, and
7 they are fantastic people, but not one of them
8 has a majority of my city. So will you please
9 take that into consideration when you go
10 forward?

11 And wouldn't it be fantastic if the State
12 of Florida did the right thing and set the tone
13 for the country so that when people begin to
14 talk about elections, we won't talk about the
15 past, and nor will we talk about the
16 partisanship that is happening in Washington?
17 Wouldn't it be nice for Florida to take the
18 lead on something very positive? And I know
19 you all know what the right thing to do, and
20 like cities, we are nonpartisan, we try to do
21 the right thing for our residents. Yes, I have
22 a party, but my obligation is first to my
23 residents, and they are the very same
24 constituents that you have.

25 So I ask you, please take into

1 consideration everything that everyone has said
2 here, and that you will hear and actually draw
3 maps that makes sense for communities. Thank
4 you all very much.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
6 Mayor.

7 That concludes our public testimony
8 portion. We thank all the ladies and gentlemen
9 who took place in helping make this a very good
10 process and an opportunity for us to hear from
11 you.

12 We would like to give members of the
13 committee an opportunity, if they had some
14 observations or questions or concerns, that now
15 would be a good time. I know that
16 Representative Horner, I think, had wanted to
17 offer a suggestion. I think if we can get a
18 microphone to him, that would be helpful.

19 Representative Horner, you are recognized.
20 Thank you for being here.

21 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Thank you,
22 Mr. Chairman. We heard an interesting point
23 tonight. I think it was from Matthew Isbell.
24 He talked about how compactness is more than
25 just being technically compact, but it is also

1 about functionally being compact. I just
2 wanted to note that I thought the point was
3 really well said.

4 We have heard from more than one meeting
5 that we should consider roadways, and whether
6 it is actually practical for an elected
7 official to represent a community. I just
8 wanted to note that the point was well-taken
9 and I will be considering it as we move
10 forward.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
12 Representative.

13 I think Senator Rich had a comment to
14 make, if we could get a microphone to her.

15 Senator, you are recognized.

16 SENATOR RICH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
17 I want to thank the residents of Broward County
18 for coming out this evening.

19 I want to say that we have had three
20 hearings in Broward County -- in south Florida
21 so far: Martin County, Palm Beach County and
22 now Broward County, with Dade County tomorrow.
23 I think the message has been incredibly clear
24 from testimony by hundreds of people, and I
25 think the issue of the maps, the issue of

1 particularly accelerating the process and
2 changing the timeline, these are things that we
3 have heard from so many people, and I think not
4 only in south Florida, but even though I didn't
5 attend the northern and central areas, the same
6 things have been said there.

7 So I would like to ask that you and
8 Senator Gaetz will talk about this, consider
9 making some changes to show the population, the
10 constituents, the voters in this state that we
11 are actually listening to what they are saying
12 at these meetings.

13 And I know that, obviously, this is not
14 something you are going to decide right this
15 moment, but I do believe that the message has
16 been so consistent, and that if we go around
17 this state and ask people to come and talk to
18 us, and then we do nothing about it, then the
19 committee -- these meetings will not have been
20 worthwhile. So I would just ask that if you
21 could consider it and possibly come back within
22 the next week or so, not necessarily during
23 these committee hearings, but think about
24 making some significant changes.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,

1 Senator.

2 Representative Gwyndolen Clarke-Reed would
3 like to make a comment, and then we have
4 Representative Nuñez as well.

5 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Thank you,
6 Mr. Chair. I have heard tonight and I have
7 heard in other hearings about who is suing or
8 who is taking everything to court, that we are
9 fighting the people. I would just like it to
10 be known that not every legislator in the House
11 of Representatives agreed on taking anything to
12 court. So I just want you to know that, and I
13 think it is very important that that point gets
14 out.

15 I too want to thank everybody who has come
16 out this evening. We have heard the same --
17 some of the same comments that have gone on in
18 other hearings, and I am sure we are going to
19 hear as we move forward the same comments
20 elsewhere. I hope that folks have their ears
21 open and are listening. Thank you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
23 Representative.

24 Representative Nuñez for a comment.

25 REPRESENTATIVE NUNEZ: Thank you,

1 Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to take this
2 opportunity to thank the members of the public
3 that came and participated this evening. It
4 was a long hearing, but we appreciate your
5 input. And I just wanted to note that I heard
6 several comments tonight about how the
7 communities here in Broward relate to the
8 neighboring counties, and that kind of input, I
9 believe, is extremely helpful to us as we move
10 forward in this process. And we have heard
11 several comments earlier today in Palm Beach
12 County as well, and I will definitely keep that
13 in mind as we go to Miami tomorrow and reflect
14 later on this week on all of the comments that
15 we have heard and the time we've spent here in
16 southeast Florida. So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
18 Representative.

19 Any other comments from the committee?

20 Okay. Seeing none, I think we would like
21 to turn it over to Senator Gaetz, and Senator,
22 maybe perhaps you could answer some questions
23 and some insight into the comments that we
24 heard today, and maybe some clarification as
25 well. You are recognized.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Absolutely. Thank you
2 very much, Mr. Chairman, and thanks to everyone
3 who testified.

4 For those who felt that the hearing today
5 was not useful, all I can tell you is that I
6 filled nine pages of notes, and those notes
7 include a lot of observations about individual
8 neighborhoods and individual communities,
9 information that I as a Senator from northwest
10 Florida could never have learned in an echo
11 chamber in Tallahassee. I had to come here and
12 listen to you. So your observations and your
13 analysis was extraordinarily helpful to me.

14 We wanted to go through a few things that
15 were mentioned, certainly not to argue with
16 anybody, because everyone is entitled to their
17 own opinion, but as Daniel Patrick Moynihan
18 said, not everybody is entitled to their own
19 set of facts. So we want to make sure that we
20 all leave here at least with some of the same
21 facts in mind.

22 First, Mr. Roosevelt Walters, I think,
23 made one of the most useful comments tonight
24 when he talked about the conflicts that might
25 exist between the Voting Rights Act and

1 Amendments 5 and 6. We don't know if those
2 conflicts exist, because Amendments 5 and 6 in
3 their entirety have never been used as a
4 template or set of requirements for any state.
5 So this will be an opportunity for us to chart
6 new ground on the whole question of any
7 conflicts that may or may not exist between the
8 Voting Rights Act and 5 and 6. But those who
9 believe that this is a simple thing, that it is
10 a bumper sticker issue, just do it, should
11 listen to Mr. Walters, because I think his
12 testimony was very useful in pointing out that
13 there may be issues that we really do have to
14 work through in good faith.

15 Secondly, the very first person who spoke
16 tonight, and the very last person, the Mayor of
17 Miramar, talked about communities of interest.
18 Twelve other people who spoke talked about
19 communities of interest. And there was someone
20 who said that they wondered why Representative
21 Weatherford and I had supported Amendment 17,
22 which was struck down by the Supreme Court.
23 Well, Amendment 7, which was struck down, would
24 have placed communities of interest as a
25 criterion that could have been used in defining

1 districts into our Constitution. So there is
2 an apparent or potential tension between those
3 who spoke about communities of interest,
4 whether they were beach communities or ethnic
5 communities, and those who demand faithful
6 adherence to what they consider to be the red
7 letter of Amendments 5 and 6.

8 Third, I wanted to get to the question of
9 timing, because it was raised by so many
10 people, and our democratic leader, Senator
11 Rich, just raised it again. Let's just review
12 for a moment the timing that there is and also
13 the comments that Chair Weatherford and I have
14 both made at prior hearings about timing.

15 First, the Legislature usually meets in
16 March. In order to speed up the process, we
17 were able to convince our colleagues in both
18 houses to agree to move up the legislative
19 session until January. So that moves it up as
20 quick as the Florida Constitution allows us to
21 vote.

22 Now, there is a gentleman who said that he
23 thought I had said that members couldn't
24 propose maps until 2012. No, no, no, no. We
25 can propose maps today. We could propose maps

1 yesterday. Any Democrat, any Republican,
2 certainly Senator Rich who has asked for an
3 acceleration of the process, I will commit to
4 her as Chairman of the Senate committee, we
5 will take up her map at the very first meeting
6 of the Senate Reapportionment Committee in
7 September. So we moved up our committee
8 meetings from December to September, we can
9 take up maps instantly in September, and we can
10 debate them and discuss them and we can vote in
11 committee. What we can't do by the Florida
12 Constitution is cast votes on the floor until
13 January, but there is no reason at all why we
14 can't debate and discuss maps beginning in
15 September. And I think I can speak for my
16 colleague, the speaker designate,
17 Representative Weatherford, in saying that it
18 is our intention that options be available for
19 committee members, for Republicans, Democrats,
20 House members, Senators, as early as possible
21 so that we can begin eliciting opinions. You
22 see, I can't simply define that we are going to
23 vote by a certain time, because I am only one
24 of 40 Senators. There may be other Senators
25 who disagree with a map that I might propose

1 who might want to debate it or discuss it or
2 amend it, and that might take more time to
3 allow them who disagree with me to do that.
4 But what I can commit is that Senator Rich's
5 map will be taken up at the very first
6 committee meeting in September.

7 Fourth, there were those who said that we
8 ought not to do the hearings first, we ought to
9 have maps first. I think that is a legitimate
10 point of view, but I would go back to the fact
11 that -- and this gentleman indicated that he
12 associated himself with the Fair Districts
13 point of view. Ms. Freidin, Ellen Freidin, who
14 is the head of Fair Districts, is the one who
15 testified before the House and Senate and said
16 that maps couldn't and shouldn't be drawn. She
17 wouldn't even attempt to draw them until the
18 public was heard from first. So maybe that was
19 wrong. Maybe we should have done what Illinois
20 did, and that is some legislators literally did
21 go into a back room, they are a one-party state
22 as well, and they came back out and said, "Here
23 are the maps, take it or leave it," the
24 Legislature voted and they went home. That is
25 one way to do it, but we elected to listen

1 first and then draw maps. The reason that is
2 important is because we are hearing today, just
3 like my colleagues heard when we were in my
4 part of the state, information about
5 neighborhoods and communities we couldn't get
6 if we were just listening to politicians in
7 Tallahassee.

8 Also I would point out that the -- it is
9 not as if there are going to be, you know, one
10 or two maps that spring fully-grown from the
11 brow of Zeus, and those are the maps. The fact
12 is 21 maps have already been proposed. Any
13 member of this committee, any member of the
14 Legislature who is not on the committee,
15 Democrat or Republican, can propose a map
16 yesterday, today or tomorrow. It will be, I
17 think, the fact that there will be many maps
18 proposed, not one map or two maps or just
19 approved maps, there will be many maps, and I
20 believe that they will be in some conflict with
21 each other, because you have different points
22 of view and different interests, as were
23 expressed in the hearing tonight.

24 Also, Mr. Chairman, there was a suggestion
25 that legislative representation needed to

1 somehow reflect the population of Florida,
2 Republicans and Democrats. We've got a problem
3 with that, we can't really do that, and I will
4 tell you why. There are 40 Senate districts,
5 for example. Twenty-eight of those districts
6 are currently held by Republicans, but eight of
7 the districts that elected Republican Senators
8 voted for Barack Obama in 2008. So you can
9 look at it one of two ways: Either President
10 Obama was a much more compelling and convincing
11 candidate to people who typically vote for
12 Republican Senators, so they voted for a
13 Democrat, or you can say that there were many,
14 many individuals who voted for President Obama
15 who also voted for Republican Senators. The
16 fact is that the Florida electorate is not
17 neatly divided. Republicans do vote for
18 Democrats. Many of us voted for President
19 Obama. Democrats vote for Republicans. Many
20 Democrats voted for Republican Senators. And
21 the fastest-growing group of voters in our
22 state are non-affiliated voters, or Independent
23 voters, and we can't tell them how to vote. So
24 as long as we have a secret ballot, we can't
25 guarantee that the Legislature will reflect

1 exactly what the party affiliations are,
2 because as several people pointed out tonight,
3 folks more and more are voting for the
4 individual and not for the party, and that is
5 the way it ought to be.

6 Next, Mr. Chairman, there were several
7 observations about the Florida process being
8 slower than other states. Let's put the facts
9 on the table about that.

10 First, the Bureau of the Census releases
11 census data. We have to rely on the census
12 data and use it for redistricting. They don't
13 release it all at once to all states. They
14 release it in groups or tranches. Florida
15 didn't get its census data last, but we were
16 certainly not first or even in the middle. We
17 received our census data in close to the last.
18 And as soon as we got the data, we put it
19 on-line as rapidly as we could so everybody in
20 the state could see the demographic information
21 that defines and describes Floridians.

22 And, secondly, you know, we could have
23 done -- somebody mentioned Illinois. We could
24 have done what Illinois did, and that is simply
25 have a take-it-or-leave-it proposition by the

1 Legislature to the people. We elected not to
2 do that. People of Goodwill can disagree about
3 that.

4 Then there were some other individuals who
5 mentioned a series of states like Louisiana who
6 finished their redistricting sooner than
7 Florida. The reason is because they vote on
8 odd years, they don't vote on even years. So
9 they are permitted by law to do their
10 redistricting early; in fact, they are obliged
11 by law to do it.

12 And finally I would just say, again, that
13 Chair Weatherford and I have both agreed that
14 we would move the process as quickly as we can,
15 given the fact that we have 120 opinions in the
16 House and 40 opinions in the Senate and lots of
17 opinions in the state of Florida, and we
18 shouldn't shut off debate and tell people to
19 sit down and be quiet and they have to vote
20 today. We need to make sure that all opinions
21 are heard and given the opportunity to be
22 considered.

23 Then, Mr. Chairman, there was an
24 observation that what we ought to do is have
25 court-proof districts. I love that phrase. I

1 wish it were possible. The individual said he
2 had a fear of many lawsuits elongating or
3 protracting the process. Well, frankly, that
4 is one of the reasons why we are listening
5 first and then drawing districts, because the
6 maps ought to reflect the input that we
7 receive. Now, not everybody here tonight
8 agreed. Some people disagreed rather strongly
9 with other people. So everyone won't be
10 satisfied. But in order for our maps to pass
11 judicial muster, we have to be able to show and
12 say that we drew upon the information and input
13 that we received from the public, and that is
14 -- doesn't make our maps court-proof, but it
15 gives us a better opportunity to defend what we
16 are doing before the courts, as we are required
17 to do by law. Although I would have to say
18 that if you look at the record of these
19 hearings, individuals who say they are members
20 of various special interest groups have already
21 indicated that lawsuits will be filed even
22 before any bills have been passed. So,
23 unfortunately, I think we may find ourselves in
24 lawsuits brought by special interest groups who
25 won't find themselves entirely happy, no matter

1 what we do.

2 And, finally, Mr. Chairman, I would say
3 that there were those who said that we ought to
4 have maps that would make it more likely that
5 Hispanics would be elected. I think that is a
6 very legitimate point of view, but you can
7 understand, I would hope, that there could be
8 tension between that point of view and then the
9 point of view of those who say that we ought
10 not to draw districts around ethnic groups, but
11 rather, those districts ought to be drawn
12 compactly around city and county boundaries.
13 So it is not as easy as falling off a log.

14 And then, Mr. Chairman, there were some
15 questions at the very end by a gentleman who
16 wanted to know -- who said, and I thought this
17 was very useful, that there needs to be a
18 rationale for why new districts are drawn. We
19 need to be able to explain why we did what we
20 do when we do it. And that is exactly why the
21 record of these proceedings is so important.
22 We need to be able to draw from the record and
23 say, "The reason why we changed the way the
24 lines are drawn in Indiantown" -- which is
25 something we heard a great deal about last

1 night -- "is because we learned that here is a
2 community of less than 4,000 people that is
3 split among three congressional districts." So
4 we have to have that information in order to
5 develop the rationale for drawing districts.

6 Someone indicated that outside third
7 parties ought to be used to define terms like
8 "compactness." We are obliged by our
9 Constitution to draw the lines and then propose
10 them to the judiciary for review, but there
11 will be outside third parties. I don't know
12 how outside they are. The Florida Supreme
13 Court is certainly inside our state, and then
14 the federal judiciary as well.

15 Finally, there was a gentleman who asked a
16 series of questions. I think we have answered
17 some of them. He asked are we using outside
18 consultants. I can't speak for anybody except
19 myself. I can tell you not yet, but we
20 probably will. It is routine to use outside
21 consultants, demographic experts, legal
22 authorities in the area of reapportionment and
23 redistricting, to make sure that we are not
24 violating the federal laws and the relevant
25 court cases that we have to abide by even as we

1 abide by the Florida Constitution.

2 The gentleman asked if we are going to use
3 outside counsel. The answer is yes. Democrats
4 and Republicans, House and Senate have
5 historically used outside counsel, because we
6 have to get objective opinions from individuals
7 who can look at the law and say "Here is what
8 we advise that you do" in these cases where
9 there are tensions between conflicting values.

10 And then the gentleman asked is there
11 software that is used by members to draw
12 districts. The answer is yes. That software
13 is on-line. It is the District Builder
14 software that you can look at and use as well.

15 And finally, the individual asked is there
16 any private entity contributing funds to assist
17 members in drawing districts. I can only
18 answer for myself. The answer to that question
19 is no.

20 I hope that by providing this information
21 we have helped to lay some questions to rest.

22 I come from a small town called Niceville,
23 Florida, and in Niceville, we got a place
24 called Doris' Restaurant. And if you go into
25 Doris' at seven o'clock in the morning with the

1 most outrageous statement, by six o'clock that
2 night, everybody in Niceville has heard it, and
3 about two-thirds of us believe it. So
4 sometimes information gets put into the
5 bloodstream that gets repeated and repeated as
6 if it were true, and that is why we wanted to
7 provide you with these clarifying bits of
8 information.

9 This is not your last time to participate.
10 This is your first time. We look forward to
11 your continuing to provide information to this
12 process as we go forward.

13 I think the idea of videoconferencing,
14 which came up from one individual, is a very
15 interesting idea, and if we can make that work,
16 I think that is a way that we can reach out
17 even further and in another round to make sure
18 that we hear from the people of Florida.

19 Thank you all. You have been
20 extraordinarily helpful tonight.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
22 very much, Senator Gaetz.

23 Today if you did not speak, and you would
24 like to have your opinion heard, please send it
25 to us. Also, all the records from today's

1 meeting, video, podcast and transcripts will be
2 available in the coming days. And with that,
3 Senator Gaetz moves that 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 170 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 1st day of November, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2011
10:00 A.M.
MIAMI DADE COLLEGE
MIAMI, FLORIDA

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 SENATOR GAETZ: Ladies and gentlemen, if
3 you will please take your seats, we can begin
4 the hearing. We would ask members of the House
5 of Representatives, members of the Senate who
6 are here for the hearing to take their seats.
7 If you are in the audience, we would ask you to
8 take your seats as well.

9 Ladies and gentlemen, we will begin our
10 hearing with the Pledge of Allegiance led by
11 the former President of the Florida Senate,
12 President Gwen Margolis. This is her district,
13 and we are delighted to be here.

14 SENATOR MARGOLIS: I pledge allegiance to
15 the flag of the United States of America and to
16 the Republic for which it stands, one nation,
17 under God, indivisible, with liberty and
18 justice for all.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you all very much
20 for being here this morning. The Joint
21 Senate/House Redistricting Hearing is called to
22 order.

23 My name is Don Gaetz. I am a member of
24 the Florida Senate, and I Chair the Senate
25 Reapportionment Committee, and we are pleased

1 to be joined this morning by the Speaker
2 Designate of the Florida House of
3 Representatives, Representative Will
4 Weatherford to my left, who will be chairing
5 this meeting with me, and Representative
6 Weatherford and I have co-chaired meetings
7 around the state, listening to voters' concerns
8 and questions and suggestions as we go forward
9 in the redistricting process.

10 We are pleased to be joined by a number of
11 members of the House Redistricting Committee
12 and the Senate Reapportionment Committee who
13 have come here to Miami-Dade to hear your
14 views, and we would like to have them introduce
15 themselves very briefly this morning.

16 We would like to begin with Representative
17 Carlos Lopez-Cantera, who will be officially
18 welcoming us to Miami-Dade County.

19 Representative?

20 REPRESENTATIVE LOPEZ-CANTERA: Thank you,
21 Mr. Chairman.

22 Mr. Chairman, members, it is so wonderful
23 to have you all here in Miami today to
24 experience our beautiful -- beautifully diverse
25 community and to hear from our community on

1 their positions and their desires as far as the
2 redistricting process goes.

3 So we know that our community will be very
4 hospitable to you and understand that you have
5 a meeting later this afternoon and we know that
6 that meeting will hopefully go well, and so
7 welcome and thank you for being here today, all
8 of you, thank you.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Representative,
10 and if you would pass the microphone, we would
11 like to ask each member of the Senate and House
12 Committees who are here to introduce themselves
13 and indicate what part of the state they
14 represent so you know who you are talking to.

15 SENATOR BRAYNON: Senator Oscar Braynon,
16 and I represent the 33rd Senate District here
17 in Miami-Dade County, which is the north
18 central area of Miami-Dade County.

19 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good morning,
20 everyone. My name is John Patrick Julien,
21 representing House District 104, which
22 encompasses North Miami Beach, North Miami,
23 Miami Gardens, Opa-Locka, a large chunk of
24 unincorporated Miami-Dade County, the City of
25 Miami and a small sliver of the City of

1 Hialeah. Welcome to Miami.

2 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good morning, I am
3 Hazelle Rogers, State Representative,
4 representing District 94, which is part of
5 Broward County, and I boast that we are
6 approximately 1.8 million after the last
7 census, and a very diverse county.

8 Cities that I do represent: Lauderdale Hill,
9 Lauderdale Lakes, Margate, Oakland Park,
10 Plantation, Sunrise and the City of Oakland
11 Park. I thank you very much. Thanks for being
12 here.

13 REPRESENTATIVE LOGAN: Good morning,
14 everyone, and welcome. I am Ana Rivas Logan,
15 Representative, and I represent the western
16 part of Miami-Dade County, part of Sweetwater
17 around FIU, East Kendall, South Miami Heights,
18 Miami Heights and part of the Falls.

19 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good morning,
20 my name is Betty Reed, State Representative. I
21 represent part -- the eastern part of Tampa and
22 parts of Hillsborough County. Thank you for
23 being here this morning.

24 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good morning,
25 State Representative Mack Bernard from West

1 Palm Beach, Florida, District 84.

2 REPRESENTATIVE FRESEN: Good morning, Erik
3 Fresen, State House District 111. In most of
4 these meetings, I've just said "from
5 Miami-Dade," but since we are in Miami, I will
6 tell you specifically where in Miami.

7 I represent the entireties or portions of
8 the City of Hialeah, Miami Springs, Virginia
9 Gardens, South Miami, City of Miami, Coral
10 Gables and West Miami. Happy to have you here.

11 SENATOR DIAZ DE LA PORTILLA: Miguel Diaz
12 de la Portilla, State Senator, District 36. I
13 represent the heart of the City of Miami, parts
14 of Coral Gables, Palmetto Bay, Cutler Bay,
15 Pinecrest and South Miami and a little sliver
16 of unincorporated Dade along 87th Avenue.
17 Welcome, pleasure to be here.

18 SENATOR NEGRON: Good morning, everyone,
19 Joe Negrón, I represent Senate District 28,
20 which is northern Palm Beach County and the
21 Treasure Coast.

22 SENATOR SOBEL: Good morning, everybody.
23 I am Eleanor Sobel. I represent southern
24 Broward County, I represent coastal cities,
25 Senate District 31. I represent Hallendale

1 Beach, Hollywood, Dania Beach, and then I go
2 out west and represent many of the cities in
3 Broward County, southern Broward County. Nice
4 to see you here.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WATSON: Good morning, my
6 name is Barbara Watson. I am the
7 Representative for District 103, which
8 incorporates the southern part of Miramar, the
9 great City of Miami Gardens and the great city
10 of Opa-Locka. Welcome.

11 REPRESENTATIVE STAFFORD: Good morning, my
12 name is Cynthia Stafford, and I represent House
13 District 109 here in Miami-Dade County. That
14 encompasses Liberty City, Brownsville,
15 Allapattah, Overtown, Midtown, Upper East Side
16 and a portion of Miami Beach. Welcome, and
17 thank you for being here.

18 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good morning,
19 I am State Representative Gwyndolen
20 Clarke-Reed, and I represent House District 92,
21 which is in Broward County, the northeast part
22 of Broward County, Deerfield Beach, Pompano
23 Beach, Oakland Park, Wilton Manors, Ft.
24 Lauderdale, a little bit of North Lauderdale
25 and a little bit of Tamarac. Welcome.

1 SENATOR FLORES: Good morning, I am State
2 Senator Anitere Flores. I represent Senate
3 District 38, which is west portions of Dade
4 County. So if you live 87th Avenue west to
5 Krome, chances are I am your State Senator.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Good morning,
7 my name is Kathleen Passidomo, I am a
8 Representative from District 76, which is
9 Collier County. I represent the City of
10 Naples, the City of Marco Island, the City of
11 Everglades City and all the alligators that
12 didn't make it over to Miami.

13 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Hi, I am Dennis
14 Baxley. I serve Florida House District 24 in
15 Ocala, Marion County, but I am also a former
16 resident of Hollywood and a graduate of
17 Miami-Dade College.

18 REPRESENTATIVE PLAKON: Good morning, I am
19 Scott Plakon, Florida House District 37, Orange
20 and Seminole Counties.

21 REPRESENTATIVE STEINBERG: Good morning,
22 Richard Steinberg, State House District 106.
23 It is a half -- the northern half of Miami
24 Beach, Surfside, North Bay Village, Indian
25 Creek, Bal Harbor, Bay Harbor, Sunny Isles

1 Beach, Golden Beach, Aventura, a portion of
2 North Miami Beach, a portion of North Miami and
3 some unincorporated Dade County. Thank you for
4 being here.

5 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good morning, my
6 name is Dwayne Taylor. I represent House
7 District 27, which is in Volusia County. I
8 want to thank you all for being here, and go
9 Dolphins.

10 REPRESENTATIVE SCHENCK: Rob Schenck.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Ritch Workman,
12 House District 30, Brevard County.

13 REPRESENTATIVE GONZALEZ: Good morning,
14 Eddy Gonzalez, I represent District 102. That
15 is Hialeah, Hialeah Gardens, Miami Lakes, PSN
16 Country Club of Miami all the way out to
17 Broward, and a little piece of the City of
18 Miramar in Broward. Thank you for being here.

19 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Mike Horner, State
20 House District 79, Osceola County.

21 REPRESENTATIVE CRISAFULLI: Steve
22 Crisafulli, House District 32, Brevard and east
23 Orange County.

24 REPRESENTATIVE BRODEUR: Good morning,
25 Jason Brodeur, State House District 33, parts

1 of Orange, Seminole and Volusia Counties.

2 REPRESENTATIVE ARTILES: Good morning,
3 Frank Artiles, Representative, District 119,
4 West Kendall, Sweetwater, Redlands and
5 Homestead.

6 REPRESENTATIVE BILECA: Good morning,
7 State Representative Michael Bileca, District
8 117 as Miami, South Miami, Coral Gables,
9 Pinecrest, Palmetto Bay and a little piece of
10 Cutler Bay.

11 REPRESENTATIVE DIAZ: Jose Felix Diaz,
12 District 115. I have parts of Westchester,
13 Pinecrest, Palmetto Bay, Cutler Bay and East
14 Kendall.

15 REPRESENTATIVE TRUJILLO: Good morning,
16 State Representative Carlos Trujillo. I
17 represent District 116, which is west of the
18 Turnpike from Blount High School all the way
19 south into the Hammocks.

20 SENATOR SIPLIN: Buenos dias. My name is
21 Gary Siplin, State Senator, District 19,
22 Orlando, Florida.

23 REPRESENTATIVE GARCIA: Good morning,
24 bonjour, buenos dias. I am Representative Luis
25 Garcia, and I officially want to welcome you to

1 District 107. You are sitting in 107 right
2 now. So this is our home district right here.

3 It represents all the way from Allapattah
4 to Pinecrest, including parts of Overtown,
5 Little Havana, downtown Miami, parts of Miami
6 Beach, Fisher Island, the most expensive ZIP
7 code in the United States, Key Biscayne, parts
8 of Coral Gables, Cocoplum and Pinecrest.

9 SENATOR MARGOLIS: Good morning, my name
10 is Senator Gwen Margolis, and I represent the
11 east side of Dade County, generally east of
12 across the street from here. East starting at
13 the county line on the east side of Dade
14 County, going all the way down to Deering Bay
15 at southwest 144th Street, and it is a long,
16 skinny district, including all the beaches, Key
17 Biscayne and everything that Representative
18 Garcia represents. I am delighted to be here
19 and I am delighted to welcome you here.

20 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: I am Clay Ford from
21 northwest Florida, District 3, Pensacola.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: And my district -- I am a
23 Senator. My district is Senate District 4,
24 which runs from Pensacola to east of Panama
25 City.

1 So you see you have people who are your
2 friends and neighbors from right here in
3 Miami-Dade, and you have people as far away as
4 you can get and still be in Florida, and we're
5 all here to hear your views and your
6 suggestions.

7 We want to thank Miami-Dade College for
8 allowing us to use this wonderful facility.
9 Typically we ask that the members of the Senate
10 and House committees not be on risers or on a
11 stage, because we think that you ought to be
12 able to look us straight in the eye and that we
13 ought not to be on a different elevation than
14 you unless we are lower.

15 But, nonetheless, we appreciate this
16 wonderful facility. Thanks to all of you for
17 being here, especially members of the public
18 who have come to share their comments and
19 recommendations to help shape Congressional and
20 State Senate and State House Districts for the
21 next decade.

22 Today's hearing, like all of our 26
23 hearings, is being webcast statewide by the
24 Florida Channel over the Internet, and we
25 welcome all those who are joining us through

1 that medium this morning.

2 Our sole purpose today is to hear from the
3 public about how you believe that the legal
4 standards governing redistricting, the federal
5 legal standards, the U.S. Constitutional
6 standards, Amendments 5 and 6 and the relevant
7 court cases, how you believe all of those legal
8 standards governing redistricting should be
9 applied in your community.

10 You don't have to be a legal expert to
11 testify to that -- on those issues. You just
12 need to share what you believe is appropriate
13 for your community and your neighborhood, so
14 that you are ably represented in Washington and
15 Tallahassee fairly, equitably and sensibly.

16 Our procedures today are simple, but they
17 are important. It is important that you sign
18 in, because we would like to create an accurate
19 public record of all attendees and speakers.

20 And also you may opt to join our e-mail
21 list so that we can keep you informed about how
22 the redistricting process goes forward after
23 today.

24 And if you have not signed in, we hope
25 that you would raise your hand, and a member of

1 our staff, either the House or Senate staff,
2 would come to you with a card so that you could
3 sign in.

4 It is the same card you would use if you
5 wish to speak. So if you wish to speak and you
6 haven't signed in today, please raise your
7 hand, and if you are just here to watch and
8 observe your friends and neighbors and learn
9 more about the process, we would love to have
10 you on our e-mail list so that we can keep you
11 informed.

12 Before we begin, the Chair will recognize
13 the Speaker Designate, Representative
14 Weatherford, to explain how today's hearing
15 fits into the redistricting process.

16 Mr. Speaker.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
18 very much, Mr. Chairman, and honored to be here
19 in Miami-Dade County today. I want to give you
20 a quick overview just about what we are here to
21 do and some of the processes involved, and also
22 a little bit of background on redistricting in
23 general.

24 Every ten years, the Legislature is
25 required by the Constitution to redistrict the

1 state based on increases and decreases and
2 movements in population within our state.
3 Because Florida has grown more than other
4 states, we have actually picked up two
5 Congressional seats.

6 So we will no longer have 25 Congressional
7 seats, we will have 27 Congressional seats.
8 Because some parts of our state have increased
9 and decreased disproportionately in population,
10 many Senate, House and Congressional Districts
11 will change because of the loss or adding in
12 population.

13 When redistricting is completed,
14 Congressional Districts must equal in
15 population and contain 696,345 people, the 40
16 Senate districts must also be nearly equal and
17 at about 470,000 people, and our 120 House
18 seats around the state must also be nearly
19 equal at 156,700 people.

20 As you can see, we have displays in the
21 back of the room showing the current boundaries
22 and the current districts as they sit today in
23 the state of Florida.

24 We encourage you to look at those on your
25 way in or on your way out or even during the

1 hearing today.

2 The equality of representation isn't the
3 only legal requirement that redistricting plans
4 must meet, and that is very important.

5 The laws and the important court cases
6 that govern redistricting are explained in
7 detail on the House and Senate websites, and we
8 would encourage you all to go and look at
9 those.

10 Those websites are actually listed on our
11 "Redistricting 2012" brochure that was
12 available to you when you came in, and in fact,
13 our redistricting brochure summarizes both
14 federal and state laws, and outlines the topics
15 that we hope you will discuss with us here
16 today at the hearing. If you did not get a
17 copy of that brochure when you came in, if you
18 would raise your hand, we will make sure that
19 each and every person who wants a copy gets a
20 copy here this morning.

21 The brochure also lists the House and
22 Senate websites, and the websites are packed
23 with information about redistricting in
24 Florida, including explanations of laws and
25 important court cases governing redistricting.

1 The two websites are complementary, and
2 they are both updated frequently. Visit both
3 and please check back often.

4 The websites also deliver to you at your
5 fingertips all of the demographic information
6 that you will be using in drawing districts in
7 the exact same computer programs that us as
8 Legislators use ourselves as we draw districts
9 in the future.

10 Before, during and after this hearing,
11 Senate and House professional staff are
12 available to show anyone the simple steps to go
13 online and build a district and submit a plan
14 of your own in the coming weeks to the
15 Legislature.

16 Recommendations from citizens and groups
17 of citizens will be made publicly -- public
18 available, and in fact, as of today, we have
19 over 32 maps that have been submitted to the
20 Legislature of partial or complete maps, and
21 approximately 110 written ideas for maps that
22 are available on the web.

23 In fact, this week, in this week's
24 meetings at Stuart, Boca Raton and Davie,
25 Florida residents completed new maps for

1 submission right at the tables outside the
2 room.

3 So for anyone here who would like to do
4 that, we would encourage you to please
5 participate in that as well.

6 The submission of these proposed maps that
7 makes sense for your community is the single
8 most effective way that you can communicate
9 with us.

10 We certainly appreciate all of you who
11 have taken time to be here today and to give us
12 your ideas verbally, but we also think that a
13 great way for you to give us your ideas is to
14 put them down on paper and actually draw maps
15 that you believe would be good for the
16 Legislature to consider.

17 We have accelerated the process of our
18 session for a very specific reason. Many of
19 you know the Constitution does not allow us to
20 have votes on redistricting maps until 2012.

21 And so what we have done is we have taken
22 our session, which normally starts in March and
23 goes for 60 days, and we've moved it up to
24 January.

25 That is the earliest that we can vote on

1 legislative maps, and I want that to be clear
2 on the front end of that.

3 It has also been suggested that the
4 Legislature should draw maps first and then ask
5 the public for comment. Ladies and gentlemen,
6 we believe that puts the answer ahead of the
7 question.

8 There should be no preconceptions made by
9 politicians, but, rather, public testimony
10 should be free and unrestricted. In fact, the
11 principal author of Florida's New Redistricting
12 Standards and the Chairperson of Fair Districts
13 Campaign are on the record and in agreement
14 with the notion that the maps should not be
15 drawn until or after the public has had the
16 opportunity to comment. And I believe everyone
17 on this committee agrees with that as well.

18 Our intent is to use these recommendations
19 made at the 26 public hearings and throughout
20 our Internet sites as the basis for developing
21 one or more options for district maps.

22 We will continue those options in the open
23 public meetings before any votes are taken,
24 even in committee. In other words, what we are
25 literally saying is if you look at the maps

1 outside the room, the ones actually submitted
2 to the Legislature by Florida residents, we are
3 literally starting the legislative process with
4 those maps and other suggestions from you
5 today.

6 So if you want to know where we begin our
7 deliberations, it is with the public
8 submissions and it is with your testimony here
9 this afternoon.

10 Throughout the process, we will continue
11 to solicit additional public comment so that
12 proposed maps can mature with the public
13 involvement all before the Legislature approves
14 any final maps.

15 Whatever the Legislature passes, it is
16 submitted for judicial review to ensure that
17 the final plans meet every single legal
18 requirement.

19 Because our purpose today is to hear from
20 you, all the time will be used to ensure that
21 every member of the public who is here and
22 wishes to speak will have time to present their
23 testimony and be listened to respectfully,
24 without interruption or argument.

25 And, if needed, we may take, Mr. Chairman,

1 if it is possible, a short break to give the
2 members -- we have four hours allotted, 10:00
3 to 2:00, we may take a short break somewhere in
4 the middle there to give members a break and
5 also to give members of the audience a break as
6 well.

7 If after every citizen has had his or her
8 say, and there is time remaining before our
9 scheduled adjournment, any member of the
10 committee may make a statement or offer an
11 observation.

12 Of course, any member of the Legislature
13 may today or at any time, propose any map or
14 any plan, and we will make it available to the
15 public immediately.

16 Mr. Chairman, I hope that this description
17 of our schedule and the process helps set the
18 stage for a very successful hearing. Thank you
19 for your indulgence.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 Mr. Speaker. A couple of housekeeping details.
22 As Speaker Weatherford indicated, we have a
23 four-hour time slot for this hearing.

24 Typically when we do a four-hour time
25 slot, in the middle, we will take a break, a

1 45-minute or so break. What I would like to do
2 with the committee's indulgence and the
3 audience's indulgence is because we have at the
4 moment 30 individuals who would like to speak,
5 I would like to see if we can make sure that
6 all of those persons have the opportunity to
7 speak, and we might be able to do that without
8 taking a break.

9 If we get a large number of additional
10 speakers, then with Speaker Weatherford's
11 indulgence, we will call an audible somewhere
12 in the middle and take a short break so that
13 all of you have the opportunity to use the
14 facilities or grab a bite of lunch or whatever
15 you would like to do.

16 Now, in order to move along quickly and
17 make sure everybody has a chance to speak, what
18 I would like to do is call the first four
19 speakers up, and there are four reserved slots
20 right in the front right for you.

21 So if I call your name, if you would come
22 up -- we will call this on the deck circle --
23 if you will get on deck, that way we won't
24 waste time having people come forward from the
25 audience, you will be ready to speak.

1 And to make sure that everybody has an
2 opportunity to speak and that we hear your
3 views, we would like you to hold your comments,
4 if you can, to three or four minutes. That
5 way, we can make sure everyone has an
6 opportunity to speak.

7 If you have extended remarks, if you
8 brought 15 minutes of good information you
9 wanted to share, we want it all, and just give
10 your printed or extended remarks or your script
11 that you brought or that someone gave you, give
12 that information to one of our staff.

13 It will go in the permanent record of the
14 committee, and it will be available and given
15 to every single member of the committee, House
16 or Senate.

17 With that said, I would like -- Ira Paul
18 is going to be our first speaker, and Ira, if
19 you would come forward, please, and behind Ira
20 is Jonas Georges, Henry Kelley and Michael
21 William Calsetta.

22 And so if those three individuals will
23 come forward in the on deck circle.

24 Mr. Paul, we are delighted that you are
25 going to lead off our hearing this morning. We

1 are anxious to hear your testimony, and you are
2 recognized.

3 MR. PAUL: Okay. I am going to be very
4 short, I am going to be less than the three
5 minutes.

6 My name is Ira Paul. I am a resident of
7 Palm Springs North, which is just slightly
8 northwest of the Hialeah-Miami Lakes community.
9 I reside in House District 102 and Senate
10 District 40.

11 I have lived in Miami-Dade, south Florida,
12 for over 50 years, and I am a retired
13 Miami-Dade County Public Schools mathematics
14 teacher.

15 I -- the talking points I have is
16 65 percent of the Miami-Dade community is
17 Hispanic, and that it is the constitutional
18 right of minorities to be able to elect
19 representatives of their choice.

20 In all fairness, I demand that a
21 sufficient number of districts be drawn to
22 offer Hispanics in these areas the ability to
23 elect representatives of their choice for both
24 the State House, State Senate and Congress.

25 It is important that the Hispanic

1 community be treated fairly and without any
2 regression of existing political power in both
3 legislative and congressional districting.

4 Areas with similar commonalities that
5 could form the basis of a district or part of a
6 district are Hialeah, Hialeah Gardens, Miami
7 Lakes, or Coral Gables, Coconut Grove and South
8 Miami.

9 Thank you very much for allowing me the
10 opportunity to speak, and thank you all for
11 being here today.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Mr. Paul, for your testimony.

14 And now Jonas Georges is next, and
15 following him, Henry Kelley, and then Michael
16 William Calsetta, and following Mr. Calsetta,
17 Gepsie, and I apologize, Metellus, Metellus,
18 with the Haitian Neighborhood Center.

19 Mr. Georges, you are recognized. Thank
20 you for coming today.

21 MR. GEORGES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for
22 the opportunity to speak to you and to the
23 committee. I am the Reverend Dr. Jonas
24 Georges, and I live and work in the northeast
25 city of Miami, the nerve center of my

1 community, the Haitian-American community.

2 I would like to spend my time today to
3 address the need for this committee to
4 emphasize and seek to preserve the integrity of
5 the ethnic communities that are the nerve
6 centers of our community in south Florida.

7 It is very difficult to conceive Miami,
8 for instance, without Little Havana or the
9 black communities of northwest Miami, like
10 Opa-Locka and Miami Gardens and so on and so
11 forth and many others.

12 And part of these neighborhoods and ethnic
13 communities is the -- is in the northeast area
14 of our city where Haitian-Americans like myself
15 do live. And within that community, there is a
16 center where the 17th Congressional District is
17 located, and the voters there are represented
18 in 34 precincts by people of Haitian-American
19 origin.

20 And I would like to impress you of the
21 necessity to continue the cultural expansion of
22 our culture, of our democracy, by preserving
23 that particular sector of our community.

24 We are very well-represented by a person
25 of our choice in that congressional community,

1 in the person of our Congressperson, Frederica
2 Wilson, but we do recognize that there are 34
3 percent of them -- of us voting in that
4 community that are from my ethnic group.

5 There is no point that this -- that
6 particular districts right now would require
7 about 51,000 persons, voters, to really make a
8 congressional community -- I mean, a district.

9 And our recommendation would be for the
10 committee to look to the north and northwest
11 area of the district in order to make up for
12 that number that is required, that is, 696
13 voters, and that would make it sure that the
14 majority of the people who live and work in
15 that area have a chance of representing
16 themselves, thus expanding the democracy that
17 we all love and serve, and allowing another
18 segment of our population to really show that
19 only in America that people who enter into this
20 country barely 30 years ago can live and work
21 and thrive, do business, go to school, pay
22 taxes and be able to represent themselves in
23 the Congress of the United States.

24 Of all the things that you will be doing,
25 which I know is going to be extremely

1 difficult, but I am calling to your sense of
2 leadership acumen, your sense of fairness and
3 your sense of adherence to the law of the
4 country, and your love also for the great
5 diversity of this country, to really make sure
6 that those of us who live in that district, the
7 17th Congressional District, do aspire to be
8 members of our community, but also to be able
9 to represent ourselves in the Congress of the
10 United States.

11 Thank you very much for the great work you
12 do, and I hope that you will take into
13 consideration these statements that I make on
14 behalf of us all living and working in this
15 community.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
17 Dr. Georges.

18 Next we will have Henry Kelley and then
19 Michael Calsetta, then Gepsie Metellus. Say
20 again? Gepsie Metellus.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: He must be a
22 popular guy, everybody knows him.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Very. And then Janet
24 McAliley, former member of the School Board
25 here in Miami-Dade County. We would like to

1 have Ms. McAliley come forward, and then Larry
2 Thorson will be next.

3 Mr. Kelley, you have the floor.

4 MR. KELLEY: Thank you, Senator, and thank
5 you to the Committee again. I was going to
6 ask, is there a chance I can get map number
7 five pulled up? Okay, thank you.

8 Again, to the Committee, I appreciate all
9 the hard work, and I have -- as we -- I've
10 tried to catch up in the meetings, you know, I
11 have actually taken the time to draw two maps,
12 and today I wanted to focus on that, but I do
13 want to recognize the difficulty and the
14 decisions.

15 I have lived in Ft. Walton, Gainesville,
16 Jacksonville, Orlando and Margate in my
17 lifetime in Florida, and this morning, my
18 girlfriend's father lives in Senator Margolis'
19 district, and I was explaining to him why I was
20 moving one of his district lines, which gives
21 me very unique insight into the political
22 things when your girlfriend's father is yelling
23 at you.

24 But last night I had the opportunity to
25 show on the map that is number four by the

1 system where I started with the existing
2 majority-minority districts and was forced to
3 draw all the other districts around it, whereas
4 this map I took and drew while using the
5 software, which, again, I found very easy to
6 use my interpretation of Fair Districts and
7 some of the methodology that I used, my intent,
8 and because the Fair Districts is unclear on
9 this, my political boundaries was to minimize
10 the number of counties that were cut up. And I
11 achieved about an 80 percent success rate in
12 keeping counties whole.

13 The other thing that I tried to do was
14 avoid what I called a U-shaped district where
15 you have to drive from one end of a district,
16 go through somebody else's district to arrive
17 back in your own district. And this was really
18 the intent that I drew.

19 I tried to keep coastal communities
20 associated, the more rural areas aggregated
21 together as much as possible, but, you know, as
22 we have discussed the maps and we have
23 discussed the districts, you know, I put this
24 up because as you -- I've watched a lot of the
25 hearings, and the comments when people say,

1 "Well, where are the maps," well, here are the
2 maps, and any group can come out and produce
3 their own maps.

4 I did this in my spare time, I didn't
5 receive any money for it, but it can be done.
6 And these districts are all within a half a
7 percent of the intended number.

8 And I also have a Senate map and a House
9 map that will be submitted in a couple of days.
10 I just have to finish a few districts in Miami,
11 little tricky.

12 And the Senate -- you know, the Senate
13 map, again, with -- you can see in this one
14 that, again, because of the population
15 differences, you can see a greater variance
16 between the coastal communities and the more
17 interior districts, and, again -- but my
18 driving objective was to minimize the number of
19 counties that would be cut up.

20 And as I have said to the Committee, I
21 know you have sat through many hearings, you
22 still have a few more to go, but that if groups
23 or individuals submit maps, to afford us the
24 opportunity in the committee season to come in
25 and discuss each one at length and some of the

1 particular decisions we have made as to why a
2 particular district may be shaped in a certain
3 way or a certain line was put in a certain
4 place.

5 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Mr.
7 Kelley. We appreciate your submission of maps
8 and your testimony.

9 Michael William Calsetta, representing the
10 Conservative Democratic Alliance.

11 Mr. Calsetta, thank you very much for being
12 here, and we look forward to what you have to
13 share with us.

14 MR. CALSETTA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
15 and ladies and gentlemen of the Committee.

16 Representatives of special interest groups
17 will come before you seeking to redraw the
18 legislative districts in such a way as to favor
19 multi-culturalism, some politically savvy
20 citizens will be looking for ways around the
21 Florida legislation preventing gerrymandering
22 for political advantage, and still others will
23 stress the need to separate themselves from the
24 majority of their fellow citizens.

25 Our founding fathers carefully crafted a

1 message to the world when we created the United
2 States. On our great seal is "E pluribus
3 unum," the translation from the Latin, "Out of
4 many, one."

5 Those seeking to divide us into what I --
6 what I call hyphenated Americans, or party
7 before principle robots, undermine our
8 political system. They make it impossible for
9 term limits, in my view, and we need term
10 limits desperately.

11 Part of the reason we are in such a
12 financial mess is because politicians are more
13 interested in re-election than the good of the
14 nation; again, in my opinion. We must reform
15 this system if we are to obtain term limits.

16 I implore you to use real, not artificial,
17 contiguous boundaries in the redistricting
18 process. We must not permit multi-culturalism
19 and/or gerrymandering to continue to divide
20 Florida the way it is today.

21 And by the way, my -- I was born in
22 Washington, D.C.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: And I apologize, sir, but
24 if I could get you to make your main points and
25 then conclude.

1 MR. CALSETTA: Okay. I came to Miami in
2 1948, so I've been around a while, off and on.

3 My point is simply that Congressional
4 District 22, in my view, is the most
5 problematic example of what is wrong and how we
6 need to fix that.

7 And I have an attachment, which I can
8 provide to the Committee. I know this to be
9 true, because I worked in District 22 in 2010.
10 I was another Democrat for Allen West.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Sir, I am going to have to
12 ask you if you would conclude, please.

13 MR. CALSETTA: I will just give you -- I
14 will just provide a copy of the remaining
15 statement. I thank you for what you do -- are
16 trying to do, and I hope that you are able to
17 follow the previous speaker's advice and take
18 into consideration his maps.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, and
20 please do give us the extended remarks that you
21 have.

22 It is Gepsie Metellus, is that right? And
23 you will correct me if I am wrong, I am sure.
24 Thank you so much for being here today.

25 MS. METELLUS: Thank you, Senator Gaetz.

1 Good morning, bonjour. In the spirit of E
2 pluribus unum, I want to thank you all for
3 being here and for providing an opportunity for
4 all of us to convey to you what our sentiment
5 and feelings are.

6 I don't come before you as an expert this
7 morning. I come to you as a dedicated, engaged
8 citizen of Miami-Dade County, one who is
9 concerned about the future of all of us. One
10 who is concerned about the need to have
11 diversity in our governing bodies, one who is
12 concerned that every single resident and
13 citizen throughout Miami-Dade County recognizes
14 his or herself and the leadership that they
15 choose to elect.

16 And so I simply want to implore you to
17 allow me an opportunity to elect someone of my
18 choosing, elect someone who will represent my
19 interests, my needs, my aspirations, my issues,
20 who represents me in terms of recognizing and
21 understanding my history, my traditions, who
22 represents me in terms of ensuring that my
23 interests, my needs and aspirations are not in
24 contradiction with those of my next-door
25 neighbor, someone who will, indeed, reflect the

1 growing population of Miami-Dade County's
2 Haitian-American population.

3 As you know, we are probably over 500,000
4 strong in south Florida. I believe Dr. Georges
5 mentioned that we, in fact, are about
6 35 percent of the voters, and specifically
7 Congressional District 17.

8 We have a 30-year presence in Miami-Dade
9 County, and very much willing to work towards
10 improving conditions for all of us.

11 And so I ask you to ensure that you
12 protect those political gains that we have made
13 over the past several years. I want to implore
14 you to indeed maintain the boundaries as they
15 are such that our interests are protected in
16 the manner that I have stated.

17 And I want to urge you to, of course,
18 have -- proceed with what the -- with the Fair
19 District standards as outlined in Amendments 5
20 and 6 such that, of course, no one's rights and
21 interests are in fact denied.

22 And finally, I want to encourage you to
23 come back and seek additional citizen and
24 resident input once you have drawn those
25 preliminary maps, such that we then continue to

1 be a part of this process.

2 I want to encourage you to ensure that we
3 are a part of the process and that you hear and
4 acquiesce to needs and issues put before you,
5 and I want to thank you again for your presence
6 here this morning.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
8 ma'am, we appreciate your testimony.

9 And now the Honorable Janet McAliley, we
10 thank you for your distinguished service to the
11 people of Miami-Dade County and our state, and
12 following Ms. McAliley, Larry Thorson, and then
13 Dr. -- and I apologize, Doctor, I am afraid --
14 you represent the Miami-Dade Democratic
15 something at 4824 Northwest 15th Court.

16 And I apologize, Doctor, it is not your
17 handwriting, I am sure, and it is my eyes, then
18 Dan Espino, and then Rhonda Sibilialia.

19 Ms. McAliley, thank you for being here,
20 and we look forward to hearing from you.

21 MS. McALILEY: Thank you, Senator Gaetz,
22 and all of the -- all of your colleagues who
23 are here to hear what the people have to say
24 about redistricting in Florida.

25 My name is Janet McAliley. I live in

1 Coconut Grove. I am in a Senate district, a
2 House district, a city district, that runs
3 pretty much along the coast of this Dade
4 County.

5 It is a more or less affluent, white
6 district, and it has been drawn to keep
7 somebody like me in office. When I was on the
8 School Board from 1980 to 1996, we had to live
9 in specific geographic areas of the county, but
10 we all ran county-wide.

11 And it certainly sensitized me to the
12 needs of people all over this county. And my
13 district was Coral Gables, Coconut Grove,
14 Pinecrest. I spent more time in Liberty City
15 and West Perrine and other parts of the county
16 than I did in my own district, because I had
17 been trained through the electoral process to
18 know the needs of those counties.

19 So I am hoping that districts will not be
20 drawn to perpetuate political -- specific
21 political ambitions. I think it is -- in this
22 time in our country where we are so polarized
23 politically, and sometimes ethnically, we need
24 to be responsible for all people and be aware
25 of their needs and not draw political lines to

1 perpetuate the divisiveness that is in our
2 country today and in this state, too.

3 I think that it is important that the
4 people have time to review the maps that the
5 Legislators draw way ahead of the time when
6 they will be passed.

7 These kind of hearings should be held when
8 the maps are drawn and we can see what you all
9 have come up with. I don't have the expertise
10 to draw those maps, but I have very strong
11 feelings that they need to encompass people of
12 all sorts of backgrounds.

13 My respect for Gepsie Metellus is very
14 high, but I have to say I would like to know
15 that some of my interests are the same as
16 Haitian-Americans and native black Americans,
17 as well as the more affluent people whose
18 district I am in right now.

19 The whole process needs to have integrity.
20 We are so tired of the kind of power-broking
21 and warfare that exists in politics in this
22 country today, and I urge you to put personal
23 power ambitions aside and draw your districts
24 so that they will make us understand each other
25 and appreciate each other and know that our

1 future well-being is together, not divided as
2 we are so often in this country today. Thank
3 you.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. McAliley.

5 Next we will have Larry Thorson, please,
6 and because we have had now, fortunately, a
7 large number of additional individuals ask to
8 speak, we are going to be -- we are going to be
9 a little tighter on time, and after three
10 minutes, we are going to ask you to yield the
11 floor to your friends and neighbors who also
12 want to speak.

13 Mr. Thorson, and following him, the Doctor
14 from the Miami-Dade Democratic group, and then
15 Dan Espino and then Rhonda Sibiliala, and then
16 Terry Coble from the League of Women Voters.

17 Mr. Thorson, thank you for coming. You
18 are recognized.

19 MR. THORSON: Thank you. I am Larry
20 Thorson. I live in Miami Beach. Gwen Margolis
21 is my State Senator and Richard Steinberg is my
22 State Representative.

23 The -- some of the things that have been
24 said here today made me -- it intensified my
25 feeling about the word "fairness" that we are

1 talking about here.

2 We are talking about fair districts, that
3 is our -- that is our aim. And I said on the
4 form that I am representing retired people. I
5 am a retired reporter.

6 I worked for a long time for the
7 Associated Press, including about 20 years
8 overseas, and the word "fair" came through in
9 my experiences a couple of times.

10 The first time that it really hit me, I
11 was working in our Tokyo bureau and I was
12 listening to some of my Japanese colleagues
13 chatter along in Japanese, and I kept hearing
14 what sounded like the word "fair" coming out
15 pretty strongly.

16 And when they finished, I asked them,
17 "Were you using the English word 'fair' as you
18 were talking in Japanese?" They said, "Yes,
19 there isn't quite the word in Japanese that has
20 the impact, the meaning, the broad meaning,
21 that 'fair' does in English."

22 My next assignment was in Germany, I was
23 working in Berlin, and the same thing happened.
24 I was listening to my German colleagues chatter
25 along in German, which I understand fairly

1 well, and they, too, were saying, "Das ist
2 nicht fair," and I asked them the same thing --
3 well, there are words that are kind of like
4 this in German.

5 But, anyway, they had appropriated this
6 English word, even though both of those
7 countries, Japan and Germany, were occupied and
8 still are by American troops, which is not
9 always a pleasant experience, but they had
10 absorbed some important things about the United
11 States, which this is not in the Constitution,
12 you know, if you look for the word "fair" in
13 the U.S. Constitution, you won't find it.

14 But somehow it is a very important
15 concept, and it is what we voted for in very
16 large numbers last year in the election, even
17 though say the -- the left or the liberal side
18 of the -- of the voting public didn't come out
19 very strongly, if there weren't a whole lot of
20 Tea Party voters out there, they must have
21 voted pretty strongly, too, for the idea that
22 we need fair districts.

23 And it is the kind of thing that we voted
24 for in very large numbers, because it isn't
25 fair, it wasn't fair, it hasn't been fair for

1 some time.

2 We've got a system that is one of the --
3 acknowledged around the country as one of the
4 most gerrymandered. This is a system that
5 is -- in a way, it is against this very
6 important idea of what makes the United States
7 an important place, and it contributes to a
8 public distrust of politicians that I am sure
9 you are aware of, that if there are things
10 wrong between the public and the politicians,
11 the gerrymandered, the unfair districts are a
12 big part of it. So at the --

13 SENATOR GAETZ: And, sir, I am going to
14 have to ask you, if possible, to conclude.

15 MR. THORSON: I am. At the end of this
16 process, I just say we will be able to see
17 again whether it is fair, and we will judge you
18 accordingly. Thank you.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Thorson.
20 And next -- and, Doctor, I am very sorry that I
21 was unable to read your writing. Can you help
22 us out with your name, please?

23 DR. CHRISTIAN: Good morning. That's how
24 doctors write sometimes. I developed my own
25 brief forms in terms of shorthand, because I

1 have so many classes. I'd like to say --

2 SENATOR GAETZ: And would you tell us your
3 name, ma'am?

4 DR. CHRISTIAN: I am getting ready to. I
5 would like to say -- I was going to address you
6 first.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: All right.

8 DR. CHRISTIAN: To the Senate Chair, House
9 Chair, to the Senate and House committee, my
10 name is Dr. Mae Christian, C-h-r-i-s-t-i-a-n,
11 like church.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: You could write
13 prescriptions with this. This is great.

14 DR. CHRISTIAN: I would like to also say
15 good morning to our voters that are present and
16 had an interest to be here.

17 As the President of the Miami-Dade
18 Democratic Black Caucus and a member of the
19 Miami-Dade Democratic Party Executive
20 Committee, I would like to say, in all
21 fairness, it is not fair to be taxed without
22 representation, and a lot of us live in
23 unincorporated Dade and in areas that are in
24 plight.

25 Recently a study stated that Miami is one

1 of the most plighted cities in -- is the most
2 plighted city and suffering city in America
3 with the highest unemployment rate.

4 And speaking for the African-American
5 community that is possibly in Overtown, Miami,
6 Miami Gardens, Opa-Locka, and some parts of
7 Coconut Grove and South Miami, that instead of
8 gerrymandering the drawings of this -- these
9 districts, I recommend highly that the
10 minorities, as you call some of us, that we
11 need those districts drawn fairly, that we can
12 be represented fairly.

13 And I also say that it is time for our
14 leadership and representatives that we voted
15 for to remember that we are the people that put
16 you there, and at this particular point,
17 whether it's the Haitian community, Hispanic,
18 African-American, that we need you all to
19 listen to our voice and let you know that we
20 have a right to have our voice heard. Thank
21 you very much.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Doctor.

23 And next, Dan Espino, Councilman for the
24 City of Miami Springs, then Rhonda Sibilila,
25 then Terry Coble with the League of Women

1 Voters, and then Marlon Hill with the Caribbean
2 Bar Association.

3 Councilman, thank you very much for being
4 here, and you are recognized. Thanks for your
5 service.

6 COUNCILMAN ESPINO: Thank you, Chairman,
7 and thank you, Senators and Representatives for
8 your service as well, certainly for being down
9 here in south Florida, and for certainly
10 conducting these meetings and genuinely
11 listening to the public before the maps are
12 drawn.

13 My name is Dan Espino. I am a Councilman
14 for the City of Miami Springs. I am a
15 life-long resident of the City of Miami Springs
16 and Miami-Dade County. And when I am not
17 fighting crime and solving quality of life
18 issues on the council, I am a practicing
19 attorney.

20 I am Hispanic, and that is the point that
21 I come to bring to you today, the point of
22 ethnicity. Amendments 5 and 6 certainly
23 require neutrality as to party and incumbency,
24 but they cannot in any way call for the -- the
25 diminishment of Hispanic representation in our

1 State Legislature and in Congress.

2 As a matter of fact, it would call for the
3 opposite, and it is a constitutional right of
4 the minorities to be represented as such.

5 Miami-Dade County is a very unique place
6 in the state of Florida. We have 65 percent of
7 our population currently comprised of
8 Hispanics, but currently Miami-Dade's Senate
9 seats are comprised of less than 50 percent
10 Hispanics. So there is not adequate
11 representation in there.

12 What we need is compact districts that
13 adequately represent and reflect the continuity
14 of certain populations, that certainly seek to
15 minimize jumping chasms, jumping gaps into
16 other counties.

17 I think the goal should be to push forward
18 Hispanic representation as it reflects in the
19 community, to certainly avoid retrogression of
20 Hispanic votes and to amplify a popular
21 diversity in our representation.

22 I implore that all of you continue to do
23 the outstanding job that you are doing in
24 Tallahassee, but to keep in mind the diversity
25 of our community and truly what has been the

1 fuel of Miami-Dade County, of south Florida,
2 which has been the melting pot, the salad bowl,
3 the soup bowl, of our community coming together
4 and being able to adequately elect individuals
5 that represent our beliefs, our choices and our
6 way of life.

7 Thank you very much, and God bless you
8 all.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Councilman.

10 And now, Rhonda Sibilialia is recognized, and
11 we thank you very much for taking time from
12 your day to be with us, and look forward to
13 your testimony.

14 MS. SIBILIALIA: Thank you, and good morning,
15 ladies and gentlemen. You want to know my
16 story? Well, here's my story: I am a native
17 Miamian. I am a product of Miami-Dade Public
18 Schools and the State University System.

19 I have worked as a broadcast journalist in
20 government and corporate communications, and
21 Senator Gaetz, that includes a couple of years
22 at VITAS.

23 I currently work outreach for the
24 Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics and Public
25 Trust, and, no, that is not an oxymoron. But I

1 am here as a private citizen, because I have
2 voted in every election since I was 18 and that
3 was a long time ago.

4 My home is in an unincorporated area of
5 Miami-Dade County commonly known as West
6 Kendall. The major concerns for the region are
7 smart growth, because there's been a lot of
8 dumb growth, the need for green space, we have
9 overburdened transit systems and other
10 attributes of rapidly developing suburbia.

11 My political districts, I think, are
12 horribly gerrymandered, and I would like to
13 explain why.

14 Congressional District 25 spans from
15 Homestead and West Kendall through Everglades
16 National Park and northwest to Immokalee. It
17 includes three very different counties:
18 Western Miami-Dade, mainland Monroe and a huge
19 section of eastern Collier.

20 Now, the concerns of the very good
21 residents of Immokalee are very different than
22 those of us who live in West Kendall. And I
23 appreciate that the alligators need some
24 representation.

25 So I think that for this Congressional

1 District, despite Mr. Henry's very good
2 intention, the boundaries, the Dade/Collier
3 line, should be the boundaries dividing that
4 Congressional District.

5 I am in Florida Senate District 38, which
6 runs north to south from the Doral city limits
7 to the Redland, and for those of you from other
8 parts of the state, that is the huge
9 agricultural basket that provides much of the
10 goods that fill our -- the nation's vegetable
11 basket during the winter.

12 So it includes the suburbs of West
13 Kendall, Sweetwater and Westchester to those
14 farms. And, again, our needs and interests are
15 very different.

16 Other parts of West Kendall, for example,
17 residents with whom I have much more in common,
18 the massive Hammocks community, are in a
19 paralleling district, 34, and, to me, that
20 makes no sense.

21 I am also in Florida House District 119,
22 and that stretches further south from the Doral
23 line to include Homestead. Now, the
24 Representative of this district was kind enough
25 to include a map with the recent flyer that he

1 sent out announcing these meetings, and I know
2 that you can't see this very well, but it is
3 very large in the bottom.

4 Then there is a skinny little line that
5 goes up north that includes just a very small
6 section of the county. District 119 apparently
7 is so strange that the elected Representative
8 doesn't even want to live there. Yes, sir.
9 Rumor is that he is waiting for his homestead
10 to be gerrymandered into this district.

11 Now, that being said, there is no reason
12 for these very expensive and time-consuming
13 public hearings to learn how we want
14 redistricting to take place. We told you with
15 overwhelming support of Amendments 5 and 6 that
16 require the consideration of municipal, natural
17 or obvious boundaries when redrawing districts,
18 and not to base it on political party or
19 candidate considerations.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: And, ma'am, because your
21 time has elapsed, could you bring it in for a
22 landing?

23 MS. SIBILIA: I am. I think this is
24 really a waste of our scarce tax dollars and --
25 by fighting the will of the people in those

1 amendments. I would like you to put those
2 supercomputers to work, get some actual
3 proposals on record, make them make common
4 sense and not political sense.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much for your
6 testimony.

7 Next we will hear from Terry Coble with
8 the League of Women Voters, then Marlon Hill
9 with the Caribbean Bar Association, and then
10 Francesca Menes, I believe, with the Florida
11 Immigrant Coalition, and then we will have
12 Mayor Michael -- and I apologize, Mr. Mayor,
13 Michael Pisa -- Pizzi from the town of Miami
14 Lakes.

15 Ms. Coble, thank you for coming, and you
16 are recognized.

17 MS. COBLE: Good morning, Honorable Chair
18 and members of the Redistricting Committee. My
19 name is Terry Coble. I am the President of the
20 League of Women Voters of Miami-Dade County,
21 and a 20-year resident of the City of Miami.
22 Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to
23 speak before you today.

24 This year's redistricting is a historic
25 event, because it is the first apportionment to

1 occur after the passage of Amendments 5 and 6
2 by which Florida voters enacted standards to
3 guide the legislative redistricting process.

4 These standards prohibit districts drawn
5 to favor political parties or incumbents, or to
6 deny racial or language minorities the equal
7 opportunity to participate in the political
8 process and to elect representatives of their
9 choice.

10 While the League of Women Voters applauds
11 efforts to seek public input, the present
12 hearings are being held, we believe, at the
13 wrong time.

14 They should be held after the Legislature
15 has drawn proposed maps so that the public can
16 be heard on needed changes. The public has
17 already spoken on redistricting by enacting
18 Amendments 5 and 6 in November of last year.

19 It is now up to the Legislature to assume
20 its constitutional duty and to begin applying
21 these new standards without delay.

22 Although the leadership in the state
23 Legislature is on record as promising hearings
24 after the maps are drawn, there has been no
25 commitment to hold these hearings throughout

1 the state, as is the case for the hearings that
2 are being held now.

3 In addition, the proposed timeline for
4 legislative redistricting is also far too long.
5 Maps should be approved by the Legislature in
6 early January of 2012, so as to allow for
7 mandatory reviews and probable legal
8 challenges, while also giving enough notice of
9 legislative districts so that incum- -- so that
10 challengers can timely declare their
11 candidacies. Otherwise, the process will favor
12 incumbents, in violation of the requirements of
13 Amendments 5 and 6.

14 The League of Women Voters urges the
15 Legislature to adopt a timeline for
16 redistricting that makes sense, given existing
17 candidate qualifying and primary dates, and
18 that includes hearings throughout the state
19 after the maps have been proposed --

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am, could I ask you to
21 conclude just in fairness to those who are
22 behind you?

23 MS. COBLE: Yes, I am on my last sentence.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: All right. Fire away.

25 MS. COBLE: We hope that you will respond

1 to this request in a manner appropriate to the
2 seriousness of the issue, and, again, thank you
3 for the opportunity for allowing us to speak.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
5 Ms. Coble.

6 As we are going through today's hearing,
7 you will notice that there may be some people
8 who ask specific questions about timeline or
9 something else, and what we will try to do,
10 time permitting at the end, is first to make
11 sure that any members of the committee have an
12 opportunity to address any comments they wish
13 to make, but then I will turn to Speaker
14 Designate Weatherford and ask him if he would
15 respond to any factual questions that are
16 answered so that we can all leave with the same
17 set of facts.

18 While the hearing has been proceeding, I
19 am pleased that we have been joined by two
20 leaders of the Florida Senate, the Democratic
21 Leader of the Senate, Senator Nan Rich, and
22 Senator Rich, if you would identify yourself
23 for the audience. Senator Nan Rich.

24 And the Republican Leader of the Florida
25 Senate, Senator Andy Gardiner from Orlando.

1 Senator Gardiner. So we've got -- we've got
2 them all, we've got both sides.

3 And now we would like to hear from Marlon
4 Hill with the Caribbean Bar Association, then
5 Francesca Menes with the Florida Immigrant
6 Coalition, and then Mayor Pizzi from the Town
7 of Miami Lakes, and then Elizabeth Pines, also
8 from the League of Women Voters.

9 Mr. Hill, thank you.

10 MR. HILL: Good morning, welcome to Miami,
11 all. Mr. Chair, Mr. Speaker Designate, first
12 let me just thank newly-minted President of the
13 Wolfson campus, Madeline Pumariega, for
14 allowing us this opportunity for being here
15 this morning.

16 Personally, my name is Marlon Hill. I
17 reside in West Kendall. I am glad to see my
18 State Representative here, Ana Rivas Logan, and
19 State Senator Anitere Flores here as well. My
20 Congressman, Mr. Mario Diaz-Balart is now
21 present.

22 Mr. Chair, we have an opportunity here on
23 our hands to really reset the values that we
24 have as a state. Some people may say that when
25 you come to a person's home and you see how it

1 is painted or what is inside, it is a
2 reflection of who they are as a family.

3 We will be watching very closely. I am
4 very glad for this opportunity and am very
5 thankful for the Redistricting Committee staff
6 for providing this opportunity for us to
7 participate in such a public manner, because we
8 are watching very closely.

9 And if you are not paying very close
10 attention to the radio waves and the
11 newspapers, folks are not really pleased about
12 any obstructionist behavior across the country.
13 We are not in the mood.

14 So we are going to be watching this
15 process very closely, and we are just imploring
16 that the Committee take into consideration that
17 the language of the amendments speak very
18 clearly, and words are very powerful, favor or
19 disfavor, incumbency or political party,
20 compact, equal, contiguous, and not to deny
21 racial or language.

22 But here in Miami-Dade County, I must tell
23 you, even in Broward County and in various
24 counties across the state, this state is very
25 complex. As you take a look at the U.S. Census

1 numbers, Mr. Chair, you will see that our
2 population is becoming increasingly diverse.

3 How do we know what fair looks like? How
4 do we know what equal looks like? How do we
5 know what denying racial or language barriers
6 looks like?

7 And, of course, this can go as far as to
8 the highest courts of the land, but we are
9 hoping that we can give you some guidance to
10 allow you to bring some balance to what racial
11 or language means.

12 Is it Creole? Is it a version of English
13 in terms of the heritage of my people from
14 another country in the Caribbean? It is going
15 to be very difficult for you to find what is
16 perfect in these boundaries, I must tell you.

17 But the road to perfection, Mr. Chair, is
18 filled with imperfections, okay, and we just
19 urge you to travel this road of imperfections
20 to a path of perfections.

21 For example, one of the most blighted
22 neighborhoods in Miami-Dade County, Mr. Chair,
23 is next to one of the most richest, half a
24 mile. A Representative could potentially --
25 one of the problems that we have is that

1 Representatives do not care, or we do not care
2 about our neighbor.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: And I would ask you if you
4 could conclude --

5 MR. HILL: I will conclude.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: -- out of respect to
7 others.

8 MR. HILL: I will conclude. I urge you
9 not to consider packing minorities in single
10 districts, because that would also
11 disenfranchise folks who are non-minority
12 packed in their own district, and I thank you
13 for hearing my comments.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much,
15 sir.

16 Francesca -- is it Menes? Francesca
17 Menes, and then the Mayor will be following
18 Francesca, then Elizabeth Pines from the League
19 of Women Voters, and then Thomas Gara, I
20 believe, and then Harold, I think it is
21 Fascer -- Foster, I'm sorry.

22 Thankfully I have the President sitting
23 next to me who can correct me -- from Miami
24 Beach, Harold Foster.

25 Francesca, thank you for coming, and you

1 are recognized.

2 MS. MENES: Hi, good morning, everyone.
3 Thank you for allowing me to speak. And I
4 would like to say good morning to my Senator,
5 Senator Gwen Margolis, and my Representative,
6 John Patrick Julien.

7 So I am just basically going to give kind
8 of like a quick overview and kind of like, I
9 guess, my feelings on everything.

10 I am with the Florida Immigrant Coalition,
11 but I am also a member of the Miami-Dade Young
12 Democrats and I also sit on the Miami-Dade
13 Commission for Women.

14 Districts can help, but they can also
15 harm. One of the tactics to fracture minority
16 populations into multiple districts is -- in
17 order to break them up is with their voting
18 power.

19 Another tactic is to consolidate as many
20 minority voters as possible in just a few
21 districts in order to limit their population
22 voting power in the Legislature as a whole,
23 also known as cracking and packing, and this
24 way can reliably limit minority representation.

25 The Federal Voting Act of 1965 was

1 designed to combat discrimination, used to deny
2 minority voters the rights to an effective
3 vote, including redistricting techniques like
4 those above.

5 As federal law, the voting rights
6 amendment overrides inconsistent state laws and
7 practices. Two sections of the Voting Rights
8 Act are particularly important to
9 redistricting, Sections 2 and Section 5.

10 Currently the Florida House is using
11 taxpayer money to attack and invalidate
12 provisions of the State Constitution that was
13 supported by 63 percent of the -- 63 percent of
14 the voters of the state of Florida. It is
15 spending our money to join lawsuits filed by
16 Representative Brown and Representative
17 Diaz-Balart asking the courts to strike
18 Amendment 6 from the Florida Constitution.

19 Secretary of State -- Secretary of State
20 Kurt Browning, who headed the "Nix 5 and 6"
21 campaign, is the defendant in the case. So
22 Florida taxpayers are actually now paying to
23 sue and defend the lawsuit.

24 All of this money is being spent while
25 teachers are being fired, social services are

1 being cut and not a single job is being
2 created. This is outrageous. Florida voters
3 should not and will not tolerate blatant
4 efforts to protect incumbents and undermine the
5 fair and competitive -- fair and competitive
6 elections.

7 We voted for Amendments 5 and 6 in the
8 past mid-term elections, and we ask that you
9 adhere to what the voters of the state of
10 Florida asked you to do. Thank you.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
12 Francesca.

13 Mr. Mayor? Is Mayor -- is it Pizzi?
14 Mayor Pizzi, are you here? All right. We will
15 pass the Mayor for the moment and go to
16 Elizabeth Pines from the League of Women
17 Voters, followed by Thomas Gara and then Harold
18 Foster and then Greg Carney from the Venetian
19 Islands Homeowners Association.

20 Ms. Pines, thank you for being here, and
21 you are recognized.

22 MS. PINES: Thank you. Thank you for
23 having me.

24 I have been a resident of Miami-Dade
25 County for 30 years. I am also on the State

1 Board of the League of Women Voters of Florida
2 and of Miami-Dade County. I am also an
3 attorney.

4 I want to start by reiterating
5 Representative Scott Randolph's query regarding
6 the expenditure related to the lawsuit the
7 House has filed against Fair District
8 constitutional amendment.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Pines, could you speak
10 more directly into the mike so everyone can
11 hear you?

12 MS. PINES: Yes, sir.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

14 MS. PINES: Have you heard me?

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, much better, thank
16 you.

17 MS. PINES: Okay. How much is this
18 costing us? Speaker Dean Cannon has refused to
19 provide this information, alleging that it will
20 divulge the Chamber's legal strategy. I ask
21 myself, will Representative Randolph have to
22 file another lawsuit in order for us to have
23 access to this public information?

24 Representative Diaz-Balart and Corrine
25 Brown have filed lawsuits challenging the

1 constitutional of Amendment 6. The House
2 has filed a complaint and intervention joining
3 them and requesting that this amendment be
4 declared unconstitutional under the elections
5 clause of the United States Constitution.

6 Why are we doing this? Amendments 5 and
7 6, as we have heard many times, has been voted
8 by Florida voters by 63 percent. Why are you
9 challenging the -- you know, our will, the will
10 of the people?

11 Why are we continuing to spend taxpayer
12 dollars on this lawsuit? It is time to stop
13 this. Dean Cannon, stop wasting our taxpayer
14 dollars on this. It is time to get to work on
15 what really counts.

16 Senator Gaetz and Representative
17 Weatherford, you have stated, and it was stated
18 in *The Miami Herald* that these public hearings
19 are to listen to the constituents, will listen
20 to us. Let's stop wasting our money and get to
21 what really counts.

22 I would like you to commit to three
23 things. Number one, adopt a working timeline.
24 For example, make October 3rd the deadline for
25 your proposed maps. This is sufficient time,

1 this is 30 days after these public hearings are
2 over.

3 In addition, you have the technology and
4 you will have the input of all the
5 constituents.

6 Number two, commit to complete all the
7 reviews by December 2011, and also allow
8 citizen review.

9 And number three, the most important,
10 please commit to have your final maps by the
11 first week of January, the first week of
12 session. That is January 13th, 2011. Thank
13 you very much.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
15 Ms. Pines.

16 Next we will hear from Thomas Gara.
17 Mr. Gara, are you here, sir? You may fire when
18 ready, sir. And following Mr. Gara is Harold
19 Foster and then Greg Carney and then Jose
20 Rodriguez.

21 You are recognized, and thank you for
22 being here.

23 MR. GARA: Thank you very much. My name
24 is Thomas Gara, I am a resident of Miami, and I
25 grew up in Michigan. I lived in New Orleans,

1 Boston and San Francisco during my lifetime. I
2 have also traveled the world and lived in
3 Europe for four years and South America for
4 five.

5 I find myself here out of curiosity to see
6 just how a state gerrymanders and
7 re-gerrymanders its districts. And I have
8 listened to these good people come up and tell
9 you, "Oh, gerrymander it so the Haitians get a
10 benefit," "Gerrymander it so the Cubans have a
11 benefit."

12 I would like to ask you not to do any of
13 that. I would like to ask you to do districts
14 that are balanced politically. We have two
15 major parties, plus independent parties. You
16 should have a district that has an X number of
17 dominant party equaling the number of
18 non-dominant parties, and that will create a
19 political environment that will be issue-based
20 and not politically-based.

21 I'm sorry, but it will take away your
22 comfortable little districts that are easy to
23 win, but if we can change our political system
24 to one that has issues instead of political
25 parties, and we can look at our political

1 system as something that is building a country,
2 a state and the nation, it will be far better.

3 I'm sorry, but I don't think the Haitians
4 or the Cubans or any other minority in this
5 city have any more rights than me, a general
6 American.

7 When I was in Europe for three years, I
8 learned German and I spoke it well at the end
9 of three years. When I was in Brazil, I
10 learned Portuguese Brazil -- Brazilian
11 Portuguese, and I spoke it well at the end of
12 three years, and I lived there and worked as an
13 exporter for five. I submit to you that our
14 good immigrants need to do the same.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Can we bring it back to
16 redistricting, please? That is why we are
17 here.

18 MR. GARA: Redistricting, well, that is
19 what I was talking about, redistricting,
20 because these people are all asking for special
21 benefits because of their special situation.

22 Their special situation is that they are
23 immigrants in another country, and they need to
24 adapt to the country, they need to adapt to its
25 language, its political means and whatever.

1 I did that when I was abroad. It is not
2 hard to do. It is nice to do. You learn the
3 culture, you learn the language, you get it on
4 in the country.

5 So I would ask you to redistrict according
6 to political party demographics so that each --
7 each district has a major party, and that is
8 equaled by the non-dominant parties involved,
9 that would be say Republicans and then
10 Democrats and Independents, or vice versa or
11 whatever.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, your time has
13 lapsed. I appreciate your testimony very much.

14 Next is Harold Foster. Mr. Foster, and
15 then following Mr. Foster, Greg Carney and then
16 Jose Rodriguez and then Evan Ross, if you will
17 be on deck.

18 And we have an on deck circle up here if
19 you'd care to sit up there to make it easier
20 for you to come forward.

21 Mr. Foster, you are recognized. Thanks
22 for coming.

23 MR. FOSTER: Thank you very much. Good
24 afternoon. I also want to respect our own
25 State Representative, Carlos Lopez-Cantera,

1 President of our Miami-Dade delegation. We
2 have a fantastic Miami-Dade delegation that all
3 of us here in Dade County should be very, very
4 proud of. And this is a great room and forum
5 to speak.

6 I live in the state Senate district of
7 Gwen Margolis. She's been phenomenal. We
8 would ask that we keep the coastal areas kind
9 of unified in that sense.

10 I also live in State Seat 107. I also
11 have -- when I was Chief of Staff for
12 Commissioner Simon Cruz, I had the honor of
13 working alongside of Luis Garcia and Richard
14 Steinberg. I commend you both with the
15 phenomenal job you have done, but I couldn't
16 agree more, we're all one county, we're all
17 together, so we shouldn't be looking at Anglo,
18 Hispanic, Haitian-American.

19 It is really in the very best interest of
20 economic development of Miami-Dade County.

21 I would suggest that part of Miami Beach,
22 maybe the south part of Miami Beach be still
23 connected to Miami downtown, Coconut Grove
24 area, and I recommend that for tourism,
25 hospitality and also to keep a -- somewhat of a

1 communication between Miami-Dade County, the
2 City of Miami and the U.S. House, and that is
3 pretty much it.

4 I think you are all doing a brilliant job,
5 and let's hope this all works out for the best.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
7 Mr. Foster.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Next, Greg Carney with the
10 Venetian Islands Homeowners Association, then
11 Jose Rodriguez and then Evan Ross and then
12 Maria Rodriguez from the Florida Immigrant
13 Coalition.

14 Mr. Carney, you are recognized, and we
15 appreciate you taking time to come see us
16 today.

17 MR. CARNEY: Well, thank you very much.
18 As President of the Venetian Island Homeowners
19 Association, I have to say we appreciate the
20 fact that the community -- or the committee
21 here has schlepped -- that is a technical term
22 we use in Miami Beach -- has schlepped its way
23 down here to listen to us.

24 Venetian Island Homeowners Association is
25 one of many homeowners associations that exists

1 in Dade County. We happen to represent the
2 causeway that runs between Miami and Miami
3 Beach behind the Miami Herald building over to
4 South Beach in Miami Beach. We are maybe five,
5 six hundred families in that area. It is not
6 very big.

7 The message I wanted to bring here I think
8 echoes some of the other messages which you
9 have heard, which is we in Dade County are a
10 relatively large county and we have a fairly
11 dense population here.

12 We have enough population in Dade County
13 to have three, four U.S. Congressional
14 Districts that are contained within the county
15 itself.

16 Instead, we have a number of districts
17 that stretch all over the place. You know,
18 District 17 and District 21 are reasonable, but
19 you take a look at our district, which is
20 District 20, and it loops up around into
21 Broward County. District 23 is almost totally
22 insane.

23 If you take a look at that, it is actually
24 two discontinuous districts in terms of
25 population, although it kind of loops out into

1 the Everglades in order to kind of create kind
2 of a continuous map, I guess to meet the letter
3 of whatever the law is.

4 But the point I want to make to the group
5 here is that the compact, contiguous districts
6 make for better representation. If we, the
7 voters, can kind of physically get at you, the
8 Representatives, and know where you are and
9 know who you are and you know who we are, you
10 will meet our needs, you will listen to us.
11 That's been my experience as President of our
12 homeowners association dealing with various
13 political representatives that we have. You
14 will meet our needs.

15 Whether we happen to match you in ethnic
16 background or religion or skin color or
17 whatever, you will meet our needs if you know
18 who we are, we are relatively close to where
19 you are, that sort of thing.

20 So I would like to urge the Committee to
21 pay attention to the amendments that have been
22 passed, look at political bound- -- existing
23 municipal boundaries, if you can, in drawing
24 the districts, and try to get the districts,
25 especially in the United States Congressional

1 Districts, as compact as you possibly can.

2 Thank you very much.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,

4 Mr. Carney.

5 Next, Jose Rodriguez, then Evan Ross, then

6 Maria Rodriguez and then C. J. Ortuno.

7 Mr. Rodriguez, thank you for being here,

8 and we look forward to your testimony.

9 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Jose Javier

10 Rodriguez, I am a resident of the City of

11 Miami. Thank you for listening to what we have

12 to say today.

13 For me, the Amendments 5 and 6 come down

14 to keeping our communities together, and what

15 that is all about is improving the quality of

16 our democracy when we keep our communities

17 together.

18 I live smack in the middle of my

19 neighborhood. I walk two houses down, and

20 there's a different State Rep district. My

21 neighbor and I speak the same languages, same

22 ethnicity, we are served by the same school,

23 same public transportation, and yet we have two

24 different State Representatives. And, again, I

25 live smack in the middle of my neighborhood.

1 I also work a lot with community-based
2 organizations, both privately and
3 professionally. I am at Legal Services and am
4 active in my community, and it makes it very
5 difficult.

6 Anecdotally, I will tell you that most
7 people do not know who their State Senator or
8 State Representative is. It is just a fact.
9 And what is even worse -- and part of that is
10 because of gerrymandering, it is not
11 exclusively because of that.

12 But one of the effects of that -- one of
13 the things that makes that even worse is that
14 even those who know who they are represented
15 by, most people can't guess or would have a
16 hard time guessing who else is in that same
17 district.

18 So, for example, in Little Havana, would
19 you be able to guess that you are also
20 represented by the same person as people in
21 Cocoplum? You might not be able to guess that.
22 And some of your introductions in terms of
23 listing all the different places you represent
24 I think communicates -- communicates that
25 probably better than I just did.

1 And I think, you know, the effect of what
2 would happen of keeping communities together is
3 echoing a lot of what has been said in prior
4 testimony is that it would create less safe
5 seats. And that is a good thing.

6 We as voters want competition, we want
7 choice. And, you know, if you look at the
8 statistics, a quarter of Miami-Dade County's
9 registered voters have no party affiliation,
10 and where would their voice be in there?

11 So I just want to echo a lot of what has
12 been said already, and really encourage you to
13 get this done quickly and get it done fairly,
14 and hopefully it won't have to go through the
15 Supreme Court and what-not. Thank you very
16 much.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

18 Next, Evan Ross, and following Mr. Ross,
19 Maria Rodriguez and then C. J. Ortuno and then
20 Jonathon Fried.

21 Mr. Ross, thank you for coming very much.

22 MR. ROSS: Thank you for having me.

23 Good morning, my name is Evan Ross. I am
24 fortunate to be represented by Representative
25 Richard Steinberg and Senator Gwen Margolis.

1 After hearing those long lists -- the long
2 list of cities that each of you represent in
3 your introductions, I am very hopeful that when
4 this process concludes, we can significantly
5 shorten those lists, thereby giving each of you
6 the ability to better represent the people
7 within your districts.

8 I am going to attempt to keep my remarks
9 brief so that my remaining time may be used in
10 order to answer the two questions that I will
11 ask.

12 The first question is directed to all of
13 our Representatives on stage, and I will simply
14 ask for a show of hands to respond to it.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: I'll tell you what, we are
16 not going to do show-of-hands questions. You
17 can ask any question you want, and then at the
18 time remaining at the end of the hearing, we
19 will ask Representatives or Senators if they
20 wish to comment on any questions.

21 MR. ROSS: I understand. I would still
22 very much appreciate a show of hands being that
23 it will save us time.

24 Public records show that you have spent at
25 least a million dollars hiring lawyers to

1 oppose Fair Districts amendments. Now that you
2 are spending our tax dollars to have amendments
3 held unconstitutional that were passed by an
4 over 63 percent of the population -- the voting
5 population of the state of Florida, by a show
6 of hands, to all of our elected Representatives
7 here today, please raise your hand if you think
8 that the House of Representatives should drop
9 its legal challenge and attack on Amendment 5.

10 Thank you to our Representatives who have
11 raised their hands.

12 My second question I will direct
13 specifically to Senator Gaetz and
14 Representative Weatherford.

15 The Florida House has joined the
16 Diaz-Balart/Brown lawsuit and is trying to get
17 a federal court to declare Amendment 6
18 unconstitutional, once again, even though over
19 63 percent of voters in Florida supported it.

20 Are private funds being collected or used
21 to fund the House position in this lawsuit?
22 And I understand that the questions will be
23 answered at the end.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: We will do our best to do
25 that, yes. Any other testimony that you have?

1 MR. ROSS: Again, I would very much like
2 to thank those Representatives who chose to
3 acknowledge my first question, and I think by
4 the response of the room, I am not the only one
5 who very much appreciated your support for 63
6 plus percent of the voters of Florida, and I
7 thank you again for that.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Mr.
9 Ross.

10 Maria Rodriguez with the Florida Immigrant
11 Coalition. Ms. Rodriguez, thank you for being
12 here today.

13 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Good morning. Thank you.
14 Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you,
15 and thank you for the people who came here to
16 share our perspectives.

17 We played a role in the We Are Florida
18 campaign, and we did that to bring those most
19 affected to the decision-making bodies, to make
20 sure that many of the people who contribute to
21 this great state are seen so that we can deepen
22 democracy and enrich democracy. I know that
23 many of you witnessed those humble,
24 hard-working voices there.

25 I am here to say that this is also part of

1 that process, and, again, I appreciate the
2 opportunity to participate. I think that the
3 immigrant community in Florida as a community
4 of interest is undervalued, and we are facing
5 sharp attacks, partly because we don't have the
6 political representation that we deserve
7 throughout the peninsula.

8 It is obvious that in Miami-Dade and
9 southern Florida, there's large immigrant
10 communities, 588,000 naturalized citizens here
11 in Miami-Dade. But you know what? Immigrants
12 have been in the state of Florida since its
13 inception, as seen in the State Seal, as seen
14 in St. Augustine, Ybor City, Miami, Orlando,
15 and the one thing that I want as a take-home
16 message is immigrants and immigration have been
17 good for Florida and will continue to be good
18 for Florida when they are given an opportunity.

19 Whether it is Miami, Cubans, the
20 Jamaicans, Haitians in Miami, or whether it is
21 Puerto Ricans in Orlando, when people are given
22 an opportunity, they will give back to the
23 most. We do not want to exclude, we want to
24 include.

25 And I agree with the previous speaker who

1 said we want to help people integrate and we
2 need policies and leadership to help people
3 integrate, because that doesn't happen without
4 support. But there are immigrants throughout
5 the U.S. 27. There's been 40 years of Mexican
6 immigrants who have fed this state and fed this
7 nation for -- as an example of a community of
8 interest of farm workers who have no
9 representation, no Mexican representation in
10 the State Legislature, even though they have
11 been living down the U.S. 27 corridor for more
12 than 40 years, four and five generations, and
13 that is an important consideration.

14 Smaller counties, Collier County has
15 23,000 naturalized citizens, Brevard County has
16 26,000 naturalized citizens. It is important
17 to understand that the immigrant rights
18 movement is developing not only its breadth and
19 depth, but its political sophistication of
20 representation. We appreciate --

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Rodriguez --

22 MS. RODRIGUEZ: -- the opportunity to
23 speak.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: -- could I ask you to --
25 oh, thank you very much.

1 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you very much.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, you are just on
3 time.

4 C. J. Ortuno, and then Jonathon Fried and
5 then Daniel Granado and then Robert -- I'm
6 sorry, Ronald Fulton.

7 Thank you very much for being here, sir,
8 and we welcome your testimony.

9 MR. ORTUNO: Thank you. Good morning,
10 distinguished Committee members. My name is C.
11 J. Ortuno. I am the Executive Director of Save
12 Dade, the largest county-wide lesbian, gay,
13 bisexual and transgender civil rights
14 organization in Miami-Dade County.

15 It is estimated that our community
16 comprises more than 300,000 residents in the
17 county. Statewide, we are roughly two million.

18 People who are LGBT fully embrace the
19 privileges as well as the responsibilities that
20 come with being part of the great Floridian
21 mosaic. We are no more or no less American
22 because of our sexual orientation or gender
23 identity.

24 As you embark on the important work of
25 reapportionment, I want to leave you with a few

1 thoughts that will hopefully remain with you
2 throughout the endeavor.

3 I am a resident of the City of Miami
4 Beach. I live there with my wife and
5 three-year-old daughter. And as a resident, my
6 family and I have always been perplexed that
7 three districts -- State Representatives that
8 make up the City of Miami are split between
9 three distinct Representatives, three. Three
10 different individuals represent 85 blocks
11 within one city.

12 However, the opportunity to right a wrong
13 is before you. We see the goal of
14 redistricting to more fairly represent the
15 changes in our state's population and represent
16 communities of common interest.

17 The LGBT community is one such community
18 of interest that to date has not been
19 represented in Tallahassee. The citizens of
20 Florida have never elected an openly gay person
21 to the State House, to the State Senate, to the
22 Cabinet.

23 We have never elected a U.S.
24 Congressperson, no one, never. And let me be
25 clear, this has not been by choice; rather, the

1 gerrymandering of districts has proven to be a
2 burden upon openly gay candidates as they face
3 the daunting challenge of running in districts
4 that fail to bring together communities of
5 common interest, and this has to change.

6 LGBT Floridians live all over the state.
7 The 2000 census ranked us fourth of the highest
8 population of LGBT people in the country.
9 Jacksonville, according to the 2010 census, is
10 estimated to have one of the biggest
11 populations of gay parents, with nearly
12 30 percent -- 34 percent of gay people
13 parenting in that city.

14 Wilton Manors, Miami Shores and Key West
15 are third, sixth and eighth on the list of
16 cities with the highest concentration of LGBT
17 people, respectively.

18 Most alarming is the roster of states that
19 have had not -- have had openly LGBT state
20 officials so far. Vermont, Maryland, Alabama,
21 Arkansas, Nevada, even Texas and Utah are part
22 of this list.

23 And looking at the Voting Rights Act, I
24 leave you with these final thoughts: The LGBT
25 population is sufficiently large and

1 geographically compact --

2 SENATOR GAETZ: I need to ask you to
3 conclude, sir. You are out of time.

4 MR. ORTUNO: -- the LGBT community is
5 politically cohesive, and there is clear and
6 convincing evidence of racial block voting.

7 We must no longer deny the LGBT community
8 a voice in Florida state politics. Thank you
9 very much.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for your
11 testimony today, sir.

12 Jonathon Fried is next, and following
13 Mr. Fried is Daniel Granado, then Ronald
14 Fulton, and then I believe it is Badili Jones.

15 Jonathon Fried is not here? Then we will
16 pass him for the moment and go to Daniel
17 Granado. And then if the others will please
18 come forward to the first row and be on deck.

19 Mr. Granado, thank you for being here and
20 you are recognized, sir.

21 MR. GRANADO: Good morning.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Good morning.

23 MR. GRANADO: One district I would like to
24 see changes, the (inaudible) district, which
25 includes Miami suburbs, you know, across

1 swamps, farms, all the way to Ft. Myers
2 suburbs. Does that make sense to you? So I
3 would like to see that change, maybe get some
4 of (inaudible) parts, which is heavily
5 gerrymandered.

6 And that is basically it, and I would like
7 to see term limits and persuade Mr. West to run
8 for Senate.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
10 Got in a couple of commercials there at the
11 end.

12 Ronald Fulton. Mr. Fulton, are you here,
13 sir? Mr. Fulton has left, okay. I'm sorry?
14 Mr. Fulton?

15 A VOICE: He is in a wheelchair.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Oh, Mr. Fulton yields his
17 time.

18 Is it Badili Jones? And I apologize if I
19 butchered that first name.

20 MR. JONES: Actually, you did a very good
21 job. I am Badili Jones. I live in Miami-Dade.
22 I want to say good morning to my
23 Representatives, Senator Braynon, I live in his
24 district, and my Representative Cynthia
25 Stafford. I am very proud of the service that

1 they have been providing to the district that I
2 live in.

3 I am the political officer for Florida New
4 Majority, and so the message that I bring is
5 not -- is a reflection on the consultations
6 that we have had with our members and with our
7 coalition partners throughout Miami-Dade.

8 In general, I just want to make sure --
9 reiterate that the State of Florida should
10 ensure transparency, fairness and compliance
11 with the Voting Rights Act with equal
12 protection.

13 And to just be more specific, we are
14 concerned that the communities of interest in
15 south Florida, south Dade particularly, Senate
16 District 39, that the African-American
17 community in Senate District 39 will continue
18 to be able to represent -- to be able to elect
19 a Representative of their choice.

20 In regard to Congressional District 25, I
21 don't have to restate what people have already
22 said.

23 We are concerned that that district is not
24 representative of communities of interest, and
25 has only been drawn to protect an incumbent or

1 a particular political party.

2 And then finally, I just want to say in
3 terms of Congressional District 17, our biggest
4 concern or the biggest response that we got
5 from our community is that institutions -- that
6 the lack of institutions within a district.

7 Congressional District 17 is one of the
8 poorest districts in the country, and that we
9 feel that if we add certain institutions, say
10 the Port of Miami or the airport, into
11 Congressional District 17, there will be more
12 investment in terms of infrastructural
13 investment, not simply in terms of jobs, but to
14 add pockets of opportunity into Congressional
15 District 17.

16 Finally, it is disappointing that the
17 state is using our tax dollars to fight
18 Amendment 5 and 6. We think that Amendment 5
19 and 6 is very helpful, and that as long as it
20 is applied in light of the Voting Rights Act,
21 we will have a fairer and more representational
22 -- representation in our Congress and in our
23 legislative body. Thank you very much.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

25 We appreciate your testimony. And -- sir? Not

1 at all, you are recognized, sir. We definitely
2 want to hear your testimony.

3 MR. FRIED: Appreciate it. I went out --

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much for
5 coming by.

6 MR. FRIED: -- to put money in the meter.

7 I -- it has been very interesting to
8 listen to the testimony here today, and it has
9 made me reflect a lot.

10 If we lived in an ideal world, I think
11 many of the comments would be very appropriate,
12 but, unfortunately, we don't live in an ideal
13 world, and this redistricting, you have a
14 tremendously difficult task of figuring out
15 what is fair and ensuring that different
16 communities of interest have -- are adequately
17 represented.

18 So I think it is perhaps easiest to say
19 what is not fair and the things that some of us
20 -- clearly -- obviously not fair.

21 Just to give you an example, let me tell
22 you a story. Years ago, I remember we visited
23 our newly-elected member of Congress, and he
24 told us how thrilled he was to represent our
25 city and that when he was a State Legislator,

1 he ensured that the district was drawn to
2 include our city.

3 Now, I think there's something wrong when
4 people are drawing their own districts and, for
5 whatever reason, are ensuring that a certain
6 place is included, whatever that reason is.
7 There needs to be really objective, fair
8 criteria. And, again, the difficulty is
9 figuring out what those fair criteria are.

10 But let me just say something else that
11 seems not right, and it is really hard to put a
12 finger on why it is not right.

13 District -- Congressional District 25 is
14 way spread out. It includes, you know, from
15 the Keys all the way up through Homestead, west
16 Dade, all the way to Collier County. And the
17 truth is it is possible to draw a Congressional
18 District that represents communities of
19 interest in Latino community, the
20 African-American community and the
21 Haitian-American community that would be more
22 contiguous, more compact.

23 And just another thing to say, even though
24 it is not in the criteria, I mean, Collier
25 County is a totally different media market. So

1 you are dealing with two different sort of sets
2 of media, two different -- really different
3 communities.

4 And so I would hope that you could really
5 take that kind of thing into account and at
6 least try to draw a district where at least we
7 are talking to the same press in that district,
8 even if it is in -- which is fine here in Dade
9 County, we love it in at least three languages.
10 Thank you very much.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Fried. I
12 appreciate your testimony.

13 Our next speakers will be Jean-Pierre
14 Bado, Council-member Pete Cabrera from the City
15 of Doral and then Mark Bryant with the Florida
16 New Majority and then Ciro Espinel, I believe,
17 Espinel, and if you will come forward and take
18 your seats in the front row, we will hear from
19 all of you, we hope.

20 Jean-Pierre Bado. Jean-Pierre, are you
21 here? We will pass you for the moment then.

22 Councilman Pete Cabrera. Councilman,
23 thank you for your service to the City and to
24 our community, and you are recognized, sir.

25 COUNCILMAN CABRERA: Thank you very much.

1 Thank you to all of you, Mr. Chair, and all of
2 you here, many friends up there, for taking the
3 time to listen to the people. I apologize for
4 my voice, I've had a cold. Listen to the
5 people before you make these maps.

6 I believe we are in a nation that today we
7 are more ethnically diverse than anytime in our
8 history. I believe as a group of people, from
9 my experience, that are grateful to be in this
10 great nation.

11 I think they are proud to contribute to
12 this nation. And this diversity, I believe,
13 enriches all of us. At the same time, it
14 creates unique needs, needs that need to be met
15 so we can continue to grow as a community.

16 Some feel that by representing these
17 people or representing special groups, we
18 actually divide. I believe we unite, because I
19 believe the only way that we can grow as a
20 nation is to embrace this diversity and
21 understand it and represent it.

22 By drawing maps that represents -- and
23 Doral at the time of incorporation I believe
24 was the first city in the nation to actually be
25 primarily Hispanic at time of incorporation.

1 Seventy percent of the community were
2 Hispanic at the time that we incorporated. I
3 have seen that, I have seen the growth over the
4 last ten years, and this diversity enriches our
5 city.

6 I believe that needs representation. So
7 as an elected official from the city that is
8 primarily Hispanic, I believe that the maps
9 need to be drawn in a way that these
10 minorities, not just Hispanics, but all
11 minorities are properly represented.

12 So I thank you. I believe that by doing
13 that, not only will you adhere to the laws, but
14 I think we will all be winning, I think we will
15 all benefit from that. So thank you very much
16 for your time today.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Councilman.

18 Mark Bryant for the Florida New Majority,
19 followed by, if I have it right, Ciro Espinel
20 and then Councilman Jesse Walters from the
21 Village of Miami Shores where I used to live
22 for ten years.

23 Mark Bryant.

24 MR. BRYANT: Good evening, good afternoon.

25 My name is Mark Bryant. I am a representative

1 of --

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Bryant, could I ask
3 you to speak into the microphone so everyone
4 could hear you?

5 MR. BRYANT: Thank you. My name is Mark
6 Bryant, and I am a representative of LIFT for
7 low income -- Low Income Families for --
8 Families Together in the City of Miami.

9 I have been a long resident of Liberty
10 City here in the City of Miami, and we -- I
11 live in Liberty City, which is a minority --
12 majority-minority district, and at the same
13 time, with a minority influence district.

14 We the citizens of Liberty City, we do not
15 want our district to be diluted in such a way
16 that it would deprive the citizens of the
17 opportunity to elect a candidate of choice --
18 of choice.

19 Voting dilution is prohibited under the
20 Voting Rights Act of 1965. It prohibits
21 minorities from making decisions that we feel
22 that best represent our community. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
24 We appreciate your being with us.

25 Next, Ciro Espinel. Ciro? Not here?

1 Councilman Jesse Walters? Councilman, how
2 is everything in my second hometown, Miami
3 Shores? 800 Northeast 98th Street I was at.
4 Great city, great village.

5 COUNCILMAN WALTERS: Thank you very much.
6 It is a pleasure to be here with all of you,
7 and I appreciate everyone coming down to Miami
8 and hearing our testimony.

9 I am not only a Councilman in Miami
10 Shores, I am the Executive Director of the
11 Chamber of Commerce in Miami Shores as well.
12 So I have a unique perspective, I think, in
13 that I have just run for election and heard
14 many viewpoints from people, and I also hear
15 from members of the business community.

16 I want to applaud the collegiality and the
17 respect that I have heard from all the
18 speakers, as well as from the people on the
19 head table today. I think that is what we need
20 more of is mutual respect.

21 There is a lot of passion in the room, but
22 I think people have been kind to each other,
23 which I think is important.

24 Two anecdotes from when I did run for
25 election. I heard from one voter who said to

1 me, "They're just not going to let this happen,
2 are they?" And, of course, what she meant by
3 that was Amendments 5 and 6.

4 And I don't know how to answer that, but I
5 didn't get a good impression from what I read
6 in the paper that there is a will in
7 Tallahassee to honor what the people voted for.

8 And in Miami Shores, we voted for it
9 overwhelmingly. Eighty percent of the people
10 voted for it.

11 The second thing was, and this came from a
12 Republican who said to me, "Jesse, we have two
13 State Senators." Two excellent State Senators
14 who are right here at the table, I am pleased
15 to see. "Why -- I know I am not going to have
16 a Republican represent me as a State Senator,
17 but why do we have two State Senators in a town
18 of 10,000 people?" And these are hard
19 questions to answer.

20 So I would just respectfully ask those of
21 you who will be making this decision in
22 Tallahassee to consider what people are saying
23 and to honor the will of Amendments 5 and 6.

24 Thank you very much.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,

1 Councilman.

2 Next is Jackie Colon, representing NALED,
3 and then Will Brown and then Bradford Brown
4 with the NAACP.

5 Jackie, are you here? Not here? Jackie?

6 MS. COLON: Yes, I am here.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: You are?

8 MS. COLON: Yes.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, come on down. We
10 would be delighted to hear from you this
11 morning.

12 MS. COLON: Good morning. My name is
13 Jackie Colon. It is a pleasure to be here in
14 front of these distinguished ladies and
15 gentlemen. I represent NALFO. I am the
16 Florida Director for the educational fund.

17 It is a nonprofit and nonpartisan
18 organization that facilitates the full
19 participation of Hispanics in America for the
20 American political process.

21 I am specifically here to discuss central
22 Florida. We spoke before you there, and we
23 would like for you to consider creating a
24 Congressional District in the central Florida
25 area, specifically the Orange, Osceola and Polk

1 communities.

2 As you folks know, the growth has been
3 tremendous there in regards to Hispanics. It
4 grew by 30 percent in the last decade. And as
5 you folks know in the state of Florida, we went
6 from 2.5 million to 4.2 million, with Hispanics
7 being 55 percent of that growth.

8 So I would just like to thank all of you
9 for the time for listening to the community.
10 And to the gentleman who previously mentioned
11 in regards to being a general American, as he
12 put it, because I was listening, too, he is
13 looking at a general American.

14 I am an immigrant, I am a former Chairman
15 of the Board of County Commissioners in the
16 Space Coast, and I think that it is really
17 important for us to realize that this is our
18 country. We might be immigrants, and we are
19 proud to be Americans.

20 So, again, I thank all of you for your
21 time, for listening to us, and for having
22 compassion and the respect that everyone has
23 shown today. Thank you.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and thank you
25 for the map that your organization presented to

1 us. It was extraordinarily helpful to the
2 Committee. Thanks for your testimony.

3 MS. COLON: Thank you. We appreciate it,
4 Mr. Chairman.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Sure.

6 MS. COLON: Thank you.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Our next presenter is Will
8 Brown. Mr. Brown, are you here? Will Brown?

9 Bradford Brown with the NAACP. Mr. Brown,
10 thank you very much for your testimony, and you
11 are recognized.

12 MR. BRADFORD BROWN: Thank you very much,
13 and Honorable Representatives and Senators, I
14 appreciate your being here and this
15 opportunity, and I will leave my talking points
16 with you since I --

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

18 MR. BRADFORD BROWN: -- won't cover them
19 all here.

20 Redistricting is a very critical issue for
21 the NAACP, and I serve as Vice-President here
22 in Miami, but I am also on the State Executive
23 Committee.

24 And it is a critical issue because it is a
25 right that was won by blood, by blood in the

1 American Revolution, but got votes for
2 African-Americans in New England and the
3 northeast, through the Civil War, through the
4 martyrs of the 50s and the 60s.

5 And redistricting is what makes sure that
6 that vote actually counts and that actually is
7 meaningful.

8 We are very concerned, of course, that the
9 Voting Rights Act is strictly adhered to, as
10 was voted on and included in Amendments 5 and
11 6. Packing and cracking have already been
12 mentioned.

13 And I will just be very specific about one
14 issue everybody has talked about, Congressional
15 District 25, but in addition to going all the
16 way across the Everglades, it split the
17 communities of African descent in south Dade
18 into three Congressional Districts instead of
19 putting one into an area where their votes
20 could be of influence.

21 And I want to note this community of
22 interest is really the critical thing, and what
23 the courts have decided and what defines a
24 community of interest.

25 One is the extent in which non-members of

1 the group recognize that group as a community
2 of interest, the extent to which members
3 identify themselves with that particular group,
4 and even more particularly, the extent to which
5 members are affected by governmental action,
6 because that is what the voting is all about.

7 And we certainly want very much the
8 consideration of community of interest, and we
9 in the NAACP feel that the citizens of African
10 descent are one of the most important
11 communities of interest, along with others in
12 the state of Florida.

13 We do also want to urge you to come back
14 out to us when you have drawn your maps so that
15 we can comment on them.

16 And when you produce the data for those
17 maps, we would like to see it in precinct and
18 district level voting age population,
19 desegregated by race and national origin, and
20 also by those eligible to vote, because while
21 we divide them up on population, it is the
22 voters that actually determine who is going to
23 be representing them.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

25 MR. BRADFORD BROWN: So with that, I thank

1 you, and I will leave my remarks at that desk
2 over there.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Please do, sir.

4 MR. BROWN: All right.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much for
6 your testimony.

7 And our next speakers will be John
8 Laffitte with the King Jesus Ministry, Lisa
9 Sloat, Vivian Casals-Munoz and Kelly Greene.

10 And, happily, we have been able to get
11 even more people who would like to speak. That
12 means we will hear from more of you, but it
13 also means that in order to be respectful to
14 all of those who wish to speak, so we can hear
15 everyone and then have a chance to answer some
16 of the questions and factual points that have
17 been raised, we are going to be even tighter on
18 time.

19 So I am going to ask you if you can hold
20 it to two and a half minutes. If you have
21 extended remarks, we will be happy to include
22 those in the record.

23 Mr. Laffitte, you are recognized, and
24 thank you for coming.

25 MR. LAFFITTE: Well, thank you very much.

1 I want to thank the Legislature for their time
2 in coming here. My name is John Laffitte, and
3 I am a natural born citizen. My parents left
4 Cuba in the '50s to escape the Communist
5 revolution, and I have since -- lived since
6 1994 in Miami-Dade County.

7 I have been able to practice as a
8 professional engineer, adjunct faculty,
9 University of Miami and FIU graduate faculty,
10 but I am part of an associate -- I am an
11 associate pastor at King Jesus Ministry, which
12 today is one of the largest Hispanic churches
13 in the entire nation.

14 We serve over 18,000 people in Monroe,
15 Dade and Broward County, and we are here to
16 speak on behalf of the Hispanic community, and
17 in a representative government such as ours, it
18 is very important that minorities have the
19 opportunity to field and elect representatives
20 that will be able to speak and have a voice for
21 us.

22 Therefore, what we ask in this
23 redistricting process is that there be enough
24 districts to allow such candidates to be
25 fielded, as well as in places such as Broward

1 where there are few opportunities to field and
2 to have such candidates.

3 Finally, I would like to ask that there
4 would be no retrogression of Hispanic votes
5 and/or diluted in any way, shape or form. So
6 thank you very much for your time, and God
7 bless you.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Laffitte,
9 for that testimony.

10 Lisa Sloat is next, followed by Vivian
11 Casals-Munoz, if I get that correct, and then
12 Kelly Greene, and then Lili Bach.

13 Ms. Sloat, thank you for being here, and
14 you are recognized.

15 MS. SLOAT: Thank you. My name is Lisa
16 Sloat. I was born in Jacksonville, Florida,
17 educated in the Florida public school system.
18 I have lived in Miami many years. So I have a
19 feel for north Florida and south Florida.

20 I wanted to say that some of the speakers
21 today really did a wonderful job of explaining
22 some of the issues that I have.

23 Janet McAliley in particular spoke about
24 the fact that we can elect public servants and
25 I say that specifically because public servants

1 are committed to serving their entire
2 communities, electing public servants versus
3 politicians who are beholden to an ideology or
4 a specific group.

5 I am a strong supporter of implementing
6 Amendments 5 and 6. I will repeat that they
7 were passed by 62 or 63 percent of the voters.
8 The money that was spent to promote and to --
9 and against Amendments 5 and 6 passing were
10 dollars spent by community people, not taxpayer
11 dollars that were sent to the State of Florida
12 to cover the expenses to take care of the
13 citizens of Florida.

14 So I also want to support what I think his
15 name was Evan Ross, who spoke about withdrawing
16 from the lawsuit. I believe that any monies
17 spent on the lawsuit is taking monies away from
18 the citizens of the state of Florida.

19 I'll also support that a response be given
20 to State Representative Randolph's request for
21 transparency in how any monies are used, and
22 that any monies that have been set aside to
23 fight the implementations of either Amendments
24 5 or 6 be returned to the people of Florida.

25 And, lastly, I want to say that -- well,

1 two things. Rhonda Sibilialia did a very good job
2 of describing the problems we have with
3 gerrymandered districts and how they are not
4 truly representing the people.

5 They are not represented by public
6 servants. They are represented by politicians
7 who drew them to support their own
8 re-elections.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: And could I ask you to
10 conclude, please, ma'am?

11 MS. SLOAT: Yes, and I will conclude with
12 the same points that the woman from the League
13 of Voters meant -- said. The timeline now
14 disenfranchises -- the proposed timeline
15 disenfranchises voters in the state of Florida.

16 I think that by allowing the time frame to
17 go too close to the time --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Speaking of time frames --

19 MS. SLOAT: Yes.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: -- your time has elapsed,
21 and we thank you for your testimony.

22 MS. SLOAT: Okay. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Next is Vivian
24 Casals-Munoz, followed by Kelly Greene,
25 followed by Lili Bach and then Lida

1 Rodriguez -- I think it is Taseff -- Taseff.

2 Vivian, you are recognized. Thank you.

3 MS. CASALS-MUNOZ: Thank you so much.

4 Good morning. I am a Councilwoman for the City
5 of Hialeah, second-largest city in the county,
6 and I want to thank the Chair and all the
7 members that are here today for taking the time
8 to explain and get information from the
9 citizens before the maps are drawn.

10 That is so important, because usually we
11 get them after everything is done, and then
12 there are no time frames for change.

13 Again, I do represent the second-largest
14 city in the county, and I understand that
15 Miami-Dade County is a unique community, one
16 like no other community in the state of
17 Florida.

18 We are 65 percent Hispanic in the city,
19 and yet we are only represented by 50 percent
20 of the Senators. That needs to change.

21 I understand the need for the
22 representation that focuses on our community.
23 I am not trying to divide the communities. I
24 am trying to get the representations that will
25 understand the needs of each and every

1 community.

2 Our districts should be divided that we
3 have representation from similar communities.

4 We have -- right now, we have Hialeah
5 Gardens, Miami Lakes, Miami Springs, Medley, we
6 all have the same needs and the same -- and we
7 share so many of the same services.

8 The -- one of the things that is very
9 important is when we do the redistricting and
10 we are represented by our members in
11 Tallahassee, we have certain needs like the
12 Enterprise Zone and the HUBZone that we have to
13 make sure that stay together in the district.

14 We have to make sure that we have the
15 representation of the Hispanic community.
16 Again, we are not trying to divide our
17 communities, we are trying to unite them, but
18 we need to make sure that we have accurate
19 representation, and that the people that
20 represent us understand our needs.

21 Thank you very much, have a great day and
22 God bless you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
24 ma'am.

25 And next we will hear from Kelly Greene,

1 and following Ms. Greene, Lili Bach.

2 Ms. Greene, thank you very much for being
3 here, and you are recognized as well.

4 MS. GREENE: Good morning, Honorable Chair
5 and members of the Redistricting Committee. My
6 name is Kelly Greene of Northwest -- 12
7 Northwest 116th Street, Miami, Florida,
8 unincorporated Dade.

9 I represent people with disabilities
10 served by Center for Independent Living of
11 South Florida. There are 500,000 people with
12 disabilities in Miami-Dade, and we were part of
13 the more than 60 percent of the people that
14 voted for Fair Districts.

15 Yes, we voted, and we represent all of the
16 ethnicities and races, we are gay and we are
17 straight. And so whenever we look at our
18 representatives, we are really looking at
19 people, and we are looking at people who have
20 honesty and integrity.

21 We don't care, honestly, if you are a
22 Republican or a Democrat or an Independent. We
23 are looking for people that have a high degree
24 of integrity. That is what we want, and some
25 of you represent that.

1 We look at the actions of our Legislators
2 and how they voted on the issues. We vote
3 across party lines. Thank you.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
5 Ms. Greene.

6 Lili Bach. Is Ms. Bach here? Thank you
7 for being here, Ms. Bach, and following Ms.
8 Bach is Lida Rodriguez-Taseff, I believe,
9 Taseff, and then Mayor Daisy Black from the
10 Village of El Portal.

11 Ms. Bach, thank you for coming, and you
12 are recognized.

13 MS. BACH: Good morning. Thank you so
14 much.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: And you can raise that
16 mike if you would like, ma'am.

17 MS. BACH: Okay. Thank you very much. I
18 want to keep it as short as possible in the
19 interest -- so that way everybody here can
20 maybe go back to Tallahassee and come up with
21 the maps.

22 So in the interest of time, this has been
23 said that this Town Hall is for the sake of
24 listening to the people. I believe that the
25 people have spoken overwhelmingly.

1 And just fundamentally, back in the day in
2 high school, I believe it was taught just, you
3 know, one voice, one vote, so I would like that
4 to be exercised.

5 Anyway, moving forward, I would like to
6 know just how much of the taxpayer dollars are
7 being spent on these Town Halls and why can't
8 that money be used for job creation and to
9 better improve, you know, Florida as a whole.

10 And, lastly, I just would like to know,
11 where are the maps? You have put us to work in
12 using these site-building sites, but I don't
13 think that is our job, I thought that was your
14 guys' job.

15 So I would just like to know where are the
16 maps, and to just please stop playing that
17 political game, you know, like I think all of
18 us can say here that we're sick of it, and, you
19 know, in the best interest of everybody from
20 all across, please just stop playing party
21 politics and do your job, and let's come
22 together and make this happen. So thank you
23 very much.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Bach.

25 Next we will hear from Lida Rodriguez, and

1 I am pronouncing it correctly, Taseff?

2 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TASEFF: You are absolutely
3 pronouncing it correctly.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am, and you
5 are recognized.

6 MS. RODRIGUEZ-TASEFF: Thank you very
7 much, members of the Committee. Lida
8 Rodriguez-Taseff, I am a lawyer. I am also a
9 long-time resident of south Florida. I am the
10 Co-Chair of South Florida Jobs with Justice,
11 which is a labor community coalition that
12 represents and works to improve the lives of
13 working Miami-Dade County residents.

14 I am also on the Board of Latino Justice,
15 which is a National civil rights group. And I
16 live on Miami Beach. Senator Margolis is my
17 representative, as is Representative Garcia.

18 I am here to focus us in a little bit on
19 the issue of the unjustified dispersion of
20 racial minorities and communities of interest.

21 This unjustified, unnecessary splitting of
22 racial minorities and communities of interest
23 is happening vis-a-vis Districts 21 and 25,
24 Congressional Districts, and that is really
25 what I want to focus on.

1 Later today, members of this community
2 will be presenting you with a map for how to
3 redraw District 25 in order to keep our
4 communities of interest, our racial minorities,
5 together.

6 One of the goals will be to eliminate
7 Immokalee from the representation, and also
8 Naples, because they really do not reflect the
9 same issues and concerns and need for
10 representation that, say, for example, the
11 people of Kendall need.

12 And we will be striving to keep Kendall
13 together, because the people of Kendall don't
14 need three different Representatives, they need
15 one.

16 And our goal here, because the most
17 important focus of the activists involved in
18 civil rights is the protection of the very
19 important gains that were made as a result of
20 the Voting Rights Act.

21 And I know that none of you will be
22 forgetting that, and I know many people have
23 spoken today about the importance of the
24 passage of the Fair Districts Amendment 5 and
25 6, but the equal importance is to be given to

1 the protection of the rights of racial
2 minorities that was provided by the Voting
3 Rights Act.

4 And I know that you, in drawing these
5 communities, will take into account the fact
6 that people in Miami-Dade County who are one
7 community, racial groups that vote together,
8 that have common issues, common schools, common
9 highways, common bus lines, common churches,
10 need to stay together, and we appreciate the
11 fact that you are here listening to us, and we
12 will be providing you with maps and we will
13 continue to be providing you with concrete
14 input for how you can keep our racial and
15 ethnic communities of interest together. Thank
16 you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
18 ma'am. We appreciate that testimony.

19 Next we will hear from the Honorable Daisy
20 Black, Mayor of the Village of El Portal.
21 Madam Mayor, thank you for your service to the
22 community, and you are recognized.

23 MAYOR BLACK: Thank you all for being here
24 today, and it is an honor for me to be here and
25 I thank you all for putting this on.

1 I am from one of the cities in Miami-Dade
2 County, not the largest, but the best, okay. I
3 am here representing these same cities, the
4 small ones and the large ones in Dade County
5 who are divided by several, as some of my
6 predecessors have said, many -- not many, but
7 at least more than one District Representative,
8 whether it is the House or the Senate.

9 And this seems to dilute what kind of
10 clout we have in Tallahassee, because if we got
11 to go to two or three different people to get
12 something done, sometimes that hurts us.

13 Okay. I am not going to repeat a lot of
14 the things that I have heard, because I agree
15 with a lot of the people who spoke before me,
16 but Florida, and in particular Dade County, is
17 a multi-ethnic state as well as county.

18 It's been that way since Florida was
19 discovered by Christopher Columbus, who was a
20 Hispanic, and also by General Basu, who was a
21 Haitian who fought in the St. Augustine War
22 with the Spanish American War.

23 So our community and our state is a
24 multi-ethnic community and a multi-ethnic
25 state. We cannot get past that. But there

1 are --

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Excuse me, Madam Mayor,
3 just out of respect for you, I would like to
4 ask the Committee members if they will give the
5 Mayor complete attention, please.

6 Thank you, Madam Mayor, please go ahead.

7 MAYOR BLACK: Okay, I talk loud. Okay.

8 All right. So what we are trying to say
9 is we are representative of everybody. There's
10 historical representation in Dade County with
11 all different groups, and that includes the
12 Anglos, and I want to address the guy who
13 thought that he was left out, because I am
14 saying no, you are not.

15 I grew up in Overtown and Liberty City. I
16 grew up here before I-95 went through Overtown
17 and Liberty City. So I know what the city was
18 -- how it can be broken up, and then you lose
19 the people that you respect and love.

20 So I am just saying, please do not divide
21 us anymore than what we have to be divided.
22 Back in 2000, before redistricting, Overtown
23 and Liberty City, the majority part of Liberty
24 City was District 108.

25 Now it is divided between 108 and 109, and

1 I want to give honor to my -- one of my State
2 Representatives, Cynthia Stafford, Ms. Campbell
3 who is not here, my State Senator Braynon.

4 But the thing I am saying now is when we
5 get over to 109, 109 goes from Overtown, one of
6 the most impoverished communities --

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Madam Mayor --

8 MAYOR BLACK: -- to Miami Beach. My time
9 is up?

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, ma'am, with great
11 respect.

12 MAYOR BLACK: Thank you.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for your
14 testimony.

15 And Will Brown had stepped out for a
16 moment when we called his name. Is Mr. Brown
17 here? Mr. Brown, would you come forward? We
18 would love to have your testimony, please.

19 And following Mr. Brown, Charlotte -- I
20 believe it is Kleiman or Kleman, then Hank
21 Klein, and then Jack Lowell, if you would come
22 down to the on deck circle, please.

23 Mr. Brown, thanks for coming.

24 MR. WILL BROWN: Thank you. Thank you for
25 having this forum and this hearing. I am with

1 the Martin Luther King Voters League, and we
2 are a group in Liberty City that is just
3 starting up, and this is an event that is
4 particularly in our interest, and we just
5 wanted to speak on the topic that my research,
6 or our research has said that there's 41
7 percent Democrats in the entire state of
8 Florida versus 36 percent Republican,
9 20 percent Independents and 30 percent minor.

10 And so the point there is that whenever
11 you talk about redistricting, those are how the
12 districts, in our opinion, that is how they
13 should reflect.

14 They should reflect the voting population
15 and the voting makeup of the entire state. So
16 anything short of that would be an injustice to
17 our community. So those are the views that I
18 wanted to put forth in the debate.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
20 Mr. Brown. We appreciate your being here
21 today.

22 Now, Charlotte -- it Kleiman or Kleman?

23 MS. KLEIMAN: It is Kleiman.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Kleiman. Ms. Kleiman,
25 thank you for being here, and you are

1 recognized.

2 MS. KLEIMAN: It is my pleasure.

3 I come here as a representative of John Q.
4 Public, as a resident of Miami-Dade for more
5 than 45 years, and as a daughter of immigrants.
6 I come here for the -- just wait one moment.

7 There are two points, two major points, I
8 would like to -- there are many remarks I would
9 like to make to this committee; however, there
10 are two major points to make to reflect the
11 attitude of millions of voters.

12 Number one, we are appalled that our taxes
13 are being used to oppose amendments we voted
14 for.

15 And the second, we implore you to follow
16 the spirit and the substance of Amendments 5
17 and 6 so passed by more than 63 percent of the
18 voters.

19 Thank you very much, sir.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much for that
21 testimony.

22 Next we will hear from Hank Klein, and
23 following Mr. Klein, Jack Lowell, and then Lida
24 Mari, please.

25 Mr. Klein.

1 MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am
2 very, very proud to call many members that are
3 up here today my close personal friends, and on
4 both sides of the aisle.

5 Mr. Chairman, we are practicing democracy
6 today. I happen to have lived in Miami for 54
7 years. I am very involved in the community. I
8 am the past Chairman of the Greater Miami
9 Chamber of Commerce.

10 I spent eight years on the Board of
11 Miami-Dade College as the Vice-Chairman, having
12 been appointed by Governor Bush. I take my
13 role and responsibility as a voter quite
14 seriously. I am an independent thinker.

15 When I found out about Amendment 5 and 6,
16 I looked into it, and I determined after
17 investigation and after reading newspaper
18 editorials from both sides for all the way from
19 Jacksonville and Pensacola to Miami and Ft.
20 Lauderdale, I determined that this was the best
21 thing for the state of Florida. So I voted for
22 Amendments 5 and 6.

23 I didn't vote for a law, I didn't vote for
24 a rule, I didn't vote for a regulation, I
25 didn't vote for an ordinance. I voted to amend

1 what I considered to be sacrosanct. I voted to
2 amend the Constitution of the State of Florida.

3 But much to my dismay, it appears that we
4 might not be amending the Constitution of the
5 State of Florida.

6 It is time for us to look at
7 redistricting, and it is time for us to look at
8 redistricting in a fair fashion. I am not
9 naïve. I understand the political process. My
10 very good friend, and I am proud to call him my
11 good friend, Mario Diaz-Balart, has filed suit.
12 He has that constitutional authority and duty
13 to do that. But I cannot agree with him in
14 this.

15 We will work our way through this, but I
16 will tell you what bothers me more than
17 anything, ladies and gentlemen of the
18 Legislature.

19 What bothers me more than anything is that
20 in a time of economic stress, in a time of
21 economic hardship, that we have allocated in
22 excess -- I shouldn't say "we" -- you have
23 allocated in excess of \$20 million to fight
24 this amendment -- these amendments to the State
25 Constitution, and that is disappointing to me.

1 It is disappointing to me personally as a
2 resident of Florida, and it is disappointing to
3 me as a voter.

4 I ask you to please reexamine, to look at
5 this more clearly, and please rule on this
6 fairly and please do not spend that
7 \$20 million. There are others that need that
8 money. Senator, thank you.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Mr.
10 Klein.

11 Next we will hear from Jack Lowell, and
12 following Mr. Lowell, Lida Mari and then Diane
13 Lawrence with Fair Districts, and then Lynn
14 Wheeler. So if you will all come down to the
15 deck circle, we would be grateful.

16 Mr. Lowell, you are recognized. We are
17 glad to have you.

18 MR. LOWELL: Good morning, Mr. Chairman.
19 I am Jack Lowell. I live in Coral Gables. I
20 am Chair of the Beacon Council, which is our
21 economic development council here in Dade
22 County.

23 I am also on the Board of the Florida
24 Chamber of Commerce. But I am speaking
25 individually, this is my personal opinion.

1 I think it is imperative that this process
2 produce more balanced districts in our state.
3 When we have all of our decisions made in the
4 primary portion of the election, we get
5 ideology running our state instead of ideas
6 that are carefully thought out and rationally
7 debated in our legislative process.

8 And I urge you to follow the intent of our
9 Constitutional Amendments and come up with more
10 balanced districts so when we debate in the
11 Legislature, we can do the issues and not
12 ideology. Thank you.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

14 And next we will hear from Lida Mari. Did
15 I do that right? Thank you very much, and
16 then --

17 MS. MARI: Well done, thank you.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Then Diane Lawrence and
19 then Lynn Wheeler and then Eufaula Frazier, I
20 believe.

21 Ms. Mari, fire away.

22 MS. MARI: Thank you. Thank you.

23 Senators, Representatives, thank you for
24 being here. I particularly want to thank
25 Representative Carlos Lopez-Cantera. I don't

1 see him here right now, but thank you very much
2 for being here.

3 I was born and raised here. My parents
4 came from Communist Cuba, and they were
5 immigrants, obviously, but I was raised here
6 and I am raising my children here in Miami-Dade
7 County.

8 I would sincerely like to thank you for
9 the effort and the time that you have taken and
10 the honest attempt to use citizen input to
11 apply the amendments of both our U.S. and
12 Florida Constitutions to select the new
13 district boundaries.

14 Thank you for coming down here and giving
15 us the opportunity to participate more easily
16 in our Republic and representative government.

17 After having watched numerous hearings
18 throughout the state, it is quite clear that
19 many have concerns about the definitions of the
20 words of our Fifth and Sixth Amendments.

21 I am a speech and language pathologist. I
22 would like to participate and contribute to
23 those definitions.

24 They have also given you criticism that
25 you do not have prepared maps to present to us.

1 It is our duty and responsibilities as citizens
2 to define those words for you and to present
3 you with maps.

4 And in keeping with the spirit that you
5 represent us, we, the people, have voted for
6 the amendments, and, therefore, you have no
7 business in fighting these wishes with lawsuits
8 or otherwise.

9 It is your responsibility to represent our
10 definitions and the district boundaries we
11 present to you in our maps.

12 I would like to first address the issue of
13 defining the words in the amendments. There is
14 particular concern among citizens with the
15 words "compactness," "contiguous" and
16 "fairness."

17 SENATOR GAETZ: And, ma'am, because of
18 time and the many people behind you, I would
19 like to ask you if you could conclude in just a
20 few seconds, please.

21 MS. MARI: Absolutely.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: And we will be happy to
23 take your written testimony.

24 MS. MARI: Absolutely. Thank you very
25 much.

1 Well, basically "compactness" is defined
2 by "the smallest perimeter around an area of
3 population." "Contiguous" is "having no
4 islands." We don't want our representatives
5 having to cross around a district to get to our
6 citizens.

7 And "fairness," it is defined by
8 "providing citizens with the opportunity to
9 have access to our elected representatives as
10 closely as possible and to get to them as
11 easily as possible."

12 I want to sincerely thank you for coming
13 out here, and I would also like to respectfully
14 request that you allow us the opportunity to
15 present to you the maps, which I, for one, have
16 been working on, but I don't have them fully
17 completed.

18 And thank you very much for coming down
19 here.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, ma'am, and as soon as
21 you finish any submission that you have or any
22 idea you would like to provide, you can either
23 provide it to us over the Internet or you can
24 send it to us by U.S. Mail. And then we will
25 make it available to everyone in Florida to

1 look at.

2 MS. MARI: Thank you very much.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much.

4 And next, Diane Lawrence from Fair

5 Districts Now. Is Ms. Lawrence here?

6 Ms. Lawrence, following your testimony, we will

7 hear from Lynn Wheeler and then Eufaula Frazier

8 and then Nelson Hernandez and then Councilman

9 Oliver Gilbert.

10 Ms. Lawrence, thank you for being here,

11 and you are recognized, ma'am.

12 MS. LAWRENCE: I am a victim of the

13 extreme gerrymandering of Congressional

14 District 25, so much a victim that in 2006, I

15 filed with the Federal Elections Commission to

16 run against Mario Diaz-Balart. Why?

17 Because I was sick of going into the

18 voting booth and seeing the one name. I had no

19 desire to be a Congresswoman, and within six

20 weeks, I dropped out, because it was really too

21 rough for me.

22 But I hope that if you will follow these

23 petitions that I worked on, I got signatures

24 and got people to vote for them, that you will

25 follow what they say.

1 Thank you.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and if you have
3 information, petitions and other things you
4 would like to present, we would love to have
5 them for the record.

6 Next is Lynn Wheeler, and following
7 Ms. Wheeler, Eufaula Frazier.

8 Ms. Wheeler, you are recognized and we
9 look forward to your testimony.

10 MS. WHEELER: Thank you, and thank you for
11 being here.

12 Gerrymandering has been going on, it has
13 been a problem for many, many years, no matter
14 what party is in power in our Legislature --
15 that's who does it, our Legislature
16 gerrymanders the districts.

17 But when the Fair Districts Amendment 5
18 and 6 were passed by 63 percent of the people
19 of Florida, that's not just 51 percent, it
20 didn't just barely pass, it is a clear
21 63 percent, it was passed by Democrats and
22 Republicans.

23 So you all are now supposed to implement
24 that, and we wanted to see some maps, we
25 expected to see some maps so we could have

1 something to say.

2 The other thing about your not presenting
3 maps is it doesn't allow someone who wants to
4 run against one of our Representatives to do so
5 very quickly. They will have to get their
6 campaign together very fast, because they won't
7 have time to figure out where their district is
8 and who they have to appeal to.

9 So that was bad enough that we have not
10 progressed with that, but then to go and use
11 our government money to fight what we just
12 voted 63 percent for, that is unconscionable.

13 And I did not realize it was \$20 million
14 y'all were spending. That is really
15 ridiculous. So that is all I have to say.
16 Thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. And
18 Ms. Wheeler, please, if you can stay until the
19 end, I think that you will probably get some
20 answers to those questions.

21 Sometimes things get put in the
22 bloodstream and people actually believe that
23 they are true, but we are going to provide some
24 information at the end that will be helpful, I
25 think.

1 Next, Eufaula Frazier.

2 MS. FRAZIER: Yes, thank you for allowing
3 me this opportunity. I am Eufaula Frazier,
4 retired, but still active. I have been a
5 community activist, not only for Dade County,
6 but throughout the state of Florida, and I
7 stand here this morning to ask you to keep in
8 mind the voters' choice.

9 They voted for Amendment 5 and 6, and I
10 encourage you to keep that in mind when you
11 start to drawing the line. Not only draw the
12 line for us, but let us be involved in the
13 process to let you know what is needed.

14 Florida is growing so fast, you cannot
15 stand here and say today that you are going to
16 draw the line for any specific group, special
17 group, but keep in mind that you are drawing
18 the line for the next ten years, and remember
19 the voice of the people. Thank you.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 ma'am.

22 Next, Nelson Hernandez, representing the
23 Town of Miami Lakes. Mr. Hernandez, thank you
24 for being here, and we look forward to what you
25 have to say.

1 COUNCILMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you very
2 much. I am actually a Councilman in the Town
3 of Miami Lakes, and I decided to come here and
4 represent my town here today.

5 I thank you all for coming. I know it
6 takes a lot to come here and sit for several
7 hours to listen to our concerns, and thank you
8 for your patience.

9 Just a little background: I represent the
10 Town of Miami Lakes. We are a fairly young
11 city. We have only been around for about ten
12 years. We were incorporated in the year 2000,
13 which might have been either right before or in
14 the middle of the last redistricting session.

15 We are about 70 percent Hispanic, so we
16 are pretty diverse as far as ethnicity is
17 concerned; however, we are a pretty homogenous
18 community when it comes to our socioeconomic
19 status, and which brings me to my next point.

20 Currently in the State House, our town is
21 divided by two districts down the middle. So
22 that causes a lot of confusion for my
23 constituents. They have always asked me who do
24 I reach to for my State Representative, and so
25 I always have to ask them where they live. So

1 I think it might be easier, not only
2 logistically for myself and for the other
3 members of my City Council, but also as far as
4 actually representing the interests of my
5 community, you know, with one solid member in
6 the State House.

7 We are currently covered by one -- by --
8 our entire town is only covered in its entirety
9 in the State Senate by Senator Rene Garcia, and
10 also in our County Commission. That is it.

11 So I think it is important for me to come
12 up here and just plead my concern to you all
13 and see if we can consolidate our city into one
14 district for the Florida House, and I think
15 that would be a great service for my community
16 and my town, and I am sure they will be
17 grateful for that. Thank you very much.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Councilman, and
19 thanks for your service to the city.

20 Councilman Oliver Gilbert from the City of
21 Miami Gardens. We are delighted to have so
22 many local officials here to give us
23 information about your communities that we just
24 couldn't get in an echo chamber in Tallahassee.
25 So, Councilman, we appreciate your testimony

1 and look forward to it.

2 COUNCILMAN GILBERT: I thank you for being
3 here, and I would just like to recognize my
4 State Senator, Oscar Braynon, my State
5 Representative, Barbara Watson, and all my good
6 friends. I see Frank Artiles is up there and
7 Hazelle Rogers there, and my Mayor who is in
8 the audience, Mayor Shirley Gibson.

9 I will be very brief. My interest is that
10 you keep Miami Gardens together as a city. We
11 incorporated seven or eight years ago, and
12 we -- we are 110,000 people, approximately. We
13 deserve to be in one Senate seat, one State Rep
14 seat. That is generally my interest and that
15 is what I am speaking on.

16 And I would just add this one point. I
17 have been listening to the comments about the
18 Fair District Amendments, and I think that you
19 have every right to challenge them in court.
20 That is what courts are for.

21 I would just ask that you do it with your
22 own money. I would just -- because there is
23 something profoundly wrong about using public
24 money to fight against the implementation of
25 amendments that were voted on by the public.

1 We actually had a chance to decide, so you
2 are going to take money out of my pocket to
3 fight something that I said I wanted. That is
4 probably wrong. The courts are there for a
5 reason, but you don't need taxpayer dollars for
6 that. Thank you for coming down.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Councilman,
8 very much.

9 Laverne Holliday with Curly's House of
10 Style. And if there is anything I need, it is
11 style, so if Laverne is here. Not so much, I
12 guess. Missed my chance. Are you here?

13 MS. HOLLIDAY: I am here, but I decline.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: You decline?

15 MS. HOLLIDAY: Yes.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, if you could consult
17 with me later, I need some style help, too,
18 I'll tell you.

19 Christopher Norwood is our next speaker,
20 and following Mr. Norwood, I believe it is
21 Gihan Perera with the Florida New Majority, and
22 then Georges Daniel with the Haitian-American
23 Coalition.

24 Mr. Norwood, thank you for being here and
25 please give us your testimony.

1 MR. NORWOOD: Senator Gaetz, I am very
2 happy to be here, and I just want to say to the
3 members of this Committee the awesome
4 responsibility that you have.

5 I want to speak directly to my members of
6 the Dade delegation, and there are several, I
7 won't even start to name, including my Senator
8 Braynon, Ms. Stafford, Miguel Diaz de la
9 Portilla and so many others.

10 I also am an adjunct professor at Florida
11 Memorial University, and I teach a class on
12 state government.

13 And one of the problems I always have when
14 I get to that section dealing with
15 redistricting is how to explain to my students
16 how it is done. I don't envy you at all by the
17 responsibilities that you have, but imagine
18 trying to explain this process to members who
19 are creating districts in which they run in.

20 And it is a very difficult task, and I
21 don't have the answers. But what I do know is
22 that I hope that you use your common sense, try
23 to keep communities intact, especially
24 municipalities, and just, you know, do what you
25 feel is necessary in order to keep this

1 community as whole as possible through a
2 process that inherently divides us, right?

3 And so that's really all I have to say
4 today, and I thank you very much for all the
5 service, and including Representative Garcia,
6 who is a friend, and many other Dade delegates,
7 Ms. Logan, who has always been very supportive
8 as well. Thank you very much.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Norwood,
10 for your testimony.

11 And then I believe it is -- is it Gihan
12 Perera?

13 MR. PERERA: Yes.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Are you here?

15 MR. PERERA: Yes.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.
17 Appreciate your being here, and you are
18 recognized.

19 And following Gihan Perera's testimony,
20 Georges Daniel and then Jean Robert Lafortune,
21 I believe it is.

22 MR. PERERA: Thank you, everyone that is
23 here. Thank you, Senator Braynon.

24 I have three things to say today. I am
25 with Florida New Majority. A number of our

1 members have been here.

2 We are a statewide organization that does
3 both voter turnout and on issues affecting low
4 income people and minority communities. We
5 have done work on unemployment, on immigration
6 and on voting.

7 And what I wanted to say in this hearing,
8 particularly around what is happening in south
9 Florida, is three things.

10 One is that we are very concerned to make
11 sure that in south Dade, that the
12 African-American communities in south Dade
13 continue to get political representation
14 throughout this process.

15 The communities down in Perrine, Cutler
16 Ridge, those areas, we are concerned that the
17 drawing of the lines here cuts out their
18 political representation.

19 That representation is very important now
20 for those communities, and we wanted to ensure
21 that those communities continue to get the
22 representation that as a community of interest
23 that they deserve.

24 Similarly, our organization does a lot of
25 work in Liberty City and the Liberty City area.

1 We enjoy representation now in the Liberty City
2 area. There's lots of issues there that need
3 to be addressed, and particularly in the State
4 House Districts where those issues,
5 particularly around jobs and taxation issues
6 and infrastructure, are going to be very
7 important for us to have representation in
8 Liberty City.

9 And, finally, our organization represents
10 people who are largely moderate and low income
11 folks. In District 17 in the U.S. Congress,
12 that district has some of the highest
13 unemployment rates and child poverty rates.

14 The demographics in our district in
15 District 17 have a lot of non-English speakers,
16 immigrants, African-American, Hispanic folks.
17 We love our constituencies.

18 One of the most important things in those
19 constituencies is for us to be able to leverage
20 federal dollars that come into those districts,
21 into District 17 in particular, to be able to
22 actually improve the conditions in that
23 district.

24 Right now the institutions that could be
25 leveraged to support improvement in those

1 districts, especially the airport and the port,
2 are currently not within that district, and we
3 think it is a shame that if you have basically
4 an island of economic disparity, that the
5 institutions that are right next to those
6 districts that could provide economic
7 opportunities and an economic engine are not
8 included in those districts.

9 So we would strongly encourage, as these
10 lines get drawn, to not just look at the
11 people, but also look at the institutions, and
12 we highly encourage putting the port and the
13 airport into that district. Thank you.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
15 We really appreciate your comments.

16 And next, Georges Daniel, and if I
17 butchered that first name, I apologize. I am a
18 redneck from the Panhandle.

19 MR. DANIEL: Georges Daniel, that is my
20 name.

21 Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. Good
22 afternoon, member of the Commission and
23 everybody who are our Representatives.

24 We are here and we have been talking about
25 fairness and homogenating. Our district where

1 Asian-American is more concerned, and as a
2 group that we are here, we have come here this
3 afternoon from the Asian-American Coalition,
4 who are civil organization and pastors with us.

5 What we are interested is the integrity of
6 District 17. Now, we know District 17 has a
7 deficit of 41,000. It is this more or less
8 district on to add the 41,000, it has to
9 increase.

10 We would like to be on the record
11 requesting that it be increased to what the
12 north -- northwest part of the district,
13 meaning we could be attached to District 21 in
14 the Miramar -- west Miramar section, or go over
15 District 20 on the north side.

16 We know also that District 20 and District
17 21 are also deficit -- have a deficit of 2,005
18 and 4,000, but it is toward District 23 or
19 District 25 where they will increase their
20 numbers, or District 19, which has a plus
21 40,000.

22 So, therefore, we will put a map on the
23 record, we don't have the full map with us, but
24 we will put it on the record requesting those
25 change, if change has to be made.

1 Otherwise, we will appreciate that the
2 district stay the same as it is.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir,
4 and we look forward to your submission, and
5 that kind of help is particularly useful to us.

6 Next, Jean Robert Lafortune, and then C.
7 C. Reed.

8 MR. LAFORTUNE: Good morning, Mr. Chair
9 and everybody in the panel, and also especially
10 good morning to Senator Margolis.

11 And we want to take this opportunity to
12 acknowledge the way that you have been of
13 support to our community when you were at the
14 Commission where we get to vote yes to have
15 fair representation for Haitian-Americans in
16 2002, and we are still at the front line with
17 the fair representation issue before you today.

18 Our aim today is basically to drive home
19 the message of the Haitian-American community
20 here in the context of District 17. As the
21 comrade just mentioned, our recommendation, the
22 recommendation of the Haitian-American Task
23 Force is for you, policy-makers, who are
24 entrusted to redraw district line, is to
25 maintain the integrity of District 17 as is at

1 this time.

2 We are in the process of advocating for
3 representation. We are witness how segments of
4 the Haitian-American community in 2002, 2001,
5 were basically divided up in the City of North
6 Miami in four different districts.

7 Our message today is not to attempt to do
8 this kind of artifice or with the Congressional
9 District 17.

10 Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and I see
11 that you have in your hand the separation of
12 the King Solomon in the old times with the
13 Bible.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

15 MR. LAFORTUNE: And good luck with that
16 mission.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. I
18 remember King Solomon, at least in the movie,
19 raised the sword and never had to use it.

20 Next is C. C. Reed with -- who represents
21 Now Our Way. Thank you very much for being
22 here, and you are recognized.

23 And following Mr. Reed is Paulette -- I
24 believe it is Darau. Great, I got it. Please
25 come on down, Ms. Darau, and you can be next.

1 Please go ahead, sir, you are recognized.

2 MR. REED: Good afternoon. As the
3 qualified 2010 gubernatorial candidate, I am
4 here to make a statement basically upon the
5 redistricting.

6 Please, if you can, keep it accountable
7 for the needs of the people, because we know
8 that the census is done every ten years, and we
9 need jobs.

10 Basically this -- what I've seen the
11 percentages of making up these districts, they
12 have to be able to include the economic factors
13 in all the different communities of the state
14 of Florida, and I am wishing that this
15 Commission would be able to honor and respect
16 the people that basically put you where you are
17 at. Thank you.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
19 Mr. Reed.

20 Next, Paulette Darau. Ms. Darau, thank
21 you very much for taking time to come and speak
22 with us today. You are recognized.

23 MS. DARAU: Good morning, everyone. I am
24 delighted to see everyone.

25 My focus is fairness for us all. It's

1 been many, many years, and people that
2 represented me and look like me, we are
3 forgiven, we are absent, and no more can we --
4 can such be subjected to us.

5 So while you guys are here, I want to make
6 sure that the people that look like me in my
7 community is not absent from the circum-front.
8 It is a new day now, and we must be included.

9 So with this thing called redistricting,
10 make sure that my community is in the
11 circum-front. And this is why I am here. I am
12 out in the community, we register people to
13 vote, they vote. But I want to know, no more
14 should we be excluded, we must be included.
15 And I want to make sure such is given. Jobs is
16 the next thing.

17 So when we redistrict, don't just exclude
18 us, include us. It is a new day. I want to
19 make sure such is given. Be blessed, and I'm
20 going to make sure accountability is given.
21 Peace out.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
23 Ms. Darau. And now we had a number of folks
24 who may have stepped out and may have come back
25 in.

1 So let's go back through that list.

2 Jean-Pierre Bado? Jean-Pierre, are you here?

3 Would you like to testify?

4 Ronald Fulton. Did Mr. Fulton come back
5 in? Okay. And I think we got Jonathon Fried.

6 Mayor Pizzi, the Mayor of Miami Lakes.

7 Mr. Mayor, sorry you had to step out, but we
8 are glad you came back, and thanks for your
9 service to the community. You are recognized,
10 sir.

11 MAYOR PIZZI: My name is Michael Pizzi, I
12 am the Mayor of the Town of Miami Lakes. I am
13 also the Town Attorney for the great Town of
14 Medley. I am also an attorney.

15 I would like to say that I would like to
16 make a plea on behalf of I think all the
17 citizens of the state.

18 I think that the Constitution and all of
19 the laws governing redistricting are really a
20 plea for nothing more than common sense.

21 I think the people should be able to look
22 at a map with some common sense and figure out,
23 you know, where the lines are going to be
24 drawn, and I just think what we really need in
25 redistricting, I don't think districts should

1 be drawn to help or hurt any elected official
2 or any group of people.

3 I think that the -- you know, the maps,
4 there's going to be a lot of different people
5 who want it drawn to help this person or help
6 that person.

7 I think the maps should be drawn based
8 upon an application of the law with common
9 sense. I think that -- let's not lose sight of
10 something. The job of the Florida Legislature
11 is to follow the U.S. Constitution, follow the
12 Florida Constitution, and apply that law in a
13 fair and common sense way.

14 And I think that -- so when you look at
15 the map, what I want you to do, and I think
16 most people in the state want you to do, is
17 people should be able to look at the map in a
18 common sense way and figure out where the lines
19 are going to be drawn, no different than the
20 way you draw the lines for municipalities when
21 you're -- I mean, it is not rocket science.

22 When you draw the lines for
23 municipalities, they've got to be contiguous.
24 When you draw the lines for other things like
25 cities, it is just -- it is pretty simple.

1 I would say -- so I would ask that you
2 simply follow the law and engage in a common
3 sense approach, and I think people -- I want to
4 see a day when you can look at the map and
5 people could figure out -- nobody should look
6 at the map and not be able to figure out by
7 application of common sense who their Rep or
8 Senator or Congressman is going to be.

9 Now, I think if you redraw the lines and
10 you have all these crazy, squiggly lines, and
11 neighbors are represented by different people,
12 and you can't figure out who your rep is based
13 on common sense, then you will have failed.

14 I am going to look at the map when it is
15 finished, and if I can't base -- if it doesn't
16 make sense to me, then this process has been a
17 failure.

18 One final point. With regard to Miami
19 Lakes, you know, when you carve up
20 municipalities, you dilute their voting
21 strength and sometimes you render them
22 irrelevant.

23 The Town of Miami Lakes, the home of the
24 former Governor Bob Graham, still my most
25 famous constituent, the Town of Miami Lakes has

1 always been carved up. We have always had two
2 State Representatives. We have always had two,
3 in some cases three, Congressional
4 Representatives.

5 So the average resident of Miami Lakes --
6 as a Mayor, I have two State Reps, one neighbor
7 having one State Rep, somebody across the
8 street having somebody else, and as many as two
9 or three Congressional Representatives.

10 They all do an outstanding job, I support
11 them all, and they are all -- God bless them,
12 but on behalf of the Town of Miami Lakes, our
13 town is making a plea. Miami Lakes should have
14 one State Representative. Miami Lakes should
15 have one Congressperson.

16 To have a town, a small little box of a
17 five-mile town, how could you take a five-mile
18 Mayberry little, small town and divide the
19 people of that town up into multiple
20 Congressional Districts or multiple State
21 Senate and multiple State Rep districts?

22 And it really dilutes your strength
23 because anytime there's a major issue, our town
24 never has strength, because we are always one
25 small part of somebody else's larger district.

1 So when you make -- when you carve up a
2 town and make different parts of the town a
3 small part of some other larger city's
4 district, you are depriving those people of
5 adequate representation, they become
6 insignificant.

7 So I am making a plea, which I am going to
8 follow up with a petition that everyone in
9 Miami Lakes is going to sign, and Miami Lakes
10 is urging, Miami Lakes is demanding that the
11 Town of Miami Lakes have one State Rep, one
12 State Senator and one Congressperson.

13 Anything beyond that would be a failure of
14 the process and would deprive the people of our
15 city of their right to fair representation
16 under the Florida and Federal Constitution.

17 So I am hoping you will do that. I want
18 to thank you for your time. It is good to see
19 all of you, many of my friends, you are working
20 hard here, and I would appreciate you giving
21 some consideration to my thoughts, and thank
22 you very much.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mayor, and when
24 you do get that petition put together, would
25 you please forward it to us as quickly as you

1 can?

2 MAYOR PIZZI: We will, and thank you very
3 much.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: You bet. Thank you.

5 And now, Joel Volinski. Mr. Volinski?
6 Thank you for coming today, and I think you
7 have the honor of giving the benediction, or
8 bringing up the end, or the first shall be last
9 and the last shall be first. You are
10 recognized.

11 MR. VOLINSKI: Senators and
12 Representatives, thank you very much for coming
13 to Miami to hear everyone. And I apologize, I
14 only came into the room a few minutes ago, so
15 whatever I am saying may have already been
16 said.

17 So I apologize in advance if it is a
18 duplication of anything, but I am here just to
19 spend two minutes to say that I do have genuine
20 concerns about the integrity of our democracy
21 and the fact that our country is so divided
22 right now, so split, and I really do think a
23 lot of it has to do with districting.

24 And when those who are in power have the
25 right to kind of draw lines to retain power, it

1 doesn't make me feel comfortable, and when the
2 State of Florida citizens provided a pretty
3 clear message that they want to see a very fair
4 set of boundaries established, to me, that
5 was -- that was something that was very valid,
6 something that represented the anxiety that
7 they have over this splitting up of our country
8 based on safe districts.

9 And once there's safe districts,
10 Representatives or Senators don't have to
11 listen to the side that they don't -- they
12 don't particularly care for in one way or
13 another.

14 And so my thought is to, please -- and I
15 am an Independent, I am not in any particular
16 party, and if it were Democrats that were in
17 control, I would say the same thing, that we
18 simply have to have our people running for
19 elected office listening to all sides of all
20 arguments, the marketplace of ideas, instead of
21 being safe and usually ending up being
22 determined by the most extreme elements of
23 either party in their district. So really that
24 is all I was here to say.

25 I don't understand the details of the

1 Legislature's challenge to what the voters
2 passed. I thought it was stunningly arrogant,
3 but I -- but I, again, don't understand it
4 completely.

5 But I am here just to say that I would
6 wish in a state that is relatively evenly
7 divided, that there should be more districts
8 that are challenged fairly in every election,
9 and I hope that as you are doing your
10 redistricting, that you will take that into
11 account.

12 Again, I thank you very, very much for the
13 opportunity to speak. Thank you for your
14 efforts in coming to this part of the state to
15 hear us. Thank you.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Excellent
17 testimony to end our hearing.

18 We have reached the part of our meeting
19 now, or our hearing now, where we will invite
20 any members of the House Redistricting
21 Committee or the Senate Reapportionment
22 Committee to make any comments they wish to
23 make or make any proposals or offer any maps or
24 offer -- answer any questions.

25 And then at the end, we will turn to

1 Speaker Designate Weatherford, who has been
2 making copious notes on specific questions or
3 points of fact that have come up.

4 So let me begin by asking, are there
5 members of the House? Representative Rivas
6 Logan requests recognition, and please give her
7 the mike.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: You are recognized.

9 REPRESENTATIVE LOGAN: Thank you,
10 Mr. Chair. I appreciate the dialogue today
11 about various communities, racial and ethnic
12 minority communities, economic communities of
13 interest, and the very civil and respectful
14 debate that went on here today.

15 But I feel it is important to make it
16 perfectly clear that Florida's new standards
17 for redistricting specifically state that
18 districts shall not be drawn with the intent or
19 result of denying or abridging the equal
20 opportunity of racial or language minorities to
21 participate in the political process, or to
22 diminish their ability to elect the
23 Representative of their choice.

24 And my point in saying that is simply that
25 these issues must be by federal and now state

1 law considered, and the letter of the new state
2 law makes these considerations very prominent.

3 And so while I certainly appreciate and
4 frankly think it is very important that
5 everyone offer their guidance in how these
6 issues should be implemented, opportunities for
7 racial and language minorities must be
8 considered by both state and federal law.
9 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
11 Representative. Other comments by members of
12 the House Redistricting Committee? Yes, sir --
13 well, any members of the House first, then we
14 will go to Senators.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Representative
16 Baxley.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Representative Baxley, you
18 are recognized, and then we will go to the
19 Democratic Leader of the Senate.

20 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thank you,
21 Mr. Chairman, and I too would like to thank the
22 participants today, including our Chairman, for
23 the courtesy with which this meeting has been
24 conducted. It has been outstanding.

25 One thing I would like to address, because

1 we do hear a lot about the lawsuit. It happens
2 to be one of the few bipartisan things going on
3 in that we have an African-American
4 Congresswoman and a Republican Hispanic
5 Congressman who are putting this together, and
6 regardless of all of the consistency that we
7 hear about opposition to this lawsuit, the fact
8 is if what we have passed in our State
9 Constitution is in conflict with the United
10 States Constitution, we need to know the answer
11 to that question.

12 And we do need to be prepared that as
13 people exercise their right to file suits
14 regarding this map, these maps that are drawn,
15 that we should be prepared to have that
16 discussion, and it is not the only environment
17 in which we pay both sides.

18 Another area that we need to know the
19 right answer is in those cases with death
20 penalty. We pay the argument for that
21 judicious decision on both sides, because we
22 must know the right answer.

23 So while we may differ about that, I would
24 like to add that context, that that lawsuit is
25 more than trying to subvert the will of the

1 people, it is trying to discern how do you fit
2 together those views that some of these things
3 that are proscribed for us to do by law, to
4 follow the law, seem to be in conflict, and how
5 do we resolve that.

6 So I hope maybe that sheds some light on
7 at least my perspective on the validity of
8 having that discussion and finding the answer
9 to that question.

10 The other is, I would like to point out
11 many remarks that we hear have to do with
12 people choosing their own voters, drawing their
13 own maps, and I would like to point out how
14 much that the aspect of term limits has already
15 addressed this subject.

16 You will find that most of these people
17 did not run on maps that they were any part of
18 drafting, and that with ten-year census data
19 and eight-year term limits, much of that kind
20 of thing is blunted, and Congressmen don't draw
21 maps at all.

22 So I think much of it has been addressed,
23 and I think we do -- are going to see out of
24 the work of this Committee some compact
25 districts that deal with many of the things

1 that were brought before us.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your liberty.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Representative,
4 and now we would recognize the Democratic
5 Leader, Senator Rich.

6 SENATOR RICH: Thank you, Senator Gaetz.

7 Representative Baxley, I want to tell you,
8 you are correct that some of us who were in the
9 Legislature in 2002, when the lines were drawn
10 absolutely had nothing to do with their
11 districts and how they were drawn, and I am one
12 of those people.

13 I am one of the handful of people probably
14 here that, Senator Negrón, a few others, that
15 actually was involved in a redistricting, but I
16 will not say that I was involved in how the
17 lines were drawn, because there was no
18 transparency, it was done behind closed doors,
19 and all of a sudden, I had a district that was
20 entirely different than the district that I had
21 previously run for in the year 2000.

22 So I think we are all working very hard to
23 try and have a different result here.

24 Having said that, I think it is important
25 for the people who have testified here, the

1 people who are still here, to know that we are
2 not all of one mind up here.

3 There are many of us up here that do agree
4 strongly with many of the points that you have
5 made, particularly with regard to the timeline.

6 We have heard from Supervisors of
7 Elections who feel that this is going to be
8 devastating, this timeline, especially in the
9 larger counties that have hundreds of precincts
10 and tremendous numbers of absentee ballots and
11 so forth.

12 So what I did last night -- Senator Gaetz,
13 I don't have a map to present to you, but I
14 still would have the same request, to take a
15 look at the timeline in light of the hundreds
16 of people who have spoken to us about it in the
17 counties that we -- where we started on Monday,
18 Martin County and then Palm Beach County,
19 Broward County and now Dade County, have pretty
20 much told us the same thing.

21 So I hope that we will take that into
22 consideration and listen to the voices of the
23 voters.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
25 Leader.

1 Other comments? Leader Gardiner, the
2 Republican Leader.

3 SENATOR GARDINER: Thank you,
4 Mr. Chairman, and I was not prepared to speak,
5 I didn't address the audience when you were in
6 my community, but I did want to just mention a
7 couple of things, because Leader Rich brought
8 up ten years ago.

9 I was on the Committee ten years ago, and
10 there are a couple of things that I think need
11 to be put in the record.

12 Number one, I was speaking with staff,
13 we're actually ahead of schedule compared to
14 where we were ten years ago. The first map ten
15 years ago was not presented to the Committee
16 until January, the second week in January.

17 The League of Women Voters, who have been
18 very active in saying we should have maps now,
19 didn't present a map until two days after we
20 presented a map in January. That is the
21 realities of the situation.

22 And the idea that it was done behind
23 closed doors, it was presented before the
24 Committees, we took public testimony, everybody
25 had an opportunity to look at them, make

1 recommendations, amend them, and then it
2 followed through the process before it and
3 passed bi-partisanly.

4 So this idea that we should have maps now,
5 the reality is if we had maps now, just as many
6 people would be standing up saying it was done
7 behind closed doors, we didn't have the
8 opportunity to review them, and now you are
9 just going to just pass it.

10 So I just would keep that in mind, those
11 that say it is behind closed doors, or look at
12 the timeline, Mr. Chairman, we are ahead of
13 schedule compared to where we were ten years
14 ago.

15 So, again, I just wanted to clarify that,
16 put that on the record, and I want to thank you
17 for your time coming down here today. Thank
18 you.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, sir. Thank you,
20 Leader. President Margolis.

21 SENATOR MARGOLIS: I will stay seated.

22 I think that the participation of this
23 very diverse community today has been an eye
24 opener for my colleagues from around the state.

25 I thank you all for coming forward,

1 expressing your opinions and telling us what
2 you expect of us.

3 If you look at our redistricting brochure,
4 you will see that we talk about not only the
5 two Constitutional Amendments that were
6 recently passed and saying that we have to
7 abide by those -- those guidelines, but we also
8 have to abide by the guidelines of the Voting
9 Rights Act.

10 I don't think they need to be in conflict.
11 I would hope that they don't need to be in
12 conflict at all during this process. But I
13 think that the members here have understood
14 that this is a very extremely diverse community
15 and respect all of you in the input that you
16 gave us, and I thank you for being here.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Madam
18 President.

19 Any other members of the Senate Committee
20 that wish to be recognized? If not, the Chair
21 recognizes the Speaker Designate, Chair
22 Weatherford, for concluding comments.
23 Mr. Speaker.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
25 very much, Chairman, and I just want to thank

1 everybody for taking the time to come out today
2 and to give us your thoughtful opinions and
3 suggestions.

4 We know it takes time out of your day to
5 be here and to sit through a hearing like this,
6 and while it is our job to be here, you have
7 other things going on in your life, and the
8 fact that you would be here and be a part of
9 this really makes us thankful.

10 And I will tell you, Mr. Chairman, I
11 learned a great deal today about Dade County.
12 And I have spent a lot of time here over the
13 years and I live in the Tampa Bay area, but to
14 hear first-hand from the citizens from
15 different parts of the community here within
16 Dade County, to hear about the diversity, to
17 hear about the differences of the communities
18 of interest, to hear about the communities of
19 interest in the Haitian community and then the
20 Hispanic community and the African-American
21 community, has really been, frankly, eye
22 opening for me, and I wouldn't have that if I
23 hadn't been here today.

24 And so I want to thank you for bringing
25 that diversity and making sure that it is

1 explained it the Committee.

2 I also want to make it clear that I think
3 there was also a very strong signal sent to the
4 Legislature today that the breaking up of
5 communities and the breaking up of cities and
6 the breaking up of neighborhoods should be
7 avoided when possible, and that you want
8 compact districts and districts that also at
9 all times when possible to follow geographic
10 boundaries.

11 I think that is a very reasonable request.
12 Somebody said earlier that Amendments 5 and 6
13 was basically just trying to make the
14 redistricting process reasonable, and I
15 couldn't agree with you more, and it should be
16 reasonable.

17 And your comments today helped us as we
18 navigate through this process, which is very
19 complex, to understand your community better.

20 Something else I heard today that I
21 thought was important, that I took note of, was
22 to make sure there was no retrogression of the
23 minority districts here in Dade County, both
24 the Hispanic districts and the African-American
25 districts.

1 And I think that is something that
2 everyone on this Committee recognizes. It is
3 now enshrined in our Constitution. Not only is
4 it part of the Voting Rights Act, but it is
5 also in our Constitution, and we plan to uphold
6 that. And so we appreciate those comments in
7 that regard as well.

8 There were those who mentioned that they
9 are planning on drawing maps today. I thought
10 that was great. I said earlier today there can
11 be no better form of participation in this
12 process with this Committee than actually
13 submitting maps.

14 That has been extremely informative. We
15 have 35 of them already. We would love to have
16 a hundred, the more, the merrier, because it
17 gives us more ideas, more options, more
18 thoughts on paper that you have, and so we
19 could ask you to continue to do that.

20 A gentleman earlier by the name of
21 Mr. Hill asked a couple of questions. They
22 were almost rhetorical in nature, but I thought
23 that they were timely.

24 And he said, "How do we know what fair
25 districts look like? How do we know what

1 compactness looks like? How are we going to
2 know -- they're enshrined in our Constitution,
3 but how do we know what they actually are?"

4 And that is the whole reason we are here
5 today, Mr. Chairman, is because we don't know
6 exactly what those are. We know that there are
7 different court opinions about what compactness
8 means.

9 We know that if we ask ten people in this
10 room what fairness means, we would probably get
11 different answers. But the idea is to come to
12 you first and to get your opinion before we
13 start drawing the first line.

14 And so that leads me to the question that
15 we hear everywhere we go, which is, "Where are
16 the maps?" And it is very simple.

17 We are probably going to be -- this
18 Committee would probably be criticized whether
19 we had the maps or we didn't, but this is a
20 chicken versus the egg debate, and it should be
21 what comes first.

22 Should the Legislature make decisions
23 first and draw maps first, or should we come
24 before you, listen to you, spend hundreds of
25 hours traveling the state, getting a feel for

1 the diversity of our state, for the diversity
2 of Dade County, and then draw maps and then get
3 public testimony after that?

4 Well, that is the choice that we have
5 made, Mr. Chairman, and I think it is the right
6 choice, and I think we should continue on the
7 track that we are on, because I could have
8 never had the understanding of the diversity of
9 Dade County and the different communities
10 involved had I not been here today.

11 And if we would have drawn maps before we
12 showed up today, I think we would have been --
13 it would have been insulting to the members of
14 this audience, and, frankly, would have been
15 insulting to the people of Florida, because
16 they deserve to be listened to.

17 And the worst Bills that have been voted
18 on in the Legislature, in my opinion, have been
19 the ones that have been rushed through, the
20 ones that we have tried too quickly to push
21 them through.

22 And we heard a lot of complaints from
23 citizens around the state saying, "Take your
24 time, slow it down." Well, ladies and
25 gentlemen, that is what we are doing here.

1 This is a very serious thing.

2 We are redrawing every district in the
3 state of Florida. How you are going to be
4 represented in Tallahassee, how you are going
5 to be represented in Washington, D.C., will be
6 dictated by this Committee and what we submit
7 to the full bodies in the Legislature.

8 And I submit to you that taking our time
9 and doing it the right way is better than
10 rushing through it.

11 And so that leads me very quickly into the
12 timeline. We are on a tight timeline, and we
13 do recognize that it has to go through the
14 courts and we do recognize that qualifying is
15 waiting for us in the first or second week of
16 June, and we have to be done by then.

17 But I would also submit to you that doing
18 what the State of Illinois did, which is voting
19 on maps and submitting maps to their full body
20 for a vote with very limited, if not any at
21 all, public testimony, is the wrong way to do
22 it, and that what we are doing, while we are
23 being sensitive to the timeline, we feel it is
24 more important to hear from you first and
25 continue to watch the time and make sure that

1 we get done.

2 The Constitution also says, and I think
3 most people in this room are familiar with
4 this, that we cannot vote on legislative maps
5 until January at the earliest. We cannot vote.

6 We are legally not allowed to vote on
7 legislative maps until then. So if we spend
8 the summer listening to you, and the fall
9 looking at maps and debating maps, we will have
10 plenty of time to vote and look at the last
11 maps by session.

12 Lastly, this was raised numerous times,
13 and I just want to touch on it very quickly.
14 There was a lot of conversation about
15 litigation and lawsuits, and I first want to
16 say this:

17 There is litigation taking place and there
18 are lawsuits that are taking place, but I raise
19 my hand every two years when I am sworn in to
20 uphold the Constitution of the United States of
21 America and of the State of Florida, and
22 everybody else up here does the same.

23 And I can assure you that Amendments 5 and
24 6 passed with over 60 percent of the vote, they
25 are on the Constitution, they are the law of

1 the land, and every person, including myself,
2 will follow the law of the land, and we will
3 follow Amendments 5 and 6 to the T. We will
4 absolutely do that.

5 There was also a mention in regard to
6 money that is being spent on lawsuits, and I
7 have heard numbers like \$30 million and
8 \$20 million, and that is simply not true, and
9 it is a rumor, and it was one -- a newspaper
10 article that was written that apparently it
11 just seems to continue to float out there, but
12 I just want to make it clear one more time,
13 that is not true.

14 There is no 20 or 30 million dollar pot of
15 money that is dedicated to these lawsuits. It
16 does not exist, it is not true. And if you
17 don't believe me, you can go to
18 transparencyflorida.gov.

19 Transparencyflorida.gov is a website that is
20 run by the State of Florida, and it shows every
21 dollar that is being spent by the Legislature
22 and all the agencies and everything else. I
23 hope you will go there and check it out.

24 Lastly, I just want to say, Mr. Chairman,
25 that any member on this Committee at any time

1 during this process can submit maps to this
2 body or to the Legislature, and they will
3 immediately be placed online for the citizens
4 and for other members to look at.

5 And so for those who are out there that
6 want to rush through this and want to hurry up
7 and see maps and have maps presented by the
8 Legislature, any member of this body can do
9 that, and we, frankly, would encourage them to
10 do that.

11 But I learned a lot today, Mr. Chairman.
12 Thank you for chairing a great meeting, and I
13 look forward to the meeting tonight. Thank you
14 very much.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: And with that,
16 Representative Weatherford moves we rise.

17 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
18 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 169 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 10th day of November, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2011
6:00 P.M.
FIU COLLEGE OF LAW
SOUTH MIAMI, FLORIDA

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: My name is
3 Will Weatherford, and I have the honor of
4 chairing today's hearing, and this is a Joint
5 Senate/House Redistricting Hearing, and we are
6 now calling it to order.

7 We are pleased to be joined today by
8 several members of the Florida House and
9 Senate, and I would like to ask each one of
10 them to briefly introduce themselves and tell
11 you who they are and where they are from.

12 But first, because we are in her district,
13 I would like to turn it over to State
14 Representative Ana Rivas Logan to welcome
15 everyone to Miami and let her kick us off.

16 So, Representative, you are recognized.

17 REPRESENTATIVE LOGAN: Thank you,
18 Chairman. I would like to welcome everybody to
19 the redistricting meeting, and thank you for
20 being part of the process. It is wonderful
21 looking out in the audience and seeing so many
22 community activists out there coming to give us
23 your input.

24 We will be taking notes and we will be
25 listening and we will be following up on your

1 input and it will be taken seriously, and thank
2 you once again for being with us today.

3 REPRESENTATIVE SCHENCK: Rob Schenck.

4 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good evening,
5 everyone. My name is John Patrick Julien,
6 representing House District 104, which
7 encompasses North Miami Beach, North Miami,
8 Miami Gardens, Opa-Locka, unincorporated
9 Miami-Dade, the City of Miami. I'm glad to see
10 so many friendly faces, and looking forward to
11 hearing from you all.

12 REPRESENTATIVE ARTILES: Good afternoon,
13 Frank Artiles, District 119, Sweetwater,
14 Redlands, West Kendall and down to the City of
15 Homestead.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Good evening, Mike
17 Horner, District 79, Osceola County.

18 REPRESENTATIVE STARGEL: Hello, Kelli
19 Stargel, District 64, north Polk County, which
20 is Lakeland, Polk City, Kathleen and Davenport.

21 SENATOR NEGRON: Good evening, Joe Negron,
22 Senate District 28, which is the Treasure Coast
23 and northern Palm Beach County.

24 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good evening, my
25 name is Dwayne Taylor. I represent House

1 District 27. That is Volusia County.

2 REPRESENTATIVE BRODEUR: Good evening,
3 State Representative Jason Brodeur,
4 representing parts of Orange, Volusia and
5 Seminole Counties, District 33.

6 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Hi, Jim Boyd,
7 Florida House District 68, which is Manatee
8 County, just below Tampa Bay on the other side
9 of the state.

10 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: Good evening, Tom
11 Goodson, representing District 29 from Mims,
12 Florida, to the St. Lucie County line and
13 Indian River County. Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE OLIVA: Good evening, Jose
15 Oliva, District 110, representing Hialeah,
16 Miami Lakes and part of unincorporated Dade.

17 REPRESENTATIVE NUNEZ: Good evening,
18 Jeanette Nuñez, State Representative for House
19 District 112, which consists of portions of
20 Miami-Dade County, Broward and Collier County.
21 Happy to be here at FIU, and I am a proud alum,
22 twice over. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GARCIA: You stole my line about
24 proud alum. Out you on that one.

25 Rene Garcia, Senate District 40,

1 encompasses northwest Dade County area.

2 REPRESENTATIVE DIAZ: Hi, I am Jose Diaz,
3 representing District 115, which encompasses
4 much of Fountainbleau, Westchester, East
5 Kendall, Pinecrest, Palmetto Bay and Cutler
6 Bay.

7 I am not an FIU alum, I'll one you up. My
8 wife is, so my better half, and my
9 father-in-law taught here for 30 years. So I
10 am very proud to be here. Thank you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: Clay Ford,
12 Representative, District 3, Pensacola.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Ritch Workman,
14 District 30, Brevard County.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Mack Bernard,
16 State Representative, District 84, West Palm
17 Beach.

18 REPRESENTATIVE STEINBERG: Richard
19 Steinberg, House District 106, Miami Beach,
20 Surfside, North Bay Village, Indian Creek, Bal
21 Harbor, Bay Harbor, Aventura, Sunny Isles
22 Beach, Golden Beach, North Miami Beach, North
23 Miami and a little bit of unincorporated Dade
24 County.

25 REPRESENTATIVE TRUJILLO: Good evening, my

1 name is Carlos Trujillo. I represent Florida
2 House District 116, which is the Balin High
3 School area all the way down into the Hammocks.

4 SENATOR RICH: Good evening, I am Nan
5 Rich, State Senator, District 34, representing
6 nine municipalities in southwestern Broward
7 County, and then coming down all the way to the
8 southern end of Dade County, all unincorporated
9 areas, quite a gerrymandered district, and I
10 also serve as the Senate Minority Leader for
11 this two-year period.

12 SENATOR BRAYNON: Good evening, State
13 Senator Oscar Braynon. I represent Senate
14 District 33, which is Miami Gardens, Opa-Locka,
15 North Miami, North Miami Beach -- a piece of
16 North Miami Beach, Biscayne Gardens -- I never
17 did this listing. It is north central
18 Miami-Dade.

19 So from the county line to the Miami
20 River, from Biscayne all the way to the edge of
21 Hialeah.

22 SENATOR SACHS: Good evening. My name is
23 Maria Sachs. I am a State Senator from Palm
24 Beach County, beautiful Palm Beach County, and
25 a little bit of Broward County up by the county

1 line. It is good to be here in Miami tonight.

2 SENATOR BOGDANOFF: Ellyn Bogdanoff, State
3 Senate District 25, representing Broward and
4 Palm Beach Counties' coastal communities.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PLAKON: Good evening, I am
6 Scott Plakon, Florida House District 37, Orange
7 and Seminole Counties.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay, great.
9 Obviously you can see that we have a lot of
10 Legislators here from the House and Senate who
11 took time to be here to listen to you.

12 More importantly, you are here, and we are
13 very thankful that many of you took the time to
14 be here as well.

15 We would like to put a special thank you
16 to FIU, and more specifically the Law School,
17 for opening up this beautiful facility. I see
18 the President of Florida National. President
19 Rosenberg, sir, thank you very much for opening
20 up your house to us. It is a wonderful
21 facility, you have a wonderful university here
22 and we are all rooting for the Golden Panthers
23 this football season, so good luck to you guys.

24 But we are very grateful for this
25 opportunity to hear from you, and, again, my

1 name is Will Weatherford, and I along with my
2 partner here, Senator Gaetz, who is the
3 Co-Chair of this Committee, we will -- I will
4 be chairing this Committee today with him,
5 which is going to be webcast live on the
6 Florida Channel over the Internet.

7 Our sole purpose today is to hear from
8 you, as I said before. We want to hear from
9 you about what you think about the legal
10 standards that guide us for redistricting and
11 how they should be applied to the community
12 that you live in.

13 We want to make sure that you are
14 represented both in Tallahassee and in
15 Washington, D.C., fairly, equitably and
16 sensibly.

17 Our procedures today are going to be
18 pretty simple, but they are very important, and
19 it is important that you sign in so that we
20 create an accurate public record of all the
21 attendees and speakers.

22 Also, you may opt to join our e-mail list
23 so that we can keep you informed about how the
24 redistricting process is progressing over the
25 next few months.

1 If you have not signed in, please raise
2 your hand, and a staff member will give you an
3 attendance card.

4 If you wish to speak today and you have
5 not filed out an attendance card, please raise
6 your hand as well, and we will get you a card
7 so that you can be called on and that we won't
8 miss your testimony.

9 It is the same attendance card whether you
10 wish to speak or if you just wish to sit and
11 listen.

12 Before we begin, I would like to turn it
13 over to the Co-Chair, Senator Gaetz, to walk us
14 through a little bit about -- give us a
15 historical perspective of redistricting and
16 maybe walk us through the process of what we
17 are here to do today and perhaps provide some
18 insight to the Committee and also to the
19 members of the audience.

20 Chairman, you are recognized.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. Is
22 this on? Not so much. Now it is. You bang
23 it, it works.

24 Well, that is what you need to know about
25 redistricting. Every ten years, the Florida

1 Legislature, just like all Legislatures in
2 America, is required by our Constitution to
3 redistrict the state, and we redistrict based
4 on increases, decreases and movements of
5 population within the state.

6 Now, Florida has grown more than other
7 states in the last ten years, so just as New
8 York lost two members of the U.S. Congress, we
9 picked up two members of the U.S. Congress.

10 So we go from 25 to 27 U.S. Congressmen,
11 and from 27 to 29 electoral votes.

12 Because some parts of our state have
13 increased or decreased disproportionately to
14 other parts of the state in population, many
15 Senate and House districts will change either
16 by adding or losing population.

17 When redistricting is completed,
18 Congressional Districts, U.S. Congressional
19 Districts, must be equal in population, and the
20 magic number is 696,345 people, no more, no
21 less.

22 There have been court cases where if you
23 have 11 more people in the next Congressional
24 District, the federal courts have thrown it
25 out. So it is 696,345 people. The 40 State

1 Senate Districts must be nearly equal at about
2 470,000 people.

3 There are 120 members of the House of
4 Representatives, and each of their districts
5 must be nearly equal at about 156,700 people.

6 Now, we have displays that are over here
7 that you -- many of you I saw were looking at
8 as you came in, displays as well as you came in
9 through the lobby, showing the current
10 boundaries of districts in this area of the
11 state, and also the number of persons which
12 must be added to or subtracted from current
13 districts to achieve equal representation.

14 Equality of representation is important,
15 but it is not the only legal requirement
16 redistricting plans must meet. There are other
17 requirements, and the laws and the important
18 federal court cases governing redistricting are
19 explained in detail on the House and Senate
20 websites.

21 You can get to those websites by looking
22 at the website information listed on the
23 "Redistricting 2012" brochure that was
24 available when you came in. The "Redistricting
25 2012" brochure summarizes state and federal

1 laws, and outlines topics that we really need
2 your advice on at today's hearing.

3 If you did not get a copy of the
4 "Redistricting 2012" brochure when you came in,
5 they are available on tables when you leave, or
6 if during the hearing you would like to get a
7 copy, just raise your hand, and a member of our
8 staff will make sure that you do get a copy.

9 The brochure lists the House and Senate
10 websites, and these websites are important
11 because they are packed with information about
12 redistricting in Florida, including explanation
13 of the laws and court cases that govern
14 redistricting.

15 It isn't just one section of the law. It
16 is many sections of many laws and many court
17 cases that have to be all applied and knitted
18 together to develop our redistricting plan.

19 The two websites, the Senate and House
20 websites, are complementary and are updated
21 frequently. We hope you will visit them and
22 check back often.

23 The websites are a great way to stay
24 current about how new Congressional Senate and
25 House districts are taking shape.

1 The websites also deliver to your
2 fingertips all of the demographic information
3 supplied to Florida by the U.S. Bureau of the
4 Census that describe the people of Florida,
5 that give all of the information that we will
6 use in determining where district lines ought
7 to be, and that information was supplied to us
8 by the Bureau of the Census.

9 We were one of the -- not the last state,
10 but one of the last states to get the
11 information, and we put it on the Web as
12 quickly as possible.

13 And also you will find on the Senate and
14 House websites the precise computer programs
15 that will be used by policy-makers and probably
16 also by the courts to evaluate and draw various
17 districts and options for districts.

18 Any member of the public can participate
19 in building plans or seeing maps submitted by
20 Legislators or by other citizens. I am fairly
21 techno stupid. It took about 15 minutes for
22 the staff to show me how to use the websites to
23 understand the plans that have been submitted,
24 and I am sure it would take you even less time.

25 I know a number of people in the audience

1 here have already begun to use the websites.
2 Before, during and after the hearing, Senate
3 and House professional staff are available to
4 show anybody the simple steps to getting
5 on-line, to building or evaluating the district
6 maps that are already there, and submitting a
7 plan, if you would like, of your own now or in
8 the weeks to come.

9 Recommendations from citizens and groups
10 of citizens will all be made publicly
11 available. So if you give us your ideas, we
12 want to make sure your ideas are also available
13 to everybody in Florida so that this is a
14 completely open and transparent process.

15 In fact, as of today, 32 maps are on the
16 website for you to review. These maps take
17 different points of view, you will see
18 different philosophies represented, but there
19 are 32 maps for you to review now.

20 There are approximately 110 written ideas
21 for maps that have been submitted by interest
22 groups or individuals, and those are on the web
23 as well. And after this week, I am sure those
24 numbers will probably increase.

25 In fact, in the last couple of days,

1 attendees at meetings just like this have drawn
2 districts for submission with the help of our
3 staff and they have drawn the districts at the
4 display tables here at the hearing.

5 So it is a fairly simple process if you
6 would like to share your ideas about your
7 neighborhood or your community. If you don't
8 want to share your ideas, that is fine, too.
9 But the submission of proposed maps that makes
10 sense for your community is the single most
11 effective form of public participation in the
12 redistricting process.

13 Now, the redistricting schedule, the
14 timeline under which we are operating, is
15 imposed by the State Constitution. It is not
16 something that we can make up or change. It is
17 imposed by the Constitution.

18 The State Constitution does not permit the
19 Legislature to act on state legislative maps
20 before the second year after the census. In
21 other words, the census was in 2010. The
22 Constitution says we can't vote on maps until
23 2012.

24 But we have accelerated this process as
25 much as we legally can by moving up the 2012

1 legislative session from March, when we usually
2 begin, to January, so that we can begin
3 deliberating and voting as soon as legally
4 possible.

5 And we began our statewide hearings five
6 months in advance of the 2012 session, and
7 Committee meetings, which usually start in
8 December, are starting in September; again,
9 allowing an acceleration of the schedule.

10 Now, it's been suggested by some that the
11 Legislature should draw maps first, and then
12 present those maps as a take-it-or-leave-it for
13 the public to comment. But we believe that
14 this puts the answer ahead of the question.

15 There should be no preconceptions created
16 by politicians, but, rather, public testimony
17 ought to be free and unrestricted. In fact,
18 the author -- the principal author of Florida's
19 new redistricting standards and the Chair
20 person for Fair Districts are both on record in
21 testimony before the Senate and House stating
22 that no maps should or could be drawn until the
23 public has had an opportunity to comment
24 through public hearings.

25 Our intent is to use the recommendations

1 made at these 26 hearings and recommendations
2 that come to us through the Internet, through
3 regular mail, through your conversations and
4 input to your Representatives and Senators as
5 the basis for developing options for district
6 maps.

7 We will discuss those options in open
8 public meetings before any votes are taken even
9 in Committee. In other words, what we are
10 saying is if you look at the maps that are
11 available to you today here at this hearing and
12 the maps that you can look at on-line, these
13 maps submitted to the Legislature by Florida
14 residents and interest groups are the starting
15 point in the legislative process.

16 So if you want to know where we will begin
17 our deliberations, if you want to see where the
18 maps are now, it is with those public
19 submissions, as well as testimony from the
20 meeting tonight and other public input that we
21 will receive.

22 Throughout the process, we will solicit
23 additional public comment so that proposed maps
24 can mature, can change, with public criticism
25 and public involvement, all before the

1 Legislature votes or approves any final maps.

2 But we are not the ones who actually get
3 to decide what the maps ought to be. The final
4 decision is left with the judiciary. Whatever
5 the Legislature passes based on input from the
6 public is then submitted for judicial review to
7 the State Supreme Court and for federal
8 judicial review to ensure that the final plans
9 meet all the legal requirements, state and
10 federal.

11 Because our purpose today is to hear from
12 you, all the time between now and the time we
13 adjourn at 9:00 will be used to ensure that
14 every member of the public who is here and
15 wishes to speak will have time to present
16 testimony and be listened to respectfully.

17 Now, after every citizen has had her or
18 his say, if there is time remaining, and we
19 hope there will be, before our scheduled
20 adjournment, then any member of the Committee,
21 Democrat or Republican, House member or
22 Senator, may make any statement, offer any
23 observation, answer any question or make any
24 proposal.

25 And, of course, any member of the

1 Legislature may yesterday, today or tomorrow,
2 propose a map or a plan, and we will
3 immediately make those proposals available to
4 the public.

5 Mr. Chairman, I hope this description of
6 our schedule and the process that we will use
7 helps set the stage for a successful hearing
8 tonight.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
10 very much, Senator Gaetz. We appreciate your
11 words. And as the Senator said, we will
12 adjourn promptly at 9:00, and there are a few
13 dozen individuals who have signed up to speak
14 so far, and if there is anyone else who wishes
15 to speak, please ensure that you get a card,
16 and we will make sure and get you to sign that.

17 Because we are limited in time, we are
18 going to try to divide the time evenly and to
19 ask each testifier to limit their remarks to
20 about three minutes, and we will try to be
21 liberal with that, but as more people sign up,
22 we may have to be a little bit tighter.

23 Our first speaker this evening is going to
24 be Celestino Palomo, and she will be followed
25 by Jesus Medina, and then Jean Newland.

1 What we will do is call three names at a
2 time and try to -- we have seats that are
3 prepared in the back for those who are on deck.
4 So if you could kind of be prepared to speak.

5 And without further ado, we would like to
6 recognize Celestino Palomo to speak. Yes, sir,
7 you are recognized, sir. I hope I said your
8 name right. I was asking Ana Rivas Logan to
9 help me.

10 You are recognized, sir, correct. We are
11 going to turn that mike on for you.

12 MR. PALOMO: Good evening, members of the
13 panel, ladies and gentlemen. My name is
14 Celestino Palomo, and I have been living in
15 Miami permanently since I was discharged from
16 the U.S. Army in the year 1970.

17 I have been compelled to participate in
18 this public hearing, my first ever, because I
19 think this is a historic moment in the state of
20 Florida.

21 This is about implementation of Amendments
22 5 and 6 and their redistricting procedures
23 taking place. Those amendments prohibit the
24 Legislature to favor incumbents or political
25 parties or to deny racial minorities their

1 right to participate in our electoral process.

2 If you accomplish this, we will see voters
3 participate in greater numbers in our
4 elections, and we will also see how communities
5 from different backgrounds or races will be
6 coming together to find solutions for common
7 problems.

8 If you don't, it will be politics as
9 usual. We have all witnessed in the past few
10 months partisan politics at its worst all of
11 the way from Washington, D.C., to communities
12 in our neighborhood.

13 Please do the right thing for the good of
14 all our citizens. Thank you very much. God
15 bless America.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much, sir. We appreciate those comments.

18 Next up we have Jesus Medina. Following
19 Jesus will be Jean or Jean Newland, and then
20 Annie Betancourt. Jesus is -- no? Okay. All
21 right, does not want to speak. Thank you for
22 being here though, sir.

23 Next up we have Jean Newland, followed by
24 Annie Betancourt, and then after that we have
25 David Crespo.

1 Jean is with the ACLU, or is affiliated
2 with the ACLU. Thank you very much for being
3 here, ma'am. We are honored, and you have the
4 floor.

5 MS. NEWLAND: Well, thank you very much,
6 and I would just like to say thank you for your
7 good description of how redistricting works,
8 because that was one of the things I was going
9 to say.

10 The one thing I would like to ask is why
11 the geospatial analysis and the compactness
12 were deleted from the computer system that you
13 have engaged to help with the redistricting.

14 I would like to also know why Senator Alan
15 Hays was so disingenuous when he said that the
16 State of Florida did not file a suit against
17 the Amendment 5 and 6.

18 Actually, the suit was filed by Corrine
19 Brown and Mario Diaz-Balart, members of the
20 Florida Congressional Delegation. The State of
21 Florida merely joined the suit as
22 Plaintiff/Intervenor.

23 This they thought would give them good
24 deniability. That means that if Mr. Balart
25 backs off, we can just step right in as the

1 state.

2 The Legislature is fighting to have
3 Amendment 5 and 6, and they are spending
4 taxpayers' money to do it. The Legislature so
5 far has spent \$700,000 in legal fees associated
6 with redistricting, half of which has been
7 delegated against Amendment 6.

8 And to add to an even more bazaar twist,
9 an almost Orwell-ian twist, the Secretary of
10 State is charging \$60,000 to the taxpayer to
11 defend the amendment.

12 So one hand, the State is trying to
13 invalidate it, and on the other hand, is going
14 to defend it, and we are paying for both sides.

15 I know that you have a big job to do in
16 Tallahassee, but please don't forget that you
17 represent us, and you represent all of us, and
18 it is important not only to the ACLU, but all
19 of us to protect our Constitution. Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
21 very much. And, Ms. Newland, I will tell you,
22 what we will do is at the end of the hearing,
23 we will make sure -- if you can stick around
24 long enough, we will turn it over to the
25 members to respond to some of the comments, and

1 specifically the questions you raised.

2 Senator Gaetz will make an attempt to try
3 to answer them for you today. We want to make
4 sure that we give everyone an opportunity to
5 speak first, but after that, there will be a
6 moment where the Senator will be able to
7 address some of those questions.

8 So thank you for your questions, and with
9 that, we will move forward to Ms. Betancourt
10 with the League of Women Voters of Florida.
11 You are recognized.

12 MS. BETANCOURT: Thank you. Good evening.
13 Representative Weatherford, Senator Gaetz,
14 members, thank you for coming down to our
15 community. I am delighted to appear before
16 you.

17 Redistricting and reapportionment, it is
18 one of the most political of all political
19 sports, and it occurs every ten years. I
20 should simply say and equate it to the Olympic
21 games. There are winners and there are losers.

22 I have been following this process since
23 1982, when legendary Senator Dempsey Barron
24 chaired the Committee. I know you, Senator
25 Gaetz, now have the honor to sit in that

1 district and represent the people in the
2 Panhandle.

3 But ever since that time, and again in
4 1992, I followed the process. And then ten
5 years ago, I sat on that other side of the
6 table as a Representative for District 116
7 where Representative Trujillo is. So I
8 seriously take this exercise as a very, very
9 serious.

10 Back in 1981, when Senator Barron chaired,
11 it was a historic moment for Florida, because I
12 was sitting in the audience and it was a
13 turning point in the state where we had
14 multiple districts.

15 And what happened was that by going into
16 the single member, it opened the door, it
17 really truly opened the floodgates for
18 African-Americans, for Hispanic and for women
19 to run for office.

20 I know that in addition, the issue of one
21 person, one vote, and the principle for all
22 citizens regardless of where they reside are
23 entitled to equal representation.

24 And the point is that we, the people, pick
25 the elected officials, not the elected official

1 pick the people on election day.

2 The concern that I have is it's a matter
3 of timeline in terms of the way for getting the
4 job done, so to speak, the district lines, the
5 maps to be drawn, and clearly we know as a
6 result of the census, Florida has 18,800,000
7 people.

8 And thank you for making the clarification
9 in terms of the number of residents per
10 Congressional District. But you do have the
11 ability to draw those districts anytime you
12 have the information at your fingertips. The
13 sophisticated technology is there.

14 So I don't see no reason why it is being
15 delayed and delayed. Floridians spoke loud and
16 clear when the Constitutional Amendments 5 and
17 6 were passed with 63 percent of approval rate
18 in our state.

19 So all I am here tonight asking you to
20 please roll up your sleeves, do your job and
21 get those maps out. Democracy, it is not a
22 spectator sport, and voters should not be the
23 loser in this Olympic game. Thank you so much.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
25 very much. And thank you for your service to

1 the State of Florida. We are very grateful for
2 that as well.

3 Next up we have Mr. David Crespo. Mr.
4 Crespo. Following Mr. Crespo, we have Andrew
5 Casademunt, and after Andrew, we after Angela
6 Vazquez.

7 David, you are recognized, sir. Thanks
8 for being here.

9 MR. CRESPO: Thank you. This will be
10 probably the first time I will be speaking to a
11 State Legislature. It feels like I'm speaking
12 to lions and tigers.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: It is okay,
14 we don't bite.

15 MR. CRESPO: Well, I am glad that most of
16 you are kittens.

17 I just wanted to bring up the issues on
18 the Constitutional Amendments 5 and 6 that were
19 passed last year. I was one of those
20 individuals that originally signed the Petition
21 to have those amendments on the ballot.

22 It turns out I was a pinhead, because I
23 have learned from then that when -- as I did
24 research on it, it was really -- it was
25 really -- first of all, I was deceived.

1 It was made to look like a good idea, but
2 I was maliciously deceived. It was designed by
3 the secular progressives and the far left wings
4 to have these redistricting decisions to be
5 left up to the Florida Supreme Court, which is
6 a court full of judicial activists.

7 And I am bringing this up because I know
8 that you got a bunch of individuals and
9 crybabies, with all due respect to the lady
10 from the ACLU, a bunch of --

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sir, we want
12 to keep the comments focused on redistricting,
13 we don't want to talk about anybody else, just
14 talk directly to us, that's it.

15 MR. CRESPO: To you?

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Just us.

17 MR. CRESPO: Sorry, sir.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You can call
19 me a crybaby, but nobody else in the room,
20 okay?

21 MR. CRESPO: Understood.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right.

23 MR. CRESPO: Understood.

24 It was really designed to intimidate you
25 guys, to intimidate you to come -- to

1 redistrict according to the image of the
2 secular progressives.

3 And so I would like to offer you guys some
4 encouragement. Those list of people, those
5 secular progressives that I just mentioned,
6 don't fear them. The one who -- the one who
7 all of us should fear is God himself. He is
8 one that put you guys in the position you are
9 in now, and he is the one who can take it away
10 from you guys.

11 I trust that you guys will do the right
12 thing with fair -- with no prejudice. I trust
13 that you guys will make the right decisions
14 and with God as your counselor.

15 And if any of those people that I just
16 mentioned try to threaten you with lawsuits,
17 disregard them. Keep your -- just do the right
18 thing and rely on God within the meetings that
19 you guys have as your counselor, and do the
20 right thing. And even if they do bring you to
21 court, God looks within your hearts and he
22 knows your right intentions, and if you have
23 done this with the right intentions, I
24 guarantee you, through God himself, even though
25 you won't see him, will defend you in court.

1 And I would like to close with this last
2 statement from the book of Psalms, in chapter
3 1, the last verse: "The Lord watches over the
4 ways of the righteous, but the ways of the
5 fools will lead to destruction." I yield the
6 floor.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
8 very much, Mr. Crespo.

9 Next up we have Mr. Andrew Casademunt. I
10 apologize if I am not saying that right, sir.
11 Following Andrew, we have Angela Vazquez, and
12 then Edith Owens.

13 Andrew, you are recognized, sir.

14 MR. CASADEMUNT: Thank you, sir.

15 Today I am here to talk about the
16 redistricting. I want to start with the
17 federal Congressional Districts.

18 I have a big thing with District 20, how
19 it is right now. I think it is one of the
20 worst gerrymandered districts in the country.
21 I currently see it going from west and all the
22 way down to Aventura into Sunny Isles Beach and
23 Bay Harbor Island.

24 I think that District 20, which has
25 lost -- which has lost 4,000 people, should go

1 more into Broward. I currently think that
2 District 17 should take over those
3 municipalities.

4 I also think that District 18, how it is
5 right now, should stay how it is, because it
6 covers coastal communities from Miami Beach
7 down into the Keys.

8 I also want to speak about District 25.
9 Right now, there is a big problem with people
10 in Collier County. Collier County has grown in
11 population, and I think that the State of
12 Florida, since it's received two new
13 Congressional Districts, should get a new
14 Congressional District for southwest Florida.

15 I also think that District 21 should --
16 has lost a little bit of population, should
17 move up, you know, and get more of the areas.
18 But the problem is with Amendment 5 and 6, I
19 see that the Voting Rights Act law is the law
20 of the land, and these districts have a lot of
21 minorities, Cubans, African-Americans,
22 Hispanics, and I think that we need to protect
23 that, then what Amendment 5 and 6 has done.

24 I am currently seeing here in the Florida
25 House how there's been a lot of population loss

1 of 20,000, 17,000. And I think that even
2 though there are a lot more minority districts,
3 I think we need to keep those in place.
4 There's a lot of communities in south Florida,
5 which is a melting pot compared to different
6 areas of Florida. So I strongly urge that you
7 keep these districts how they are, but we need
8 to do it in a way that, you know, voters can
9 see what the districts are going to look like.

10 I want to speak quickly on 117, 101 and
11 112. 112 and 101, they go from Collier County
12 all the way down to the Florida Turnpike. I
13 definitely think that we need to keep Collier
14 County with Collier County, and Dade County
15 with Dade county. And I think we need to
16 combine 101 with 112 and make it a rural area,
17 because there's a lot of farmers and a lot of
18 rural communities that need a representative in
19 the Florida House and the Florida Senate.

20 The other thing I want to talk about was
21 that -- you know, how they are talking about
22 voter precincts and all that, whether
23 Republican or Democrat. I think we should go
24 by ZIP code. I don't know if anybody said
25 that, but I think ZIP codes is a good way to

1 make districts fairer, and city lines.

2 Like, for instance, District 117 and one
3 -- 117 and 111, for instance, go through Coral
4 Gables, and there's about two districts that --
5 you know, why are you going to have two
6 districts in Coral Gables when you can only do
7 one district?

8 So I think that we really need to preserve
9 the minority districts, but I think we should
10 try to go ZIP code and use like state roads,
11 interstates and county boundaries. Thank you.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
13 very much, sir.

14 Next up we have Angela Vazquez, followed
15 by Edith Owens and then Louella Grayson.

16 Ms. Vazquez, you are recognized. Thank
17 you for being here.

18 COUNCILWOMAN VAZQUEZ: Thank you,
19 Mr. Chairman, and thank you to all of you for
20 coming down here. And some of you may already
21 know, I have an issue that sometimes the state
22 and federal government says they are going to
23 come hear the people, and then they meet in
24 south Broward and say that they were in
25 Miami-Dade County. So thank you very, very

1 much for taking the time to venture in, I
2 promise you will get out safe, into Miami-Dade
3 County to hear -- I don't know why they don't
4 want to come -- to hear what we have to say.

5 I want to let you know I run five senior
6 centers and a Meals On Wheels program for the
7 -- through that and the fact that I am a
8 community Councilwoman in our area, I do know
9 several of our State Reps, and I know that
10 Amendment 5 and 6 charges you with very
11 specific things that you need to do, and that
12 there are some funky-shaped districts out
13 there, but I beg you to please remember -- and
14 my county may not be a minority, but Hispanics
15 in particular, the elderly. You can do the
16 same thing and water down a minority, or you
17 can keep a minority adrift and make sure their
18 voice is heard. And I hope that you will make
19 sure when you go in there and redraw what you
20 are doing, that you remember the minorities and
21 you remember the Hispanics and be careful on
22 how you draw it.

23 And specifically to me, those that
24 represent my five senior centers, and I don't
25 know them by memory, I know them by name, I can

1 tell you, the elderly are very important, they
2 are very frail and they are usually overlooked.
3 And from -- well, from most of the Miami-Dade
4 delegation, they really, really went out of
5 their way. I sit on a state board for the
6 Florida Association of -- of FASP, and on a
7 national board for the elderly, and many times
8 they look at their Legislators with dismay,
9 because they think that they are not thought
10 of. Ours do.

11 And lastly, and my Representative in
12 particular, who you are in her area today, very
13 open, very outgoing. Actually, everybody, I
14 think, in here that I do know can tell you they
15 are doing a great job. And I know you can't
16 protect the incumbents, but for the sake of my
17 old people, for the sake of us women,
18 Hispanics, et cetera, take care of the ones
19 that take care of us, because to throw the baby
20 out with the bath water just doesn't make any
21 sense, and thank you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
23 very much.

24 Next up we have Edith Owens with the
25 Democratic Executive Committee. Ms. Owens,

1 waiving your time? Okay. Thank you very much
2 for being here.

3 We also have -- I hope I am saying this
4 right, Louella Grayson, also with the DEC.
5 Waive your time, too, ma'am? Thank you very
6 much.

7 Augusto Luna is next. I'm sorry I didn't
8 call your name earlier. After Augusto, we will
9 have Artie Leichner, followed by Dorrit Marks.

10 Augusto, you are recognized.

11 MR. LUNA: Thank you. I just -- I wanted
12 to be here in favor of the local business
13 owners, small business owners, namely District
14 119.

15 I had a run-in with -- I was just trying
16 to move my business recently, and I encountered
17 some local government that wasn't supporting my
18 move *per se*. I went through the proper
19 channels to fix this, and I couldn't fix it.
20 Thankfully, I was able to go into my State
21 Reps, Frank Artiles, and he took a special
22 interest in my case and basically promptly gave
23 me a quick resolution to my problem, coming
24 back in business. So I think it is important
25 that, you know, in my district, which is mainly

1 -- I think it's 50 percent Hispanic or so, that
2 we keep that representation close to the
3 business owners, because that's what really
4 moves the economy. So I just wanted to thank
5 Frank personally, and just give him the support
6 that we need for small business owners in my
7 district at least. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
9 very much, Augusto, we appreciate that. And at
10 the end of the hearing, we will make sure and
11 give out Representative Artiles' cell phone
12 number so he can help out everyone in the room
13 who has any problems. If you please could do
14 that for us later, sir, we would appreciate
15 that.

16 Next up we have Artie Leicher, or
17 Leichner. I apologize if I didn't say that
18 right. After Artie, we've got Dorrit Marks,
19 and then we have Ernesto Ackerman.

20 You are recognized.

21 MR. LEICHNER: Good grief.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I thought I
23 had a booming voice. That's pretty strong
24 there.

25 MR. LEICHNER: No, you got it right the

1 second time. Thank you very much.

2 I am Artie Leichner. I am First
3 Vice-President of the United Teachers of Dade,
4 and a member of the State Executive Board for
5 the AFL-CIO.

6 I just want to tell you, I came here a lot
7 more skeptical before I heard the opening
8 statements about how the process is being done
9 and why you are coming to us without maps, and
10 that sort of made me a little less skeptical
11 about that process, so thank you.

12 I do want you to just keep in mind that
13 63 percent of the people of this state voted
14 for this amendment, both of these amendments,
15 and it is really a rare thing to get 63 percent
16 to vote for anything. Our Governor was only
17 elected with 49 percent. So it sort of makes a
18 big statement about the desire of the people of
19 the state to have fairness in representation.

20 Now, I guess I am one of those secular
21 progressives that the gentleman was complaining
22 about before, and I am not making a threat to
23 have a lawsuit. I just want you to follow
24 exactly what was prescribed in the amendments
25 and do it with fairness, efficacy and

1 efficiency.

2 I would personally be faced with a
3 dilemma, because the concept of Hispanic
4 minority in south Florida is almost oxymoronic,
5 considering there's such a Hispanic majority,
6 and I don't know how that all plays into what
7 you have to configure, but I am sure that does
8 in some way make it a little bit more
9 complicated. But if you follow the process,
10 and we do have districts that don't look like
11 snakes crawling up the side of a mountain, and
12 if you follow the process and everything gets
13 blocked off, some of you will keep your seats,
14 some of you will lose your seats. That is just
15 politics. I am not complaining about the
16 politics. But at least the representation will
17 be based on communities, geography and the way
18 things need to be set up.

19 My biggest curiosity, though, is if
20 someone wanted to run for one of the current
21 seats, and they wanted to run by petition, how
22 would they go about that, not knowing where the
23 seats are drawn? And that -- I guess that is a
24 question that maybe Senator Gaetz can answer at
25 the end.

1 And thank you all for being here tonight,
2 and I just hope it is not costing the citizens
3 of the state a whole lot of money for you to
4 make the traveling show. Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
6 very much. And you are correct, we will get
7 the answer to that question. There is an
8 answer to it, and Senator Gaetz will address it
9 later.

10 Next up we have Ms. Dorrit Marks, who's
11 already at the microphone, and following Dorrit
12 will be Ernesto Ackerman, followed by Wilson
13 Cristancho.

14 And Ms. Marks is with the League of Women
15 Voters of Miami Dade County. Ms. Marks, thanks
16 for being here, you are recognized.

17 MS. MARKS: Thank you both Senator Gaetz
18 and Representative Weatherford. I think it is
19 wonderful, so many of the Representatives and
20 Senators here. Thank you, and welcome to our
21 community.

22 My name is Dorrit Marks, and I am
23 Vice-President of the League of Women Voters of
24 Miami-Dade County, and a long-time resident of
25 Pinecrest, which is in southwest Miami-Dade

1 County.

2 As members of the Florida Legislature, you
3 have a most important task: Drawing and voting
4 on congressional and legislative district
5 boundaries. The Florida Constitution gives you
6 the job to draw new district boundaries every
7 ten years following the census.

8 In November 2010, the people of Florida
9 voted in favor of standards to guide the
10 redistricting process. The Florida
11 Constitution requires that as you draw new
12 districts, that you do not create districts
13 with the intent to favor political parties or
14 incumbents, and that you be mindful that the
15 districts do not deny racial or language
16 minorities the opportunity to elect
17 representatives of their choice, and that
18 district populations be nearly equal, that
19 districts be geographically compact, using
20 existing city and county boundaries where
21 possible in joining communities.

22 But what, in fact, does the Constitution
23 of Florida say? So this -- I am quoting really
24 from the Constitution. This is Article III,
25 "The Legislature," Section 20 and 21, that

1 provides standards for establishing
2 Congressional District boundaries and standards
3 of establishing legislative districts. So it
4 says: "No apportionment plan or district shall
5 be drawn with the intent to favor or disfavor a
6 political party or an incumbent, and districts
7 shall not be drawn with the intent or result of
8 denying or abridging an equal opportunity of
9 racial or language minorities to participate in
10 the political process, or to diminish their
11 ability to elect representatives of their
12 choice, and districts shall consist of
13 contiguous territory." And then it goes on
14 further: "Unless compliance with the standards
15 in this subsection conflicts with the standards
16 in subsection a" -- which is what I just read
17 -- "or with federal law, districts shall be as
18 nearly equal in population as is practicable.
19 Districts shall be compact and districts shall,
20 where feasible, utilize existing political and
21 geographical boundaries." So I just wanted to
22 make clear to the Representatives, Senators and
23 everyone in the audience what it actually says.

24 While it is positive for you to gather
25 input from citizens, it would be better and

1 more efficient really to hold hearings after
2 draft district maps have been proposed. Only
3 then can the public really comment in an
4 effective manner.

5 While I know you cannot vote on new
6 district maps until the Legislature meets in
7 early April -- or early January, I'm sorry --
8 early January of next year, the League of Women
9 Voters asks that Legislators file proposed
10 redistricting plans in early October and that
11 Committee meetings in the fall review such
12 proposed maps and then have public hearings by
13 December. Citizens need time to review and
14 give input. And, further, the timeline should
15 assure that maps be approved by the Legislature
16 in January, as early as possible after the
17 session --

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Marks, I
19 don't want to rush you, but we are over the
20 time limit.

21 MS. MARKS: I am almost finished, almost
22 finished.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay, good.

24 MS. MARKS: -- as early as possible after
25 the session convenes. We are suggesting this

1 timeline so that there is time for review by
2 the Florida court and the U.S. Department of
3 Justice, and to respond to challenges from the
4 government or the public, and that can be a two
5 or three-month process. This timeline will let
6 candidates know district boundaries and enable
7 them to qualify. If you do not move up the
8 timeline, decisions for candidates, for
9 Supervisors of Elections and voters will be
10 chaotic. Thank you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
12 Ms. Marks. We appreciate your comments.

13 Next up, Ernesto Ackerman with Independent
14 Venezuelan-American Citizens. You are
15 recognized, sir.

16 Following Mr. Ackerman, we will have
17 William Cristancho, followed by Gisela Gomar.

18 You are recognized, sir.

19 MR. ACKERMAN: Thank you, sir.

20 First of all, I would like to thank the
21 members of the Legislature for listening to us
22 and coming down all the way to Miami.

23 I am the President of the Independent
24 Venezuelan-American Citizens, as you said. We
25 have eight years only in -- involved in

1 politics, so we are kind of new in this field.
2 We educate politically all the Venezuelan
3 community to participate in local politics.

4 We also do the citizenship drive to help
5 the legal residents become citizens. And we
6 also bring students from Venezuela to see how
7 the democracy works in this country.

8 We have learned in our small time in this
9 area that before the '80s, there was no
10 Hispanic representation in the local
11 government. And that is why we would like to
12 ask you to -- in the new maps, to really take
13 care of all the Hispanic community that lives
14 in this area. That is really important and
15 big. And that is all.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much, sir. We appreciate that.

18 Next up, William Cristancho.
19 Mr. Cristancho, you are up, and then following
20 Mr. Cristancho, we have Gisela Gomar and Joseph
21 Salzverg.

22 You are recognized, sir.

23 MR. CRISTANCHO: Thank you. Thank you,
24 Mr. Chairman, Senator Gaetz. Thanks for coming
25 to south Florida, and thanks for coming to an

1 area where we all live and we want to share our
2 thoughts with you.

3 I am a resident of Miami-Dade County. I
4 am a U.S. citizen for 23 years and counting. I
5 was born in Columbia and I am very active in
6 the Colombian community. And I am also a
7 professional IT consultant in
8 telecommunications and I travel quite a bit.
9 And I have taken the time today, because this
10 is a historic moment, like many of those have
11 mentioned.

12 I want to make sure the Hispanic community
13 is actually identified, that there is no
14 retrogression, which is something of grave
15 concern for us, the Hispanic community, and to
16 continue expanding and truly represent our
17 Hispanic community in Miami-Dade County.

18 I am from the neighborhood of Kendall
19 where many of our Colombians live there, and so
20 I am representing them, and -- but most of all,
21 I am here representing my son. My son is a
22 child of nine years old. He has autism, and he
23 is on a waiting list of many kids waiting to
24 receive services. I want to make sure that
25 this time around, there is an opportunity for

1 Hispanic kids with special needs, not only with
2 autism, but with many other needs to get access
3 to those services. Thank you very much.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
5 very much, sir.

6 Next up we have Ms. Gomar, and following
7 Ms. Gomar, we have Joseph Salzverg, followed by
8 Tim Daubert.

9 You are recognized.

10 MS. GOMAR: Good evening. My name is
11 Gisela Gomar, and I live in the Sunset/East
12 Kendall area. And if you pardon me, I wrote
13 everything down so I can make sure that I
14 communicate everything that I want to to you
15 today.

16 I wanted to take this moment to discuss
17 our very unique south Florida community, a
18 community that I have been part of for over 50
19 years. I grew up here in the Westchester area.
20 I think that it is fantastic that you are here
21 today listening to us, the voters.

22 Our county might be the only one in the
23 state that has the majority of the -- are
24 minorities, so I believe that Amendments 5 and
25 6 will allow us to preserve many of our current

1 district boundaries.

2 It is important to note that it is
3 difficult, if not impossible, for the
4 boundaries of our counties, almost 40
5 municipalities, to be completely preserved. In
6 fact, I think that certain areas like Palmetto
7 Bay have been better served having two
8 Representatives. Instead of having one person
9 to call, some of these cities have the luxury
10 of calling more than one Representative when
11 they need help with a regional issue.

12 I also think that you should continue to
13 have our districts in Dade run north to south
14 instead of east to west. I believe that it is
15 in the best way to truly capture and represent
16 our local communities of similar interest.

17 Again, thank you for your time, and good
18 luck.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
20 very much.

21 Joseph Salzverg, followed by Tim Daubert
22 and then Pablo -- I hope I am saying this
23 right -- Lead or Led. Leal, I apologize. You
24 are recognized, sir.

25 MR. SALZVERG: Good evening. First of

1 all, I want to thank you guys for having this
2 forum. It definitely cements the fact that you
3 guys are interested in what we have to say
4 before these districts are drawn. I just want
5 to thank you guys.

6 I wanted to speak with you a little bit.
7 I am a life-long Miami-Dade County resident,
8 born and raised in Miami, attend the University
9 of Miami. Now I live in the East
10 Kendall/Sunset area. I currently live in
11 District 115, which is pretty well-drawn. It
12 is a north/south district, with the eastern
13 border being the Palmetto and then going west
14 to 97th Avenue, very like communities with
15 Kendall, with Westchester. A lot of the
16 opportunities and a lot of the troubles that I
17 face either with transportation, traffic,
18 services are very common in Kendall which to
19 what they are in Westchester, you know, single
20 family homes and -- and it dramatically changes
21 once you go west of the Turnpike.

22 So the biggest thing that I would like to
23 recommend and really cement with you guys is
24 what she said, let's have these districts
25 north/south, especially in the southwest

1 Miami-Dade County area. Let's take into
2 account the U.S. 1 corridor, which separates
3 communities, affluent communities like
4 Pinecrest and Palmetto Bay, so that they're
5 maybe not in the same district as an area as
6 Fountainbleau, which is, you know, dramatically
7 different. Let's take into account the
8 Palmetto Expressway as well. Let's take into
9 account the Turnpike, because once you cross
10 the Turnpike and go west, you have a lot of
11 multi-family housing, you have a lot of cluster
12 homes, you have a lot of new development, new
13 roads.

14 The biggest thing I would like to cement
15 is, you know, let's keep like communities in
16 the same districts and let's make sure that
17 these run at least north/south in our area,
18 because, you know, that's really helped us in
19 the long run and that's helped us get proper
20 representation and knowing where we sit. Thank
21 you for your time.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

23 Next up, Mr. Tim Daubert, followed by
24 Pablo Leal and then Thomas Comerford. I hope I
25 am saying that right. I apologize if I am not,

1 but you are recognized, sir.

2 COUNCILMAN TIM DAUBERT: Good evening,
3 Councilman Tim Daubert from the Town of Miami
4 Lakes. Representatives and Senators, I want to
5 thank you very much for being here. I want to
6 thank FIU for hosting this. And Representative
7 Logan, it is a great area that you have in your
8 area here. I personally want to thank
9 Representative Oliva and Senator Garcia, my two
10 representatives in Miami Lakes.

11 I urge you as you sit there and listen to
12 the constituents -- I also want to say thank
13 you to each and every one of you, the public
14 that is here. It is very impressive and very,
15 very important for you to get your voices out.
16 One of the things that I ran on when I ran for
17 office only in October was getting the word out
18 to the public. And I urge you as you sit
19 there, please listen to the public. Do the
20 right thing, and that is it. Thank you very
21 much.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
23 Councilman, and thank you for your service to
24 our state.

25 We have Pablo next, and following Pablo,

1 we have Thomas and then Barbara Schwartz.

2 Pablo, you are recognized, sir.

3 MR. LEAL: Good evening. I am here
4 representing the student body of FIU, I guess.
5 I may -- I guess three-fourths of my life is
6 spent here. The other fourth is spent at home
7 and at work, which is represented in District
8 114.

9 I just want to thank the Legislator for
10 coming out here and doing this for us. I
11 didn't have talking points already made, but I
12 want to support you guys in this troubling time
13 that you guys are going to go through, and I
14 hope that you guys can figure out the lines for
15 us, and don't forget about us students, because
16 we are your future.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
18 very much. Go Panthers.

19 Next up, Mr. Thomas, and I hope I can say
20 your last name right, Comerford.

21 MR. COMERFORD: Comerford.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Comerford,
23 okay. And then after Mr. Comerford, we've got
24 Barbara Schwartz and then Orlando Gutierrez
25 Boronat. I may have messed that one up, too,

1 but you are recognized.

2 MR. COMERFORD: Good evening. Thank you
3 very much for holding this meeting.

4 I am in Senator Ana Rivas Logan's district
5 and also Senator Flores' district. I live in
6 the Kendall area, but I am also the co-founder
7 of the Sacred Heart Outreach Center in
8 Homestead, and so I want to support the people
9 down there, that most of the people we work
10 with are the poor, and many of them are also
11 the undocumented, and so those are the people
12 that are picking our food, and we don't want to
13 forget those people. There's a lot of bills
14 that they are going to be coming up and did
15 come up that are important in that area, so I
16 wanted to call that to your attention.

17 But there is a great book by Bill Bishop
18 called *Sorting*, and it is about how people in
19 the United States are grouping, mainly by
20 lifestyles. And that is what we see here in
21 Dade County with all these communities. And so
22 please keep that in mind as you are drawing
23 these districts, so that people of like
24 backgrounds and like characteristics are
25 considered. And don't overlook the poor people

1 throughout Dade County.

2 And I want to welcome all those people
3 from central and northern Florida. I go to
4 Tallahassee every year for Catholic Days at the
5 Capitol. It takes us about eight hours to
6 drive up there, so we know it is a long trip
7 down here, but we welcome you down here. Thank
8 you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
10 sir.

11 Next up we have Ms. Barbara Schwartz,
12 followed by Orlando Gutierrez Boronat, and then
13 Alexandra Bassil.

14 Ms. Schwartz.

15 MS. SCHWARTZ: Representatives and
16 Senators, not you guys, I just want to
17 apologize for those people who do not know how
18 to address you properly.

19 I am a long-time resident of Miami-Dade, I
20 am an activist, and I believe that people voted
21 for 5 and 6 because they were tired of looking
22 at some of the districts in Florida that go
23 through three, four and five counties, who do
24 not represent similar people of the same
25 interest.

1 Example: I am in District 25, and that
2 goes from Kendall Lakes all the way over to
3 Naples. I guarantee you I have no relationship
4 with the crocodiles -- with the alligators, I
5 have no -- I really do not have the similar
6 backgrounds of the people of Naples, and I
7 think that has to be taken into consideration.

8 We have a lot of very good and a lot of
9 very not so good Representatives, but we have
10 to remember that this is basically a majority
11 Hispanic community. We have many different
12 nationalities. And when you say Hispanics, I
13 don't think you can group them as one people.
14 I think they have their own individuals, rights
15 and ideas, and I think this is a melting pot,
16 or a salad, whichever you wish to call it, but
17 we have mixtures, and you are going to have the
18 responsibility of blending them into unique
19 areas of common interest, and it is not right
20 for a Representative in 25 to have to go all
21 the way over to Naples. They don't represent
22 the same people, and you've got to be able to
23 talk to your Senators, your Representatives.
24 And so I think you've got a very tough job
25 ahead, but let us help you. Thank you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
2 very much.

3 Next up we have Orlando Gutierrez Boronat,
4 followed by Alexandra Bassil and then Dario
5 Moreno.

6 You are recognized, sir.

7 MR. BORONAT: Thank you. Firstly, I would
8 like to thank the members of the Legislature
9 for listening to my testimony and that of other
10 citizens. My name is Orlando Gutierrez
11 Boronat, and I have been a resident of
12 Westchester for 30 years. I teach social
13 sciences.

14 I respect the task that you have before
15 you as our elected representatives of drawing
16 legislative and Congressional Districts, which
17 is not an easy one. Through our votes, we
18 citizens require that these districts be drawn
19 in a way that does not favor or disfavor any
20 incumbent, candidate or party. This period of
21 fairness is important for the integrity of our
22 political decision-making process.

23 I would like to remind the members of the
24 Legislature to take into account the nature of
25 the communities involved. I came to the United

1 States at a very young age with my family,
2 Cuban exiles who came to this country so we
3 could live in freedom. I live in a majority
4 Hispanic community. My neighbors came to the
5 United States, which was also a beacon of
6 opportunity and offered freedom for them as
7 well.

8 Constitutional Amendments 5 and 6, which
9 we citizens passed recently, respects the right
10 of my community and similar ones to elect
11 representatives of our choice, specifically
12 prohibiting any drawing of district lines that
13 would diminish the ability of minorities to
14 elect representatives of our choice. When it
15 comes to choosing Legislators who will
16 represent us in Tallahassee and Washington, DC,
17 we are counting on this constitutional
18 protection to ensure that our concerns and
19 interests get a fair hearing in the law-making
20 process. Therefore, an unacceptable result
21 would be retrogression of Hispanic voting
22 rights, especially at a time when the Hispanic
23 population continues to grow. In fact, the
24 Hispanic voting population has grown to the
25 point that it merits an additional Senate seat.

1 In conclusion, I would like to once again
2 state my gratitude to the Legislature for
3 giving this matter the consideration it
4 deserves, and I exhort the members to keep in
5 mind their constitutional duty to draw
6 districts that will neither play political
7 favorites nor diminish the ability of
8 minorities to elect representatives of our
9 choice. Thank you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
11 Orlando.

12 We have Alexandra Bassil with the ACLU of
13 Florida, followed by Dario Moreno and then Evan
14 Ross.

15 You are recognized.

16 MS. BASSIL: Hi, good evening, welcome to
17 south Florida. My name is Alexandra Bassil. I
18 am a Greater Miami Chapter member of the ACLU
19 of Florida, and I am a second-generation native
20 Miamian. I live in District 109 for the House
21 and 35 for the Senate.

22 I just was here today because I really
23 wanted to impart that the Fair District
24 standards does protect minority districts, and
25 remember that most of the people in Florida

1 voted for amendments, almost 63 percent of the
2 voters, so they are not really amendments that
3 were Democratic or Republican, and I really
4 believe that linking the Fair Districts
5 amendments to minority districts is a
6 distraction.

7 Attorney General Eric Holder and the U.S.
8 Justice Department have already approved or
9 pre-cleared the amendments, finding that they
10 do not violate the 1965 Voting Rights Act and
11 do not dilute or have a retrogressive effect on
12 minority voting strength in Florida. It is
13 important that everyone, especially people of
14 color, have equal access to impact and election
15 and run for and have a fair opportunity to
16 compete for elective office. Thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

18 Okay. Dario Moreno, good to see you
19 again, sir, and then after Mr. Moreno, we've
20 got Evan Ross and then I believe it is Joshua
21 Eisenstein.

22 MR. MORENO: I am Dario Moreno. I teach
23 political science at Florida International
24 University. Welcome, and I am glad you are
25 beginning the process early.

1 I just want to remind the Legislature that
2 really the headline news of the 2010 census was
3 the continuing growth of the Hispanic
4 population. In 1990, 10 percent of Florida
5 residents were Hispanic. Today it is
6 22 percent. By the next census, it will
7 probably be in the 30s. So it is incredibly
8 important for the political legitimacy of this
9 process that Hispanic and African-American
10 representation is not diluted, and this you
11 face a very, very difficult calculus, because
12 the Hispanic population, about 48 percent of
13 it, is concentrated in Miami-Dade County, and
14 Miami-Dade County, because its population
15 growth is less than in the rest of the state,
16 is actually going to lose representation, or
17 its Senate and State House seats will be
18 larger. At the same time, because the state
19 has gained in population, its congressional
20 seats will be smaller.

21 So the challenge you have before you is to
22 protect Hispanic and African-American
23 representation, and in order to do that, I
24 don't see any other way than to go over the
25 boundaries in many of the districts into

1 Broward County.

2 And if worrying about community of
3 interest, for example, I see very similar
4 communities in Miami Gardens and the eastern
5 side of Miramar, so -- as an example. So it is
6 very important as you go through this process
7 is to realize that the Hispanic population is
8 rising and it is going to be more difficult to
9 draw Hispanics districts in central Florida
10 than in south Florida. Thank you for your
11 time.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
13 Dario, always good to see you. Thank you.

14 Next up we have Evan Ross, followed by
15 Joshua Eisenstein and then Lois Kahn.

16 Good to see you again.

17 MR. ROSS: Good to see you again. Good
18 evening. Having had the privilege of speaking
19 in front of you this morning, I am pleased to
20 be able to do so once again.

21 Unlike this morning, I won't be asking any
22 questions here this evening for any of you to
23 answer. Instead, I will be making a demand on
24 behalf of 3,155,149 people, though I won't be
25 requesting use of all of their time. Those

1 people are you all of those across the state of
2 Florida who voted for Amendment 5. Lead by
3 Speaker Dean Cannon, the Florida House of
4 Representatives has filed suit against over 3.1
5 million people I am representing here today,
6 not against them personally, but against their
7 will.

8 Coming from a Legislature that has
9 preached low taxes and less wasteful spending,
10 I can't help but find these actions of our
11 House hypocritical, and for lack of a more
12 appropriate word, deplorable. Each and every
13 one of you that does not stand up and fight
14 against our tax dollars being used against us
15 is responsible for some of the most wasteful
16 spending in the history of our great state.

17 So I have to ask the question, could our
18 tax dollars be better spent? At a time when
19 you passed a budget that cut \$542 per student
20 in education spending, I can't help but ask,
21 could our tax dollars be better spent? At a
22 time when we have made massive cuts to
23 veterans' benefits, those people who have
24 risked their lives to protect and serve this
25 country, I have to ask, could our tax dollars

1 be better spent? At a time when you all felt
2 the need to cut unemployment benefits when so
3 many Floridians are in such dire straits due to
4 lack of employment opportunities, I can't help
5 but know the answer to my question. Our tax
6 dollars could be much better spent.

7 I fully expect that when you leave here
8 today, though my words will be in your memory,
9 they won't be used to create any real progress.
10 I fear that you will continue to play party
11 politics and work to continue gerrymandering
12 districts that benefit you rather than the
13 people that you are supposed to be
14 representing. If you care about the will of
15 the voters of Florida, if you care about
16 honoring the oath you gave to defend and uphold
17 the Constitution when you took office, prove me
18 wrong.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
20 Thank you very much.

21 Moving on, we've got Joshua Eisenstein,
22 followed by Lois Kahn and then Congressman
23 Mario Diaz-Balart.

24 MR. EISENSTEIN: Hello, Senators and
25 Representatives. My name is Joshua Eisenstein.

1 I am a social studies teacher in Miami-Dade
2 County Public Schools. And with due respect to
3 the other social studies teachers in the room,
4 I think that drawing a district really isn't
5 all that difficult.

6 Granted, the Fair Districts Amendments 5
7 and 6 are the law, and you have to follow the
8 law, but one of the things it says is you don't
9 have to consider one part over all the other
10 parts. And I -- every fall, I teach a lesson
11 to my seventh graders on how to draw a
12 district, and I think they do an okay job of
13 it. And I think when you look at a district, I
14 think really you shouldn't really over-think it
15 that much. My advice is don't think about it
16 that much. Just make it look basically like a
17 rectangle. It is the kind of thing where you
18 know what a fair district looks like when you
19 see one, that is what I think. And if by any
20 chance you should need any help this fall
21 drawing the districts, I volunteer my seventh
22 grade class. They can help. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much, and don't think we won't take you up
25 on that. So we appreciate those comments.

1 Next up we've got our -- I think Lois Kahn
2 is not going to speak. We thank you for being
3 here though. Next up we've got our
4 Congressman, Mario Diaz-Balart.

5 Congressman, thank you for being here,
6 sir. Thank you for your public service to the
7 State of Florida and our country. Welcome.

8 CONGRESSMAN DIAZ-BALART: Chairman, good
9 to see you, gentlemen, distinguished members,
10 honorable distinguished members of this
11 Committee. I will be brief.

12 First, welcome to this, a great part of
13 the state of Florida, the great state of
14 Florida. Yes, I am a little biased, I admit
15 it, but it is great. It is a privilege and an
16 honor to have you here.

17 I want to thank all of you for doing what
18 you are doing, for traveling the state before
19 you draw the plan, to -- listening to the
20 people before you draw the plan. I know that
21 you have traveled and have heard from a number
22 of Floridians about their requests to consider,
23 for example, and it has probably gotten some
24 say, too, parts of Amendments 5 and 6 that
25 speak about contiguous districts and -- but as

1 the Committee considers what you are going to
2 have to be doing, and it is a very difficult
3 task, I would like to draw your attention, all
4 of you, to another part of the amendment that
5 requires the Committee to consider racial or
6 language minorities in the process.

7 The relevant part of the amendment reads,
8 if I may quote, "Districts shall not be drawn
9 with the intent or result of denying or
10 abridging the equal opportunity of racial or
11 language minorities to participate in the
12 political process," end of quote.

13 And I respectfully request from all of you
14 that the Committee pay special attention to
15 this essential requirement and the text of the
16 amendments, because for way too long, the
17 redistricting process was really used as a way
18 to really disenfranchise minorities, racial and
19 language minorities, really take away their
20 ability to elect candidates of their choice.

21 You know, I worked -- as some of you may
22 know, I worked when I was in the State
23 Legislature in a bipartisan way, on a
24 bipartisan level, with members of both parties,
25 including some that I see here and that I have

1 seen in this process and I have run into and
2 that I run into all the time, including the
3 State Representative, now I guess State
4 Senator, Chairman Smith, and many others, to
5 make sure that we did -- had some fair plans
6 for the State of Florida. I am proud of the
7 way that we worked together, and those efforts
8 lead to what? Go back to -- think about
9 pre-1992. There was one district where an
10 African-American -- I'm sorry, there were no
11 African-Americans representing on the
12 congressional level, no African-Americans
13 representing the State of Florida. Can you
14 believe that? I mean, I am not talking about a
15 million years ago. This is 1991. And one
16 Hispanic. But because of the efforts -- the
17 bipartisan efforts that I worked on with a
18 number of many people, many other people, we
19 were able to -- right after that redistricting
20 process that you are now involved with, then,
21 we went from zero African-Americans to three
22 members of Congress, three African-American --
23 districts where African-Americans could elect
24 candidates of their choice, and we went to two
25 Hispanics. Fast-forward ten years, three and

1 three.

2 And I mention that because I think it is
3 very key that we do not retrogress, that we do
4 not go backwards and go back to the years where
5 minorities were used as pawns in the
6 redistricting process.

7 So, again, I know you have a very
8 difficult task, and I wanted to be brief. I
9 want to again thank you for the fact that you
10 are listening to everybody in the state of
11 Florida before drawing. Novel concept, elected
12 officials listening, you are doing it, thank
13 you. And number two is, please pay special
14 attention, don't retrogress. Remember that
15 part in the Constitution that says that you
16 shouldn't. And, again, I commend you. It is a
17 privilege and an honor to have all of you here
18 in this great community. Thank you for what
19 you are doing. You are doing the people's
20 work, and we are grateful for it. Thank you
21 very much.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
23 Congressman. And thank you for your service to
24 our country, sir. It is good to see you.
25 Thank you very much.

1 Next up we have Tim Hyman, and after
2 Tim -- I'm sorry, Tim, I didn't give you very
3 much heads-up there. After Tim, we have Gisela
4 Gomar-Salzverg, although I think we may have
5 heard from her already, and then after that, we
6 have Jeanne Baker, or Jeanne Baker, Jeanne
7 Baker.

8 Tim, you are recognized, sir.

9 MR. HYMAN: Good evening, sir. Thank you
10 for the opportunity to speak. That is a tough
11 act to follow.

12 I am here tonight as a member of the
13 community of West Kendall. I had the
14 opportunity to run ten years ago when the last
15 redistricting process took place. As my wife
16 says, I was very fortunate to lose in that
17 process. And I have stayed active in the
18 community, because it is important that we all
19 stay active.

20 As a member of the community that would I
21 guess be considered a minority now, not being
22 Hispanic, I think it is interesting that the
23 focus seems to be whether it is Hispanic or
24 non-Hispanic. What I say is the people need to
25 vote for the person they believe in, not

1 whether they are Hispanic, whether they are
2 Anglo, whether they are black, white, yellow,
3 brown, it doesn't really matter. You need to
4 have a person representing you that believes in
5 what is best for the community.

6 So what I am here to say is, please, if it
7 is not broken, don't fix it. If the districts
8 haven't changed, if the community hasn't
9 changed, leave it alone.

10 I am represented by a Hispanic that I
11 believe in. I don't think it matters if he is
12 black, white, Republican or Democrat. I vote
13 for the person who is going to take care of our
14 community.

15 So please keep a simple process -- the
16 process simple, and I agree with don't
17 over-think it. If you remember that we are
18 here to elect you and it is our job to do so,
19 then I think that's what's most important. So
20 I would ask the voters to remember to go out
21 and vote. That is what is going to make the
22 difference, not where you draw the line. Go
23 out and vote. Thank you.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

25 Next up we have Gisela Gomar-Salzverg,

1 although I think we heard from her earlier. Is
2 she here? Okay, no.

3 Then we have Jeannie Baker.

4 MS. BAKER: Jeanne Baker.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Jeanne Baker,
6 I'm sorry. And, Ms. Baker, after you, we have
7 Maria Wadsworth.

8 You are recognized.

9 MS. BAKER: Good evening, Senators,
10 Representatives, fellow citizens and voters. I
11 am another person from the ACLU. We are all
12 over the place tonight, because we were all
13 over the effort to get 5 and 6 as part of our
14 Constitution. It was an effort that was
15 rewarded by a non-partisan 63 percent super
16 majority of Floridians. And, yes, we applaud
17 ourselves. And the ACLU is here in a very
18 non-partisan position.

19 I have heard so many speakers share their
20 delight in this process tonight, and I am very
21 impressed with it. It is wonderful to have our
22 Senators and Representatives come to us and
23 give us an opportunity to speak, and hopefully
24 listen. But we in the ACLU are a little bit
25 concerned that there might be more of an

1 appearance than substance in these hearings.

2 I will tell you why we are concerned. It
3 was really pinpointed by the two excellent
4 speakers from the League of Women Voters. We
5 can speak tonight in generalities, in
6 platitudes. Occasionally a speaker has said,
7 "I live in such-and-such a district, and it is
8 really weird that I am joined with somebody in
9 Naples when I live, you know, somewhere in
10 Miami-Dade." So we have had -- we have heard
11 some specifics, but for the most part, and for
12 the most part probably what you will hear from
13 me, have to be classified as generalities and
14 platitudes. And what I am concerned about,
15 what the ACLU is concerned about, is that until
16 we see what the Legislature is proposing, we
17 cannot make meaningful comments, we cannot
18 point out -- we cannot until we see what your
19 proposed map looks like. We cannot point out
20 how it doesn't look like that rectangle that
21 the seventh graders apparently know what a
22 district looks like. We can't point out that
23 it still looks like a salamander sliding up the
24 state coastline. We cannot point out that
25 there are still communities thrown together who

1 have nothing in common, either economically or
2 geographically. We can't point those things
3 out.

4 And we, on behalf of the ACLU, urge that
5 you change your own timeline to reflect the
6 timeline proposed by the League of Women
7 Voters, and that you have real maps to -- a
8 real map, perhaps two real maps from each
9 chamber, to show us at the very beginning of
10 2012, which is the time when you can undertake
11 to vote. And if we can see real maps then,
12 then you can get not just the appearance of
13 citizen participation in the process, but the
14 reality of citizen participation in the
15 process. So I leave you with that request.
16 Thank you very much.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

18 Next up we have Maria Wadsworth, and
19 following Maria is Kathy Charles and then
20 Denise White.

21 MS. WADSWORTH: Good evening, my name is
22 Maria Wadsworth. I live in the Palmetto Bay
23 area. I decided to come to this hearing
24 because I believe that this is very important.
25 We do this every ten years, so it will effect

1 us for many elections.

2 Our districts are whole, together
3 communities with similar concerns and
4 interests, and I encourage you to keep these
5 districts in a way that matters to us and that
6 it means something to us.

7 So just a short request, and I thank you
8 very much for holding these meetings. Take
9 care. Thank you very much.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

11 Ms. Kathy Charles, and following Kathy, we
12 have Denise White and -- I am going to have to
13 get back to everybody on that one. I need a
14 minute to read it.

15 MS. CHARLES: Good evening.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You are
17 recognized, Kathy.

18 MS. CHARLES: Good evening,
19 Representatives and Senators. My name is Kathy
20 Charles, and I live in the south Dade area;
21 actually, specifically in the area represented
22 by Representative Artiles. As a --

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: If you could
24 speak a little closer to the mike.

25 MS. CHARLES: As a citizen by way of the

1 Caribbean, I want to let you know that this
2 community means a lot to me. I went to high
3 school here, went on to University of Miami,
4 got married here, am raising a five-year-old
5 daughter, and look forward to being actively
6 involved in my community. Therefore, I think
7 that our government and our community benefits
8 directly from the level of involvement of its
9 residents. So I am happy to have this
10 opportunity to provide input and what those
11 priorities should be and how we want our
12 districts to look and how we want to be
13 represented. Happy to have this opportunity on
14 the front end, but I must say I would agree
15 with some of the previous comments regarding an
16 opportunity on the back end to provide input.

17 So we are looking forward to you actively
18 taking the information from the community and
19 giving us another opportunity to participate
20 and partner with you in how the community
21 looks.

22 So welcome to the south Dade area, and I
23 invite you back.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

25 Next up we have Denise White, and I

1 believe the name after it -- the only part I
2 can make out is Reyes. I know it is probably
3 my reading and my eyes. Reyes, okay, we've got
4 you next, sir, and then Peter Nefsky.

5 You are recognized, ma'am.

6 MS. WHITE: Good evening, Representatives
7 and Senators. My name is Denise White. I am a
8 concerned voter, and I appreciate your being
9 here listening, and I pray what you are hearing
10 is not falling on deaf ears.

11 I am not versed in mapping districts yet.
12 However, I feel the State of Florida should
13 ensure transparency, fairness and compliance
14 with the Voting Rights Act and with equal
15 protection. You should assure one person, one
16 vote. You should redistrict in a way that
17 avoids minority vote dilution. You should
18 avoid drawing district lines so that the
19 minority population is over-concentrated or
20 packed in election districts.

21 You should always be careful to avoid
22 cracking, drawing district lines so that an
23 area of concentrated minority population is
24 divided and spread among several districts that
25 are predominantly white. You should be careful

1 to avoid drawing district lines so that a large
2 minority population concentration is included
3 with a larger white population with the purpose
4 of or effect of depriving minority voters of a
5 voting majority, and that would fall in the
6 stack -- that would -- to avoid stacking.

7 I would respectfully request that you
8 avoid drawing plans that erode minority rights
9 relative to the status quo, that is, you avoid
10 creating retrogressive redistricting plans. I
11 pray you are fair in your challenges, and I
12 thank you very much.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

14 Reyes, you are recognized next, sir, and
15 following Reyes, we have Peter Nefsky and then
16 Frank Pena.

17 If you could identify your last name for
18 the record, too, I apologize. I know it is my
19 eyes.

20 MR. REYES: My name is Jaime Reyes. I am
21 from the Town of Cutler Bay. I am going to
22 give you all the benefit, Mr. Chairman and
23 Senator Gaetz and the rest of you Legislators,
24 the benefit, and believe that you are going to
25 go back and you are going to take some of these

1 ideas and actually implement them.

2 I don't see a lot of folks writing, and I
3 am the kind of person if I don't see anybody
4 writing or taking notes, I kind of wonder
5 whether they are really listening. I do see
6 you, by the way, you are one of the few.
7 Representative Horner I have seen writing, and
8 the Chair and Senator Gaetz. Everyone else
9 seems to be listening, so I hope you have a
10 good memory.

11 The Town of Cutler Bay -- you could easily
12 say that all lines go through the Town of
13 Cutler Bay, because that is the way that it was
14 done ten years ago. District 117, 118, 119 and
15 120 literally split our community apart. Okay.

16 The Town of Cutler Bay is about 40,000
17 citizens. It is contiguous, it is a very mixed
18 town.

19 I would like for you Legislators to go
20 back. I have seen some of the maps that are
21 drawn, and it looks like they are heading in
22 the right direction to keep the Town of Cutler
23 Bay -- so remember the name, the Town of Cutler
24 Bay would like to remain contiguous.

25 The Congressional Districts, also in

1 the state -- the state Senate, we have three
2 Senate lines or Senate seats that come through
3 Cutler Bay, so we have three different
4 representatives. That is nuts, really.
5 Congressional, we have also three. It is hard
6 to believe, but if you look down at that end of
7 the map, which is in southern south Dade, you
8 will wonder how that ever happened. And I
9 think that is what lead a lot of the citizens
10 to Amendment 5 and 6, a lot of our folks in our
11 community were very angry about that.

12 So I would like to go on the next -- would
13 like to believe the next ten years that we have
14 one representative, either it's a state
15 Senator, Representative, congressional, what
16 have you, that represents our entire Town of
17 Cutler Bay. That is what I want to see, and I
18 hope that is what you remember.

19 That is really all I have, you know. I
20 don't want to talk about Amendment 5 or 6. I
21 just want you to remember what I said, and when
22 you go back to your staff say, "Listen, I
23 talked -- I listened to the guy from the Town
24 of Cutler Bay, and he wants it changed."

25 Thank you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
2 Jaime.

3 Next up, Peter Nefsky, followed by Frank
4 Pena and then Joe Miller.

5 MR. NEFSKY: Honorable Chairman and
6 distinguished members of the political
7 community and members all, I have been involved
8 in politics since 1960. I am only 73 years
9 old, but I always have belonged to a political
10 clubhouse in New York City, and about
11 95 percent of the people that I work with have
12 been in office. I came down here because I
13 think I would love not only to be a person from
14 New York to just visit, but to live. And I
15 have been here since '95.

16 I am -- when I went for my program of a
17 Master's degree in political science and
18 international politics in Staten Island
19 University, I thought that I would be able to
20 see things differently, and, sure enough, when
21 I came down here, I saw this redistricting, and
22 I never thought in my life that I would see
23 something so terrible. I was appalled at what
24 transpired, and I am sure that many of you did
25 not agree with this. I don't know why you

1 voted for it, but you have cut the community in
2 half.

3 I have seen communities in black
4 communities that were divided. I have seen --
5 where I live in Kendall, off Bird and 127, I
6 have seen where we have two different
7 districts. We have in Kendall, I think, a big
8 enough community to have its own congressional
9 district, but in Richmond Heights, I have
10 seen -- and not only do I work with the crime
11 watch, but I have seen people who say, you
12 know, "I have a different district." Kendall
13 has two different districts, if not more, and I
14 think that you should keep the community
15 together. We have Chinese community in
16 Kendall, Asian community, Hispanics, Jewish
17 people in Kendall. I think that Kendall should
18 remain as is. I think that other communities
19 who have been there for many, many years should
20 exist in its entirety.

21 Can you imagine having two different
22 Congressional Districts, one gets funded, the
23 other don't? In other areas, one side gets
24 funded, the other don't? Every Congressman is
25 entitled to vote for his community, but what a

1 shame that across the street, something is
2 happening; in my community, nothing is
3 happening.

4 So am I involved in politics in this
5 Florida? Yes. I am a precinct captain and I
6 am area coordinator for the 116. So I have
7 seen things and I feel and I work with
8 communities whereby I volunteer my services
9 other than the community that I live, and my
10 party will tell you that.

11 So all I am saying is that when you make a
12 redistricting, put into consideration that you
13 keep the community, you know, together, not to
14 divide it, please. Thank you very much.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
16 sir.

17 Next up we have Frank Pena, followed by
18 Joe Miller and then Vivian Navarro.

19 Frank? Is Frank here? We are missing
20 Frank, so we will keep moving forward to Joe
21 Miller. Is Joe here?

22 Mr. Miller, thank you for being here, and
23 then we've got Vivian Navarro, followed by
24 Efran Montero. I hope I've said that right.

25 One thing I would like to point out, when

1 we first started, we had about 30 people who
2 had signed up to speak, and so we said we would
3 keep it at three minutes and be a little
4 liberal. We are now over 60 people who signed
5 up to speak because we keep getting them as
6 they come in. So we would like to try to keep
7 our time limit to about two and a half minutes,
8 and I am going to try to keep it tight, so I
9 don't want to be rude to anybody, I want to
10 make sure you get all of your comments in, but
11 if you could, we give bonus points for brevity,
12 and we want to make sure that everyone gets an
13 opportunity to speak here this evening.

14 So with that, you are recognized to speak,
15 sir.

16 MR. MILLER: Good evening, Representatives
17 and Senators. I apologize for my attire. My
18 physical therapist said one more round today.

19 I am here as a Representative from
20 Democracy for America Miami-Dade. We are a
21 non-partisan progressive organization. We are
22 very concerned about the implementations of 5
23 and 6.

24 With a State Legislature with their
25 first -- one of their first actions was to cut

1 services for severely disabled kids and
2 autistic children, they -- and also to override
3 the citizens' amendment to --

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sir, I would
5 like to keep the comments focused on
6 redistricting.

7 MR. MILLER: -- for high speed rail --

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Plenty of
9 Town Hall meetings to have that conversation.

10 MR. MILLER: Okay. We are concerned that
11 the State Legislature is going to just ram down
12 this proposed maps that they are going to come
13 out with at the last minute. With the track
14 history of the State Legislature on these other
15 issues, we are very skeptical if the State
16 Legislature is even going to have enough time
17 for hearings and if there is going to be anyway
18 for public input for 5 and 6 into the maps. We
19 are very skeptical about the implementation
20 process. I hope that you guys prove us wrong,
21 but, sadly, I don't think so.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

23 Next up we have Vivian Navarro, followed
24 by Efran Montero and then Julie Simon.

25 Ms. Vivian? She is waiving her time. Okay,

1 thank you.

2 Efran Montero, I hope I am saying that
3 right. I see him coming. Efran, thank you for
4 being here.

5 Next after Efran, you have Julie Simon and
6 then Milton Todd.

7 MR. MONTANO: It is Efran Montano, but
8 that is all right. I understand.

9 I would like to take this time to thank
10 all of you for your effort and your service,
11 your public service. Thank you for the time
12 you have taken to listen to our concerns. And
13 I am here as a citizen, a proud public service
14 employee and a proud Union member for AFSCME.
15 And I am proud to have said that I voted for
16 Amendment 5 and 6, because I believe this
17 finally gives us, the voters, a voice to choose
18 our representatives, and not for our
19 representatives to choose us through
20 gerrymandering.

21 Once again, I would like to thank you for
22 your time and your efforts.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
24 Bonus points for Efran. Thank you, sir.

25 Next up we have Julie Simon. Following

1 Julie, we have Milton Todd and Gary Simon.

2 MS. SIMON: Hi. Thank you for letting me
3 speak, and thank you for visiting us in south
4 Florida.

5 Just a little background: I live in
6 Pinecrest. I was born at Jackson Memorial
7 Hospital. My parents moved here in the
8 mid-'30s. My mom is 96, still living here, and
9 my son is a U.S. Marine.

10 So with that being said, I just wanted to
11 say I am very, very concerned about the timing
12 of the amendments and the drawing of the maps.
13 People have already addressed the fact that
14 there are no maps for us to comment on, but I
15 am concerned that they are not going to be
16 finished in time for the June 12th filing
17 deadline. And how will people know what
18 district they are filing for if they -- if
19 there are no redistricting maps, number one.

20 And also, number two, I am really
21 concerned with the state of our state, and
22 again, I would like to ask -- I guess I have
23 more questions than comments, but the question
24 is the money that is being spent to fight the
25 redistricting that 63 percent of us voted for

1 is coming out of the State Legislature, and we
2 are basically paying for it as state taxpayers,
3 and that is really inappropriate since
4 63 percent of us have already approved this
5 amendment. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

7 Next up is Mr. Milton Todd. He says he is
8 a voter. Thank you very much. We are glad
9 that you are voting, Mr. Todd, thanks for being
10 here, and you are recognized to have the floor.

11 MR. TODD: Thank you for providing these
12 hearings and giving us the opportunity to
13 express our views.

14 I have been working on my maps, and I will
15 be submitting them when they are completed. It
16 is a tedious process, but it is completely
17 doable. I am a little disappointed here that
18 folks prefer you to do these maps first.

19 "Gerrymandering" is the buzz word, and it
20 is what we have now because there was
21 insufficient input from the people. This
22 process right here is the fix. Thank you for
23 the fix.

24 The new amendments have some language that
25 is ripe for interpretation. The last thing I

1 want is the Legislature to do the interpreting
2 for me. I want you to represent my
3 interpretations. That is what our government
4 is all about.

5 First, the big word in there, "fair." I
6 submit that only -- the only concept of fair
7 that will work is blindness. The districts
8 must be drawn with no consideration to what
9 type of voter resides in what area, just to how
10 many voters reside there. Every person in this
11 room will have a different definition of
12 "fair." Therefore, no solution will be viewed
13 as fair by everyone. Some will want focus on
14 community interest, others on economic
15 similarity, others on ethnic similarity.
16 Massaging districts to accommodate any of this
17 is just another form of gerrymandering.

18 Next phrase in there is "make use of
19 existing city, county and geographical
20 boundaries." I submit roads are some of the
21 best boundaries. They tend to be generally
22 straight, and are also inherently understood by
23 people. The larger the road, the better.
24 Rivers, canals, shorelines are also easily
25 understood. Current city and county boundaries

1 can sometimes look as ridiculous as some of the
2 Congressional Districts we are trying to fix.
3 So to strictly follow those is going in the
4 wrong direction.

5 The word "compact" comes up. That
6 essentially means minimizing the perimeter for
7 maximizing the area. Circle is the most
8 compact, that is not going to work. So the
9 most compact shape that is practical is a
10 square. So while impossible to achieve, each
11 district should attempt to be as square-like as
12 possible.

13 And finally, "contiguous" should simply
14 mean there are no islands of districts, there
15 should be no pocket of District X completely
16 detached from the rest of District X.

17 These are the guidelines I am using for my
18 maps, and I want them to be your guidelines,
19 too. I will submit them when I'm complete.
20 Thank you again for having this available.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
22 very much, and thank you for taking the time to
23 work on maps and submit them. We really
24 appreciate that.

25 Next up we have Gary Simon. After Gary,

1 we have Lida Mari and then Lisa Lorenzo.

2 MR. SIMON: Good afternoon. Thank you for
3 being here, Senators and Representatives.

4 I found this brochure very informative,
5 because I had no idea you were actually asking
6 us for some input about certain areas and
7 interpretations. Not only am I concerned about
8 the timing of everything, because the timing is
9 really important for other people who want to
10 seek election, and you can stymie that or you
11 can favor that. I am hopeful that you are
12 going to favor that and you are going to work
13 on getting these maps so we can reflect on them
14 after you have created them.

15 I am hopeful that in your Committee
16 meetings, that they are going to be open so
17 that we can see what you are thinking about and
18 how you arrived at the different dimensions and
19 sizes and locations of each of these different
20 districts.

21 I do not think that "compactness" means
22 taking into account commerce, transportation or
23 communication. When this -- when these
24 amendments were proposed, the word
25 "compactness" always had a geographical

1 analysis, not commerce, transportation and
2 communication. To try and broaden it and
3 liberal it so you -- liberalize it so you can
4 make your own ideas about where you want things
5 to be and say, "Well, it is now compact," I
6 don't agree with that.

7 I know it is important from your
8 perspective to preserve the core of existing
9 districts. I realize this is your job, this is
10 what you do a lot, you spent a lot of time, a
11 lot of energy, but that is not and should not
12 be why we draw districts. It could be
13 pie-in-the-sky thinking, but I am hopeful that
14 you will create a blind eye, you will forget
15 where the existing districts are, you will
16 forget your own district, and you will draw
17 districts that we, the voters, voted in in 5
18 and 6. Thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

20 Next up we have Lida Mari, followed by
21 Lisa Lorenzo, and then Gerry Tiziani.

22 Lida? You are recognized, thank you.

23 And if we could, we've got a couple of
24 seats up front for those of you, if you are on
25 deck, if you want to sit in those seats, it

1 will make the process go quicker, so thank you
2 very much.

3 You are recognized. Good to see you.

4 MS. MARI: Thank you. Good to see you
5 again. I want to thank you again all for being
6 here and allowing us the opportunity to come
7 before you.

8 I want to continue where I left off this
9 morning. I wanted to address the issue of
10 defining the words as a speech pathologist.
11 Words mean a lot, and I want to particularly
12 express to you that I would like for you to
13 represent what I have in mind when I read the
14 amendments.

15 There is particular concern among citizens
16 with the words "compactness," "contiguous" and
17 "fairness." "Compactness," it can be defined
18 as having the smallest perimeter around an area
19 of a population. Now, we cannot have districts
20 that are round, but the next best ratio of
21 perimeter area is a square. So our districts
22 should be as square as possible, like building
23 blocks or train cars connected to each other.

24 "Contiguous" is to have no islands. No
25 piece of district should be trapped inside of

1 another district. We don't want
2 representatives to have to cross another
3 district just to get to the rest of his or
4 hers, and I certainly wouldn't want people to
5 have to travel long distances to go and meet
6 their representatives.

7 "Fairness." It can be defined as
8 providing citizens with the opportunity to have
9 access to our elected representatives to be as
10 close and as easy as possible.

11 It is also our responsibility as citizens
12 of a republic to participate in drawing the
13 maps. Yes, they are tedious, time-consuming to
14 draw, but it is not like mapping the human
15 genome. We want representative government?
16 Well, it takes work to participate, it takes
17 our time and it takes your effort to make it
18 work for you. You can then come here and argue
19 your case clearly on how you want the districts
20 drawn. They can -- our Representatives and
21 Senators can then represent your interests,
22 because they know what you want.

23 Having said that, I acknowledge that you
24 have all been here and have gone to a lot of
25 meetings, but I wish to respectfully request

1 that you give us another opportunity to present
2 our maps to you and to explain them in detail
3 so that you may represent our interests as
4 effectively as possible. We are working on
5 them, I am, but I don't have them available
6 today.

7 Thank you very much for being here, and I
8 sincerely appreciate it.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

10 Next up is Lisa Lorenzo, followed by Gerry
11 Tiziani and then Marcia -- Marcia Reisman.

12 You are recognized.

13 MS. LORENZO: Hello, Representatives and
14 Senators. I hope you don't mind, I am a little
15 nervous, I am going to read from my notes.

16 First of all, I am a mom from -- Dade
17 County resident, and I would never tell my
18 child, "Do your homework and then read the
19 instructions." So I am glad that you are here
20 listening first and then going on to do your
21 job.

22 As you guys know, Miami-Dade County is a
23 unique community defined by its diversity, as
24 we see here today, and is unlike any county in
25 Dade County -- in the state of Florida. So I

1 ask that you make -- make every attempt not to
2 split our districts into multiple counties.

3 Furthermore, Dade County is over
4 65 percent Hispanics, as we have heard. To me,
5 what does that mean? That means that my
6 daughter gets to look at our State
7 Representative, Jeanette Nuñez, and see a
8 Hispanic woman, and know that she can grow up
9 to be anything she wants to be, and it is all
10 possible because of where she lives and where
11 she is able to go to the voters and have people
12 like her vote her in for her beliefs and what
13 she stands for. And she is doing a great job.
14 Thank you, Representative Nuñez.

15 Lastly, I just want to say that we must
16 keep our districts compact, our key word today,
17 so that we can allow additional Hispanic access
18 representation in the House and the Senate.
19 And I am going to take my bonus points for
20 being brief, and thank you very much.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Take them and
22 run with them. Thank you.

23 Okay. Next up we have Gerry. Gerry here?
24 You are passing, okay. Major bonus points.

25 Thank you very much, ma'am, but we do

1 appreciate you being here, I can tell you.

2 Okay, you are thinking, good.

3 After that, we have Marcia Reisman. Did
4 she leave? Okay.

5 After that we have Claudio Perez from The
6 Agape Network. Raise your hand if you are
7 here. Yes, okay, I'm sorry if I said your name
8 wrong there. Mr. Perez, you are next up, sir,
9 and then we have Patrick O'Keefe, followed by
10 Dexter Baldan.

11 You are recognized.

12 MR. PEREZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
13 represent The Agape Network, and what we do is
14 we are a substance abuse and mental health
15 treatment facility for women. These are women
16 that have been abandoned, abused, and the
17 reason I am talking about that is because they
18 have a faint voice, and as we do the
19 redistricting, in looking at all the different
20 representation, they usually with that
21 population need the representation that a
22 specific, small redistricting process would
23 give to recognize their needs.

24 So I appreciate your servanthood for our
25 great state. God bless you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
2 sir, and thank you for your service.

3 Next up we have Patrick O'Keefe, who is,
4 it looks like, a student at FIU. Is Patrick
5 here? Great, Patrick, thanks for being here.

6 And then I believe we have -- I believe it
7 is Dexter Baldan, and after Dexter, we will
8 have Milagro Ruiz.

9 You are recognized, sir.

10 MR. O'KEEFE: Chairman, Senators,
11 Representatives, I would like to thank you to
12 coming to my school, Florida International
13 University. I am currently the student body
14 President here at FIU, and I am also the
15 Legislative Chairman of the Florida Student
16 Association, representing over 300,000 public
17 university students here in the state.

18 I also represent two communities. I
19 currently reside in Hernando County, but my
20 current community is obviously Miami-Dade.
21 Seeing the differences between rural Florida
22 and urban or Hispanic, a very more diverse
23 Florida, it really has given me a lot of views
24 that would be different than a lot of other
25 citizens in this state. In this area, I have

1 seen explosive growth. It is very impressive
2 to see the differences in communities, and I
3 think this area could really benefit from an
4 extra Senate seat.

5 Another thing to remember, and there
6 really are some very commonalities between this
7 area and rural Florida, if you look at the --
8 not only the -- I would say the racial
9 diversity, but also the economic diversity, if
10 you go and you look at rural Florida, you will
11 see -- especially in my county, Hernando
12 County, you will see that Brooksville, Florida,
13 out in eastern Hernando County, and Citrus
14 County have a lot of very common interests, and
15 you will see that Springhill and Port Richey,
16 New Port Richey and those areas have common
17 interests. Yet they're really -- the districts
18 are really generated without that in mind. I
19 mean, I think when you are looking at the
20 districts, you have to remember that I am
21 trying to elect somebody to represent me, and
22 if you draw up the districts just in giant
23 blocks, you are not going to have the person
24 that represents you, because it is tough. You
25 can't have a district that both represents

1 the -- just the county when you are looking at
2 it and you are seeing that this person is so
3 conflicted because they have so different group
4 of people that they are trying to represent.
5 So I just ask you to try to create the
6 districts to best represent the people as a
7 whole, and I thank you for your time. I look
8 forward to seeing more of you in the spring in
9 Tallahassee.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

11 Next up, Dexter Baldan. Do we have Dexter
12 here, did he leave maybe? I will put him over
13 here. I believe it is Baldan, B-a- -- Beatriz,
14 I'm sorry, that's my eyes. Ms. Beatriz Baldan,
15 thank you very much, I'm sorry that I butchered
16 that so badly, but we do want to hear from you,
17 and so after Ms. Beatriz, we will hear from
18 Milagro Ruiz and then Frank Irizarry.

19 MS. BALDAN: Hi. Thank you for being
20 here, and I will just be extremely brief,
21 because there were a lot of people here that
22 spoke with the same willingness that I have.
23 But I want you -- to remind you that people who
24 voted for 5 and 6 voted because they didn't
25 like what they saw. So basically is when you

1 are going to do the districting now, remember
2 that. That is your mandate. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
4 Beatriz.

5 Okay, Milagro Ruiz? Is Mr. Ruiz here,
6 Milagro?

7 Okay. Frank Irizarry? Frank, thank you,
8 Frank. After Frank, we have the Mayor of
9 Pinecrest, Cindy Lerner, and after Cindy, we
10 have -- I believe is Winnie Tary, but we will
11 get back to that.

12 Frank Irizarry, thank you very much for
13 being here, sir. You are recognized.

14 MR. IRIZARRY: Thank you very much for
15 being in our community. My name is Frank
16 Irizarry. I am the Chairman of the West
17 Kendall Business Association, and I have to say
18 that I can get very used to having you all
19 here. I really don't want to wait another ten
20 years to have you all here, but I would very
21 much like to have you back on a regular basis.
22 This expression of democracy is wonderful, and
23 I think I speak for everyone here that we want
24 to have you back.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

1 MR. IRIZARRY: You have set this up very
2 well. Everyone is very well-informed. I think
3 it is great.

4 Shared constituencies, that seems to be
5 the new word in our dictionary. I think that
6 we all can agree that there are some issues
7 with regard to the way our representatives are
8 set about in our community.

9 I am from New York, and none of you know
10 -- you may have heard of the Finger Lakes. And
11 I look at our congressional and representative
12 maps, and I am reminded of the Finger Lakes,
13 and I am reminded of the Finger Lakes because
14 of the fact that way up in the northern part of
15 the Finger Lakes, they would know nothing about
16 what is going on in the southern part of the
17 Finger Lakes, and to a very great degree, I
18 think that is what happening here. Shared
19 constituencies.

20 I have wonderful representatives that deal
21 with the West Kendall Business Association,
22 starting with Ana Rivas Logan, who is a member
23 of the West Kendall Business Association,
24 Carlos Trujillo back there, he is a member of
25 the West Kendall Business Association, Frank

1 Artiles, who has also been very, very involved
2 in the West Kendall Business Association,
3 Anitere Flores, wherever she went, is also a
4 member of the West Kendall Business
5 Association. Our representatives are very in
6 tune with the business of being successful here
7 in Kendall.

8 But I think that we -- like any business,
9 we like to know where we are at. We like to
10 know -- we don't like surprises, we like to
11 have consistency. And I think that having
12 these tentacles that we have is very -- does
13 not accomplish what we want to do.

14 I have two representatives in our area
15 that -- and I feel bad because I am a Democrat
16 and I would love to have more input from them,
17 but they are not around. And I can understand
18 that, because their constituency is further
19 south or further north. I am talking about
20 Senator Rich and Representative Saunders. I
21 understand, Representative Saunders is down in
22 Key West, Senator Rich is up north, I
23 understand that. But, unfortunately, she
24 represents some people that are across the
25 street from me, but then I don't see her that

1 often. I would very much like to see her
2 often, believe me, as a Democrat in this area,
3 I would love to see her more often. But,
4 however, I understand that her values are a
5 little bit further north, as it is
6 Mr. Saunders. But the representatives that we
7 have here that I spoke about earlier are very
8 dutiful, they're representative, but, however,
9 I think it would help them better if we have a
10 bit more of a shared constituency and not
11 having all of these Finger Lakes type of
12 districts that we have now. Thank you very
13 much.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Next up we
15 have the Mayor of Pinecrest, Ms. Cindy Lerner.
16 Mayor, thank you very much for being here, and
17 after the Mayor, we have Winnie -- I believe it
18 is Tary, or Tang, and then Maria Barbaran.

19 Mayor, thank you so much. You are
20 recognized.

21 MAYOR LERNER: Good evening. I was
22 elected to the Florida Legislature in the year
23 2000, representing the old District 119.
24 District 119 had been drawn in 1992 after the
25 census of 1990, and it was a perfect House

1 district. It represented a community of
2 interest. It was everything from Kendall Drive
3 south to Homestead and east of U.S. 1. So that
4 old district contained all of Pinecrest, what
5 is now Palmetto Bay, what is now Cutler Bay.
6 And I am the victim of the very ugly side of
7 redistricting, the very partisan side of
8 redistricting, because my district was wiped
9 off the map in 2002, literally gone. It was
10 chopped into thirds, given over to neighboring
11 districts. Some of my colleagues that were
12 elected with me in the year 2000 sit up on the
13 dais now and very capably and well represent us
14 in the state of Florida still in different
15 positions in the Legislature were not the
16 victims, but know full well exactly what I
17 experienced. It was quite brutal and quite
18 disappointing.

19 I can't complain, because I would have
20 never imagined I would be Mayor of Pinecrest
21 now. It is much better than being in the
22 Legislature ever was, and I have power to do
23 things in my community now, which I didn't
24 have. I can see immediate results and I can
25 well represent my community, not only within my

1 own village, but in my county and my state and
2 throughout the country. So I appreciate that I
3 ended up in a better place.

4 But I say all that because I am very
5 concerned about the districts we ended up with.
6 We have no voice. Pinecrest has no voice in
7 the Legislature anymore, based on those
8 districts.

9 I brought my props just to show you the
10 old District 19 that was compact, it was
11 contiguous, it had a community of interest, and
12 based on what is going on now in Pinecrest,
13 Palmetto Bay, Cutler Bay, South Miami, we are a
14 very dedicated, very well-organized and
15 collaborative set of municipalities that are
16 working for the entire region of south Dade
17 County, and we need a voice that represents all
18 of us in that regard. What happened to
19 District --

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mayor, I am
21 going to have to ask you to -- we've got a lot
22 of speakers to get to.

23 MAYOR LERNER: Okay. I just want to show
24 you, because it is very important that you see
25 what happened to that and the other districts,

1 and that we do have no voice. One way I can
2 tell you I am very disappointed in what's
3 happened to the district and that we have no
4 voice -- you see this?

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Actually,
6 Mayor, we actually all have copies of the maps
7 right here in front of us.

8 MAYOR LERNER: Yes, but it is much clearer
9 -- look at this 117 --

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ma'am,
11 please.

12 MAYOR LERNER: You see the tentacles? My
13 voice and my constituents' voice in 117 are not
14 heard at all. I have not --

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
16 very much. You are a minute over, and I'm --

17 MAYOR LERNER: I just want to make one
18 last sentence.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay, last
20 thing.

21 MAYOR LERNER: I have not seen or heard
22 from either of our State Representatives, and
23 when I was a State Representative, I made damn
24 sure I got myself out there to represent the
25 people that I cared about. We haven't seen

1 them.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thanks,
3 Mayor.

4 MAYOR LERNER: Thank you. One more prop
5 --

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Next up we
7 have Winnie Tang.

8 MAYOR LERNER: One more quick --

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: No, I'm
10 sorry, ma'am, we are out -- we are out of time.
11 Mayor, we are out of time. Thank you very much
12 for being here. Thanks for your service to
13 your community.

14 Next up we have Winnie Tang. Ms. Tang,
15 thank you very much for being here. Following
16 Ms. Tang, we have Maria Barbaran, and then Mark
17 Gotz.

18 You are recognized.

19 MS. TANG: Thank you, Chairman, Honorable
20 Chairman, Representative and Senators. And
21 based on the census 2010, the Asian population
22 have increased 70 percent, and which is almost
23 equal one -- one seat for the Senators as of
24 the redistricting.

25 So you leave it all in one community, it

1 looks really well, we have one State Senator
2 representing us and three House representing --
3 representing us, but reality, we are not. We
4 are spread out in the entire state of Florida.
5 And many of you may miss some of them for
6 across the state, and not like a lot of people,
7 you heard earlier, the Hispanic interest, the
8 African-American interest, and right now I am
9 here to voice that you also listen to the
10 Asian-American interest. And we are
11 fast-growing communities, and we don't really
12 ask too much, we work very hard, and in our
13 organization as for the Asian community, we do
14 the citizenry drive, voter registration drive,
15 to also allot education for our community to be
16 productive citizens.

17 However, as Asian community, we are over
18 100 different languages, so it is a challenge
19 for us to really get everybody together to say
20 one language. And, fortunately, we got English
21 right now in the United States and -- but
22 there's a lot of concern and issues, and I'd
23 really like to thank you for you all coming
24 back to the legislation to really listen to the
25 Asian community to help us also serve our

1 community as the way it is.

2 So for the redistricting, we look -- we're
3 looking at it, no matter how you draw the map,
4 but we like as square as possible, it doesn't
5 matter how you draw it, we are all over the
6 whole Florida state. And then -- but we also
7 really want to make sure that when you do the
8 map, and also a lot of people have really
9 expressed an interest that not too much
10 divided, and that we should have one
11 Representative to serve to voice the community.
12 So in that way, just think about the Asian
13 community also be here and then we work among
14 the whole community, across the whole state.
15 So we look forward that we are going to see a
16 fair and then well-represented communities for
17 redistricting to serve us. And just remember,
18 2012, when you come back to the session,
19 there's a lot of issues for the Asian community
20 to really come forward to you, but hope that
21 time you also listen to us as to really support
22 our issue, which is the one issue I want to
23 take this minute to say it, and not many people
24 knows about it. There's alien land law, and
25 state of Florida is the only state have this

1 old discriminating language in our state to
2 really prohibit and the Asian to purchase and
3 lease any property.

4 So we want your support in coming up with
5 legislation to help us to remove that language
6 off to the --

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank your,
8 Ms. Tag.

9 MS. TANG: -- our state.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, ma'am,
11 thank you very much. Thanks for your comments.

12 Next up we have Maria Barbaran with the
13 Miami-Dade Florida College Democrats, and then
14 Mark Gotz. Following Mark, we have Ana
15 Navarro.

16 MS. BARBARAN: Hello, respectable Senators
17 and Representatives. I am glad to see
18 Representative Clarke-Reed and Representative
19 Nuñez, I went over there in Tallahassee in
20 around April to fight for women's health rally,
21 nice to see you guys. Thank you for coming
22 down here.

23 Basically, I am 23, I am a senior at FIU,
24 I am a homeowner. I just bought my first house
25 here at FIU, in front of FIU, and I am really

1 excited to be getting into this political
2 realm, because this is insane. I think that we
3 need more information out there for students,
4 for people that don't speak English, to come
5 over here in these meetings, because these are
6 very great and informative.

7 Okay, so my point is, thanks for coming at
8 FIU. As an FIU -- as a Florida voter, I would
9 like to see Florida Legislature honor the wish
10 of constituents who voted for Fair District
11 standards. Sixty-three percent of Floridians
12 expressed that they wanted fair districts, but
13 the Legislature has spent well over a million
14 dollars on taxpayer money to fight them. All
15 this money has been spent while teachers are
16 being fired, social services are being cut out,
17 and not a single job has been created. The
18 House and Senate have set aside upwards of \$30
19 million to avoid the Fair District standards
20 and promote the version of a redistricting
21 plan.

22 The Legislature's timeline for drawing the
23 districts is unfair to Florida voters. It
24 makes no sense that the hearings that are being
25 held now today around the state have been held

1 around the state, but there has been no maps
2 provided for citizens to comment on. Citizens
3 are completely left out of the process.

4 I am asking you today to honor the
5 standards of Fair Districts that 63 percent of
6 the Floridians voted for, finish the maps and
7 stop wasting taxpayer money. Thank you, and
8 listen, I want to commend the Mayor of
9 Pinecrest. I know that it was so much of her
10 bringing an extra map out, but, come on, you
11 know, we need to get things going, like Rick
12 Scott says, we need to get to work, and no
13 matter what Representative -- Republicans or
14 Democrats, who cares, let's make this happen.
15 We can do it. I will do it, I will help you
16 for free, I'm here.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
18 very much.

19 Next up we have Mark Gotz. After Mark, we
20 have Ana Navarro and then Alex Cruzet. Is Mark
21 here? I don't see Mark, so we are going to put
22 him to the side. I don't see Ana Navarro, she
23 was here earlier, so we will put here to the
24 side as well. Alex Cruzet? Sorry I didn't
25 give you more heads-up there. We've got Alex,

1 and then we've got Dudley Philistin, and then
2 after Dudley, we have Fran Cobo.

3 Alex is with the Democratic Party. Alex,
4 thanks for being here, and you are recognized
5 to speak, sir.

6 MR. CRUZET: Good evening, Senators and
7 Representatives. I thank each and every one of
8 you for making it out here. My name is Alex
9 Cruzet. I am a member of the Democratic Party,
10 and I was a candidate to the State House of
11 Representatives in 2010 in District 113.

12 I think that what is going on today in
13 Tallahassee is unbelievable, and I think that
14 some of the people that are making these
15 decisions really need to rethink what they are
16 doing. The fact that \$30 million are being
17 spent at a time when we have an employment
18 problem in this state and no jobs are being
19 created is shameful.

20 When I was in -- a candidate for House of
21 Representatives and I took on an incumbent, it
22 was hard, especially working at the Public
23 Defender's office representing people of low
24 income who are charged with sometimes absurd
25 crimes. I think that before -- I think that

1 before you guys make a decision, you should
2 really consider the interests of the state, and
3 in the spirit of democracy, allow people who
4 want to get involved in the democratic process,
5 the time to even prepare, because if by August
6 is when we are -- as new people who want to
7 join the House of Representatives, okay, if by
8 August is when we even have a chance to
9 prepare, there's really no way that we can be
10 ready to take on an incumbent.

11 So as a challenger and as somebody who
12 wants to be involved in the democratic process,
13 I urge you, if you truly believe in democracy
14 to take that into consideration. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
16 Alex.

17 Next up, Dudley Philistin. Dudley? Does
18 she? Okay, thank you very much, Representative
19 Julien. Okay, having waived, Fran Cobo, is
20 Frank here? Okay. Next up we have Jorge
21 Navarro. Is Jorge here? All right, thank you,
22 sir. Sorry we didn't give you more time there.
23 After Jorge, we have Jenny Levin and then
24 Thomas Lander.

25 Jorge, thanks for being here.

1 MR. NAVARRO: Thank you so much. Good
2 evening, Senators, Representatives. My name is
3 Jorge Navarro, and I just would like to say
4 that what makes this county great is its
5 diversity. Miami-Dade County is a melting pot
6 of different Hispanic cultures.

7 I come from a Hispanic family that left
8 Cuba because of a lack of political
9 representation, so I know how important this
10 process is.

11 I believe that we need to keep our
12 districts compact in order to allow for
13 additional Hispanic access to the Legislature.
14 This is the only way that we can ensure that
15 our cultural and our local interests are
16 represented at the state level. And I thank
17 you so much for all of your hard work.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
19 Jorge.

20 Next up we have Jenny -- I think it is
21 Levin, I hope. I am not sure if I said that
22 right, but after Jenny, we have Thomas Lander
23 and then Janice Coakley.

24 Jenny, you are recognized.

25 MS. LEVIN: Good evening, my name is Jenny

1 Levin, and I want to thank each and every one
2 of you for taking the time to come out here,
3 but also to listen to our concerns.

4 Miami-Dade is very unique, and it is
5 unique because of its diversity for Hispanics
6 and different diversities alike. Miami-Dade
7 has over 65 percent Hispanic, but yet less than
8 50 percent are actually represented in both the
9 House and the Senate.

10 My only concern is that if we do all this
11 redistricting, we must make sure at all costs
12 that Hispanics are represented in both the
13 House and the Senate. Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

15 Next up, I skipped Ana Navarro, but I know
16 she is here, so why don't we go to Ana first,
17 and then we will come back to Thomas.

18 Ana, good to see you again. Thank you for
19 being here, and the floor is yours.

20 MS. NAVARRO: Well, I love having you all
21 here. I think it is good for our economy, so I
22 think we need to have more of these hearings.
23 And my friend Mario Diaz-Balart said he was
24 going to be brief. I am actually going to be
25 brief.

1 It is so very important for you all to
2 recognize that Miami-Dade is unique. You all
3 know it, we know it, it is no big secret.
4 There's 67 counties. There's 66 counties and
5 Miami-Dade.

6 I am here because I am from Nicaragua
7 originally. I am a naturalized citizen, and
8 when you are a naturalized citizen, voting,
9 representation, means so much, particularly
10 when, like so many of us here, you have had to
11 leave your homeland because of lack of
12 representation, because of oppression. So I
13 commend you guys for taking this process so
14 seriously. It is very important that we have
15 adequate Hispanic and minority representation
16 in Florida, especially for counties like
17 Miami-Dade.

18 Miami-Dade is unique, so to the extent
19 possible, if you can keep the districts within
20 the counties. People in Broward will tell you
21 that they think they need visas to come here,
22 and some of us think we need visas to go there.
23 We are different. It is different
24 constituencies, different needs. So I urge you
25 to take a look at keeping the districts as

1 compact as possible. And I think we need a new
2 Senate seat in Miami-Dade. I would like you
3 guys to consider that. And other than that, I
4 am going to be brief.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
6 You certainly beat the Congressman, there is no
7 doubt about that. Thank you, Ana.

8 Next up --

9 MR. LANDER: I like Ana's juice.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Next up we
11 have Mr. Lander.

12 MR. LANDER: How are you doing? I am
13 Thomas Lander.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: One second,
15 Mr. Lander. After Mr. Lander, we have Janice
16 Coakley, and after that, we have Alejandro
17 Almirola.

18 MR. LANDER: I am a teacher at Miami-Dade
19 County Public Schools, a public servant, paid
20 for by the taxpayers, and on behalf of all
21 public servants, I want to apologize that we
22 caused the economic downturn in America.

23 I am a history teacher. I am a great
24 history teacher. I love teaching social
25 studies. And I think of the words that we, the

1 people of the United States, in order to form a
2 more perfect union, not an AFL-CIO, although I
3 wish it was, but a union that is united, and so
4 many times we are talking past each other when
5 we create the districts that represent us. We
6 have people today that are choosing the voters,
7 rather than the voters choosing the candidates.
8 We build our districts for political power of
9 ideology that divides us and doesn't get us to
10 discuss the important issues. And we are
11 becoming more and more balkanized as a society,
12 and we see it where we can't solve our
13 problems. We voted for Fair Districts so that
14 we can come together and reach consensus and
15 not go to the opposite poles of our society.
16 We have serious problems affecting Florida and
17 this nation, and unless we bring the reds and
18 blues together in the districts, we will not
19 find solutions, but we will continue to raise
20 the rancor, and that can bring terrible
21 consequences to our country.

22 Please make these districts fair. Look
23 back to our founding fathers to create a more
24 perfect union. God bless you in your work.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,

1 Mr. Lander.

2 Our next speaker is Janice Coakley.

3 Janice is followed by Alejandro and then Millie
4 Herrera.

5 MS. COAKLEY: Good evening, Senators,
6 Representatives and guests. Janice Coakley,
7 President of AFSCME local 3293 and trustee on
8 the AFL-CIO board.

9 A key traditional redistricting principle
10 is respect for communities of interest. These
11 are defined by three: One, the extent to which
12 non-members identify members as a distant
13 community; two, the extent to which members
14 identify themselves as a distant community;
15 three, and the extent to which members are
16 similarly affected by government actions.

17 African-American citizens form one of the
18 strongest communities of interest in the state,
19 and the redistricting plan should have as
20 priority the district that accord
21 representation to communities of interest.

22 We are aware and request redistricting
23 principle outlined in Section 20 and 21 of the
24 Florida Constitution: "Districts shall not be
25 drawn with the intent or result of denying or

1 abridging the equal opportunity of racial or
2 language minorities to participate in the
3 political process or the ability to elect
4 representatives of their choice." In addition,
5 districts should be compact and be fair to all.

6 Thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

8 Next up we have Alejandro Almirola,
9 Alejandro? After Alejandro, we have Millie
10 Herrera, followed by Robert Sarhack.

11 Thank you, Alejandro, you have the floor.

12 MR. ALMIROLA: Hello, my name is Alejandro
13 Almirola, and I just wanted to state my huge
14 disappointment with the Legislature wasting
15 millions of dollars fighting its people. Why
16 don't you just put a sign up that says, "Screw
17 the people over"? That is what you have been
18 doing, and I feel very disappointed with your
19 actions.

20 And I really hope that the districts are
21 drawn fair, because I would hate for the state
22 to waste millions of dollars to defend against
23 a lawsuit by the ACLU or any -- or citizens
24 because the lines aren't drawn fairly, and it
25 should be very shameful for all -- for all

1 those who are supporting that lawsuit, who are
2 supporting the Governor from not getting it
3 cleared from you trying -- the Legislature
4 trying to fight it. It just -- why are you
5 trying to fight it? I would hope for a good
6 explanation and a refund check in the mail for
7 all that waste of money and time for such a
8 stupid thing.

9 So I hope -- and I am very disappointed
10 with also on -- tagging along with that with
11 the recent Voter Suppression Act. So what is
12 the signal you are sending? You are sending a
13 signal of we are going to trick our voters, and
14 we don't -- and we're going to say no to the
15 voters that don't agree with us. I think you
16 want a dictatorship, not a democracy. So it is
17 a huge insult for us.

18 So Representatives and Senators who
19 support these lawsuits, they should do us all a
20 favor and resign from office, because they have
21 done a huge disservice to this office.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sir, I will
23 allow you to speak, but I will just ask this:
24 The committee is being very respectful to
25 listen to you. I would only ask that you be

1 respectful to the Committee who's listening.

2 MR. ALMIROLA: Be respectful to the
3 people. Don't waste our money. I would agree,
4 yes, don't waste our money either. I would
5 really hope you don't waste our money anymore,
6 and I really want the refund and an explanation
7 of why you have to waste our money. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
9 Thank you very much.

10 Next up we have Millie Herrera, followed
11 by Robert Sarhack.

12 MS. HERERRA: Good evening to everyone.
13 My name is Millie Herrera. I am a Cuban-born
14 Hispanic, proud to be a U.S. citizen since 1975
15 and a resident of Kendall for the past 24
16 years. Thank you very much for the opportunity
17 to express my thoughts on the redistricting
18 process.

19 I am here as a member and representing
20 LULAC Florida, the oldest Hispanic civil rights
21 organization in the United States.

22 We want to urge you to adopt a timeline
23 for redistricting that ensures an early final
24 approval of the new maps and districts in
25 January of 2012. This will allow county

1 Supervisors of Elections to properly prepare
2 for the municipal, primary and general
3 elections, and inform the public of new
4 districts and voting places. It will prevent
5 much of the voter confusion that ensued in 2002
6 when the process took us down to only weeks
7 before the August election.

8 Excuse me, my voice, I have a cold.

9 We suggest finalizing the proposed
10 redistricting plans by October the 3rd,
11 complete all Committee reviews of the maps in
12 December of 2011, and require that amendments
13 are filed with sufficient notice so that
14 citizens can review, testify before any
15 Committee before they vote, and vote on the
16 final plans no later than the first week of
17 session in January 2012. This timeline is
18 going to allow the U.S. Justice Department
19 plenty of time to review and approve Florida's
20 redistricting plans and certify compliance with
21 the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

22 We also ask that you keep to the letter of
23 the Amendments 5 and 6, and where feasible,
24 follow the existing city, county and
25 geographical boundaries, not gerrymander across

1 the counties, nor across communities with
2 little in common with each other.

3 You must also please resist the urge to
4 sequester minority voters into only a few
5 districts in order to protect incumbents and
6 the continued majority of one party over
7 another.

8 Miami-Dade County is a very diverse
9 county, as diverse as can be. We have
10 65 percent Hispanics. Over 49 percent of
11 Miami-Dade residents were born in a foreign
12 country. This is why it is important to have
13 this information early, so that everybody gets
14 access in their own language to where they are
15 going to be voting.

16 I also ask that you keep in mind that over
17 19 Latin American countries are represented,
18 now less than 40 -- 50 percent of Cuban decent
19 and the majority from Columbia, Nicaragua,
20 Honduras, Venezuela, Peru, Mexico, Dominican
21 Republic, Puerto Rico and the rest of south and
22 Central American countries. It is very
23 important to -- that this fact be kept in mind
24 when districts are drawn so that we also create
25 opportunities for all these other populations

1 to elect representatives of their choice, and
2 more than one group is represented in our
3 elected leadership.

4 Lastly, I urge you to please require
5 Governor Rick Scott to reintroduce Amendments 5
6 and 6 to the U.S. Justice Department for
7 approval as required under the Voting Rights
8 Act of 1965. The people of Florida spoke
9 loudly and clearly. Sixty-three percent of us
10 voted for these reforms to the Florida
11 Constitution, and it is your -- it is your
12 obligation to please keep the letter of the law
13 and draw districts fairly following the new
14 dictates of the law, without partisan or
15 incumbency considerations, in a timely manner
16 to ensure that we have smooth elections in
17 2012. Thank you very much.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

19 Last we have Robert Sarhack. While Robert
20 is coming up, there's a couple of people we
21 skipped. Frank Pena earlier, I don't know,
22 Frank, if you ever came back, but if you are
23 here, we would love to get to you. Milagro
24 Ruiz, Mark Gotz or Frank Cobo, if any of you
25 are here, please step forward. If not, you are

1 recognized, sir, and don't worry, we saved the
2 best for last. So, Robert, please wow us with
3 your words, sir.

4 MR. SARHACK: I don't about that, I have
5 nothing prepared, but I would like to say thank
6 you for coming out. I hope you are listening.
7 I am a little disappointed that more people
8 haven't come out. It may be indicative of how
9 disenfranchised people are feeling about this,
10 that maybe you aren't going to listen. This is
11 the first time I have done this, but I am
12 hoping that you all listen to what the people
13 are requesting.

14 Compact districts. When I went on the
15 website the other night and I looked at the
16 districts, I thought my monitor had gone whack.
17 I could not believe the way some of the
18 districts were set up. It's like who is doing
19 this? What drugs are they taking? It
20 shouldn't be hard. Compact districts is all it
21 takes. And it is really indicative of how
22 disenfranchised people are feeling when they
23 don't come out to this forum to -- for all you
24 all to listen to us. And I just hope you
25 listen and appreciate to get the people

1 involved again, give us districts that work.

2 Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

4 Okay. We are told that we missed someone
5 that is back in the room, Dudley Philistin.
6 Dudley? You don't have to, but if you want to,
7 we will wait for you. You are last, this is
8 it. All right. One point for democracy.

9 After Ms. Dudley, I will go ahead and --
10 we're going to -- for those of you who had
11 comments or questions that maybe were seeking
12 clarification, if you will stick around for a
13 moment, Senator Gaetz will spend some time
14 after we allow other members for comment to
15 maybe try to answer some of those questions for
16 everyone.

17 So with that, Ms. Dudley, thank you for
18 being here, and you are recognized.

19 MS. PHILISTIN: Hello. My name is Dudley
20 Philistin. I would like to say that this is my
21 first time, and I have never been introduced to
22 this until today. I would like to thank you
23 guys for coming to hear our concerns, and as a
24 college student, I am here to represent the
25 immigrant students. And on the behalf of the

1 Haitian community, I am asking how will the re-
2 --

3 A VOICE: Redistricting.

4 MS. PHILISTIN: Yes -- benefit us as
5 Haitians who are trying to better our lives,
6 and will it bring healthcare to the seniors,
7 will it bring better opportunities and will it
8 bring more funds to us as different
9 communities. That's it.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
11 You did a great job, Ms. Dudley. Great job.

12 Okay. We have one more who showed up just
13 now who wants to speak, Ralph Rosado. Ralph?
14 You are last, my friend, but they say that the
15 last will be first and the first will be last,
16 so feel free to come up and give us your
17 thoughts. Thanks for being here.

18 MR. ROSADO: Thank you. Yes, I am Ralph
19 Rosado, private citizen. I want to tell you a
20 quick story about something that happened to me
21 last week which had never happened to me
22 before. I went to Chicago for an academic
23 conference. Usually when I fly, I like to
24 travel comfortably, sneakers, jeans, flannel
25 shirt. I showed up at the building where I

1 would be making a presentation. This was a
2 doctoral conference. I am walking around, I'm
3 just -- you know, I am thinking, it is Chicago,
4 I want to sightsee. I see two gentlemen in
5 uniforms walk by me.

6 I see Gonzalez and Guzman. They asked me,
7 limpia la oficina?" "Did you clean the
8 offices?" So in Miami, I am a businessman, I
9 am a professional. In Chicago, perhaps in
10 L.A., in New York, in a number of cities, I am
11 probably the janitor.

12 Miami, Miami-Dade, Florida, we are light
13 years ahead of a lot of those places, and we
14 need to make sure that we maintain that
15 standing. So I would urge you, in a county
16 that is two-thirds Hispanic, we not lose any
17 Hispanic representation. In our Senate, which
18 I know has done in many ways a wonderful job,
19 we are represented by fewer than a 50 percent
20 Hispanic delegation. In the State House,
21 certainly we are always at risk of losing that.
22 I urge you, if we are going to be the Hispanic
23 leaders of the country, we not lose that
24 representation at our state level ever. So
25 thank you very much.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
2 Ralph.

3 Okay. I think what we are going to do at
4 this time, historically what we have done at
5 this time is we have allowed members on the
6 Committee, if they have any comments or
7 questions or suggestions or would like to offer
8 any suggestions, this is the time to do it. So
9 if there are any members here, we will pass the
10 mike around.

11 Senator Rich, would you like to start us
12 off?

13 SENATOR RICH: Thank you. I wanted to
14 make a comment tonight about the issue of the
15 lawsuit. Many, many people at these hearings
16 have expressed their disapproval that the House
17 has gone to court to have Amendment 6 thrown
18 out, despite the fact that 63 percent of the
19 people voted in favor of the Fair Districts
20 standards. And some of my colleagues, this
21 morning in particular, responded that they were
22 not trying to have the amendment invalidated,
23 that they were only seeking clarification, and
24 now --

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Senator --

1 now, I know that we live -- I know that people
2 accuse us of partisan politics, but I swear
3 that was not part of it. Senator, we are very
4 sorry about that, but it woke everybody up for
5 those who may have been sleeping. So please
6 continue.

7 SENATOR RICH: So now in the last few
8 days, we have heard a number of Legislators say
9 that they felt that it was the duty of the
10 House to uphold both of the Florida and the
11 Federal Constitutions, and that Amendment 6
12 might create some conflict between the two.

13 Actually, I checked this out today, the
14 court papers filed on behalf of the House do
15 not ask for clarification, nor do they ask for
16 the court to resolve any conflict. The court
17 papers specifically ask the court to hold
18 Amendment 6 unconstitutional so that, in
19 reality, the people who have been saying that
20 taxpayer money is being spent to invalidate the
21 amendment are actually correct.

22 I also would just like to say, and I think
23 it is important for the people who came here,
24 and I very much, all of us, appreciate our
25 constituents and voters coming here to share

1 their points of view, it is extremely
2 important, but I do want to say that all of us
3 are not of the same mind here. Your concerns,
4 especially about the timeline, have been voiced
5 not only by voters, constituents, but by
6 Supervisors of Elections across the state,
7 particularly in the large counties, and they
8 have indicated that it would be -- they would
9 be unable to prepare for the elections on this
10 timeline. So I have spoken at several of these
11 meetings and asked that our Chairs take a look
12 at this and listen to the voters and to the
13 people across this state who would like this to
14 be done, the timeline to be accelerated to some
15 degree, so that we can make sure that we have a
16 good and effective process in place so that we
17 can have an election of which we can all be
18 proud.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
20 Senator Rich. That is right, it is bipartisan
21 now, it's happened to both sides. Good point.

22 Okay. I don't see -- are there any other
23 members who wish to speak? I didn't see
24 anybody else raise their hand. Okay, yes,
25 Representative Steinberg, you are recognized,

1 sir, if we can get him a microphone.

2 REPRESENTATIVE STEINBERG: Thank you,
3 Mr. Chair. I sat through the meeting earlier
4 today and this, and I think that what we heard
5 in Miami-Dade is consistent with what was voted
6 on here. And while we heard that 63 percent of
7 Floridians voted for 5 and 6, the reality is,
8 in Dade County, it was even higher.
9 Sixty-seven percent of the voters here in Dade
10 County supported 5 and 6. And so we heard
11 overwhelmingly, and what I took out of these
12 meetings was a call on us to respect the
13 language and the intent of 5 and 6, not to try
14 to find ways to circumvent it, overturn it, get
15 around it, but to respect the will of those of
16 us that elect here, especially those in the
17 Dade delegation, and support 5 and 6 and make
18 sure that the maps that we come up with are
19 consistent with 5 and 6.

20 So I will hold that to heart and hope that
21 all the members here do so as well, and that
22 the maps that we do comply with 5 and 6, not
23 only to the letter, but to the intent of 5 and
24 6 and create the fair districts that Floridians
25 have demanded.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
2 Representative.

3 Okay. Anybody else wish to speak? Alex,
4 do you see anybody else with their hand raised?

5 Okay. We are going to turn it over to our
6 Senator, or my co-Chair, Senator Gaetz, to try
7 to leave us with a few comments and maybe some
8 clarification and some data points to make sure
9 we all walk out of here with the same facts,
10 and, again, want to thank everyone for being
11 here, and Senator Gaetz, you are recognized to
12 finish us off here.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, and
14 I want to associate myself with Representative
15 Steinberg's comments. Each of us has taken an
16 oath when we are sworn into the Senate or the
17 House to preserve, protect and defend the
18 Constitution of the United States and of the
19 State of Florida, and I believe that every
20 single one of us, whether we are House members
21 or Senators, regardless of political persuasion
22 or where we come from in the state, intend to
23 fulfill that oath, and intend to fulfill it
24 with respect to all the provisions of the
25 Florida and United States Constitution. So

1 Representative Steinberg's comments were
2 comments that I think that we could all
3 associate ourselves with.

4 One of the interesting things that I have
5 observed tonight, and I have taken my usual
6 large set of notes, is that while almost
7 everybody, not everybody, but almost everybody
8 said that 5 and 6 ought to be implemented -- in
9 fact, there's one individual who said it ought
10 to be followed exactly as it was prescribed --
11 that there were a number of differences as to
12 what the meanings of various words were and
13 various concepts. For example, we heard a lot
14 of testimony today in the earlier hearing and
15 tonight about ensuring that districts be drawn
16 in order to preserve certain racial or ethnic
17 groups, making sure that there is no
18 retrogression, and, in fact, even a call for
19 additional districts for Hispanics, which is
20 certainly a legitimate point of view. But, on
21 the other hand, there were those who said, you
22 know, really what you need to do is pay
23 attention to the literal words of 5 and 6,
24 which talk about, for example, compactness.

25 The interesting point here is that there

1 could be, in many people's minds, some tension
2 between these two values. So I believe that
3 Representative Steinberg's words could be
4 associated with all of us, but at the same
5 time, that one of the great values of these
6 hearings is to hear your view about how you
7 think these values that some people believe
8 might be in conflict, that some people believe
9 might have some tension between them, could
10 actually be applied in a fair and equitable
11 fashion.

12 Mr. Chairman, let me go down some of the
13 other questions that were asked. There was a
14 question asked, "Why was the geospatial
15 analysis deleted from the House website?" To
16 clarify, there was never such a tool in the My
17 District Builder House website; therefore, it
18 was never removed. Unfortunately, there is
19 some confusion because there was an opinion
20 column that was published in *The Sun Sentinel*,
21 and later *The Sentinel* ran a correction because
22 the information was inaccurate. The author of
23 the opinion column, unfortunately, confused My
24 District Builder with a private vendor's
25 application, and that application had a similar

1 name. So it was a case of mistaken identity,
2 and the notion that there was a spacial feature
3 that was deleted from the House website or the
4 House computer program was simply not true, and
5 *The Sun Sentinel* has printed a retraction, but
6 once you get something in the bloodstream,
7 sometimes it stays there, and so I think that
8 is important for us to know. And I appreciate
9 the question being asked so it could be
10 clarified.

11 A number of folks talked about the
12 timeline, and our Democratic Leader, Senator
13 Rich, eloquently spoke of the timeline. Let me
14 mention a couple of facts that have to do with
15 the timeline, and then indicate how Chairman
16 Weatherford and I plan to go forward.

17 First, it is true that Florida is among
18 the last states to complete its redistricting.
19 But part of the reason for that is because
20 Florida was not the last state, but was one of
21 the last states to receive the census
22 information from the Bureau of the Census, the
23 demographic information that by law we must
24 rely upon. That shows the movement of
25 populations back and forth, and the character

1 and description of those populations. As soon
2 as we received the census information, we put
3 it on the website and began to use it, but we
4 were in -- not the last state, but one of the
5 last states to receive it.

6 Secondly, it is true, and a couple of
7 people mentioned it, that there were some
8 states that got their job done earlier.
9 Illinois, I think, was mentioned. Well, the
10 fact is that Illinois is a one-party state, and
11 the Legislature there, I think it is fair to
12 say, went into the proverbial back room, came
13 out with a take-it-or-leave-it set of maps, did
14 a fairly quick vote, a snap vote in the
15 Legislature, it was over and they went home.
16 Now, that is one way to do it, but our
17 presiding officers chose to do it very
18 differently, and their direction to us was that
19 even though this is maybe sometimes a difficult
20 or even contentious process, that we needed to
21 make sure that we heard people's opinions and
22 their input before we went forward.

23 The -- another individual mentioned, in
24 listing states that had gone before Florida,
25 Louisiana. Well, the reason Louisiana got its

1 job done earlier is because it holds its
2 elections on odd years, not even years, so it
3 is required by law to get its redistricting
4 done sooner, and it's provided the information
5 by the Census Bureau to do so.

6 Florida did accelerate the process. As we
7 indicated at the beginning of the hearing, and
8 I know some of you were not here, typically the
9 Legislature goes into session in January -- or,
10 rather, in March. We moved up the session to
11 January, the Legislature voted, Republicans and
12 Democrats, to move the session up to January so
13 that we could begin voting as soon as we
14 constitutionally could. And then, in order to
15 begin discussing -- producing and discussing
16 and debating maps earlier, we moved up
17 Committee meetings from when they would usually
18 begin in December to September. And Leader
19 Rich has asked that we take this matter up as
20 quickly as possible, and I have given her my
21 commitment that at the very first meeting of
22 the Senate Reapportionment Committee in
23 September, the second item on the agenda after
24 the call to order will be a discussion of
25 Senator Rich's proposed maps, and we will

1 invite any member of the Legislature,
2 Republican or Democrat, to bring their maps
3 that day.

4 Sometimes there is a confusion and people
5 think that there's going to be a set of maps.
6 The fact is that there will be multiple sets of
7 maps that will be debated and discussed. They
8 can be produced today by any member of the
9 Legislature, and we will call for those maps on
10 the very first day that we have the first
11 legally-allowed committee meeting.

12 Then, Mr. Chairman, there was a question
13 about using city and county boundaries, but yet
14 somebody else testified, quote, "It is
15 difficult, if not impossible, to draw districts
16 around the boundaries of 40 municipalities in
17 south Florida." There is a city to the north
18 of Miami-Dade County that has three
19 non-contiguous areas in its city; in other
20 words, the person who testified earlier about
21 this said that the city boundaries were sort of
22 like throwing some mud against the wall, and
23 part of it is over here, part of it is here and
24 part of it is here, the city is actually in
25 three different non-contiguous places. So you

1 can't always use city boundaries, and that,
2 again, indicates the potential tension there
3 may be between a literal interpretation of
4 Amendments 5 and 6, and a practical application
5 of it, and it is why it is so important to get
6 the information we have gotten from these
7 hearings. And there are some city boundaries,
8 if you look at them, that look like Rorschach
9 tests, the city boundaries are splattered, and
10 they're certainly not perfect squares or
11 perfect rectangles, to get to you, the social
12 studies teacher.

13 And then there was a comment made that if
14 someone wanted to run, how could they get
15 petitions? That was a really good question,
16 how could you get petitions. Well, I happen to
17 be a candidate for the Senate in District 4,
18 and the way that the law works is that in a
19 redistricting year, when district lines haven't
20 been drawn, that petitions -- you simply sign
21 up with your address as it is now, and you can
22 get petitions from any registered voter in
23 Florida. So it is really easy. If you want to
24 run for office in a redistricting year, it is
25 actually easier to be a challenger and get

1 petitions signed than in any other year,
2 because you can get any registered Florida
3 voter to sign the petition. So we are glad to
4 provide that information.

5 Then, Mr. Chairman, a member of the public
6 said tonight that the league asks that
7 Legislators file redistricting plans by early
8 October. Let me emphasize again, it is not
9 going to be a plan. There will be multiple
10 plans that will be advanced by Legislators who
11 don't necessarily agree with each other. We'd
12 all have one opinion. Even within the
13 Democratic caucus and within the Republican
14 caucus, there are differences of opinions. So
15 let me emphasize, any Democratic member of this
16 Committee, any Republican member of this
17 Committee, can submit a map today, they can
18 file a map today. There is not a requirement
19 that you wait till September or wait till
20 October, as the league has suggested, it can be
21 filed today.

22 And then, Mr. Chairman, there were several
23 individuals who said that many current
24 districts are drawn oddly, improperly and with
25 all kinds of odd geometry. A point that I

1 think is important to make is that nearly all
2 of us who are here -- not all of us, but nearly
3 all of us are representing districts whose
4 boundaries we didn't draw. I -- I am a Senator
5 from the Fourth Senate District, and the Fourth
6 Senate District wasn't drawn by me, it was
7 drawn by people who were in the Legislature in
8 2002, and I wasn't in the Legislature in 2002.
9 So I am living with the consequences of
10 somebody else's decision, and most of us are.
11 So there is no pride of authorship. We are in
12 it with you. We would like to see many of the
13 oddities associated with these districts
14 resolved.

15 I will tell you personally, I live in what
16 is called a rattail of a Congressional
17 District. We are in a rattail at the end of a
18 Congressional District that really has its
19 center of gravity a long, long way away. And
20 there are a lot of us who will associate with
21 the belief that we ought to, as much as
22 possible, try to deal with those oddities.

23 And then, Mr. Chairman, there were
24 individuals who used the term "communities of
25 interest," and one -- one testifier tonight

1 said that a community of interest is more
2 practical than county lines. Well,
3 "communities of interest," that is a good term,
4 it is a useful term, but Representative
5 Weatherford and I and others actually tried to
6 get that term included in the amendments to the
7 Constitution so that it could be used as a
8 criterion, but the Supreme Court said no. So
9 "communities of interest" is not a term that is
10 in the Constitution, it is not in Amendments 5
11 and 6, and, therefore, there again could be an
12 apparent tension between those who very
13 eloquently discussed using "communities of
14 interest" as a way to define a district, and
15 those who want a literal interpretation of
16 Amendments 5 and 6.

17 We had a very eloquent young man, a social
18 studies teacher, who said that it is easy,
19 because you just make districts look like
20 rectangles, and he volunteered his seventh
21 grade class to do that. I note that he
22 disagreed with another social studies teacher,
23 I guess social studies teachers don't always
24 see it that way, but I would encourage you to
25 check with the geography teachers. They will

1 tell you Florida is not a rectangle. So I have
2 a deal for you. One of the great things that
3 we have had in the Legislature over past years
4 is students proposing legislation that gets
5 seriously considered and even passed. Here is
6 my offer: If -- and it's got to be student
7 work now. If it is student work, if you can
8 get your class to draw all the Congressional
9 Districts, all the Senate districts and all the
10 House districts to comply with all federal and
11 state laws and court cases, including no
12 retrogression of minorities, and all of them
13 are perfect rectangles, I will personally pay
14 for the bus to bring you and your class to
15 Tallahassee and we will have you testify before
16 the committee. How about that? Will you do
17 that? Will you take me up on that? I hope you
18 will.

19 Then one testifier said tonight that he
20 didn't see everybody writing and taking notes.
21 I take notes because I am an old newspaper
22 reporter, and I just -- you know, I do that.
23 But I would want you to know that all of the
24 members here are furnished with transcripts and
25 have access to video transcripts, as well as

1 written transcripts, of every one of these
2 hearings. So oftentimes you will have
3 Legislators who will study the transcripts
4 later. I plan to do that. Others take notes.
5 It just depends on your personal preference.
6 But, believe me, everybody was listening and
7 paying attention to your views.

8 Then a testifier suggested that there was
9 a fear that the State Legislature would, by
10 itself -- and these are his words -- "ram the
11 maps down our throats without public
12 testimony." Well, here are a couple of facts:
13 First, no vote, no vote, even in Committee,
14 will be taken without public testimony being
15 taken first, no vote. Secondly, the
16 Legislature doesn't have the final word. Even
17 if we wanted to ram something down somebody
18 somewhere, we couldn't do it, because the
19 judicial review that is called for in the law
20 and the Constitution means that whatever we
21 come up with has to go to the Supreme Court of
22 Florida and it has to go to federal judicial
23 review. And already there have been
24 individuals who are members of various public
25 interest groups and personal special interest

1 groups who have indicated that they are
2 threatening lawsuits even before the first map
3 is presented by Senator Rich or whoever will
4 present the first map. So I guarantee you,
5 there won't be any ramming of anything.
6 Instead, I think there will probably be a good
7 year for lawyers.

8 Then, Mr. Chairman, an individual said,
9 and I think with great sincerity, that you
10 ought to forget where your districts are when
11 you do this. I probably can't forget the five
12 counties that I represent and the communities I
13 represent. It is probably impossible to forget
14 them. But let me tell you what Speaker
15 Weatherford has said to the House of
16 Representatives and to his staff. He has
17 instructed them that he doesn't even want to
18 know where incumbents live, so that when
19 districts are drawn, they will be drawn without
20 reference to even where incumbents live, let
21 alone their preference.

22 And secondly, let me tell you what I have
23 said as Chairman of the Senate Committee to our
24 professional staff. I want any maps that are
25 presented to the Senate Reapportionment

1 Committee to have no partisan data in them, so
2 that the maps would not be able to be looked at
3 by our Committee with people being able to say,
4 "Well, here's how many Republicans there are
5 here, and here's how many Democrats." So while
6 we can't forget the people and the communities
7 we represent, I think there is a real intent
8 here to try to be fair and to be as unbiased as
9 possible.

10 Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me comment on
11 the comments of the ACLU. First, there was an
12 ACLU representative who said that certainly
13 hope that the 5 and 6 would be pre-cleared and
14 that we could get Governor Scott to submit them
15 for pre-clearance.

16 Here are the facts: The House and the
17 Senate have submitted 5 and 6 for pre-clearance
18 to the Justice Department, and our request that
19 they be pre-cleared was honored, and they have
20 been pre-cleared.

21 And the ACLU Representative said that in
22 her view, 5 and 6 do not conflict with minority
23 rights. We agree, and we hope that that turns
24 out to be the case. We requested
25 pre-clearance, and we believe that 5 and 6

1 could strengthen the Voting Rights Act. We
2 don't believe that there has to be a conflict,
3 even though you have heard a lot of testimony
4 today, and we have in all of these hearings,
5 suggesting that, in some people's minds, there
6 could well be tension.

7 But then, finally, Mr. Chairman, there was
8 an ACLU member who spoke -- let us see -- and
9 said that, sadly, she could only speak in
10 generalities and platitudes, and suggested that
11 these hearings could only be about generalities
12 and platitudes. Boy, I hope she was here to
13 hear the Mayor of Pinecrest. I hope she was
14 here to hear the representatives of the city
15 governments of Kendall, the gentleman from
16 Cutler Bay, the representatives from Miami
17 Lakes and Miami Shores and El Portal and the
18 other communities who spoke in tonight's
19 hearing and this afternoon's hearings, because
20 they didn't speak in platitudes and
21 generalities. We have heard literally hundreds
22 of people in these hearings who have talked
23 about their neighborhoods and their communities
24 and how current lines may be bisecting or
25 trisecting those neighborhoods and need to be

1 fixed. We've gotten all kinds of specific,
2 very specific data, that we never could have
3 gotten in an echo chamber in Tallahassee, only
4 could have gotten on the ground by listening to
5 people who live in those communities and
6 neighborhoods.

7 And I'm sorry that there might be some who
8 believe that there is no value in proposals and
9 maps submitted by grass roots organizations and
10 by individuals and by special interest groups.
11 We think there is. There are 21 maps that have
12 been submitted, and, frankly, I believe that
13 there's some real value in some of them. And I
14 haven't drawn a map myself yet, don't plan to
15 until I hear all the public testimony, but I
16 can already tell you that there are some things
17 about the maps we have received that I hope
18 will be in the options that are presented to
19 the House and the Senate Redistricting
20 Committees.

21 The 31 -- the 21 -- actually, 31 maps are
22 real maps, and they were developed by real
23 people who were really sincere, and I would
24 hope we would not denigrate their efforts by
25 saying it was only generalities and platitudes.

1 These are people who take the process
2 seriously.

3 And, finally, Mr. Chairman, let me just
4 say that we have learned an extraordinary
5 amount about Miami-Dade County. I lived here
6 for ten years, and I thought I knew something
7 about this community. I can tell you that I
8 learned a whole lot about what's happened since
9 I left, and I am delighted that we were here, I
10 think we have all gained a great deal and we
11 thank everyone who has contributed value to
12 these hearings.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
14 and I think this has been mentioned before, but
15 our great distinguished Senator who just spoke
16 is also from Niceville, Florida. So thank you,
17 Senator, for that very much.

18 And I think everybody recognizes that we
19 do take your comments seriously, we appreciate
20 you being here this evening and we hope you
21 continue to follow the process on our websites
22 that you have on the brochure. And with that,
23 Senator Gaetz moves that we rise.

24 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
25 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 152 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 10th day of November, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, AUGUST 18, 2011
4:00 P.M.

FLORIDA KEYS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
KEY WEST, FLORIDA

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 SENATOR GAETZ: The Joint Senate House
3 Redistricting hearing is called to order, and
4 before we any other business the Chair will
5 recognize the Speaker Designate of the Florida
6 House of Representatives for a motion.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I think --
8 thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the motion
9 was going to come from the gentleman who
10 resides here in the Keys.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: The Leader.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: The District
13 Leader, that is exactly right.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, in that case we are
15 pleased to recognize our House Leader,
16 Democratic Leader, Ron Saunders, who is a
17 legend in the Keys and even more of a legend in
18 Tallahassee, and our good friend.

19 REPRESENTATIVE SAUNDERS: Thank you,
20 Mr. Chairman, and on behalf of all of the
21 constituents in District 120, I want to welcome
22 you.

23 It is a very big honor, by the way, for
24 those of you who aren't in the Legislature, we
25 have both Chairs, the Senate Chair and the

1 House Chair Redistricting who are here, but
2 there are also the incoming President of the
3 Senate and incoming Speaker of the House.

4 So when you have the top two presiding
5 officers of the next term in our city, that is
6 a real honor for us to have them down here, as
7 well as the rest of my colleagues.

8 We have a lot of House members and
9 Senators here and to have people come all of
10 the way to Key West and all of us who live here
11 know how hard it go to get here, so to have
12 them here is a real honor for us and we
13 certainly appreciate ya'll being here.

14 Last night I went on, because the videos,
15 they, this is the 20th meeting around the State
16 of Florida, but those that know me very well,
17 people that went to high cool with me, I don't
18 wear a coat and tie very often.

19 So I said, what is the dress for these
20 meetings. So I actually went out and watched
21 the video and every video I watched, every
22 member on the Committee was wearing a coat and
23 tie. So it is not a wedding or a funeral, but
24 I am wearing a coat and tie today.

25 But in talking with Representative

1 Weatherford, who I was elected in 2006, along
2 with Will, he is a good friend of mine, I said,
3 was the deal here. He said why don't you make
4 a motion.

5 So I would like to make a motion now that
6 we waive the rules and allow the members to not
7 wear their neckties today.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Without objection, so
9 ordered. And if there are any members of the
10 statewide press who are here or who are
11 listening, let it be known that this was a
12 bi-partisan decision and a bi-cameral decision.

13 Well, we thank you very much, Leader, and
14 thanks for welcoming us to your community where
15 you have served with great distinction for many
16 years.

17 And I will tell all of you that while we
18 hear often about the ranker in Washington,
19 there are certainly sharp philosophical
20 disagreements, disagreements on principle that
21 occur in Tallahassee.

22 That is the way the framers of our
23 Constitution set it up, but there is tremendous
24 respect and affection for Ron Saunders and he
25 is an extraordinarily Legislator and a great

1 leader for the State of Florida.

2 REPRESENTATIVE SAUNDERS: So I hope you
3 will vote for my map.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Ladies and gentlemen, were
5 are pleased to be joined today as the Leader
6 indicated, by a number of members of the
7 Florida House of Representatives and the
8 Florida Senate.

9 I will tell you that when we indicated
10 that we would be having a hearing in Key West
11 all of a sudden that was not viewed as hard
12 duty or hazardous duty, but there were people
13 on our committees who made sure that they could
14 come here and hear your views, because your
15 views matter as much as those in Pensacola, in
16 my part of the state, where we began on
17 June 20th.

18 But with your permission, Mr. Speaker, I
19 would like to ask each of the members who are
20 here today if they would briefly introduce
21 themselves and indicate the part of the state
22 that they are from so that -- well, so that you
23 will know who is talking to you and who you are
24 talking to.

25 And we will begin with the former

1 President of the Florida Senate, Senator Gwen
2 Margolis, Madam President.

3 SENATOR MARGOLIS: I am delighted to be
4 with you today and listen to your comments
5 about redistricting in the state of Florida,
6 delighted to be in Key West.

7 This was a stop I wouldn't miss. So thank
8 you for coming today and thank you for
9 expressing your opinions.

10 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Thank you. My name
11 is Representative Peter Nehr. I am in the
12 Tampa Bay area, specifically Tarpon Springs and
13 Palm Harbor, District 48 and I am also
14 delighted to be here, thank you.

15 SENATOR LATVALA: I am Jay Latvala. I
16 represent the 16th Senatorial District and I
17 live in Clearwater.

18 SENATOR BRANNON: I am State Senator Oscar
19 Brannon and I represent the north central area
20 of Miami-Dade County, and if you will look, pan
21 to the camera right down there you will see
22 State Representative Rob Schenck.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WORKMAN: Representative
24 Ritch Workman from Brevard.

25 REPRESENTATIVE BRODEUR: Representative

1 Jason Brodeur from the 33rd District,
2 representing parts of Seminole, Orange and
3 Volusia Counties.

4 REPRESENTATIVE JENNE: Hi, State
5 Representative Evan Jenne, District 100 in
6 southeast Broward County and thank you all for
7 having us here.

8 REPRESENTATIVE CRISAFULLI: Good
9 afternoon, Steve Crisafulli, House District 32
10 out of Brevard and east Orange County.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PLAKON: Scott Plakon,
12 Florida House District 37, it is good to be
13 here tonight and I was smart enough to marry a
14 conch, the former Suzie Rushing, Key West 1979,
15 good to be here.

16 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: Representative Clay
17 Ford from Pensacola 's District 3, and I drove
18 16 hours to get here. So I hope our input
19 tonight is going to be worth that drive, and I
20 am sure it will, thank you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE DIAZ: Hi, Jose Diaz from
22 District 115 in Miami, which goes from Fountain
23 Blue through Cutler Bay.

24 REPRESENTATIVE NUNEZ: Good afternoon,
25 Jeanette Nuñez, from House District 112, which

1 represents portions of Dade, Broward and
2 Collier County.

3 REPRESENTATIVE GOODSON: Good afternoon,
4 Tom Goodson, representing House District 29
5 from north Brevard through St. Lucie County,
6 the St. Lucie County line, Vero Beach, thank
7 you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good afternoon
9 everyone, I am John Patrick Julien,
10 representing House District 104, which is in
11 the northeastern parts of Miami-Dade County.
12 It is a pleasure to be here.

13 I might as well call this my second home,
14 because we are always down here anyway, but
15 looking forward to hearing what you all have to
16 say.

17 REPRESENTATIVE GARCIA: Thanks, Luis
18 Garcia, Senate District 40, northwest Dade
19 County.

20 SENATIR GARDINER: Andy Gardiner, District
21 9 out of the Orlando central Florida area.

22 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Dwayne Taylor from
23 Volusia County. I represent House District 27
24 and I am glad to be here at Key Saunders -- I
25 mean, Key West, I am sorry.

1 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good afternoon, I am
2 Betty Reed from Tampa, Florida. I represent
3 the eastern part of Hillsborough County and
4 some of the southern part of Hillsborough
5 County. I am happy to be here. This is my
6 first trip and it is beautiful.

7 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good
8 afternoon, I am state Representative Gwyndolen
9 Clarke-Reed, representing House District 92,
10 and for eight years in September, I always came
11 here as a local government official.

12 So I am so happy to be able to come back
13 now as a state Representative. I represent the
14 northeast part of Broward County, seven cities,
15 starting in Deerfield Beach and going all of
16 the way down to Ft. Lauderdale, out to north
17 Lauderdale and a little bit of Tamarac. Thank
18 you. Happy to see you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good afternoon, I
20 am State Representative Hazelle Rogers. I
21 represent eight cities in Broward County, one
22 of the most diverse counties in your state with
23 approximately 1.8 million residents.

24 My eight cities are Lauderhill, Lauderdale
25 Lakes, North Lauderdale, Oakland Park,

1 Plantation, Tamarac, Margate.

2 It is good to be here to listen to you.

3 Thank you for being here.

4 REPRESENTATIVE CANNON: I have been
5 introduced, but I want to introduce our host.
6 As you know, we are here on the campus of
7 Florida Keys Community College.

8 In the audience we have our President of
9 the college, Dr. Larry Tyree, and we also have
10 a couple of our Trustees here. I will mention
11 them both, Republicans and constituents, they
12 are very good friends of mine. We have Ed
13 Scales here, who was our Speaker's roommate in
14 college, the House members, Ed Scales, and we
15 have the State Republican Committee Woman from
16 Monroe County, Anne O'Bannon.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: And I am
18 Representative Steve Precourt, also from the
19 west side of Orlando, right in the center of
20 the state.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: If everyone has had the
22 opportunity to be introduced I want to join
23 Representative Saunders in thanking Florida
24 Keys Community College and Dr. Tyree for
25 allowing us to use this wonderful facility.

1 Thank you all for being here, especially
2 those of you who have come to share your
3 comments and your recommendations to help shape
4 Congressional Senate and House Districts for
5 the next decade.

6 My name is Don Gaetz. I am a Senator from
7 the panhandle of Florida, northwest Florida,
8 the northwest Florida Gulf Coast from Pensacola
9 to east of Panama City is my district.

10 And along with my House colleague, Will
11 Weatherford, to my immediate left,
12 Representative Weatherford is the incoming
13 Speaker of the House of Representatives and
14 pleased to be joined by him in chairing today's
15 meeting which is being webcast statewide by the
16 Florida Channel over the Internet.

17 Our sole purpose today is to hear from you
18 about how you believe the legal standards, all
19 of the legal standards, Amendments 5 and 6, but
20 also the Federal requirements and Federal Court
21 cases, how all of the legal standards governing
22 redistricting should be applied in your
23 community.

24 You don't have to be a legal expert to
25 comment. You can just tell us about your

1 community and your part of the state and what
2 makes sense so that you are represented in
3 Washington and Tallahassee fairly, equitably
4 and sensibly.

5 Our procedures today are simple but
6 important. It is important that you sign in so
7 that we can create an accurate public record of
8 all attendees, and also you may opt to join our
9 e-mail list so that we can keep you informed
10 about how the redistricting process is moving
11 forward.

12 If you have not signed in, please raise
13 your hand and we will give you one of these
14 attendance cards. If you have not signed in,
15 raise your hand and one of our professional
16 staff will come by and get you to sign an
17 attendance card.

18 It is the same card that you would sign if
19 you wish to speak, whether you want to
20 participate by speaking or participate by
21 listening to your friends and neighbors, we
22 would like you to sign in if you would.

23 Before we begin the Chair will recognize
24 the Speaker Designate, Representative
25 Weatherford, to explain how today's hearing

1 fits into the redistricting process.

2 Mr. Speaker.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
4 very much, Mr. Chairman. Make sure that is on
5 there. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman,
6 again, my name is Will Weatherford, and my
7 district is in Pasco County, which is just
8 north of Tampa and very happy to be here today.

9 We had a beautiful drive in driving
10 through the Keys and it has been a great day
11 and we are looking forward to hearing from your
12 comments this afternoon.

13 One thing that is important, I will try to
14 be brief, but it is important that we walk
15 through at every hearing to give everyone kind
16 of an understanding of where we are in the
17 redistricting process and what we are doing
18 here today and what we hope we will hear from
19 you in the public comment portion.

20 Every ten years the Legislature is
21 required by our Constitution to redistrict the
22 state based on increases, decreases and
23 movements in population.

24 Because Florida has grown dramatic over
25 the last ten years, we are actually picking up

1 two Congressional Seats. So were are now going
2 from 25 Congressional Seats to 27 Congressional
3 Seats.

4 Because some parts of our state have
5 increased or decreased disproportionately, many
6 State or House Districts will change, either
7 adding or gaining in population.

8 When redistricting is completed
9 Congressional Districts must be equal in
10 population and contain 696,435 people. The 40
11 Senate Districts must also be nearly equal at
12 about 470,000 people, and our 120 House
13 Districts must also be nearly equal at 156,700
14 people.

15 Now, for the approximate 73,000 residents
16 of Monroe County and the Florida Keys,
17 redistricting has unique impacts, and I will
18 tell you why.

19 Because of its unique location and the
20 fact that the county's population is less than
21 the size of a complete district, the question
22 for Monroe County can be characterized as which
23 community does Monroe County want to be joined
24 with for its State Legislative and
25 Congressional Districts.

1 In addition to that, Monroe County is one
2 of Florida's five counties that is covered
3 under Section V of the Florida -- of the
4 Federal Voting Rights Act, meaning that we must
5 consider how Monroe County's political lines
6 will impact the ability of minority communities
7 to elect a candidate of their choice.

8 Now, we have displays on the outside of
9 this room that show the current boundaries and
10 the districts, I am sorry, at the very front of
11 this room, that show the current districts as
12 they stand today, both the Florida House,
13 Florida Senate and the Congressional Districts.

14 Equality in representation is not the only
15 legal requirement that redistricting plans must
16 meet.

17 It is important to everybody to understand
18 that the laws and important court cases
19 governing redistricting are explained in detail
20 on the brochure that people handed out when you
21 first came in.

22 And in fact, if you did not get one of
23 those Redistricting 2012 brochures, if you will
24 raise your hand we will make sure that you get
25 one right now.

1 Our Redistricting 2012 brochure summarizes
2 Federal and State laws and outlines the topics
3 that we hope we will hear from you today about.

4 If you did not get a copy when you came
5 in, as I stated earlier, please raise your hand
6 and keep it up and we will get it to you.

7 The brochure -- I am sorry, before and
8 during this hearing Senate and House
9 professional staff are available to walk
10 through with you how to draw actual maps, and
11 recommendations from citizens and groups of
12 citizens will be made publicly available as
13 soon as we get them.

14 And in fact, as of this morning we have
15 over 32 public submissions of partial or
16 complete maps and approximately 110 written
17 ideas for maps that are all available on the
18 web.

19 In fact, in this week, the meetings that
20 we have had in Stuart, Boca Raton, Davie and
21 Miami, Florida residents have completed new
22 maps for submission right there at the tables
23 that are outside of this building.

24 And so we would hope that on your way out
25 you would walk through there and talk to our

1 staff and if you have are interested in drawing
2 maps and getting involved in that process and
3 submitting them to us, we would certainly
4 encourage that.

5 The submission of the proposed maps that
6 make sense for your community is the single
7 most effective way that you can communicate and
8 participate in the redistricting process.

9 Our intent is to use the recommendations
10 made at these 26 hearings and through our
11 Internet sites as the basis for developing one
12 or more options for our district maps.

13 We will discuss those options in open
14 public meetings before any votes are taken,
15 even in committee.

16 In other words, what we are literally
17 saying is, if you look at those maps outside of
18 this room, the ones that have actually been
19 submitted to the Legislature by Florida
20 residents, we are literally starting the
21 legislative process with those maps and other
22 suggestions from people in the public just like
23 you.

24 So if you want to know where we are
25 beginning our deliberations, it is with those

1 public submissions and the testimony from the
2 meetings that we have had so far.

3 Throughout the process we will continue to
4 solicit your additional public comments so that
5 the proposed maps can mature throughout the
6 process.

7 Whatever the Legislature passes, it is
8 then submitted for judicial review to ensure
9 that the final plans meet every single legal
10 requirement.

11 Because our purpose is to hear from you
12 today, all of the time will now be used to
13 ensure that every member of the public who is
14 here and wishes to speak will have time to
15 present public testimony and to be listened to
16 with respect and without interruption.

17 If, and after every citizen has had their
18 say and there is time remaining on the
19 scheduled adjournment, any member of the
20 Committee may make any statement or any
21 observation.

22 Of course, any member of the Legislature
23 may today or at any time propose a map or a
24 plan to this Committee and we will make it
25 public immediately.

1 Mr. Chairman, I hope that brief
2 description gives a good perspective on the
3 hearing today and I look forward to hearing the
4 public testimony from the citizens here in the
5 Florida Keys. Thank you very much.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
7 We have a number of people who have indicated
8 that they wished to speak.

9 If you would like to speak and came in a
10 little bit late, please raise your hand and a
11 member of our staff will get you one of these
12 registration forms so that we will have it and
13 we can call on you.

14 If during the public hearing you become
15 inspired and you feel like you would like to
16 speak, you don't feel as though you have missed
17 your chance.

18 You can raise your hand and a member of
19 our staff will get you a slip of paper. We
20 will call on you. We want to make sure that
21 everyone who is here tonight will have the
22 opportunity to share their views with the House
23 and Senate Committees.

24 We have Pam Martin as our first speaker,
25 and Ms. Martin, if you would come down right

1 there by the microphone so that everyone can
2 hear you, we would be grateful.

3 Our next speaker will be Ed Scales and
4 following Ed Scales, Terry Griffs, and if they
5 will be on deck and ready to come forward.

6 Ms. Martin, thank you for taking time from
7 your day and we are anxious to hear your
8 testimony.

9 MS. MARTIN: Thank you. I am Pam Martin
10 from the upper Keys. I want to thank you all
11 for being here. The last time ten years ago
12 when I testified at the Key Largo library there
13 was just a very few of you.

14 One of the things I would like to ask is
15 why the Legislature prepares, wouldn't prepare
16 the maps earlier, debate them in the fall and
17 pass them during the first week of session.

18 It has been reported the Legislature, you
19 all, plan to finalize district maps at the end
20 of the session in March.

21 By law the courts and the Department of
22 Justice have more than 90 days after passage to
23 review the maps.

24 Under the present timeline it would be
25 cutting it very close before the June 8th, 2012

1 deadline for candidates to file their papers to
2 run.

3 Florida maps will be approved later than
4 almost every other state in the nation.
5 Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana,
6 Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi,
7 Nebraska, Nevada and Oklahoma have either
8 already completed or almost completed their
9 redistricting.

10 Your Legislature's own attorney says it
11 will cause massive voter confusion. Election
12 Supervisors will have insufficient time to
13 prepare for the election.

14 Challengers or new candidates will have
15 little if any time to mount campaigns and
16 voters will be voting for candidates they have
17 little opportunity to get to know.

18 The Constitution requires you to redraw
19 the districts during our 2012 regular session,
20 but you could debate and pass maps during the
21 first week of session.

22 You could hold interim Committee meetings
23 from September through December, and then you
24 could present the maps, allow public comment
25 and prepare final plans to submit to the full

1 House and Senate before the legislation
2 convenes.

3 Then the Legislator could bring the maps
4 to the floor and the first order of business,
5 voting on them by the end of the session's
6 first week, that would be January 13th.

7 This would double the time for review by
8 the courts and the Department of Justice
9 creating a real possibility that maps could be
10 finally approved before qualifying and allow
11 election officials ample time to prepare.

12 Inserting as what a district will look
13 like helps incumbents because incumbents are
14 already known to the voters and can raise money
15 and challengers are reluctant to throw their
16 hat in the ring.

17 The current timeline is designed as an
18 incumbent protection plan, and, you know, we
19 are here for getting the best Representatives
20 that we can to do the best job for Florida.

21 So we would like to ask why the
22 Legislature is spending money to oppose the
23 will of the constituents as expressed when
24 63 percent voted for the fair district
25 standards.

1 The Legislature doesn't want to comply
2 with fair district standards so it spent over
3 that million dollars of taxpayer money hiring
4 attorneys to fight them and to set aside
5 30 million for court battles.

6 You tried many ways to stop fair
7 districts, but it didn't work, and the citizens
8 passed it.

9 Please stop using our taxpayer dollars to
10 attack and invalidate the provisions of our
11 State Constitution that was supported by
12 63 percent of Florida voters.

13 This wastes money. At this time you are
14 spending money while teachers are being fired,
15 social services are being cut and not a single
16 job is being created, yet the House and Senate
17 are putting upwards of \$30 million aside so
18 they can try to avoid fair district standards
19 and promote their version in redistricting.

20 You know, this, and you joined in a
21 lawsuit to seek to clarify. Well, that excuse
22 doesn't fly to the voters. Politicfact and the
23 Orlando Sentinel rate the denials of spending
24 public money to avoid fair districts false.

25 The Legislature should be working to

1 uphold the constitutional provision placed here
2 by almost two-thirds of the electoral last
3 November.

4 Stop -- instead, stop spending the money
5 to protect your own seats. So we ask, where
6 are the maps? Why won't the Legislature
7 provide at least some sample maps, not the ones
8 that we the audience have done there.

9 You say that in order to do the maps you
10 must hear from the citizens about what they
11 want them to look like.

12 Well, you are asking non expert citizens
13 to comment in a vacuum and to draw the first
14 maps. The Legislature has the necessary data
15 to draw the district maps since March, and over
16 four months since not a single map drawn by any
17 Legislator has been revealed to the public.

18 So while you have created the My District
19 Builder, and I worked with that a little today,
20 to have the public draw their own maps, the
21 system does not provide the actual real input
22 that we need to look at compactness and other
23 data.

24 It is intended to make us feel good about
25 doing that, but yet you are going to use

1 consultants and you are not going to be looking
2 for very much from public input when you will
3 be doing those.

4 Without the maps to comment on, the public
5 does not have a real opportunity to really make
6 meaningful comment on the maps, and
7 unfortunately, the map, the real mapping will
8 be done away from the public eye and without
9 meaningful public input in Tallahassee, where
10 the mass, the majority of us don't live.

11 It takes me nine and-a-half hours speeding
12 in the middle of the night to get to
13 Tallahassee.

14 Okay, so we really need to go ahead and
15 have that comment period where people can
16 actually do it. How can citizens hundreds of
17 miles from Tallahassee review, analyze and
18 comment on complicated statewide maps in two or
19 three days?

20 So it is pretty obvious what has been
21 trying to happen. No maps, pushing the time
22 limits, lawsuits are probably going to follow,
23 and it is going to be hard for candidates to
24 run.

25 The public isn't falling for it. We

1 passed Fair Districts because we want fair
2 districts. You know, it has always been
3 America has been about equal opportunity, have
4 a chance, balance of power, and we would like
5 you to honor the constituents what they voted
6 for.

7 Thank you very much for coming and
8 visiting us. Please tip our waiters and
9 waitresses very well, okay, and give the bag
10 boys a lot of dollars and spend a lot of money
11 in town. We could use it. Thank you.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and Ms. Martin,
13 I hope you can stay for the whole hearing
14 because we are going to let every member of the
15 public who wants to speak, speak, then we are
16 going to turn to members of the Committee for
17 any observations they might have, and then
18 Speaker Weatherford is making a list.

19 There were a number of specific expressed
20 and implied questions in your testimony, and
21 you will hear answers to those and all of the
22 members of the audience will before you leave
23 today, if you could stay for the whole hearing.

24 MS. MARTIN: I will.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thanks so much,

1 Ms. Martin. A great way to start out. Our
2 next speaker will be Ed Scales.

3 MR. SCALES: Good afternoon, I am Ed
4 Scales and I have been a resident of the
5 Florida Keys since 1998, and for full
6 disclosure, I am an attorney and I am
7 affiliated with the Gray Robinson Law Firm
8 which is the counsel for the House of
9 Representatives for redistricting.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: You may sit down then.

11 MR. SCALES: But I am not here today on
12 behalf of anybody, except myself. First of
13 all, welcome to the Florida Keys, and more
14 particularly, welcome to Florida Keys Community
15 College.

16 I know this is not a meeting about higher
17 education, but as a Trustee of our Community
18 College I would be remiss if I didn't take this
19 opportunity to thank you so much for your
20 support of higher education, and especially
21 funding are to Florida's state colleges.

22 In particular, thank you for funding the
23 capital improvement on our campus, the state of
24 the Art Marine Propulsion Building which will
25 provide practical job training and practical

1 research for thousands of residents, not only
2 in the Keys, but throughout the state of
3 Florida.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: And Ed, we appreciate the
5 thanks, but if you could bring it around to
6 redistricting, we would be grateful.

7 MR. SCALES: I will. I will. Had I not
8 mentioned the Community College though the
9 President would have shot me in the head.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: There you go.

11 MR. SCALES: With regard to redistricting,
12 I want to thank the Legislature for providing
13 this open and transparent process and to give
14 Florida citizens the opportunity to know how we
15 feel about redistricting and how we should be
16 represented in the Florida Senate, the Florida
17 House and the United States Congress.

18 As you are no doubt aware, Monroe County
19 and the Florida Keys are different than just
20 about any other area in the state. If you
21 don't believe that, I challenge you to walk on
22 Duval Street tonight at 2:00 a.m. and you will
23 realize that we are fundamentally different
24 than most places in the state of Florida.

25 And you will recognize that difference by

1 designating not only Key West, but Monroe
2 County as an area of critical state concern.

3 You have recognized our unique
4 significance to the entire state, our historic
5 cites, our proximity to the largest coral reef
6 in North America, our unparalleled fishing,
7 diving and snorkeling opportunities and our
8 very sensitive and fragile ecosystem.

9 You have also recognized our unique
10 challenges, our goal for affordable housing,
11 our staggering windstorm insurance, our
12 hurricane --

13 SENATOR GAETZ: We got to get it back to
14 redistricting. Other people wants to speak,
15 too.

16 MR. SCALES: Against -- against this back
17 drop, please recognize that the Florida Keys
18 need a cohesive, single Representative in the
19 House and the Senate and the United States
20 Congress.

21 Our geography is not compact as the new
22 requirements outline, but our issues are unique
23 and that is why we need the Keys to stay
24 together in a single House District, a single
25 Senate District and a single Congressional

1 District.

2 And so I would urge you that in drawing
3 the maps, please keep the Florida Keys together
4 and not split them up.

5 Thank you very much for your time.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
7 Mr. Scales. Our next speaker is Terry Griffs,
8 if I have that correct, and then following
9 Terry Griffs, Michael Berman from the ACLU.

10 Terry, are you here? I am sorry, you are
11 not going to speak?

12 Thank you very much for being here in any
13 case, and if you have any written testimony we
14 would be happy to take that into the record and
15 share it with all of the Committee members.

16 Michael Berman from the ACLU.

17 Mr. Berman, thank you for being here and
18 you are recognized, sir.

19 MR. BERMAN: I am Dr. Michael Berman, Key
20 west, and actually, I don't think I actually
21 registered for this as a member of the ACLU.
22 It has nothing to do with what I am here to say
23 today.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: It says so right here on
25 your thing. It says representing ACLU,

1 Florida. If you are not, I apologize.

2 MR. BERMAN: I actually never said that,
3 but that is okay, I am a proud member of the
4 ACLU. I am sure many of you on the panel are.

5 I only have a few things to say. Florida
6 implemented the Fair Districts Amendments
7 overwhelmingly this past November.

8 The new rules mean that you can't make a
9 district to favor any political party. I am
10 troubled that so many of you, of our
11 Legislators, opposed, fought and continue to
12 fight these voter approved fair district rules.

13 What steps are you going to take to make
14 sure the new redistricting rules that are now a
15 part of our Constitution are followed?

16 It is an insult for the -- to the
17 democratic process for you to ignore and
18 continue to fight the results of an election
19 just because you disagree with the outcome.

20 The Legislature has spent already over a
21 million dollars and has put aside \$30 million
22 to fight the overwhelmingly approved Fair
23 District Amendments.

24 Furthermore, this process today and these
25 hearings are very troubling. The Legislature

1 has invited the public to comment but gives us
2 nothing to comment upon.

3 Why does it take you so long to develop
4 the maps of the new House, the Senate and
5 congressional Districts? You have had the
6 information from the census for months.

7 If anyone of us can use the Internet to
8 create a map, why can't you do it? After all,
9 we are not the experts. You have consultants.

10 This isn't really a conversation. You
11 have not said anything and you have given us
12 nothing to talk about.

13 My understanding is the final outlines of
14 the new districts will be approved just prior
15 to the next election, giving the incumbents an
16 overwhelming advantage.

17 If I want to run for office, when will I
18 know what district I am in? Thank you.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: And Dr. Berman, thanks for
20 your testimony and I hope you can stay until
21 the end of the hearing because I think you will
22 get some helpful information in answer to your
23 comments and questions.

24 Robert, is it Cintron?

25 MR. CINTRON: Yes, sir.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Cintron, you are next,
2 and following Mr. Cintron, Ian Whitney who
3 writes here that he represents the Monroe
4 County Democratic Executive Committee.

5 Mr. Cintron, thank you for coming, and we
6 look forward to your testimony.

7 MR. CINTRON: Thank you, sir, and thank
8 you for being here. My name is Robert Cintron.
9 I live and work in Key West. I grew up in Key
10 West.

11 I don't represent anyone but myself here
12 today, and I want you to know that I have been
13 a Republican since 1972, when I first was able
14 to vote, and I have always been a Republican.

15 But as a Republican I do not expect my
16 party to carve up our state in such a way that
17 would favor the Republicans over the Democrats,
18 favor incumbents over other folks.

19 I expect you to draw lines that are fair
20 and representative of the demographics of the
21 districts that you, for the lines that you are
22 going to draw.

23 Many of my friends and colleagues have
24 said and I have read that this, these
25 proceedings are nothing more than a horse and

1 pony show, and that you are just going through
2 the motions to make it appear that this is a
3 fair process.

4 I don't accept that. The reason I don't
5 accept that is that hundreds of thousands of
6 women and men died to preserve our democracy
7 and they deserve that you all treat this
8 process with the utmost respect, and in my
9 estimation, what you are doing is probably the
10 most fundamental thing that you can do to
11 preserve this democracy, because if people
12 believe that districts are being drawn to favor
13 parties or to ensure that an incumbent is
14 re-elected, then you are just going to further
15 damage an already very damaged perception that
16 people have of our democracy.

17 And I just want to share with you one
18 story that, an actual story that I was a part
19 of about ten years ago.

20 A very good friend of mine who happens to
21 be in this room decided to run for a statewide
22 office, and I met with a friend of mine who is
23 in the Florida Legislature who was on Key West
24 on vacation and I explained to him that this
25 friend of mine was running for this office, and

1 he laughed and he told me that this friend of
2 mine had absolutely no prospect of winning the
3 election.

4 And I asked him why, and he said because
5 this district was drawn in such a manner that
6 only a certain type or class of person could be
7 elected.

8 And it turns out, unfortunately for my
9 friend, that he lost the election, and that
10 didn't set very well with me, because it just
11 doesn't seem right that gerrymandering is used
12 to protect seats, to favor incumbents and to
13 help parties maintain their control of the
14 Legislature and the Senate and the Congress.

15 As you all know, the United States Supreme
16 Court has said many, many times that you cannot
17 draw district lines based upon political
18 considerations such as those.

19 And I would urge you to please, make a
20 difference and demonstrate to the people of
21 this state that you are going to do it right
22 this time and that you are going to draw lines
23 that are fair and are an accurate reflection of
24 the demographics of the community.

25 And I once again thank you for the

1 opportunity to speak.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
3 Mr. Cintron. Very excellent testimony.

4 Next, Ian Whitney with the Monroe County
5 Democratic Executive Committee, and then
6 following Mr. Whitney, Phillip Schaeffer with
7 the Monroe County Democratic Executive
8 Committee and then Constance Gilbert is next
9 after that.

10 Mr. Whitney, thank you for coming and we
11 are delighted to have your testimony.

12 MR. WHITNEY: Yes, thank you all for
13 coming down to Key West. My name is Ian
14 Whitney. I am the Democratic State Committee
15 man for the Florida Keys.

16 I would like to just have a disclaimer
17 first that I would probably say this if
18 Democrats controlled the Legislature and were
19 running this meeting right now, because I think
20 that it would apply.

21 I am somewhat skeptical that public input
22 is going to really play that much of a role in
23 this process, because in 2010, I think that the
24 public made their position on redistricting
25 extremely clear by passing Amendments 5 and 6.

1 It is -- one distinction that Key West has
2 other than key lime pie and being a really
3 popular tourist destination, is that we are
4 about as far away from Tallahassee as you can
5 get in the state of Florida, and people down
6 here just like all across the state think that
7 Tallahassee is broken.

8 Not because good people aren't sent there,
9 but because the process is so rigged and the
10 way that the districts are set up is so rigged
11 that in many districts across the state
12 elections turned out to be more formality than
13 actually an in-depth campaigns of people
14 competing to win office based on their merits.

15 One thing that I would like to see and
16 simple, I guess this is my comment. If you
17 follow the law, if you follow what the
18 amendments say and speed up the process so that
19 we know what these districts are further out
20 before qualifying so that good candidates can
21 step up and run, then we will have a
22 Legislature that is more representative of the
23 people of this state. Thank you.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
25 Mr. Whitney, and next, Phillip Schaeffer, and

1 following Phillip Schaeffer, Constance Gilbert
2 with the Key West National Organization for
3 Women.

4 Mr. Schaeffer, thank you for coming and we
5 look forward to what you have to share with the
6 Committee.

7 MR. SCHAEFFER: Thank you. I want to join
8 with Representative Saunders, I am Chairman of
9 the Monroe County Democratic Executive
10 Committee and I want to share his welcome to
11 this distinguished group of visitors to the
12 Florida Keys. And to follow on Pam Martin's
13 suggestion, please tip on the high end.

14 My statement actually is simple. I could
15 reiterate the comments that you have heard
16 already, but I am not going do.

17 I would simply ask that you do what you
18 have been sworn to do, and that is follow the
19 Constitution of the State of Florida.

20 That Constitution has been amended through
21 Amendments 5 and 6 with the redistricting
22 guidelines contained therein. The voters
23 overwhelmingly voted for that. It is now part
24 of the State Constitution.

25 I hope when you get back to Tallahassee

1 you will address this issue, promptly, fairly
2 and equitably and get the maps drawn. We will
3 be watching. Thank you.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
5 Mr. Schaeffer, for your testimony.

6 Next is Constance Gilbert, ready, and then
7 following Ms. Gilbert, and I apologize if I
8 butcher this name, Ty Symroski.

9 MS. GILBERT: Perfect.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Gilbert, thank you for
11 coming and the floor is yours.

12 MS. GILBERT: Thank you, sir. I welcome
13 all of you to Key West. I am -- I was brought
14 here first in 1944, which is before most of you
15 were born.

16 I haven't lived here non stop since then,
17 but I have a good deal of experience in the
18 last 17 or 18 years, and also in the 60s when I
19 taught at Miami-Dade then Jr. College, now
20 Community College, and brought my creative
21 writing students down to Key West for field
22 trips.

23 I am thrilled that you are here,
24 especially those of you who haven't visited us
25 before, because we are a very, very lovely

1 place to spend some time.

2 Unfortunately, beyond the positive affects
3 of showing ourselves off to those of you who
4 have never been here before, I am afraid I have
5 not been given reason to have faith in the
6 process that we are now a part of.

7 The National Organization for Women in
8 Florida were very early and active supporters
9 of our Amendments 5 and 6. We worked in full
10 faith that the Legislature would not, in fact,
11 work against what the will of the voters had
12 proven itself to be.

13 It is very positive that you are here, but
14 I am reminded that gerrymandering is
15 manipulation, and it is discrimination, no
16 matter which way you cut it. That I am small
17 and female and right, mostly, and Jewish, is no
18 reason to believe that I can't vote for someone
19 who is brown and Christian and male.

20 Leave me to decide, even if in political
21 parties, I hate to admit it in this company,
22 but I don't vote a straight ticket. I try very
23 hard to vote for the best possible candidate.

24 Please respect my intelligence. A very
25 nice and intelligent gentleman from Key West

1 named Chris Belland, writes a column in the Key
2 West Citizen, and a couple of times over the
3 last months he has pointed out that statesmen
4 look forward to the next generation.
5 Politicians look forward to the next election.

6 It is up to you to prove my discomfort
7 wrong. I hope you will. Thank you very much.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
9 Ms. Gilbert, for your testimony.

10 Ty, Ty Symroski, if I got that right.

11 MR. SYMROSKI: Very.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Then Kimberly Sloan, who
13 writes here that she represents the ACLU.
14 Mr. Symroski.

15 MR. SYMROSKI: Yes, thank you very much
16 for coming here. My name is Ty Symroski and I
17 am a resident of Key West, and again, thank you
18 for, ladies and gentlemen of our government to
19 come here. It is great to see the government
20 can make a house call once in a while. So
21 thank you very much for coming here.

22 I would like to reiterate both the
23 comments of Ed Scales, as well as Robert
24 Cintron, to recognize, as you are looking at
25 these boundaries, to recognize that the Florida

1 Keys have been designated as an area of
2 critical state concern.

3 This entails a great deal of
4 responsibility and partnership with the state
5 to administer and address these very unique
6 issues that we have down here.

7 These issues include the endangered
8 species that we have down here. Its very
9 strange aspects of affordable housing, and, of
10 course, certain --

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Symroski, to make it
12 more comfortable, President Margolis suggests
13 that maybe you manipulate the microphone so you
14 don't have to bend over.

15 MR. SYMROSKI: Thank you, thank you very
16 much.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: She is a nice lady. She
18 is thinking of your best interest.

19 MR. SYMROSKI: Thank you very much. So we
20 need a -- and we have a very, at this time of
21 the year we are all very aware of hurricane
22 evacuation. So we, as you draw these
23 boundaries I hope you will be aware that we
24 need that cohesive representativeness of
25 interests and the people that are going to be

1 responsible for implementing the area of
2 critical state concern, crafting the local
3 response, and will bear the results of that.

4 So as you draw these boundaries I hope you
5 will recognize that we are unique down here.
6 We have a unique responsibility and we need
7 that cohesiveness to address that and to make
8 sure that we have the best Representative that
9 we can that can speak fully to those issues.

10 So thank you again very much for coming
11 here.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir,
13 for your testimony. Next is Kimberly Sloan
14 here?

15 MS. SLOAN: Yes.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Sloan, representing
17 the ACLU, and then Elissa Bishop-Becker is
18 next, and then Doctor, Reverend Doctor Randolph
19 Becker follows Ms. Bishop-Becker.

20 You are recognized, Ms. Sloan, and thank
21 you for taking time to come and share your
22 views.

23 MS. SLOAN: Thank you, and just so it is
24 clear, I am also with the Democratic Executive
25 Committee, and thank you all for being here and

1 for hearing our comments.

2 One thing I wanted to point out and
3 something that I desperately hope that you all
4 address is why it is at this point we are
5 having an invitation for the public to comment.

6 I mean, that is something that we did
7 already. The people of this state have voted
8 on this. They approved this. We stood out on
9 street corners, we got signatures. We typed
10 our Facebook accounts away.

11 We did everything that we could to get
12 this passed and it is passed, and so why are we
13 still here talking generally about the
14 redistricting issue?

15 Why don't we have maps? Why don't we have
16 something more at this point to talk about?
17 Why is it being stalled? Why do we have
18 attorneys working to fight this?

19 That is from where I sit, what it exactly
20 looks like, that we are fighting the whole
21 redistricting movement. The people of this
22 state have spoken and they said that they don't
23 want gerrymandering. We want more equitable
24 districts. When are we going to see movement
25 in that direction?

1 In addition, I am a government employee,
2 and I have recently had my pay cut by three
3 percent. So why is it that we are funding
4 attorneys millions of dollars in order to go
5 against something that the people of this state
6 have spoken and voted on and said that they
7 wanted, and I want to know why, specifically
8 what steps you all are taking to implement
9 these redistricting amendments. Thank you.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, thank you,
11 Ms. Sloan, and if you can stay until the end of
12 the hearing I think we will be able to provide
13 you with some -- with some background on your
14 questions. Elissa Bishop-Becker. Come on
15 down.

16 MS. BISHOP-BECKER: Hello.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: If you need to adjust the
18 microphone, ma'am, feel free. We are delighted
19 to have your testimony.

20 MS. BISHOP-BECKER: Do you think I do?

21 SENATOR GAETZ: You don't. You are
22 sounding great to us.

23 MS. BISHOP-BECKER: Thank you so much.

24 All right, that is all.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: No, no, no. We are not

1 letting you off that easy.

2 MS. BISHOP-BECKER: Okay, first of all, I
3 want to thank you all for coming here, but I
4 have to tell you, I am a little bit puzzled as
5 to the purpose of this whole process.

6 I heard, I just got here so I didn't hear
7 anybody before me, but I just heard someone say
8 something similar.

9 First of all, we are very happy with our
10 Representative from Key West, but it seems to
11 me like a very strange process and one that I
12 don't really trust.

13 We have already told you, as that woman
14 before me said what we wanted, with -- as
15 expressed by our votes for overwhelming votes
16 for Amendments 5 and 6.

17 And now, and you have joined in a lawsuit
18 as intervenors which is just another word for
19 plaintiff, in a lawsuit to fight Amendments 5
20 and 6 that we voted for, to fight the will of
21 the people, and now you are coming to listen to
22 us to find out what we want.

23 We have already told you what we want. I
24 don't know how I can trust that you are going
25 to listen to us. It seems like a sham to be

1 totally honest.

2 It seems, and the fact that you are using
3 our money to fight against us is just wrong,
4 and really, I have heard the arguments. I have
5 heard the denials. I have heard this is
6 bi-partisan.

7 I really don't care if it is bi-partisan.
8 It is wrong, and that is what I have to say.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for your
10 testimony. And next, Reverend Doctor Randolph
11 Becker and we have just heard from your boss,
12 Reverend, so --

13 REVEREND BECKER: I had better concur.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: I would suggest that you
15 may want to stay within the lines, Pastor.

16 REVEREND BECKER: Yes.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for being here.

18 REVEREND BECKER: Glad to be here, and
19 besides looking at the immediate issues of what
20 is before you, which is the implementation of a
21 referendum that has overwhelmingly passed, the
22 question is how are you going to do that, not
23 are you going to do it.

24 I will tell you what I am looking for. I
25 am looking for a rational, logical algorithm, a

1 model, a systematic model that can be applied
2 within the state, and there are many
3 mathematical models that could be used that
4 have no relationship to any partisan politics.

5 A model that say begins with the four
6 corners and the 11 population centers of the
7 state and using ZIP codes, all of the
8 statistical areas. Maps out new districts
9 based upon the number you want to get to in
10 each district.

11 Doing some model like that that is not
12 based on who wants this territory or who wants
13 that, we could get to a model that could stand
14 for a long period of time, no matter who is in
15 control of the various houses of government,
16 and I don't hear that happening.

17 I am hearing plans being made for how we
18 are going to work all of this out, but there
19 are within higher mathematical operations, ways
20 this could all be figured that would take it
21 out of the political realm, and I think that is
22 what the people asked for, that it is not be a
23 political operation, but rather be a simple
24 statistical, it is actually a geographic
25 operation that could be taken care of by

1 computers easily using already established
2 lines such as ZIP codes.

3 So you wouldn't divide neighborhoods, you
4 wouldn't divide certain areas, but there would
5 logically go together based upon that model and
6 not upon the manipulation of the people.

7 I hope you will find some model that
8 doesn't reflect personality, but rather
9 reflects values. Thank you.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
11 pastor. Now, we have had excellent testimony
12 up to this point, but we have had fewer people
13 sign up to testify at this hearing than at any
14 of the other hearings so far, and I am sure
15 that is not because we lack ideas or opinions
16 or points of view.

17 So if there is anyone else who did not
18 sign up to speak who would like to sign up to
19 speak, we will pause for a moment if anybody
20 else has had the spirit move them.

21 If not we will go to Committee members for
22 their comments and observations and then to
23 Speaker Weatherford. Anybody else that we have
24 missed?

25 Okay, if no one else has any public

1 testimony, let's turn first to members of the
2 House of Representatives Redistricting
3 Committee to ask if any would like to share any
4 observations, make any comments or if they have
5 any plans or proposals to present.

6 Any members?

7 Then let's go to members of the Senate who
8 are here. Any comments or questions? If the
9 spirit moves any of you we may come back to you
10 as well.

11 Speaker Weatherford, thank you for taking
12 notes during the meeting. There were a number
13 of very good questions that were asked and
14 points that were made that call out for
15 information.

16 Daniel Patrick Moynihan, that great
17 Democratic Senator said everyone is entitled to
18 their opinion but not everyone is entitled to
19 their own set of facts.

20 So we are going to try to lay out some
21 information so that at least we may leave here
22 with a similar set of facts.

23 Let me start with a historical analysis
24 that we learned from a member of the Democratic
25 Executive Committee in Alachua County up in

1 Gainesville who also happens to be a teacher.

2 And he testified and explained the history
3 of gerrymandering. I thought it started with
4 the Governor Eldridge Gary of Massachusetts,
5 but according to the testimony we received in
6 Gainesville, it was actually Patrick Henry.

7 Patrick Henry was trying to make sure that
8 James Madison didn't get elected to the
9 Virginia House of Burgesses, and so therefore,
10 he gerrymandered poor James Madison, and as a
11 consequence, all of this got started with, give
12 me liberty or give me death. So it has a -- it
13 has a rich historical precedent.

14 With that, Mr. Speaker, you are
15 recognized.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
17 very much, and as the Chairman and many members
18 of this Committee recognize, when you put a
19 microphone in front of me, the spirit always
20 moves me, and I feel compelled to speak.

21 And so I did very copious notes and I want
22 to thank everybody for taking the opportunity
23 to come out here and to share with us your
24 views and to give us your perspective on
25 redistricting.

1 And there is a couple of things I would
2 like to touch on, Mr. Chairman, if that is
3 okay. I am going to try not to take up too
4 much time and let people get home.

5 The first thing is that we hear a lot of
6 the same comments when we are on the road and
7 when we are going from town to town and county
8 to county and sometimes rumors get into the
9 blood stream, and certain comments continuously
10 get made, although we have pointed out some
11 facts otherwise.

12 And so I wanted to try to fix some of
13 those and I know some folks also have talking
14 points that may not have been amended since
15 some of the facts have come out, so I want to
16 address those as well.

17 The first one of that is the timeline, the
18 issue of the timeline, and people have said
19 that, you know, maybe we should be like
20 Illinois or one of the other seven or eight
21 states that were mentioned earlier.

22 Well, there is a reason that we are not
23 done with redistricting, and it is very simple.
24 The first reason is because we are one of the
25 last states, not the last state but one of the

1 last states to get our census data.

2 We got it back in, I believe it was April
3 or late March, while we were in the middle of
4 session and most states got it much earlier
5 than that.

6 For example, the state of Virginia, the
7 state of Louisiana, the state of Mississippi,
8 they have elections this November. So they got
9 their census data long before we did and drew
10 their maps long before we did, because they had
11 elections in about three and-a-half months,
12 whereas ours aren't until November 12.

13 And so there is a reason other states are
14 ahead of us. I want to make sure no one is
15 misled by that.

16 The other thing is, and I think this is
17 important to point out as well, and that is
18 that if the timeline which was so important
19 which we are now hearing about every hearing
20 that we go to, it would have been nice if the
21 Fair District folks would have put that into
22 the Constitution, because they could have
23 easily added that to the Constitutional
24 Amendments, Amendments 5 and 6 and asked for a
25 specific timeline, because currently the reason

1 we are on the current timeline that we are on
2 is because the Constitution of the State of
3 Florida says we cannot vote for legislative
4 maps until the session in 2012.

5 And ladies and gentlemen, let me tell you
6 what we have done so that we can vote on them
7 as quickly as we possibly can.

8 We normally have session in March of 2012
9 or March of any year, it is actually the first
10 Tuesday of March, and what we did was we moved
11 it up by two months and so we are actually
12 going to meet for session in January, the first
13 week of January just so we can make sure and
14 past maps out as quickly as possible, get them
15 into the courts and good into the process so
16 people can qualify and know the districts that
17 they are running for.

18 So for those who say that we are slowing
19 the process down. There is nothing that could
20 be further from the truth. In fact, we are
21 moving very quickly and we have done so much as
22 to move our session ahead by 60 days.

23 The other thing I want to point out is
24 because of the Constitutional requirement that
25 we can't vote on maps until the session, what

1 we are doing this summer is we are spending the
2 summer months, June, July and August on the
3 road and listening to you, and it would be
4 really easy for me to sit in the Ivory Tower or
5 any member of this Committee to sit in
6 Tallahassee and to try to draw maps for the
7 entire State of Florida, but if you have never
8 been to those communities, if you have never
9 sat across from the citizens eyeball to eyeball
10 and had a chance to hear from them and hear
11 from people like Ed Scales who talk about the
12 uniqueness of the Florida Keys, then we
13 wouldn't really understand what we are doing
14 and what we are drawing.

15 So the reason we are on this tour, the
16 reason we are going to 26 different locations
17 all over the state of Florida, starting in
18 Pensacola and ending here, is just for that
19 reason. So we can see the community you live
20 in, we can understand the uniqueness and the
21 communities of interest, we can understand what
22 you think about your district, about your
23 community, and I think that is why we are doing
24 it the way that we are.

25 The other thing that we have heard a lot

1 about or we hear the same question everywhere
2 we go. There are several people who get up and
3 say, where are the maps, why hasn't the
4 Legislature shown us the maps.

5 And there is a chicken versus the egg
6 debate taking place. If the Legislature would
7 have drawn the maps first and then showed up
8 and said, here is our maps, here are the
9 districts we have drawn for ourselves, what do
10 you think.

11 Most people would have said it was a sham,
12 that clearly the Legislature had already made
13 its decision and that we have already drawn the
14 maps for ourselves and that we are wasting
15 everybody's time and why are we even here.

16 Instead, for the first time since I have
17 been in the Legislature, the Legislature is
18 actually listening first, and we are coming to
19 you first and listening to you before we draw
20 the first line.

21 And frankly, I wish, Mr. Chairman, we
22 would do that on more issues. I think we are
23 usually criticized when we say we have passed
24 bad policy or people accuse us of passing bad
25 policy, it is usually because they say were

1 rushing too quickly.

2 And one thing I can tell you about this
3 process is that we are not rushing, we are
4 being deliberate, but we are also being very
5 sensitive to the timeline that is before us.

6 Another issue that is very important in
7 regards to the maps is that Ellen Freidin, who
8 is the Chairwoman of Fair Districts, she was
9 the woman who was behind the Amendments 5 and
10 6, funded them from the very beginning,
11 supported them, was the face of the entire
12 organization.

13 She testified before a Joint House and
14 Senate Committee in Tallahassee over a year ago
15 and specifically said to us that she would not
16 even attempt to draw the first map until she
17 went and heard from the citizens of the public.

18 She specifically said that, and we agree
19 with Ms. Freidin and we agree with the leader
20 of Fair Districts and that is why we are doing
21 this.

22 The other thing is, when people ask about
23 the maps, there are 32 maps that have already
24 been submitted, most of them are actually out
25 in the foyer there.

1 We hope you look at those. Those are
2 actually the maps that we are looking at.
3 Those are the starting point. We are allowing
4 the citizens of Florida to start this
5 conversation and draw maps and submit maps to
6 us to give us ideas.

7 There was a comment made by a gentleman by
8 Mr. Berman who asked how would -- how would you
9 know as a candidate what seat you are going to
10 be running for with all of the kind of
11 confusion that he had talked about.

12 And I just want to point out and be very
13 clear, there shouldn't be any confusion,
14 because what will happen is, we will go into
15 session, we will pass maps during session. The
16 Attorney General's Office has 15 days to then
17 submit those maps to the Florida Supreme Court.
18 These are the legislative maps.

19 Those maps will go before the Supreme
20 Court and the Supreme Court has 30 days to make
21 a decision and to tell us what they are going
22 to do, approve or what-not, and then it goes to
23 the Department of Justice, and the Justice then
24 has 60 days to make a decision and to pre-clear
25 those maps.

1 And so there is a very clear line and if
2 anyone wants that information, it is on the
3 websites, and if you have that brochure, keep
4 it, go online, study it, it should not be that
5 confusing.

6 There is a very clear way to know what
7 seats you are going to be running in and how to
8 follow the process.

9 The fourth thing, and this has been
10 brought up quite a bit today as well, is in
11 regard to the lawsuits and litigation,
12 Mr. Chairman.

13 This also seems to come up quite a bit and
14 I want to make sure that I clarify a few
15 things.

16 There is litigation that is going on. The
17 Congresswoman from Northeast Florida,
18 Congresswoman, Corrine Brown, a Democrat, and a
19 Republican, Mario Diaz-Balart, from Miami, both
20 filed litigation.

21 That litigation has nothing to do with
22 legislative maps. It has nothing to do with
23 the map of the seat that I am running for. It
24 has nothing to do with the map that Senator
25 Gaetz is running for.

1 It only deals with Congressional maps, and
2 for those who say that the Legislature or there
3 is a lawsuit involved with Legislators fighting
4 against the Constitutional Amendment that deals
5 with legislative maps, it is not true. There
6 is no litigation. That does not exist.

7 There is litigation that is taking place
8 on the Congressional maps and what I will tell
9 you is that myself as Chairman of this
10 Committee and Co-Chair with Senator Don Gaetz,
11 we swear every two years to uphold the
12 Constitution of the United States and of the
13 State of Florida.

14 And that means that we are going to follow
15 Amendments 5 and 6, and we will follow them to
16 the letter of the law and we will make sure
17 that they are upheld and that they are
18 respected. That is our job and we will make
19 sure and do that.

20 Also we hear a lot about that the
21 Legislature has stored away money, \$20 or \$30
22 million to fight these amendments which I just
23 clarified, to fight the amendment.

24 I want to clarify that as well. That is
25 not true. There was an article written about

1 it and it is one of those things that got in
2 the blood stream and so we hear it over and
3 over.

4 There is no \$20 or \$30 million that is
5 dedicated to fighting these lawsuits. It is
6 not true, and frankly, if you don't believe me,
7 you can go to Transparency Florida.gov,
8 Transparency Florida.gov is a website where you
9 can track money that is being spent at the
10 state level in the Legislature.

11 I hope you will follow that. I hope you
12 will look at it and hold me accountable if what
13 I am saying is not true.

14 Mr. Chairman, I also want to point out
15 lastly that any member of this Committee can
16 submit any map or any plan to this Committee or
17 to the Legislature at any time, and as you have
18 stated before, if anyone in the Senate submits
19 a map, you will have it heard in the very first
20 Committee hearing in September, and I think
21 that the Florida House would be willing to do
22 the same.

23 So we encourage members of the public to
24 continue to work with us, follow this process.

25 There is a lot of misinformation out there. If

1 you have questions, please follow up with us.
2 There is many ways to communicate with our
3 offices and please visit our websites and learn
4 more about what we are doing.

5 We are honored to be here today in the
6 beautiful part and unique part of our state. I
7 hope you learned a little bit of something
8 about this process.

9 We have certainly learned a lot about your
10 community and we appreciate your time.

11 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Speaker
13 Weatherford. This is not your last time to
14 have input to this process. Instead, it is
15 your first opportunity.

16 There will be other opportunities as well.
17 There was an individual who asked whether or
18 not there would be votes in the Legislature
19 that would not be in public.

20 The fact is that there won't be and there
21 can't be, it would be a violation of the law
22 and anybody who tried to vote on a matter like
23 this without doing it in a public hearing and
24 first taking public testimony, would be in
25 serious legal trouble and probably lose their

1 jobs.

2 So the other commitment we can make to you
3 is, if after tonight and tomorrow or the next
4 day or the day after that, you have decided
5 that while we did hear some general comments
6 tonight about the process, frankly, we didn't
7 hear too many comments tonight about one of the
8 questions that is really important to the Keys.

9 And that is, as Speaker Weatherford
10 indicated at the beginning, because the Keys
11 doesn't have enough population for a Senate
12 Seat or a Congressional Seat, or a State House
13 Seat, the real question is, what part of South
14 Florida do you believe constitutes a community
15 of interest for you to be attached to for those
16 districts.

17 And so if later an idea comes to you or a
18 proposal comes to you we are very interested.
19 You can contact us online. You can contact us
20 by mail. Leader Saunders is right here in this
21 community. You can contact him face to face
22 and share your views or share your proposals or
23 suggestions.

24 And again, we commit to you that no
25 decision will be made on any map even in the

1 Committee that is not made in public taking
2 public testimony ahead of time with you being
3 able to see how every single member of the
4 Legislature votes.

5 And with that Representative Weatherford
6 moves we rise.

7 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
8 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 64 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 1st day of November, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

MONDAY, AUGUST 29, 2011

4:00 P.M.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY COMMISSION

TAMPA, FLORIDA

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 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you all. The Joint
3 Senate/House Redistricting Hearing is called to
4 order. We are pleased to be joined today by a
5 number of members of the House of
6 Representatives and the Senate who serve on the
7 House Redistricting Committee and the Senate
8 Reapportionment Committee, and in a moment, I
9 will ask them to briefly give their name and
10 the part of the state that they represent so
11 that you will know who you are speaking to.

12 We want to thank Hillsborough County
13 Public Schools and particularly Jefferson High
14 School.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Florida state
16 champs.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, the last year
18 state -- state high school football champions.
19 And Speaker Weatherford just told me they beat
20 his brother's team, so you all can take great
21 pride in that.

22 We want to thank the Hillsborough County
23 Public Schools and Jefferson High School for
24 allowing us to be here today and to use their
25 facility.

1 Thank you all for coming here, especially
2 those of you who have come to share your
3 comments and your recommendations to help shape
4 congressional, Senate and House districts for
5 the next decade.

6 My name is Don Gaetz. I am a State
7 Senator. I represent northwest Florida's Gulf
8 Coast from Pensacola to Panama City, and along
9 with my colleague to my left, State
10 Representative Will Weatherford, who is the
11 Speaker Designate of the Florida House of
12 Representatives, I will be chairing today's
13 meeting, which is being webcast statewide by
14 the Florida Channel over the Internet.

15 And let's now go, if we can, to each
16 member and ask them to indicate their name and
17 indicate what part of the state they represent.
18 Why don't we begin with Senator Joyner.

19 SENATOR JOYNER: Thank you, Senator Gaetz.
20 My name is Arthenia Joyner, I am State Senator,
21 District 18, encompassing portions of
22 Hillsborough, Pinellas and Manatee Counties.

23 SENATOR LATVALA: Hi, I am Jack Latvala.
24 I represent Senate District 16, which is
25 Hillsborough and Pinellas.

1 REPRESENTATIVE BURGIN: Hello, I am State
2 Representative Rachel Burgin, representing the
3 City of Tampa and eastern Hillsborough County,
4 District 56.

5 SENATOR NORMAN: I am Senator Jim Norman,
6 I represent north Hillsborough County and about
7 two-thirds of Pasco County in Senate District
8 12.

9 SENATOR DETERT: Good afternoon. I am
10 Nancy Detert, State Senate District 23. I
11 represent a portion of Manatee, 70 percent of
12 Sarasota County and about 25 percent of
13 Charlotte County.

14 SENATOR STORMS: She is just trying to
15 impress you with math.

16 I am Senator Ronda Storms, and I represent
17 eastern Hillsborough County, I represent a
18 little bit of Polk County and a little bit of
19 Pasco County, Zephyrhills, and if you know
20 where Publix is in Polk County, Wabash, around
21 that area, a little bit around there, and then
22 most of eastern Hillsborough County.

23 SENATOR NEGRON: Joe Negron, I represent
24 the Treasure Coast on the east side of Florida,
25 Martin, St. Lucie, and Palm Beach Counties,

1 also a little bit of Okeechobee as well.

2 REPRESENTATIVE McKEEL: I am Seth McKeel.
3 I represent parts of Polk and Hillsborough
4 Counties. I am not on the redistricting
5 committee, but I Chair the Hillsborough
6 delegation and certainly am interested in the
7 conversation. Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE ALBRITTON: Hi, my name is
9 Ben Albritton. I represent in the Florida
10 House southern Polk, all of Hardee County and
11 northwestern Highlands.

12 REPRESENTATIVE STARGEL: I am
13 Representative Kelli Stargel, I represent north
14 Polk County.

15 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Good afternoon, my
16 name is Dwayne Taylor. I serve in the House of
17 Representatives, House District 27, and that is
18 the other end of I-4 in Volusia County.

19 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good afternoon,
20 John Patrick Julien representing House District
21 104, which is in Miami-Dade County, encompasses
22 North Miami Beach, North Miami, Miami Gardens,
23 Opa-Locka, City of Miami, Hialeah and
24 unincorporated Miami-Dade. It is a pleasure to
25 be here.

1 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thank you. I am
2 Dennis Baxley, serving the Florida House from
3 Ocala and Marion County, thank you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Mike Horner,
5 representing District 79 in central Florida.

6 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Hi, I am Janet
7 Adkins, representing House District 12, which
8 is Nassau, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Union and
9 Duval Counties.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Mack Bernard,
11 State Representative, District 84, West Palm
12 Beach, Florida.

13 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Peter Nehr, State
14 Representative, north Pinellas County and Pasco
15 County.

16 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Daphne Campbell,
17 District 108, Miami-Dade County.

18 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Hazelle Rogers,
19 Representative from Broward County, one of the
20 most diverse counties in the state of Florida,
21 representing approximately 1.8 million people,
22 and it is good to be here, District 94.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Good afternoon.
24 My name is Representative Alan Williams. It is
25 great to be here with my good friend, Gershom

1 Faulkner, I see out there. And I represent the
2 Tallahassee and Gadsden County, and it is great
3 to be here in the birthplace of my father,
4 Leroy Williams, in Tampa.

5 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good
6 afternoon. I am State Representative Gwyndolen
7 Clarke-Reed, representing House District 92,
8 northeast Broward County, representing seven
9 cities: Deerfield Beach, Pompano Beach,
10 Oakland Park, Wilton Manors, Ft. Lauderdale, a
11 little bit of Tamarac and a little bit of North
12 Lauderdale. Thank you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE KIAR: Hello, everybody.
14 My name is Martin Kiar, and I represent
15 District 97 in the Florida House, which is
16 located solely within Broward County. And I
17 have to tell you, this is my first time back to
18 Tampa after taking the Florida Bar exam, and
19 this is a much better experience, so I am
20 happier now. Thank you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE HOLDER: Good afternoon, I
22 am Doug Holder. I represent House District 70,
23 which is all within Sarasota County, south
24 Sarasota County.

25 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: Hello, I am Ed

1 Hooper, representing House District 50, which
2 is central Pinellas County.

3 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good afternoon,
4 I am Chuck Chestnut, House District 23, a
5 portion of Marion County and a portion of
6 Alachua County.

7 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Good afternoon, I
8 am State Representative Jim Frishe from
9 Pinellas County. I represent the beaches on
10 the west edge.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Kathleen
12 Passidomo, House District 76, which is Collier
13 County, City of Naples, Marco Island and
14 Everglades City. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE TRUJILLO: Good afternoon,
16 my name is Carlos Trujillo. I represent
17 District 116, which is West Kendall and
18 southwest Miami-Dade County.

19 REPRESENTATIVE FULLWOOD: Good afternoon,
20 Reggie Fullwood. I represent District 15,
21 Jacksonville, Florida.

22 REPRESENTATIVE HARRISON: Good afternoon,
23 welcome to Tampa. I am Shawn Harrison, I
24 represent northern Hillsborough County, the
25 City of Temple Terrace, Lutz and New Tampa.

1 REPRESENTATIVE SMITH: Hello, Jimmie
2 Smith. I represent District 43, Citrus, Levy
3 and Hernando County.

4 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: Representative Clay
5 Ford from Pensacola. Like Marty Kiar, I lived
6 here about a week while I was prepping for the
7 Florida Bar, and this is a way better
8 experience, I agree with Marty.

9 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good afternoon, my
10 name is Betty Reed, and I represent the eastern
11 part of Hillsborough County. And I thank each
12 one of you for being here today.

13 REPRESENTATIVE CRUZ: Good afternoon, my
14 name is Janet Cruz, and I represent District
15 58, and I want to tell you welcome to District
16 58, because you are sitting in my district.
17 District 58 is here, West Tampa. This is
18 Lincoln Gardens, Carver City, West Tampa, the
19 eastern part of Town and Country and a little
20 piece that runs out into the Busch Gardens
21 area, but thanks for being here today.

22 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Good afternoon, I am
23 Jim Boyd, District 68, which is western Manatee
24 County and northwest Hillsborough County,
25 including the beautiful Egmont Key.

1 REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: Hi, everyone, and
2 thanks for coming. I am State Representative
3 Dana Young, and I represent South Tampa all the
4 way up to Westchase. And looking out here, I
5 see many, many of my constituents, and I am so
6 grateful that you are here to share your views
7 with us, so thanks for coming.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: I thank that -- does that
9 take into account everybody who is here?
10 Representative Richard Corcoran is here.
11 Representative Corcoran, would you wave? We
12 are delighted to have you here as well.

13 Our purpose today, ladies and gentlemen,
14 is to hear from the public about how you
15 believe the legal standards governing
16 redistricting, the state, federal redistricting
17 standards, ought to be applied in your
18 community so that you are ably represented in
19 Washington and Tallahassee fairly, equitably
20 and sensibly.

21 Our procedures today are simple, but
22 important. It is important that you sign in so
23 that we can create an accurate public record of
24 all attendees and speakers, and also you may
25 opt to join our e-mail list so that we can keep

1 you informed about how the redistricting
2 process is proceeding. If you have not signed
3 in, please raise your hand, and a staff member
4 will give you an attendance card. It is the
5 same card if you wish to speak. If when you
6 came in you did not get a chance to sign a
7 card, and you wish to speak, raise your hand,
8 and we will get a card to you, because we don't
9 want to miss your testimony. There is a young
10 lady -- two young ladies up there, and a
11 gentleman in the center, another gentleman
12 about in the middle. If you will just keep
13 your hands up, we promise to get you a card.

14 Before we begin, the Chair recognizes the
15 Speaker Designate of the Florida House,
16 Representative Weatherford, to explain how
17 today's hearing fits into the redistricting
18 process and timeline.

19 Mr. Speaker.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
21 very much, Chairman Gaetz, and we welcome all
22 the members. A great turnout today to hear
23 from folks from Tampa Bay.

24 I want to walk through really quickly,
25 Mr. Chairman, if I could, just the process that

1 we are here to do and what we hope to achieve
2 by the end of this evening.

3 Every ten years, it is required that the
4 Legislature, by our Constitution, to redistrict
5 the state based off of increases, decreases and
6 movements in population. Because Florida has
7 grown more than most states over the last ten
8 years, we have moved up from 25 congressional
9 seats to 27 congressional seats. Because some
10 parts of our state have increased or decreased
11 disproportionately in population, many Senate
12 and House districts will change, either adding
13 or losing in population.

14 When redistricting is completed,
15 congressional districts must equal in
16 population 696,345 people, the 40 Senate
17 districts must be nearly equal and have 470,000
18 people, and our 120 House seats around the
19 state must also be nearly equal at 156,700
20 people.

21 We have had displays up at the front
22 before you came in the room showing the current
23 boundaries -- I guess we have them at the front
24 of this room. We have displays on the front of
25 the room showing the current boundaries of the

1 districts in this part of the state and the
2 number of persons which must be added or
3 subtracted from each state. So feel free at
4 any point during the hearing to walk down there
5 and take a closer look.

6 Equality of representation is not the only
7 legal requirement that redistricting must meet,
8 and that is very important. The laws and the
9 important court cases governing redistricting
10 are explained in detail on the House and Senate
11 websites. Those websites are listed on the
12 "Redistricting 2012" brochure that was
13 available when you came in. Our "Redistricting
14 2012" brochure summarizes both federal and
15 state laws, and it outlines the topics that we
16 hope that you will share with us today. If you
17 did not get a copy of that brochure when you
18 came in, please raise your hand, and we will
19 make sure and get you a copy while you are
20 sitting here this evening. Keep your hand up
21 just like we did with the sign-in sheet,
22 there's a lot of folks, so we will get you that
23 brochure and I will just keep moving.

24 The brochure also lists the House and
25 Senate websites. The websites are packed with

1 information about redistricting in Florida,
2 including explanation of the laws and the
3 important court cases governing redistricting.
4 These two websites are complementary and
5 updated frequently. Visit them both and please
6 check back often as current and new maps come
7 into place and are submitted for your viewing
8 pleasure.

9 The websites also are delivered to your
10 fingertips all of the demographic information
11 that will be used in drawing the districts and
12 the exact same computer programs that
13 legislators and professional staff will use in
14 Tallahassee when we go to draw maps. Any
15 member of the public can participate in
16 building plans or seeing maps submitted by
17 legislators or other citizens.

18 Before, during and after this hearing,
19 Senate and House professional staff are
20 available to show anyone the simple steps in
21 going on-line, building districts and
22 submitting a plan. So when you walk out these
23 doors, we will have staff out there throughout
24 the entire meeting and even after the meeting
25 to help you, show you how to draw maps

1 yourselves.

2 Recommendations from citizens and groups
3 of citizens will be made publicly available
4 immediately, and, in fact, as of this morning,
5 we have had 48 public submissions of partial or
6 complete maps and many other written ideas for
7 maps available on the Web.

8 The submission of these proposed maps that
9 makes sense for your community is the single
10 most effective way for you to participate in
11 the redistricting process. I will say that
12 again. The submission of proposed maps that
13 makes sense for your community is the single
14 most effective way for you to participate in
15 the redistricting process.

16 The schedule under which we are operating
17 is imposed by the State Constitution, and I
18 want to be clear about that. The Constitution
19 does not permit us to act on legislative maps
20 before the second year after the census, and
21 what that means is before 2012. Now, we have
22 accelerated the process as much as we possibly
23 can by moving the session up, which is normally
24 in March, up until the first week of January in
25 2012.

1 It has also been suggested that the
2 Legislature should draw maps first and then ask
3 the public to comment. We believe that puts --
4 I am almost through, ladies and gentlemen. Let
5 me get through. We believe, both Chairman
6 Gaetz and I and many others believe that puts
7 the answer ahead of the question. In fact, a
8 principal author of the Florida's new
9 redistricting standards and the Chairperson for
10 Fair Districts campaign are both on record and
11 in agreement with us that the notion that they
12 would not even attempt to draw maps until they
13 heard from the public first. The lady who
14 actually said that was Ellen Freidin, who was
15 the Chairwoman of Florida districts --
16 Floridafairdistricts.org.

17 Our intent is to use the recommendations
18 made at these hearings today and many around
19 the state and through our Internet sites as the
20 basis for developing one or more options for
21 district maps. We will discuss those options
22 in open public meetings before any votes are
23 taken, even in committee. In other words, what
24 we are literally saying is if you look at those
25 maps outside the room and the 48 other maps

1 that have been submitted to the Legislature,
2 the ones that have actually been submitted by
3 citizens, Florida residents, we are literally
4 starting the legislative process with those
5 maps and other suggestions from the public. So
6 if you want to know where we begin our
7 deliberations tonight, it is with those public
8 submissions and the testimony from meetings
9 just like this. Throughout the process, we
10 will continue to solicit public comment so that
11 the proposed maps can mature with the public's
12 involvement. Whatever the Legislature passes,
13 it is then submitted for judicial review to
14 ensure that the final plans meet every single
15 legal requirement.

16 Because our purpose today is to hear from
17 you, all of the time between now and 8:00 p.m.
18 will be used to ensure that every member of the
19 public who is here and wishes to speak and
20 provide public testimony is given that
21 opportunity and is listened to both
22 respectfully and without interruption or
23 argument.

24 Note that I do anticipate that we will
25 likely take a short break sometime after two

1 hours. So sometime around 6:00 p.m., we will
2 probably break for a few minutes.

3 If after every citizen has had his or her
4 say, and there is time remaining before our
5 scheduled adjournment, any member of this
6 committee may make any statement or offer any
7 observation. Of course, any member of the
8 Legislature may today or at any time propose a
9 map or a plan, and we will make it available to
10 the public and to you immediately.

11 Mr. Chairman, thank you for allowing me to
12 take a few moments to walk us through the
13 process, and I look forward to hearing from our
14 citizens here in Tampa Bay tonight. Thank you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
16 In order to facilitate as many people as
17 possible getting a chance to testify, let me
18 ask first, where is Laura Simpson? Laura,
19 where are you? Laura, I am an advocate for
20 you. Right now you are the last person signed
21 up to testify. There are probably going to be
22 some others, but right now you are the last
23 one. We have over 70 people signed up to
24 testify. So in order to make sure we hear from
25 Laura, everybody else needs to be respectful of

1 those behind you, your friends and neighbors
2 who have also come to testify, and so we ask
3 that your testimony be limited to three
4 minutes. If you have other testimony,
5 additional or extended testimony, we want it,
6 just give it to us in writing. If you brought
7 a script or something that you wish to read,
8 and if it can't be done in three minutes, give
9 it to us, and we will make it available to all
10 of the members of the committee.

11 If someone else has already made your
12 point, it is okay to say "I agree with them,"
13 and then sit down so that your friends and
14 neighbors behind you will have an opportunity
15 to speak. But even if somebody has already
16 made exactly the same point, and you want to
17 read off of exactly the same script and the
18 spirit moves you, we still want to hear from
19 you.

20 So with that, I am going to call three
21 people at a time so that we can -- we are going
22 to have an on deck circle right down here in
23 front of the podium, and we are going to call
24 three people at a time. If you would come
25 forward, that way we could use the time as

1 efficiently as possible.

2 Our first speaker tonight is going to be
3 Kenneth Johnson, followed by Jack Wolff,
4 followed by Anne Voss. So if those three
5 individuals will come forward, we would like to
6 begin. And, again, we are very, very grateful
7 that so many people have come out tonight. We
8 are anxious to hear your testimony.

9 And, Mr. Johnson, you are recognized to
10 begin our evening celebrations.

11 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you. Thank you for
12 welcoming us here. We welcome -- we would like
13 to welcome you also. I know that you all have
14 taken a lot of time to do this arduous task
15 that you have.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Johnson, the
17 Sergeant's office is going to help you here.
18 We want to make sure we get every word that
19 everybody has to say, and you are also on
20 statewide television, so -- there you go.
21 Check your hair, check your makeup, we want you
22 to look good, we want you to sound good.

23 Mr. Johnson, you are recognized.

24 MR. JOHNSON: My name is Ken Johnson. I
25 am a resident of District 9 -- Congressional

1 District 9 here in Tampa. I have lived here
2 for 16 years. I want to welcome you all to the
3 festivities here today. I know you have an
4 arduous task, and we appreciate the work that
5 you have to do.

6 I have a couple of points that I would
7 like to raise regarding the Fair District
8 amendments passed last year. One of the main
9 issues I have with these amendments is that
10 they treat Floridians unequally.

11 As I understand them, the amendments say
12 that districts must be compact, but this
13 standard only applies to non-minority seats.
14 Minority seats don't have to be compact. This
15 is going to mean that districts surrounding
16 minority seats will not be compact either since
17 they fill in around the borders of the
18 non-compact minority seats. The gerrymandering
19 of minority seats will also mean political
20 parties and incumbents will be favored since
21 minority voters tend to support one party over
22 another.

23 My other concern with these amendments is
24 that they are so loosely defined, I think
25 judges, rather than you legislators, will be

1 the people who ultimately end up drawing the
2 new districts. I don't want to see that
3 happen, but with so many ambiguous terms like
4 "compact," "practicable," "feasible" and
5 "existing political boundaries," how will you
6 be able to prevent a landslide of lawsuits from
7 falling on you once you pass a map? Are there
8 definitions for these words that you will be
9 going by when you draw the new maps? Without
10 firm definitions for these words, I don't see
11 how you will be able to satisfy all of the
12 requirements of the amendments, which means
13 millions of our tax dollars will be spent in
14 litigation over the maps that you pass this
15 year or next year.

16 You have a tough job ahead of you, and I
17 hope you will be able to juggle all of these
18 various requirements and end up with some good
19 maps. Thank you for your time.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 Mr. Johnson. And next we will hear from Jack
22 Wolff. Mr. Wolff, if you will pull the mike
23 down, we are delighted you are here and anxious
24 to have your testimony on the record.

25 MR. WOLFF: Thank you. Good afternoon.

1 My name is Jack Wolff, W-o-l-f-f. My address
2 is 2718 Laurel Oak Drive, Plant City, which is
3 in eastern Hillsborough County.

4 Now, the Florida Constitution now requires
5 compact legislative and congressional districts
6 to replace the gerrymandered districts that we
7 now have. In Hillsborough County, we have
8 three snake-like congressional districts
9 intertwined in the county and spinning out into
10 neighboring counties.

11 With the limited time that I have here to
12 speak today, I wish to give you my suggestion
13 as how we can instead have two compact
14 congressional districts in Hillsborough County.
15 The 2010 federal census is the basis for
16 redistricting. The population of Hillsborough
17 County in 2010 was a little over 1,200,000.
18 Dividing the 2010 Florida population of just
19 over 18,800,000 by the 27 congressional
20 districts allocated for Florida by the 2010
21 census, each Florida congressional district
22 will have a population total of just under
23 700,000.

24 Now, using these figures, I would like to
25 show you how Hillsborough County would best be

1 divided into two compact congressional
2 districts by a north/south line creating an
3 east Hillsborough County congressional district
4 and a west Hillsborough County congressional
5 district.

6 Now, with the help of the Hillsborough
7 County Planning Department, I was able to
8 determine by the population figures that the
9 north/south dividing line should be at or near
10 I-75 to the Bay. This would create a primarily
11 urban west Hillsborough County district with a
12 population of 697,371, the amount of population
13 needed for a congressional district, and which
14 is shown on this map in yellow. The remaining
15 portion of the county in green is east
16 Hillsborough County, a much larger area, but
17 more sparsely populated and primarily an area
18 of smaller communities, rural and farmland,
19 very different from west Hillsborough County,
20 with a different constituency.

21 Now, similar constituency within a
22 district is an important factor to consider
23 when drawing these district maps. The
24 population of the more sparsely green area is
25 531,855, or approximately 165,000 population

1 short of the needed population of a
2 congressional district. My suggestion for this
3 shortfall is to include the east portion of
4 Hillsborough County, a contiguous portion of
5 eastern Pasco County that is also east of I-75
6 to the north, for the additional 165,000
7 population. This makes sense, because this
8 portion of Pasco County also has small
9 communities, rural and farmland, with a similar
10 constituency of eastern Hillsborough County.
11 And I plan to e-mail each of you on the
12 committees -- the redistricting committees my
13 completed map of the two districts with the
14 exact population figures, which I hope can be
15 of help to you in drawing the congressional map
16 for our area and that you will give it your
17 consideration.

18 One final thing. These public hearings
19 are slated to be over later this week on
20 September 1st. Time now is of the essence for
21 you to complete your drawing of the legislative
22 congressional districts without delay. It is
23 critically important for you to --

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Speaking of time being of
25 the essence --

1 MR. WOLFF: Just one more sentence.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: All right.

3 MR. WOLFF: It is critically important for
4 you to have all of the Florida legislative and
5 congressional districts maps drawn and
6 completely approved well before the June 4th
7 day, 2012 date, the only dates candidates can
8 qualify to run for state and federal office in
9 Florida.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you very
11 much and thank you for your maps that you drew,
12 and please turn them over to Mr. Guthrie and we
13 will be happy to include them with all the
14 other maps.

15 MR. WOLFF: I am going to e-mail a more
16 completed one.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay. Thank you very
18 much. Thank you, Mr. Wolff.

19 We will hear from Anne Voss, and after Ms.
20 Voss, Carol Carter, if you will come on deck,
21 please, and then Martha Hodge.

22 Ms. Voss, thank you for being here. We
23 are delighted to see you, and you are
24 recognized.

25 MS. VOSS: Thank you. I want to thank you

1 all for coming and listening to the citizens of
2 Hillsborough County before you redraw our
3 districts. I would also like to thank the
4 Legislature for an open and transparent process
5 that allows us, the citizens, to make
6 recommendations, draw our own maps and submit
7 them on-line for your consideration.

8 I want to now address Amendments 5 and 6,
9 which were added to the Florida Constitution
10 last year, because I feel without important
11 clarifications, you cannot reasonably begin
12 your task.

13 These amendments use the term "compact,"
14 but do not define it. So my first request is
15 that you please explain in layman's language
16 exactly what this important term means and how
17 it relates to the amendments' mandate to
18 respect existing city, county and geographical
19 boundaries.

20 In addition, Amendments 5 and 6 prescribe
21 very subjective standards; for example,
22 establishing criteria using the words that Ken
23 also mentioned, "practicable" and "feasible."
24 I would like to know how are we to judge that
25 these standards have been met. I might think

1 the lines you draw are practical and feasible,
2 while others may well in good faith not.
3 Unless these terms are clarified and subject to
4 be minimized, I don't understand how you can
5 reasonably begin. I am very concerned that
6 these vague terms will result in confusion,
7 consternation and lawsuits, which will deprive
8 us of our equal right to representation. I --
9 we don't want this to happen, and moreover, I
10 want the legislators to establish the new
11 districts, not the courts and unaccountable
12 judges.

13 I hope that you will clarify these points
14 for me and for all Floridians. I wish each and
15 every one of you the very best with this truly
16 difficult challenge. Thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Ms.
18 Voss, and a number of you have already been
19 begun to raise questions. There will be
20 questions raised during the hearing. Some will
21 be rhetorical questions, of course, some will
22 be questions of fact. The Speaker Designate is
23 making a list of those questions, and as he
24 indicated, when all public testimony is
25 concluded, then we are going to give members an

1 opportunity to answer any of the questions that
2 have been asked. The Speaker Designate will
3 bat cleanup, and he will try to get to any
4 factual questions that members have not gotten
5 to.

6 And so with that, Carol Carter is
7 recognized. Following Ms. Carter, Martha
8 Hodge, and then if Chris Hart will come on
9 deck.

10 Ms. Carter, thank you for coming, and we
11 look forward to your testimony.

12 MS. CARTER: Well, thank you all for being
13 here today to listen to us. My name is Carol
14 Carter, and I have been a resident of Tampa
15 since 1949. I have seen redistricting happen
16 every ten years since that time. It is always
17 tough, but I think you are unfortunately
18 operating under a difficult situation this year
19 with Amendments 5 and 6.

20 I think that we can all agree that we want
21 districts that are reasonable, but I do not
22 believe that Amendments 5 and 6 will lead to
23 that outcome, because they are so vague. Take,
24 for example, as someone else mentioned, the
25 requirement for districts to be compact. What

1 does that mean? Can all of you on this
2 committee agree and understand this term used
3 in Amendments 5 and 6?

4 Then we have the term "existing political
5 boundaries." What are those boundaries? Are
6 they city boundaries? People have spoken to
7 you before about not splitting up cities.

8 Here is a map of the City of Tampa. Once
9 it was compact, I would have said, but I would
10 not say that the City of Tampa is now compact.
11 Would you? So then how would you draw a
12 district that would use the boundaries of the
13 City of Tampa? And also you might note, this
14 is the City of Plant City. It is not very
15 compact either.

16 Under the amendments, I would say --
17 anyone here say that it would -- that Tampa
18 would qualify as a compact district, even under
19 Amendments 5 and 6? I don't think so. I would
20 describe the City of Tampa as sprawled out and
21 oddly shaped. Tampa is just one example of the
22 many that you will face as you redistrict the
23 state.

24 I believe that Amendments 5 and 6 are
25 filled with words and standards that don't mesh

1 with reality, words like "compact,"
2 "practicable" -- I don't even know what that
3 word is -- "feasible" and "existing political
4 boundaries," to list a few. With these
5 regulations, I don't see how you can draw a map
6 that will withstand legal challenge.

7 I wish you the best of luck with this
8 arduous task, and thank you for allowing me to
9 speak.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
11 Ms. Carter. We appreciate your testimony. And
12 Martha Hodge is next, then Chris Hart, and
13 following Chris Hart, Charles Mckenzie.

14 Ms. Hodge, did I get your name correctly,
15 ma'am?

16 MS. HODGE: You did.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, you are recognized,
18 and we look forward to your testimony.

19 MS. HODGE: Thank you. Good afternoon. I
20 am a voting Democrat in precinct 112 in Tampa,
21 and I take pretty much a totally different tack
22 from two of your previous speakers. I was one
23 of the original signers of the Amendments 5 and
24 6 because I believed in the necessity for some
25 more organization as regards that, and I have

1 been dismayed, I might as well be honest with
2 you, at the Legislature's, one, attempt to come
3 up with another amendment that would have
4 nullified 5 and 6, and secondly, to spend
5 taxpayers' dollars, that would be me for one,
6 to fight these amendments, and I think that you
7 certainly show your colors in those
8 circumstances.

9 But the -- my reason for speaking here
10 though is not to chastise you, but I am old
11 enough to be able to chastise most of you, so
12 keep that in mind. My reason for speaking here
13 is that I ask you to deal with these amendments
14 in the fairest way possible. That is why it
15 was called the Fair Districts amendment.

16 I studied gerrymandering in the eighth
17 grade. I don't think I ever really understood
18 it until I moved to Florida, and I have been
19 stunned. And I was a Georgian, we are not good
20 up there, but I was stunned when I came here.

21 The intent of Amendments 5 and 6 was
22 purely to ensure that all districts are redrawn
23 in a way so as that incumbents don't have a
24 totally open book to move and win another seat,
25 and to make sure that neither political party

1 gets any particular advantage. These were
2 necessary because Democrats and Republicans
3 alike in previous years have, in fact, used
4 their political prowess to district out what
5 would work for them.

6 I will say to each of you, you have not
7 been courageous enough to tell us what is on
8 your mind and what is in your heart and what
9 lines you have already drawn in your thinking.
10 I have no idea. I can look at your website
11 from now until next year, sir, and I see really
12 only one that even comes close, one map that
13 comes close, and I don't see your signature on
14 any of them. So I don't believe with these
15 particular hearings that you are really looking
16 at the legal intent of the laws.

17 I would say to you, show us or tell us
18 your thinking. Show us your map. I would say
19 most of the people in here would join me. Can
20 you join me and say that? Show us your map.
21 We have to have it. We really need it. Now, I
22 have used my minutes up and --

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, ma'am, and we
24 appreciate your testimony and appreciate those
25 who came to support you tonight.

1 Our next speaker is Chris Hart, and
2 following Chris Hart, Charles Mckenzie, and
3 following Charles Mckenzie, Alan Peacock.

4 Chris Hart, thank you very much for being
5 here tonight. We are grateful.

6 MR. HART: Mr. Chairman, members of the
7 Legislature, thank you for joining us. It is
8 nice to see you here. I know some of you
9 traveled far, but also let me first, if I
10 might, thank Representative Cruz since this is
11 her district, but also for what I consider the
12 only priority ahead of this, and that was
13 creating jobs, and she just had a job fair here
14 recently we desperately needed.

15 When I talk about redistricting, I have
16 had a few opportunities to do this having been
17 a commissioner here over a 12-year period where
18 I represented 1.2 million people, and so we
19 have gone through this over -- a few times over
20 the years, and I've worked directly with some
21 of you here now as legislators.

22 But let me get a little bit toward this
23 Amendments 5 and 6, because I think they are
24 important. I know it is something that many
25 people have addressed for many years and

1 mentioned here, but when I look at some of
2 this, it talks about intent or result of
3 denying or abridging equal opportunity or
4 diminish somebody's ability to elect
5 Representatives of their choice. In many
6 cases, the words are intended only to apply to
7 minorities, but I would have you say -- or I
8 would certainly say I think they really apply
9 to us if you look at the broader intent of this
10 legislation.

11 When I get into some other things that we
12 all know, it talks about feasibility and
13 compact and practical, and then the closing
14 words in your documents to us said, "following
15 political and geographical boundaries." Well,
16 I am only going to use two districts as
17 examples to talk about here today. I wish one
18 of the Representatives were here, because it is
19 Florida Congressional District 11 and Senate
20 District 16, and I use them both as examples to
21 address my points, and it goes to one of the
22 other points that you know is that
23 congressional districts or Senate or House
24 districts make cross bodies of water. But I
25 will tell you, it doesn't set well here in

1 Tampa and Hillsborough County. What it does,
2 too, if you look at -- and I can just hold this
3 up, I know you've got this record, but if you
4 look at Hillsborough and Pinellas County,
5 District 11, you've got this area here of
6 Pinellas County. Who in hell living there
7 would actually believe that they are being
8 represented by somebody in Tampa and
9 Hillsborough County? Well, if you go down
10 to -- you go down to the county south of us, do
11 they -- who really believes and if you live
12 there or sit there, that those people have a
13 chance to elect a Representative that is really
14 going to represent their views and their
15 values?

16 Now, when I look at the Florida Senate
17 district, it crosses a body of water as well.
18 Where I live in this area, I know that no one
19 living in Tampa and Hillsborough County can
20 ever be elected to that Senate position. I
21 will tell you that has a chilling effect on
22 people going to the polls.

23 Where you have many House districts here,
24 for example, you may go up and touch lines and
25 cross lines, but it would be like starting the

1 state of Florida somewhere in the middle of
2 Florida instead of saying, "You know what, we
3 do have to start at Key West." You can't end
4 up there and find out you don't have enough
5 people. Surely you must have to do that.

6 Well, we are a peninsula. Hillsborough
7 County and Pinellas County are peninsulas, and
8 I would recommend to you, you start looking at
9 those political and geographic boundaries and
10 then move north.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.

12 MR. HART: Thank you very much.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Appreciate it. Next we
14 will hear from Charles Mckenzie with the
15 Rainbow-PUSH Coalition, then Alan Peacock with
16 the National Association of Letter Carriers,
17 and then Earl Lennard, the Supervisor of
18 Elections, the Honorable Earl Lennard.

19 MR. MCKENZIE: Good afternoon.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. McKenzie, you are
21 recognized.

22 MR. MCKENZIE: I want to thank Senator
23 Gaetz and Representative Weatherford for this
24 opportunity to speak, and I am delighted to see
25 so many members of our august body of

1 legislators here today. And to this honorable
2 group of legislators, I ran for a congressional
3 seat that is highly gerrymandered, and I ran
4 for a House seat against a very capable
5 opponent. I wish I was sitting where he is
6 sitting today, but that was not the case. But
7 I know what it means, and I think --

8 SENATOR GAETZ: I think he might change
9 places with you today.

10 MR. MCKENZIE: I know what it means, and I
11 think he knows what it means to run for office
12 in a highly gerrymandered district. It is a
13 very cumbersome task.

14 But I wanted to say this, and then I will
15 take my seat: Amendments 5 and 6 were passed
16 by Florida voters in November, and they reveal
17 that the majority of Floridians are tired of
18 lopsided, partisan-driven politics and public
19 policy. They want political districts with
20 boundaries that are contiguous and genuinely
21 competitive. This is the leading rationale
22 that should guide any redistricting that takes
23 place. They are weary of politics by those who
24 are drunk with the arrogance of power and
25 inflicted with the recurring disease of

1 incumbenitis. And I believe that this is a
2 reasonable expectation that would only be a
3 anathema to those who intend to maintain power
4 at any cost and by any means in spite of the
5 legitimate will of the majority.

6 Because the Legislature, of course, is
7 controlled by honorable individuals who would
8 never engage in politics of pure self-interest,
9 we are also certain that there is no
10 undisclosed agenda unfolding here. We have not
11 gathered in this place to wag the dog and dance
12 the pony simply to avoid lawsuits and judicial
13 intervention if the real deal was on the table.

14 Surely there is no attempt here to prolong
15 the process, create mass confusion, let the
16 clock run down and chase challengers away.
17 This is undoubtedly a bona fide,
18 honest-to-goodness attempt to allow the people
19 to have a meaningful impact on the
20 redistricting process. After all, we know that
21 those we elect want to represent the will of
22 the people and operate with the consent of
23 those who are governing.

24 That having been said, I have but two
25 questions to direct to our distinguished panel,

1 the lawmakers: Why have you spent three
2 million dollars of taxpayers' money trying to
3 overturn the very amendments that we, the
4 people, passed in the last election cycle? And
5 then finally, we have listened intently to your
6 usage of terminological exactitudes and
7 polysyllabic vocables about time tables in
8 other states and the accelerated session and
9 that you are waiting to begin working on them,
10 but for some strange reason, hanging in our --

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Could I ask you to wrap up
12 soon just to -- with respect to all the people
13 behind you?

14 MR. MCKENZIE: Yes, absolutely. Hanging
15 in our mental skies is this hard to dismiss,
16 lingering question, where are your maps?

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

18 Now, Alan Peacock, Mr. Peacock,
19 representing the National Association of Letter
20 Carriers. Then we will hear from the Honorable
21 Earl Lennard and then we will hear from Danny
22 Aprile, I believe it is Aprile.

23 MR. PEACOCK: That is a hard act to follow
24 right there --

25 SENATOR GAETZ: It is.

1 MR. PEACOCK: -- and to precede
2 Dr. Lennard, who I have known for a long time,
3 and his task is going to be one that is going
4 to be very difficult if some of these don't
5 come to fruition before too long, as all the
6 election supervisors in this state. If we
7 don't get the maps and we don't get the
8 confusion dismissed and everything, then it is
9 going to create quite a confusion when it comes
10 to election time.

11 Now, I have signed a resolution with my
12 organization that's going to go to Congress in
13 hopes that there will be a permanent absentee
14 ballot where you won't have to actually, you
15 know, reconfirm your absentee ballot request
16 every four years. Those are one of the things
17 that I am looking forward to.

18 I am hoping that in the near future there
19 will be voter mail, because I do represent the
20 Postal Service and letter carriers, all right.

21 I grew up in southeast Hillsborough
22 County, and I resided most of my life now in
23 northwest Hillsborough County, and I don't
24 think there is a great divide in constituency
25 between east and west, north and south. I

1 don't think that is the proper way of trying to
2 divide things to create the maps.

3 All right. None of the maps that are on
4 your website now are currently contiguous or
5 complete. When will the committee allow the
6 citizens of Florida to see one proposed by the
7 Legislature?

8 If the Libby map is the one that is being
9 considered, I want to record my objection to
10 that map, because it fails to comply with
11 Amendments 5 and 6.

12 There is no doubt about it, it is a
13 difficult task you have. The large population
14 shifts have taken place in over one-third of
15 all the current districts. So there is no
16 doubt it is a difficult thing that you've got
17 to deal with, but let's get with it. Let's get
18 her done. Thank you.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
20 Mr. Peacock. And next we will hear from our
21 Supervisor of Elections, the Honorable Earl
22 Lennard, who has served this community in more
23 than one capacity, and all was honorably, and
24 we are delighted to hear you today,
25 Mr. Supervisor, Mr. Superintendent. It is good

1 to see you again.

2 MR. LENNARD: Also good to see you,
3 Mr. Superintendent.

4 Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman, members of the
5 Legislature, I want to thank you for being here
6 at beautiful Jefferson High School, one of the
7 finest high schools in the state of Florida and
8 the United States of America, as well as one of
9 the finest school districts and counties in the
10 state of Florida and the United States of
11 America.

12 I want to thank each of the people that
13 have come out, because this is a great audience
14 you have here, and I know you've got a tough
15 task ahead of you, and so I want to just
16 mention some of the things that's important to
17 the Supervisors of Elections and, of course, to
18 me in carrying out my responsibilities.

19 And while I am going to be redundant, I
20 would be remiss if I did not reiterate two very
21 important issues for the Supervisors of
22 Elections in getting the task done and setting
23 up for the 2012 election, and first of all, of
24 course, is the timeline. You are very much
25 aware of that, but I think I would be remiss if

1 I did not once again mention it to you. The
2 timeline is very important to us in order to
3 get all the ministerial work that goes into
4 getting everything set up prior to qualifying
5 and then moving forward with setting up the
6 election.

7 Also, I would like to mention that as you
8 go about drawing the districts and drawing the
9 lines within those districts, that you consider
10 the Voting Tabulation Districts. We furnished
11 that information to you some time ago at your
12 request, and I think it would be -- it would be
13 great if you were able to honor the work that
14 we have done as supervisors in providing and
15 utilizing that information.

16 Other than that, I want to say that the
17 issues are before you, you know them, and I
18 wish you very well. God speed and good luck in
19 this task ahead of you. Once again, it is very
20 good to see you, many of you old friends -- not
21 old -- former friends, and so it is good to see
22 you again, and take care and God speed.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, and
24 thank you for your service to the community.

25 Next we will hear from Danny Aprile, I

1 think, if I am pronouncing it correctly, then
2 Ted Campbell with the Florida Strawberry
3 Growers, and then Connie Johnson with the
4 Florida Realtors. Ms. Johnson, if you will be
5 on deck.

6 Danny, thanks for coming. We look forward
7 to your testimony.

8 MR. APRILE: Good evening. I am Danny
9 Aprile, Hillsborough County Farm Bureau
10 President.

11 As the redistricting process progresses,
12 we respectfully request that those involved in
13 this process recognize the unique heritage,
14 makeup and importance of the agricultural
15 industry in eastern Hillsborough County,
16 specifically in the area east of Interstate 75.
17 Residents of this area share long-term
18 agriculture interests and endeavors, enabling
19 them to contribute significantly to the
20 county's economy with over \$700 million in
21 annual sales and providing jobs for 20,000
22 people, with an annual income of over \$293
23 million.

24 We believe drawing the district boundaries
25 from I-75 east to the county boundary would

1 help to preserve the important way of life,
2 rural character and economic engine that this
3 area -- to benefit not only those who reside
4 there, but all residents of Hillsborough
5 County.

6 Thank you for your time and consideration.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
8 We appreciate your testimony.

9 And next may we hear from Ted Campbell
10 with the Florida Strawberry Growers, then
11 Connie Johnson and Robin Lankford, if you would
12 please come on down.

13 Mr. Campbell, thanks for coming, and the
14 floor is yours.

15 MR. CAMPBELL: Good afternoon and thank
16 you for allowing me to speak and thank you all
17 for coming to this event. My name is Ted
18 Campbell, I am Executive Director of the
19 Florida Strawberry Growers Association in Plant
20 City.

21 Our farmers represent the largest segment
22 of agriculture production in Hillsborough
23 County, over 42 percent of the total farm gate
24 value on five percent of the land. Florida
25 produces about 20 percent of the domestic

1 strawberry crop, with over 90 percent of
2 Florida's commercial production in eastern
3 Hillsborough County. It is a very high-value
4 crop and obviously a very high-density crop.
5 So the Florida strawberries generate
6 approximately \$700 million in economic value to
7 Hillsborough County. We are responsible for
8 60,000 jobs and have an annual payroll of our
9 farm workers alone of \$165 million.

10 Our economic impact goes beyond jobs and
11 revenue, because agriculture in eastern
12 Hillsborough County provides desirable green
13 space, wildlife habitat, fresh water recharge,
14 areas of rural character, I want to echo what
15 Danny just said, it brings a high quality of
16 life to all of Hillsborough County. And we are
17 a tax park, and agriculture exerts
18 substantially less tax drain on public
19 resources. A Hillsborough County study showed
20 farms only required only 25 cents' worth of
21 services for every tax dollar they spend, as
22 opposed to urban residents that did a
23 hundred -- 129 in services for each dollar. So
24 we are revenue positive for the county.

25 But we are here to talk about

1 redistricting, so I will get more to the point.
2 To maintain the desirable agricultural
3 community and the continuity of eastern
4 Hillsborough County, we are suggesting the
5 state district lines would be drawn from I-75
6 east to the county boundaries. It is a very
7 contiguous region, and within that area it is
8 very simple to draw House districts in lateral
9 bands across that area based on the population
10 density in each of those sectors.

11 So thank you for your consideration.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Ted.
13 We appreciate your testimony.

14 And next, Connie Johnson with the Florida
15 Realtors, then Robin Lankford and then Willie
16 Lawson, please.

17 Ms. Johnson, thank you for coming, and we
18 are delighted to hear your testimony today.

19 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you. Yes, that is
20 great, thanks.

21 First of all, I would like to thank all of
22 you for giving your constituents the
23 opportunity to come and tell you what is very,
24 very important to them, because it truly is.

25 As a realtor, and I have been a realtor

1 for over 20 years, I do have the opportunity to
2 speak with a lot of people, and being on the
3 leadership team of the Florida Realtors, I do
4 get to speak to realtors. As of last week, we
5 had a convention from all over the state. The
6 things that are important to us is what you are
7 hearing from everyone here, so I thank you for
8 allowing us to say what is important.

9 On a personal note for myself, I live in
10 east Hillsborough County. I am very happy with
11 the way it sits. I know you have to make some
12 changes and it is going to be difficult for
13 you, but there are communities that have
14 changed in the last ten years and there's been
15 a lot of growth, and now there's growth that is
16 no longer there. I want you to please keep
17 that in mind. Densities are changing. It is
18 not going to be the same as it is today next
19 year or the year after, so please keep that in
20 mind.

21 But the one thing I do want to bring up to
22 you now is something I heard over and over
23 again last week with the realtors. That is the
24 time frame. This we know you know is crucial,
25 but please don't put us in a position to where

1 we don't know who we are voting for. Thank
2 you.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
4 Ms. Johnson. And I hope -- Ms. Johnson, I hope
5 you will be able to stay until the end of the
6 hearing, because I think there is some
7 information about time frame that might give
8 you a little bit more data and some comfort,
9 hopefully.

10 Next, Robin Lankford and then Willie
11 Lawson. Following Willie Lawson, Dr. Wesley
12 Johnson.

13 Robin, thank you for coming tonight. We
14 appreciate hearing from you.

15 MS. LANKFORD: Well, thank you. As you
16 said, my name is Robin Lankford, and I have
17 lived in Hillsborough County for over 30 years.
18 That is a long time in one county for Florida.

19 I want to thank you first for your
20 common-sense approach to gathering input from
21 all of us about drawing the new maps and
22 allowing the public a never before access to
23 redistricting the whole process. The My
24 District Builder software makes it so easy for
25 anyone to submit a proposed map to the

1 Legislature.

2 And I know there's been some groups,
3 specifically the League of Women Voters, that
4 are not participating or maybe not appreciating
5 the path you are taking this year in the
6 redistricting process, and I think that is a
7 shame. After all, the League submitted maps to
8 you ten years ago and they worked very hard to
9 get Amendments 5 and 6 passed. Obviously they
10 are interested in the redistricting process, so
11 why would they not submit maps this time
12 around? Getting 5 and 6 passed was only half
13 the battle, in my opinion. The League needs
14 now to offer some concrete suggestions for
15 drawing maps. With these standards in place,
16 it is more important than ever that the
17 Legislature draw good maps, and I don't think
18 you can do that without getting suggestions
19 from the public. With Amendments 5 and 6 on
20 the books, I think it is incumbent upon the
21 League to show us what they think is fair
22 districts. I hope they will choose to
23 participate and be a meaningful part of the
24 redistricting process by submitting maps like
25 they did ten years ago.

1 We did hear from some folks tonight who
2 said that they think that you should submit
3 them first. Well, you can't win in that
4 situation. If you tell us what you are going
5 to do, we are going to say you didn't allow us
6 input. Now you let us have input, and now that
7 is wrong, too. I feel sorry for you in the
8 fact that it is very difficult for you to make
9 your constituents happy, because it is like no
10 matter what you do, you can't win. But I
11 appreciate the fact that you are holding these
12 meetings and that you are here listening to all
13 of us tonight as you have done in other
14 counties as well.

15 So until you hear from everybody, I
16 appreciate you continuing to keep those lines
17 of communication open, and I encourage the
18 other voters and concerned citizens to submit
19 maps to you for you to have a chance to look
20 at, and I also would highly encourage the
21 League of Women Voters to do the same.

22 Thank you for your time.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
24 Ms. Lankford, appreciate your testimony.

25 Next, Willie Lawson, and after Mr. Lawson,

1 Dr. Wesley Johnson and then Elizabeth Morowati,
2 I believe it is, and I apologize if I
3 mispronounced your name, Elizabeth, but please
4 do come on down.

5 Mr. Lawson, we are delighted you are here,
6 and we look forward to what you have to share
7 with us.

8 MR. LAWSON: Well, that is great. Thank
9 you so much. Again, thanks for being here.
10 You know, I am running for a local office, but
11 right now, I wouldn't trade with you guys for
12 anything on the planet. I just wouldn't do it.

13 Again, I am a resident of east Tampa,
14 County Commission District 3, the State House
15 District 59, State Senate District 18 and
16 Congressional District 11. I have been here
17 for years.

18 The hope of these hearings is to produce
19 not only fair districts, but just districts,
20 because fair, as you know, is subjective. It
21 is just that is important. And I believe that
22 district representation needs to look like the
23 electorate. The ever-changing demographic
24 dynamics of Florida, however, provided
25 ever-changing backdrop by which to draw these

1 lines.

2 I would hope that much care is taken to
3 provide all Floridians with a voice in the
4 political process. I would hope that you would
5 avoid the temptation to destroy political
6 discourse by the time old tradition of
7 gerrymandering.

8 I would also -- and this is tough in this
9 highly politicized time, I know that is going
10 to be tough, also avoid the temptation to use
11 any particular area as a trading chip or
12 bargaining chip to satisfy a political agenda.
13 That also must be avoided.

14 I am sure this is a difficult process, but
15 please remember whatever you do affects real
16 people. These aren't just lines on a map.
17 These are real people.

18 Please also remember the importance to
19 provide more than fair districts. Like I said,
20 fair is subjective. You must provide just
21 districts that show that Florida is a
22 government by all the people, a government of
23 all the people and by all the people. It would
24 be a travesty to miss the opportunity to right
25 the wrongs of the past while offering a

1 platform to the voices of the future. Many of
2 these voices are from emerging, traditionally
3 ignored or bargained-away areas. They are from
4 every stripe that are starting to understand
5 the importance of them to stand and be heard.
6 They are hearing from their communities that
7 there must be change from the status quo.

8 Please keep in mind that in order for
9 Florida to continue to move forward
10 politically, socially, morally, racially, we
11 must have full participation in a political
12 process by all Floridians. I am in no way
13 asking for a return to segregation, but a
14 sensitivity to the demographic dynamics that
15 can provide some of the things of which I have
16 already talked about, an awareness of the
17 importance to provide access to government and
18 representation to everyone that makes up the
19 tapestry of this wonderful state.

20 So, in closing, please understand the
21 difference between fair and just districts,
22 please remember that what you decide will
23 affect a generation of Floridians, and finally,
24 remember to thank past the next election cycle
25 and far into the future of Florida. Good luck

1 and God bless.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
3 Mr. Lawson.

4 Next, Dr. Wesley Johnson, and following
5 Dr. Johnson, Elizabeth Morowati and then
6 Christopher Cano.

7 Dr. Johnson, thank you for coming, and the
8 floor is yours, sir.

9 DR. JOHNSON: Thanks. Nice to see you
10 all, Senators and Representatives. As you
11 mentioned, my name is Dr. Wesley Johnson, and I
12 am a medical research scientist, I am a
13 businessman, I served seven years in the United
14 States Navy in the submarine force and I am a
15 voter. I have lived in Dade County, I have
16 lived in Citrus County, Alachua County, and now
17 for the past eight years, I have lived in
18 Hillsborough County, and Senator Latvala and
19 Representative Young are my representatives in
20 the Senate and the House.

21 I am skeptical, quite frankly, of the
22 redistricting process. My skepticism is
23 largely due to the current partisan structure
24 of Florida's government, one political party
25 that holds all the cards. Historically, when

1 one party holds power, that party is loathe to
2 give it up. In fact, every effort is typically
3 made to solidify and extend that party's power.

4 I am challenging you, each and every one
5 of you, to take the high road, the ethical
6 road, do the right thing, do the fair thing.
7 Doing so will make your life and your job much
8 harder. It is easy to do it the bad way, but
9 much harder to do it the ethical way. But the
10 voters and citizens of Florida deserve no less
11 than your supreme effort to do it correctly.

12 The great philosopher John Rawls said,
13 contrary to the previous speaker, that fairness
14 is justice. That is a definition, fairness is
15 justice.

16 A fair process is the goal that has been
17 set before you by Florida's voters. I'll
18 remind you all that an unjust society does not
19 long endure. Thank you for your attention.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: And thank you very much
21 for your service to our country.

22 Next we will hear from Elizabeth and --
23 oh, thank you very much, ma'am. And I am --
24 did I pronounce your name correctly? Morowati,
25 and you are recognized, and thank you so much

1 for being here tonight.

2 MS. MOROWATI: Thank you. Let me tell
3 you, I have been here since 1979, but I lived
4 overseas for nine years, so I am an American
5 first and then a Floridian. I was in New York
6 before that, born in Brooklyn. You can hear
7 that accent, I am sure.

8 What I have done here is I have prepared a
9 statement, but I have given you existing
10 layouts of congressional districts and overlays
11 showing recommended changes, and what started
12 me on this track was District 11. It is
13 gerrymandered and it is absurd.

14 Now I am going to read my text, if you
15 don't mind. Okay. Sirs, these comments and
16 recommendations refer to the U.S. House of
17 Representatives, Districts 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13
18 only, and now are being discussed via the
19 redistricting process.

20 Accompanying this cover letter are sets of
21 maps pertaining to existing boundaries as well
22 as those I am proposing. You are going to see
23 with the overlay, the existing and the
24 suggested.

25 Based on recommendations for redrawing of

1 district boundaries: A, any district should be
2 designed for the mutual benefit of both the
3 constituent and their Representatives so that,
4 one, the constituents can have their
5 Representative easily accessible via a physical
6 address should they want or need to visit an
7 office, as well as use other means of
8 communications, the Internet, phone, fax, mail,
9 et cetera; two, the Representative can have
10 more direct and interactive contact with their
11 constituents to not only hear about their
12 concerns, but observe these concerns, if
13 necessary, during their travels throughout the
14 various communities they represent.

15 B, boundaries should be drawn with
16 common-sense continuity. B, practical for both
17 Representative and constituents alike for
18 reasons stated in A and B above.

19 General comments -- now, I'm referring to
20 District 11 as now drawn belies these criteria.
21 It is located in three counties: Pinellas,
22 Hillsborough, Manatee. I propose consolidation
23 of District 11 to improve both quality and more
24 Representative interactions between
25 Representative and constituents by having

1 redrawn -- it redrawn solely within
2 Hillsborough County alone.

3 Two, to do so, surrounding districts will
4 have to be boundary adjustments based upon any
5 comments above. Florida will be getting two
6 members for the U.S. House of Representatives
7 because of an increased population, this being
8 the case because of increased demographics and
9 where they -- excuse me -- dominate one or more
10 of the following recommendation boundary
11 adjustments might be examined and divided into
12 two districts from the existing one based upon
13 where the increase in population dominates.

14 Four, District 9, which is presently Gus
15 Bilirakis' seat, looks as though the areas
16 between Dunedin to the south and Palm Harbor to
17 the north have been cut out as part of District
18 11, which is Bill Young's seat. It is also
19 appears as though the district to the east
20 should really be part of District 12, which is
21 now Dennis Ross' seat.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: And, ma'am, may I -- just
23 in deference to those behind you, could I ask
24 you to conclude? This has been extremely
25 helpful, and all of this will go on the record

1 and on the Internet so everybody here can see
2 this.

3 MS. MOROWATI: Okay, okay, okay. Can I
4 just conclude with the recommendations then?

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Could you just wind that
6 up in about five seconds?

7 MS. MOROWATI: Sure, recommendations, yes.

8 District 11 should be more compact only
9 within the County of Hillsborough, these areas
10 currently in Pinellas County to be part of
11 redrawn District 10, and those areas currently
12 in Manatee County to be part of redrawn
13 District 13, and that was my focus and you have
14 the --

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and everything
16 that you provided to us will be in the record,
17 shared with every member here, and those maps
18 were extremely helpful. Thank you very much,
19 Ms. Morowati.

20 Next, Christopher Cano, and following
21 Mr. Cano's testimony, David, I think it is
22 Kulcsar, and then Sharon Janis, if you will be
23 on deck.

24 Mr. Cano, did I get your name right, sir?

25 MR. CANO: Yes, sir, yes, you did.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much for
2 being here and sharing some of your time with
3 us.

4 MR. CANO: Not a problem.

5 My name is Christopher Cano. I know many
6 of you in the room. I am born and raised here
7 in Hillsborough County, just celebrated 28
8 years on this planet and in this county, and I
9 am happy to be here this evening.

10 What I am here to talk about is not just
11 Amendments 5 and 6, of which has been touched
12 on, but also the Voting Rights Act, in which
13 each of you are very familiar with, and the
14 dilution of minority population groups and
15 their voting power.

16 Hillsborough County is under pre-clearance
17 because of past discrimination to the Hispanic
18 community, and that is why we are under
19 pre-clearance by the Justice Department. And
20 in saying that, when you go to redraw these
21 lines, I would caution you to take into account
22 the Hispanic community's population to avoid a
23 lawsuit and avoid a wastefulness of taxpayer
24 dollars.

25 Representative Janet Cruz's district,

1 District 58, happens to be one of the only
2 districts that we have always had a Hispanic
3 Representative, because of the large majority
4 Hispanic population. Currently it is
5 51 percent Hispanic. And there was a map
6 submitted to you earlier today via e-mail
7 through a nonprofit group called LatinoJustice
8 up in New York, which actually handles, you
9 know, this issue that we're talking about as
10 far as dilution of Hispanic voting power.

11 We would ask that you would actually
12 re-include, as it once was, Town and Country in
13 her district, which is a large Hispanic
14 neighborhood, because in the end, all of these
15 debates that we are having break down the
16 neighborhoods, you know, should this
17 neighborhood be in this district, should that
18 neighborhood be in that district, and you can't
19 properly draw these lines unless you take
20 neighborhoods into account. I, myself, am on
21 the Board of Directors for the Wellswood
22 neighborhood here, and we are very happy to
23 have Representative Cruz as our Representative.
24 We would ask that you keep our communities and
25 stop dividing them up.

1 I know it is going to come down to
2 Representative Young and Representative Cruz
3 getting together and deciding where they want
4 to draw their border at. So we would ask that
5 you draw everything between Hillsborough Avenue
6 and Waters Avenue and put that into District
7 58, and we would hope that they would work
8 together to do that.

9 People have concerns about gerrymandering,
10 and for many of you in the room, you talked
11 about 5 and 6 and you talked about
12 gerrymandering. Well, gerrymandering is
13 simple. If you direct yourself up to the House
14 districts, you can see that our esteemed Chair
15 Weatherford's district goes into Hillsborough
16 County. And we would ask, why is that
17 necessary when you represent pretty much all of
18 Pasco, why do you need that sliver, New Tampa?
19 That is what Amendments 5 and 6 were designed
20 to stop, and that is what we ask that you do is
21 that you make the districts compact, that you
22 take in our geographical boundaries and that
23 you do what the voters of the state of Florida
24 have asked you to do last November. Thank you
25 for your time.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
2 Mr. Cano.

3 Our next speaker will be David -- is it
4 Kulscar? Kulcsar, thank you very much.

5 And since the hearing has begun, great
6 news. We have had another 34 people sign up to
7 speak since we started. So now -- now we are
8 into triple digits, and so, therefore, I am
9 going to take the prerogative of the Chair to
10 make sure we hear from as many as we can, and I
11 am going to ask if you could possibly hold your
12 verbal comments to about two minutes, and then
13 we will take your written comments and pass
14 them out to the committee and make sure they
15 are available to the public as well.

16 And with that, David, you are recognized.

17 MR. KULCSAR: Okay. I don't want to seem
18 like I hold any animosity towards any one of
19 you. I don't know any of you really that much
20 personally at all, so don't assume I am
21 attacking you. But as I stand here, I am
22 looking at the incoming Speaker of the House
23 and the incoming Senate President. These two
24 men have been ensured these positions based on
25 the predictability of the elections in our

1 Legislature, and of which they are in charge of
2 drawing the majorities for the 2012 session.

3 Masterfully, in 2002, the Republican party
4 in power has crafted a miraculous map that
5 ensured their lock on the state of Florida.
6 For the next ten years or so, the map has
7 pretty much done its job. However, this is
8 giving them a peace of mind to at least choose
9 people ahead of time. You have freshmen people
10 -- freshmen legislators being choosed to be
11 Speaker of the House, State Senate Presidents,
12 at the end of their eight-year terms and
13 eight-year term limits.

14 However, I feel this thing is a very
15 dangerous thing for our democracy. Our
16 predictability is making it very difficult for
17 us to really feel engaged with our Legislature
18 and our political system. If, say, you do
19 something very unpopular to the citizens of
20 Florida, we could vote you out. We want to
21 vote you out, but it may be pretty hard to. I
22 mean, we want more districts that are actually
23 more representative of the areas. And I have
24 drawn three maps for House, Senate and
25 Congress. A lot of them are swingy. I'm sorry,

1 but that's just how Florida is. We are not
2 called a swing state for nothing.

3 Now, I am not going to expect you guys to
4 draw maps that will draw yourselves out of a
5 job. That would be kind of futile to say,
6 wouldn't it? But I am going to say this: It
7 angers me as a voter, it repulses me as a
8 citizen and it depresses me as an American when
9 I see the maps that we have right now. Orlando
10 is sliced and diced four ways just so Winter
11 Park can have three Congressmen is wrong. And
12 when I also look at the maps we have in our
13 area, St. Petersburg -- the only person in St.
14 Petersburg that's actually really in District
15 12, I think -- or which one, Kathy Castor's
16 district -- is just the black section of it --

17 SENATOR GAETZ: And David, can I ask if
18 you might --

19 MR. KULCSAR: I am almost done.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: -- summarize?

21 MR. KULCSAR: Yeah. What I am saying is
22 simply we need to be honest and more equitable
23 in our districts at least, because Bill Young,
24 his district has been -- let's just put it this
25 way: Pinellas County has not voted for a

1 Republican President since George Bush, Sr.,
2 and Bill Young has stayed possibly a little bit
3 longer, whatnot, his district or whatnot could
4 be a little bit better if it had all Pinellas
5 County. So --

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
7 David, and our next speaker is Sharon Janis and
8 then Christopher Shalosky, and following
9 Christopher is Mickey Castor. And, again, we
10 ask, just in respect for all of those people
11 who have come who are your friends and
12 neighbors who want to speak behind you, if you
13 could hold your verbal comments to about two
14 minutes.

15 You are recognized.

16 MS. JANIS: I live in St. Petersburg
17 and --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Could I ask you to pull
19 the mike up? Tommy, would you pull that up?
20 Please go ahead.

21 MS. JANIS: Okay. I am from St.
22 Petersburg, and I hope you will excuse me
23 reading a note from my Blackberry, because my
24 thoughts want to fly away with the butterflies
25 in my stomach, so -- for a long time, Florida

1 politicians have been drawing voting districts
2 in ways to keep themselves in office and to
3 favor their party. As you know, last November,
4 we, the people, overwhelmingly passed
5 Amendments 5 and 6 so that districts can be
6 drawn in ways that are fair and logical. They
7 would have districts drawn in ways that makes
8 them compact, equal in population, and they can
9 use the existing geographical boundaries.
10 Amendments 5 and 6 are conducive to two -- to
11 democracy. Real communities would have a
12 voice, instead of contrived ones.

13 As you know, districts would not be drawn
14 to favor or disfavor a particular candidate or
15 party, and the real reasons the court
16 challengers are there are simply about
17 protecting those in power. They are not really
18 about protecting minority rights or democracy.

19 Thank you.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 Sharon, for your good testimony.

22 Next, Christopher Shalosky and then Mickey
23 Castor with the League of Women Voters and then
24 Christine Goding with the Polk County Elections
25 Office.

1 Christopher, thank you for coming, and the
2 floor is yours.

3 MR. SHALOSKY: Thank you, sir. My name is
4 Chris Shalosky. I have been a resident of
5 Florida since 1988 and a resident of
6 Hillsborough County since 2004.

7 I just want to start by saying thank you
8 very much for having these public hearings.
9 The government works best when it is open and
10 transparent, and I, for one, am very happy and
11 very pleased that you guys are taking our
12 inputs first before you draw maps, because it
13 is usually done in darkness. We like it done
14 in the light. So thank you for listening to us
15 first.

16 I want to say that you guys have a very
17 difficult task ahead of you, Amendments 5 and 6
18 provide a lot of ambiguity, and I am just
19 afraid that that is going to be the lawyer
20 employment act of this year, because the people
21 that should be the winners in this
22 redistricting act are the people and it
23 shouldn't be tied up in the courts for years,
24 and I am just afraid it is.

25 And a lot of people have covered the

1 topics I wanted to cover, but one other one
2 that someone hasn't is that when we talk about
3 favoring or disfavoring a candidate, if you
4 take any part of a candidate's current district
5 away, aren't you disfavoring him? Those are
6 his current constituents, they are people who
7 vote for him. So if you take away part of his
8 current district, you are disfavoring him. So
9 I don't see how you can win with the way this
10 bill is written.

11 So I do appreciate the way you guys are
12 going about it, I think you've got a tough road
13 ahead of you, and I just wish you good luck.
14 Thank you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
16 Chris, appreciate it.

17 Next we will hear from Mickey Castor with
18 the League of Women Voters and then Christine
19 Goding with the Polk County Elections Office
20 and then Jack Keates with Tampa 912 Group.
21 Jack, if you will come down, please.

22 Ms. Castor, thank you for coming. It is
23 good to see you.

24 MS. CASTOR: Good to see all of you, and
25 thank you for coming and giving us an

1 opportunity to provide input.

2 I am the President of the Hillsborough
3 County League of Women Voters, and all of you
4 as members of the redistricting committee have
5 a very important responsibility. You have two
6 choices in how you carry out that
7 responsibility. You can continue on your
8 announced timeline of adopting the new maps in
9 March. This will result in confusion and chaos
10 for all concerned. Your own legislative
11 attorney said this timeline will create massive
12 voter confusion, chaos for all concerned.
13 Elections supervisors, you have heard from
14 Dr. Lennard, who talks about the difficulties
15 that this timeline would create for all
16 elections supervisors, for candidates and
17 potential candidates, who will have a very
18 short time frame to know what district they are
19 running in and how to mount a campaign, and
20 most of all, voters will be confused, because
21 they will have a very short time to get to know
22 the candidates in their district, the potential
23 candidates in their district. Surely your
24 commitment to good government will not allow
25 you to pursue such an outcome.

1 The alternative is you can follow the
2 timeline submitted to you on August 10th of
3 this year by the League of Women Voters of
4 Florida, Democracia, the NAACP and Common
5 Cause. How many of you have seen and agree
6 with that timeline? Anybody seen it? Good.

7 In summary, it asks four things: To
8 publish and commit to an accelerated
9 timeline --

10 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Castor, again,
11 out of respect for those behind you, could I
12 ask you to summarize, please?

13 MS. CASTOR: Yes.

14 -- adopt a rule requiring all maps to be
15 filed by October 3rd, adopt a rule requiring
16 all committee action on redistricting plans to
17 be completed by the end of 2011 and adopt a
18 rule requiring all plans to be voted on the
19 first week of the session.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

21 MS. CASTOR: This will not deviate from
22 your constitutional requirements. You can do
23 it. We hope you will. Thank you.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Castor,
25 very useful testimony.

1 And now, Christine Goding with the Polk
2 County Elections Office, then Jack Keates with
3 Tampa 912 Group and then Scott Barrish.

4 Ms. Goding, thank you very much for being
5 here.

6 MS. GODING: Thank you for giving me the
7 chance to speak. I am the Deputy Supervisor of
8 Elections from Polk County, as you said, and
9 this is the third redistricting process that I
10 will be going through. I have been with the
11 office for 20 years. I am thankful that we all
12 have so much better tools to use as we go
13 through this process now, but as Dr. Lennard
14 spoke earlier, we do have a lot of work to get
15 done in a short time frame. So I really just
16 want to echo what he had to say and just ask
17 for as much time as we can to get the
18 information out to the voters and get the right
19 ballot to the right voters, because of that
20 timeline with -- you know, if you finish at the
21 best possible time scenario, we have two weeks
22 to get absentee ballots out to our overseas
23 voters. So thank you for that consideration.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Goding, and
25 I hope that you will have a chance to stay to

1 the end of the hearing, as well as Ms. Castor,
2 because occasionally there are some things that
3 get put into the bloodstream, and after a while
4 they actually sound like facts, and I think you
5 will get some reassurance when you hear from
6 the Speaker Designate later.

7 Jack Keates. Jack, thanks for coming
8 tonight, giving us your time.

9 MR. KEATES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
10 members of the jury.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: That is the jury.

12 MR. KEATES: I know, I know. I was going
13 to mention that.

14 I didn't bring any maps tonight. I didn't
15 bring any fancy terminology. I brought an
16 experience.

17 Last year before the November election, I
18 was driving down 41 through Parrish -- or,
19 pardon me, Palmetto, down in northern Manatee
20 County, and saw a sign -- pardon me, multiple
21 signs for Kathy Castor. I honestly don't
22 remember if I saw any for Senator Joyner, but I
23 do remember because Kathy Castor, whatever you
24 think of her politically -- I live just outside
25 of Temple Terrace. That is 40 miles between

1 there and down there.

2 That is one of the reasons why I am here
3 tonight is because we are gerrymandered.
4 Whether we like it or not, Florida has a
5 problem. It is in your hands. I don't -- I
6 don't envy you your job, I really don't,
7 Republican or Democrat, I don't care. It would
8 be easy to just say, "fix it," but you are not
9 going to be able to make everybody happy. I
10 don't even expect you to make me happy, but
11 please, please work on it. Keep these citizens
12 in mind.

13 I didn't realize until I came in here
14 today, although I have heard some of your
15 reruns, and they are pretty good, and I have
16 heard other people who feel like I do, it is
17 always nice to know the majority of these
18 people in this county feel the same way.

19 Thank you.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much. Thank
21 you, Jack. And we heard, by the way, Jack, up
22 in Alachua County from a civics teacher who I
23 think was an official of the Democratic party,
24 so, therefore, he had to be trusted, being a
25 civics teacher, of course, that gerrymandering

1 didn't get its start in Florida or even with
2 Governor Elbridge Gerry in Massachusetts, but
3 it was that rascal Patrick Henry who drew some
4 strange lines to try to push his enemy, James
5 Madison, out of a congressional seat. So it is
6 all of the way back to those rascals Patrick
7 Henry and James Madison. We are in good
8 company.

9 Scott Barrish is next, and following
10 Mr. Barrish, Adriane Lunny and then Vera
11 Chapman.

12 Mr. Barrish, you are recognized, and we
13 are pleased you are here.

14 MR. BARRISH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15 My name is Scott Barrish. I have been a
16 Hillsborough County resident for over ten
17 years, very active in local and state politics,
18 as some of you here on this panel are well
19 aware.

20 Amendments 5 and 6 that was passed this
21 election cycle, who wouldn't want fair
22 districts? However, when you read those
23 amendments, the terms are very ambiguous and
24 vague, and it's going to be extremely difficult
25 for this body to come up with concrete

1 definitions of those terms and come to an
2 agreement on how to draw these districts. As
3 much as you want to do it and pass it in the
4 Legislature, it is going to go to the courts,
5 and that is not fair. We cannot hold the
6 judges accountable, but we can hold you
7 accountable. So please work on getting these
8 definitions and passing these districts in the
9 Legislature. Thank you.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
11 Mr. Barrish.

12 Next, Adriane Lunny, if you are here,
13 Ms. Lunny, and then Vera Chapman, and then if
14 Joseph McCormick will come down to the on deck
15 circle, we would be grateful.

16 Ms. Lunny, thank you so much for being
17 here tonight, and you are recognized.

18 MS. LUNNY: My name is Adriane Lunny, I am
19 from Sun City Center, Florida, and I won't take
20 your time repeating what other people have
21 said. I would just like to remind you that
22 Amendments 5 and 6 were passed by a majority of
23 voters, Independents, Republicans and
24 Democrats. It was not a one-party deal. Thank
25 you.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
2 Ms. Lunny.

3 Vera Chapman. How are you?

4 MS. CHAPMAN: Doing just fine.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Good to see you. We are
6 delighted you are here, and you are recognized.

7 MS. CHAPMAN: Thank you, thank you. Let
8 me get this down.

9 I am from Sun City Center. I am a -- I
10 live in a community of about 20,000 people. In
11 season, we have 20,000. This time of the year,
12 we don't.

13 Sad to say, it depends on which side of
14 Route 674 who represents you, and that causes a
15 lot of confusion. Maybe that is what you want.
16 I would certainly hope not. To give you
17 further definition, my Congressman -- I'm in
18 Congressional District 12, Senate District 10
19 and State House 63.

20 Sixty-three percent of Floridians voted
21 for fair districts. No statewide elected
22 official got 63 percent of the vote. And I
23 know that percentage is higher than many of you
24 got. Even Dean Cannon didn't get 63 percent.

25 We are the people. You need to stop

1 wasting our time and our money on these sham
2 hearings and your desire to overturn 5 and 6.

3 I am old enough to be the mother of some
4 of you here on this panel, and I can assure
5 you, if you were my child, you would be taken
6 behind the shed and it would be a darn stiff
7 switch that would take your hineys.

8 Use the Fair Districts rules when you draw
9 your official maps. Finally, if you do not
10 understand terminology like "compact,"
11 "contiguous," "fair," I recommend you buy a
12 dictionary.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. And now from
14 the other side of the woodshed, Joseph
15 McCormick, and following Mr. McCormick, we have
16 Judy Davis McCormick. You are related?

17 MR. McCORMICK: Spouse, yes.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay. And you are not
19 going to let her speak first?

20 MR. McCORMICK: Well, I was, but you
21 called me down first, so I came first.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay, okay, because if she
23 spoke first, then that way you could make your
24 remarks consistent. Now you are on your own,
25 my friend.

1 MR. McCORMICK: Okay, I will let her speak
2 first.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: All right. Wise man, wise
4 man. Judy, you are recognized.

5 MS. McCORMICK: He knows when to give up
6 the floor.

7 I am Judy Davis McCormick. I have lived
8 in Florida for 40 years, and lived in Tampa for
9 17 years, I guess, the same amount of time I
10 have been married to this wonderful man.

11 During the last several days, I have been
12 working on creating district maps. The My
13 District Builder website is very easy to use as
14 long as I am keeping the districts very simple
15 and straightforward. When working on areas of
16 the state where I have lived, Tampa,
17 Tallahassee, Panama City, Ft. Walton and the
18 Keys, I have no problem. The difficulty comes
19 when I start trying to keep like communities
20 together and other areas with which I am not so
21 familiar.

22 While doing this exercise, it occurred to
23 me that the group of people most qualified to
24 understand the various communities in all areas
25 are the elected county Supervisors of

1 Elections. I understand, as Dr. Lennard has
2 said, that they have created the VDTs, but --
3 and -- I'm sorry -- that they have created the
4 VDTs. I changed my notes. But perhaps if this
5 group were given more of a role in
6 redistricting in the future, the process would
7 be made simpler. Not only do they know their
8 areas better than outsiders, they also know the
9 difficulties in creating the many complicated
10 ballots that are required for each election,
11 and they are elected without political
12 affiliation since 2008.

13 As an added benefit of placing the
14 responsibilities on the 67 county supervisors,
15 the legislators of our state would be removed
16 from any cloud of suspicion that they are
17 creating districts to benefit their own
18 political parties.

19 Perhaps the next amendment Florida voters
20 should consider is to remove the charge of
21 redistricting from the legislators and place it
22 in the capable hands of the state's county
23 Supervisors of Elections. Thank you.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. And
25 now we will hear from the lower chamber of the

1 house of McCormick. Joseph McCormick, thank
2 you very much for being here. You now know
3 which lines to stay within.

4 MR. McCORMICK: That is right, thank you.
5 I will be brief. Thank you for the opportunity
6 to speak today on redistricting.

7 By way of disclosure, I signed the Fair
8 District petition, contributed a small amount
9 of money to help pass it and voted for them. I
10 would ask any members of either the House
11 Redistricting or the Senate Reapportionment
12 Committee to remove themselves from their
13 committee if they have any conflict of interest
14 or perceivable conflict of interest in this
15 matter.

16 For example, Senator Gaetz, you -- the
17 website shows that you have -- you also lead
18 the Florida Leadership Alliance. That group
19 has contributed \$10,000 to the legal defense
20 funds of U.S. Representatives Mario Diaz-Balart
21 and Corrine Brown. That lawsuit attempts to
22 defeat the restructuring -- the redistricting
23 amendments as they relate to federal voting
24 districts. This apparent conflict of interest
25 seems an easy target for any future lawsuit to

1 overturn the actions of the 2012 Legislature in
2 drawing up new congressional districts and, in
3 turn, state redistricting.

4 In the best interest of the people of
5 Florida, if any of you have such a conflict of
6 interest, please remove yourself from your
7 Senate or House committee before taking any
8 action on this when committee meetings begin in
9 September. You will restore a huge amount of
10 confidence of the people of Florida in their
11 elected representatives if you will do so.
12 Thank you.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. And,
14 Mr. McCormick, I hope you will have a chance to
15 stay until the end. I think you will be able
16 to get some information that might disabuse you
17 of any you might have there.

18 John -- is it Teti with the League of
19 Women Voters? And John, I'm sorry I didn't
20 give you a long enough heads-up, but following
21 John, Charlie Touchton and then Mark Smith.

22 John, did I get your name right?

23 MR. TETI: It is John Teti.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Teti. I am very sorry,
25 sir. You are recognized.

1 MR. TETI: Thank you. Welcome to Tampa,
2 distinguished visitors. I really do appreciate
3 the opportunity tonight.

4 I am speaking on behalf of the League of
5 Women Voters. I wish to apologize, first of
6 all, to the Legislature, because somehow we,
7 the people, didn't make ourselves clear in
8 November. We told you what we wanted. We, the
9 people, sent you to Tallahassee to -- with an
10 unambiguous mandate with the passage of
11 Amendments 5 and 6. Yet we obviously left
12 leaving you something that you didn't
13 understand.

14 You joined in a lawsuit to defeat that,
15 and we asked you to drop that lawsuit, stop
16 spending our money, we, the people, stop that
17 immediately, and it is a wasteful and foolish
18 effort.

19 Having watched some of the videos of the
20 past conferences across the state, it would
21 still seem that you are dumbfounded in not
22 understanding what we, the people, are asking
23 for.

24 Let me add the voice for all here tonight
25 in saying that we, the people, sent you,

1 everyone, to Tallahassee to draw the districts.
2 It is not for us, the League of Women Voters,
3 or any other entity to actually draw them. We
4 can give you recommendations, and the League as
5 individuals are doing so, but the League will
6 not draw the -- as we did in 2000, because you
7 didn't listen to us. You completely ignored --
8 we spent a lot of money, and you completely
9 ignored what we did.

10 So we ask that you draw your maps, get on
11 with the job, and we want you to do this before
12 the end of March -- no, March 9th. We want to
13 see the maps in January. So thank you very
14 much.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Teti.

16 Charlie Touchton is next, and following
17 Charlie Touchton, Mark Smith and then Kenneth
18 Key, if you will please come down and take your
19 seat in the on deck circle.

20 Mr. Touchton, thank you for coming and
21 sharing your views with the committee.

22 MR. TOUCHTON: Thank you, Senator Gaetz.

23 Good afternoon, I am Charlie Touchton. I
24 live in South Tampa. I have lived in Florida
25 most of my life and in Tampa most of that time.

1 Number one, I really appreciate this
2 opportunity to talk to all of you and give you
3 one set of inputs relative to the task you have
4 in front of you. It is a challenging effort, I
5 know, and I don't envy you. And yet I can look
6 at the Amendments 5 and 6 and the broad
7 guidelines that those two amendments present to
8 you, and I wind up being fairly comfortable.
9 Admittedly, compact is kind of hard, and
10 practical might be kind of hard, but if I look
11 at it in terms of four fundamentals that I call
12 fair, balanced, cohesive and logical.

13 Fair and balanced is fairly
14 straightforward. All I am looking for there is
15 for every voter in every district to feel like
16 he has an opportunity to be heard and an
17 opportunity to reach out and touch his
18 legislator as I am able to do locally, to reach
19 out and touch my Senator as I am able to do
20 locally, and even though it is across the bay,
21 and therefore it is somewhat of a stretch and I
22 can talk to him -- to Dana more easily more
23 than I can talk to Jack, but at the same time,
24 that is the kind of reach-out that is
25 important.

1 The second piece, however, gets a little
2 bit more complicated, and that's where we get
3 to cohesive. Cohesive, compact, hard to say
4 exactly how you separate those two, but if we
5 look at House District 56 reaching from
6 Westchase on one end, I think, down to
7 Riverview on the other end, that is not compact
8 and that is not cohesive. You can't reach out
9 and touch. I am fortunate because I live in
10 South Tampa, and that is in the center. But if
11 I were -- if I were somebody that lived in
12 Westchase, and my Representative were down in
13 Riverview, that would be a problem.

14 Similarly, going across the river --
15 across the bay to St. Petersburg, similarly, if
16 we go into District 11, it just doesn't make
17 sense, and that is where --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Charlie, if I could get
19 you to bring it in for a landing.

20 MR. TOUCHTON: Yes, sir.

21 The -- try to reach out and touch --
22 Manatee doesn't make sense. The -- Pinellas
23 County in the case of District 11 doesn't make
24 sense. So what we need is to tighten our
25 boundaries however you find it in your best

1 interest to do so and --

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you very
3 much.

4 MR. TOUCHTON: -- I think we can do that.
5 Thank you very much, Senator. I appreciate the
6 opportunity to speak.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, sir, of course.
8 Thank you for your testimony.

9 Mark Smith is next, and following
10 Mr. Smith, we will have Kenneth Key, and then
11 if Ella Coffee would please come down and be
12 ready to testify.

13 Mr. Smith, thank you for coming, and you
14 are recognized, sir.

15 MR. SMITH: Thank you, and thank you for
16 giving me this opportunity --

17 SENATOR GAETZ: And if you could pull the
18 mike up, that way everyone can hear your
19 testimony.

20 MR. SMITH: Thank you.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

22 MR. SMITH: I appreciate that.

23 My name is Mark Smith. I am a resident of
24 Valrico, District 9. I am here today to
25 request the redistricting committee consider

1 leaving all of Valrico with -- and east
2 Hillsborough in District 9 for two reasons.
3 The first and foremost is that we want
4 Congressman Bilirakis to remain our
5 Congressional Representative. Second, we want
6 to remain with District 9 because this district
7 best represents our community.

8 In recent years, we have seen the failure
9 of corporations, financial institutions and
10 foreign governments. We have witnessed the
11 fundamental transformation of our healthcare
12 system and the near collapse of our very own
13 federal government. The change we are
14 experiencing is traumatic and is tearing apart
15 the social fabric of our society.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Sir, I need you to bring
17 it back to redistricting, please.

18 MR. SMITH: This district in District 9,
19 this is a multi-county band of bedroom
20 communities composed of commuters,
21 professionals, military veterans and small
22 business owners. This district is a homogenous
23 district, and the last thing that we want
24 changed is our congressional district where a
25 new Congressman's ideology will contrast with

1 the interests of our community. There is a
2 high potential that a new representative would
3 support their traditional base at the expense
4 of newly acquired voters and destabilize our
5 current effect of political representation.

6 There are two ways to divide up districts:
7 Geography or demographics. Because we are
8 largely a suburban district, our need for
9 representation differs at many levels from
10 neighboring districts. It would be a
11 disservice to assimilate parts of District 9
12 into districts with urban areas, as it would be
13 a disservice to the urban voters as well. I
14 believe a representative is at their best when
15 they are representing a defined group of
16 voters. When that interest is split, one group
17 will be favored at the expense of the other.
18 We will have a more effective representation
19 using our current demographic boundaries.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
21 We appreciate your testimony.

22 Next we will hear from Kenneth Key,
23 please. Kenneth, thank you for being here
24 tonight, then Ella Coffee and then Dan
25 Raulerson -- Raulerson, I apologize, Mayor of

1 the City of Plant City.

2 Kenneth, thank you for coming, and you are
3 recognized. Go Rays.

4 MR. KEY: Thank you for the opportunity to
5 speak here tonight. I agree with many of the
6 people that have spoken before, so I am not
7 going to -- try not to repeat too much of it.

8 But one of the things that the committee
9 and the Legislature needs to keep in mind is
10 the fact that an overwhelming majority of the
11 populous did approve Amendments 5 and 6, and it
12 is not very difficult to understand what the
13 terminology means. It is common sense. Chris
14 Hart actually said something earlier, which I
15 think may be the first time I have agreed with
16 him politically, but having the south St.
17 Petersburg part of Kathy Castor's district
18 makes no sense, unless you are gerrymandering.
19 It just -- it doesn't.

20 So if you use common sense -- and he also
21 looked back at the reason why 5 and 6 were
22 necessary to begin with. If the Legislature 10
23 years ago and 20 years ago had done their job
24 and drawn fair districts that made some
25 semblance lanes of sense, 5 and 6 would have

1 never happened, all right. We elect you to use
2 common sense, because it is like both parties
3 do it, you know. The Democrats did it just 20
4 years ago, you guys did it 10 years ago. Well,
5 let's break the cycle.

6 I do have two questions real quick I did
7 want to ask for the record, one of which is, is
8 there any private entity contributing funds to
9 help for the preparation of any map by any
10 Legislature? And, also -- and I think that
11 comes to conflict of interest, but also
12 Representative Precourt at the Boca Raton
13 hearing said that the House and Senate used
14 different District Builder software. What is
15 the difference between the two, are they using
16 the same data, and are there private software
17 programs being used to draw maps?

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Great questions, and we
19 will get those answers for you at the end,
20 assuming we have a little bit of time left.

21 Next, Ella Coffee, and then following
22 Ms. Coffee, Mayor Raulerson, and then Mike -- I
23 think it is Pheneger, I apologize if I
24 mispronounce, President of the ACLU of Florida.

25 Ms. Coffee, thank you for coming, and you

1 are recognized.

2 MS. COFFEE: Thank you. My name is Ella
3 K. Coffee, and I hope that buys me a couple
4 extra moments with Representative Weatherford
5 there. I reside in State House District 67.
6 The majority of that district is in Manatee and
7 Sarasota Counties. The district office is in
8 Sarasota. There isn't a district office in
9 Hillsborough County. I don't have as much in
10 common with the communities in Manatee and
11 Sarasota that I do in Hillsborough. Our
12 children attended public schools here in
13 Hillsborough County. Our youngest is actually
14 attending Thomas Jefferson High School where we
15 are tonight, as a senior and a member of the
16 AAA state champions, which will probably now
17 take those few moments from Representative
18 Weatherford now. We shop, we play and we vote
19 here in Hillsborough County. My representation
20 should be from Hillsborough County. I should
21 be able to visit an office in Hillsborough
22 County. District 56 fits that criteria. That
23 district office is in Riverview, which is my
24 community.

25 District 63, which is represented also by

1 a Representative out of the county in Polk
2 County, his office is in Lakeland. District 67
3 backs up to 63. Again, those Representatives
4 that are my neighbors should not have to travel
5 out of the county to visit their
6 Representative. Our boundaries for District 56
7 should include east of Interstate 75 to Balm
8 Boyette Road and south to State Road 672.

9 District 59 boundaries should continue up
10 41 to State Road 582, to include citizens that
11 share the same city council, county
12 commissioners, but remembering that communities
13 share the same interests.

14 District 58 should continue northwest from
15 Hillsborough Avenue to Sligh Avenue and
16 continue over west with the current boundaries.

17 The minority districts must be preserved.
18 The redistricting process is in place to ensure
19 we are represented by those who share our
20 community's interests, values and beliefs, and
21 who will be accountable to the citizens.
22 Communities share common languages,
23 characteristics such as housing, economic
24 factors, education, working in the same
25 industries, racial and ethnic commonalities.

1 When drawing maps --

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Coffee.

3 Could you conclude very, very quickly?

4 MS. COFFEE: Sure.

5 When drawing maps, they should be
6 continuous as it relates to communities. Help
7 make Florida as good as America's promise, one
8 person, one vote. Ensure that none of our
9 minority seats are held -- none of our minority
10 seats that are currently held end up being
11 fractured or cracked. Thank you.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Ms. Coffee.

14 Mr. Mayor, thank you for your service to
15 the community, and we are anxious to hear your
16 testimony, and following your testimony, it is
17 Mike Pheneger, I think -- is that correct --
18 with the ACLU, and then Evelito Otero, I
19 believe.

20 Mr. Mayor.

21 MAYOR RAULERSON: Thank you, Senator, and
22 first of all, thank all of you for being here.
23 Not only do you have a tough job, but you have
24 been threatened to be taken to the woodshed.
25 Now, I saw a bunch of you straighten up in your

1 seats when she said that, so apparently there's
2 enough of you up there old enough to know what
3 that really means. I won't say which ones, but
4 what I want to do first of all is to thank you.
5 I will be short, which is not my nature, but I
6 do want to say that we are -- in east
7 Hillsborough County, in the Plant City area, we
8 are happy with our current representation, both
9 at the state level and the federal level. We
10 represent the areas -- or the areas we are
11 represented by are 9 and 12. We are very happy
12 with those people, and we would really like for
13 you guys to figure out a way that we could get
14 a third one in there somehow. We would love to
15 have three U.S. Representatives from the Plant
16 City area.

17 However, practicality being what it is,
18 the most important thing I think is that we
19 need to understand -- and it has been
20 articulated by people before me very well, so I
21 will be short. We have a very
22 agricultural/industrial base group of people
23 and economy in east Hillsborough County. So
24 what we would ask is that you take that into
25 consideration and make sure that the

1 agricultural interests of Hillsborough County,
2 which is 62nd in the country in terms of all of
3 the counties of the United States in
4 agricultural production. And when you grow
5 food, and we have talked about how important
6 jobs are, when you grow food, folks, you grow
7 jobs, and that is important to this economy.
8 And east Hillsborough County and Hillsborough
9 County in general has done an extremely good
10 job of growing those jobs and growing the food
11 that feed the rest of the world.

12 In closing, I would certainly like to wish
13 you well, God speed and God bless you, good
14 luck. Thank you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
16 Mr. Mayor, and thank you for your service to
17 the people of your community.

18 Mike, I think I butchered your name.

19 MR. PHENEGER: It is Pheneger.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Say again, sir.

21 MR. PHENEGER: Say that P-h as an F, like
22 in telephone.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay.

24 MR. PHENEGER: It is Pheneger.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay. Thank you for

1 correcting me. And after your testimony,
2 Evelio Otero and then Maria Elbilbaisi, I
3 think. And I apologize, I know I messed that
4 one up.

5 Mike, you are recognized. Thanks for
6 coming.

7 MR. PHENEGER: Thank you. I am the
8 President of the ACLU of Florida. I am also a
9 retired Army colonel. I retired after a couple
10 of tours out at MacDill Air Force Base where I
11 was the Director of Intelligence for Special
12 Operations Command.

13 We are very interested in this thing. I
14 want to say dittos to Mickey Castor and the
15 elections supervisors on issues of timing, but
16 I would like to kind of take on the critics of
17 5 and 6, because I have noticed Representative
18 Weatherford here nodding a lot of the time when
19 they were up here.

20 They say that the words are vague and
21 ambiguous. Well, there's not much more vague
22 and ambiguous than nothing, and because without
23 5 and 6, that is what you've got, nothing. The
24 only guideline you have is to make the
25 districts relatively equal in population, okay.

1 So we have given you some districts. Now, I
2 think these are pretty easy to do. After equal
3 in population, you can say contiguous. A
4 district that is contiguous isn't separated by
5 Lake Okeechobee or Tampa Bay, things like that.
6 A district that is compact doesn't begin on the
7 east coast of the state of Florida and end up
8 in Ft. Myers. That is not compact. So we can
9 see that these districts, they may be subject
10 to some interpretation, they are there. All of
11 this is, in fact, possible.

12 Now, the other thing I would like to do is
13 talk a little bit about the districts and the
14 citizens-developed districts, because I have
15 heard Representative Weatherford now talk about
16 that twice, and using that as a basis. I must
17 tell you that I have my suspicions about using
18 citizens-established districts as the basis for
19 your consideration. First, elections have
20 consequences, and for better or for worse, we
21 have given you the job, okay. It is your
22 responsibility to draw the districts and apply
23 the constitutional standards.

24 The second thing I would like to say is
25 that I would be suspicious that you all have

1 kind of done the equivalent of salting the mine
2 and putting out districts from so-called
3 members of the citizenry to --

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Mike --

5 MR. PHENEGER: -- kind of conform to what
6 you want to do.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Colonel, in deference to
8 those behind you, if I could get you to wrap
9 up, sir.

10 MR. PHENEGER: I will wrap up, and I will
11 simply wrap up with this: If you all produce a
12 set of districts where each of you is not
13 absolutely sure that you are going to be
14 reelected, then maybe you all have done the
15 job. Thank you.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Colonel, and
17 thank you for your service to our country.

18 MR. PHENEGER: I have a gift for you.
19 Show me the maps. I will give one to each of
20 you.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. I always need
22 another campaign button. I can put it next to
23 my Spiro is the one.

24 Now, Evelio Otero. Did I pronounce that
25 name correctly?

1 MR. OTERO: Yes, you did. Before you did
2 it, only my mother used to call me Evelito.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Evelito.

4 MR. OTERO: So Evelio is my name.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Evelio. So I got it
6 right?

7 MR. OTERO: You got it.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Good. You are recognized.

9 MR. OTERO: Yes. Ladies and gentlemen, I
10 am Evelio Otero, I am also a retired colonel
11 from MacDill, and special operations commando
12 was my last assignment where we developed
13 international agreements and SOF, Special
14 Operations, and I also worked in Intelligence
15 with a central commander in the war beginning
16 on September 11, that is when we started, and
17 one thing that I learned that you are doing
18 very well is that intelligence comes before
19 operations. You are the infantry. We are
20 providing you the intelligence. It is very
21 difficult to do it the other way around. If
22 you develop the maps and nobody knows what is
23 going on, then it is going to be
24 self-defeating. So what you are doing right
25 now, obtaining the intelligence from us so you

1 can go ahead and develop the appropriate maps
2 is the way to go. I applaud you for that.

3 I also wanted to -- I also wanted you
4 folks to know that being a member of the Tampa
5 community since 1997 and having been one of the
6 senior-ranking Hispanics in Central Command and
7 the most senior-ranking Hispanic in Special
8 Operations Command, I am in touch with that
9 community. I am very much in touch with the
10 Hispanic community, and I would encourage you
11 to maintain the community as it is, to maintain
12 the integrity of the community, whether it is
13 in House 58, whether it is in the Senate 18,
14 Districts 18 and 58, please maintain them as
15 such. When it comes to the Congressional
16 district, the Congressional District 11, that
17 is fine, except Pinellas, which makes no sense
18 whatsoever. They are great people, love them
19 to death, I go there a lot to smoke my cigars,
20 but when it comes to political reasons, we
21 don't have anything in common. There are
22 issues that need to be discussed when it comes
23 to funding from universities, when it comes to
24 baseball parks, et cetera, that if there is no
25 actual representation for those -- for those

1 specific districts, it is self-defeating.

2 I just want to say thank you very much for
3 everything you are doing. I respect you very
4 much, and maintain your duty of elegance.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
6 Colonel.

7 And, Maria -- I am going to try this --
8 Elbilbaisi.

9 MS. ELBILBAISI: Yes.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Elbilbaisi. Maria
11 Elbilbaisi, thank you for being with us
12 tonight, and following Maria's testimony,
13 Carole Torres and then Benito Torres.

14 And you are recognized, ma'am. Thank you
15 for coming.

16 MS. ELBILBAISI: Thank you, members, for
17 coming here today to listen to us --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: And I apologize, ma'am, if
19 you could speak directly into the microphone,
20 that way everybody can hear you.

21 MS. ELBILBAISI: Thank you, members, for
22 coming here today to listen to us on a critical
23 issue that, depending on what you do, could
24 empower us or could diminish us.

25 My name is Maria, and I live in Ybor

1 neighborhood, a proud historical black
2 community of Tampa. At this time, House
3 District 59 is a minority black district, and
4 that I ask you to uphold in the State Senate
5 and in Congress, united with other communities
6 in Bradenton and St. Petersburg. We have the
7 opportunity to participate in the political
8 process and elect a Representative of our
9 choice. I ask you to maintain these districts
10 to give us a voice. The Florida Constitution
11 requires you. Thank you.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Maria, we appreciate your testimony.

14 And next, Carole Torres, please, and
15 following Carole Torres, Benito Torres, and
16 then Pat Spencer.

17 Ms. Torres, you are recognized. Thank you
18 for coming and sharing your thoughts tonight.

19 MS. TORRES: Thank you. My name is Carole
20 Torres, and I appreciate all of you listening
21 to all of us this evening. I will be brief,
22 because I know there are others behind me.

23 I am mainly here to ask you not to turn
24 back the wheels of political progress that we
25 have -- the black community here in Tampa have

1 witnessed in the past decades. The black
2 community in House District 59 constitutes a
3 majority, and we don't want this district split
4 up. In the State Senate and in Congress, our
5 community, along with others in Tampa Bay, form
6 majority districts that give us the ability to
7 elect a Representative of our choice. The
8 Voting Rights Act and Amendment 5 and 6 require
9 you to keep our community empowered. Not
10 following the law will result in unnecessary
11 and expensive lawsuits. They can be avoided if
12 you get it right the first time. Thank you so
13 much.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, ma'am.
15 And now we will hear from Benito Torres.
16 Benito, you were wise to let Carole go first.
17 And you are recognized, sir, and we are pleased
18 that you took time out of your day to come and
19 testify before the committee.

20 MR. TORRES: Thank you. I would like to
21 welcome everybody. I have lived in Tampa since
22 1973.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Could you speak directly
24 into the mike, because there are some folks in
25 the way back who could not hear you, sir?

1 MR. TORRES: Okay. I said I would just
2 like to welcome everybody, and I have lived in
3 Tampa just about since -- about the time since
4 I left New York City, that was 1973. So I
5 currently reside in the State House District 59
6 where we are proud to be represented by Betty
7 Reed. I also take part in electing our State
8 Senator, Arthenia Joyner, and Castor in the
9 U.S. House. In the State House seat, the black
10 community forms the majority. In the House,
11 Senate and in the U.S. House together, we --
12 with Hispanic voters, we form a
13 majority-minority district. We elect
14 candidates who know the needs of our community,
15 and we like it this way. I ask that when
16 redrawing the district boundaries, you maintain
17 these districts as much as possible so that our
18 voice stays strong and we are not weakened.
19 Thank you.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much,
21 sir. We appreciate that. And in this part of
22 our hearing, we are going to take a short
23 break, but in this part of our hearing, Pat
24 Spencer is going to be our final speaker, and
25 then don't go away, because we have lots more

1 folks who would like to share their views.

2 Ms. Spencer, thank you for coming tonight,
3 and we look forward to anything you may have to
4 share with us.

5 MS. SPENCER: Thank you very much. I,
6 too, would like to say thanks to all of you for
7 coming, and if you will notice, I am watching
8 each and every one of you, because I have read
9 so much about you, and I read about you,
10 especially during the sessions, but when you
11 can put a face with a name that you have read,
12 then when I read, I will know who I am upset
13 with or who I am pleased with. So thank you
14 for coming.

15 And maybe I don't agree with what
16 everybody has said, because a lot of people
17 have said the way you are doing the hearings
18 and doing your maps and not having the maps
19 here, I do not agree with that. So I am going
20 to be very brief with what I am saying and ask
21 that once you get all of the information at the
22 hearings and you get your maps drawn, in your
23 schedule will you please try to put in some
24 time that you can come back to the citizens and
25 let us see what you are presenting to us, and

1 that way, we can have some input. Thank you
2 and God bless.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
4 Ms. Spencer. And we will take a 15-minute
5 recess, but don't go away, come back after 15
6 minutes.

7 (Brief recess taken.)

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Would you start over?

9 MS. RACHEL: Yes.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: And would you speak
11 directly into the mike, please?

12 MS. RACHEL: Yes. My name is Wanda
13 Rachel, and I am a resident of Hillsborough
14 County and I have been a resident for over 40
15 years and I am a commercial truck driver. And
16 I am here today as a member of the
17 African-American community here in Tampa to ask
18 you to please reserve our vote when you redraw
19 your district lines.

20 Amendment 5 and 6, passed by over
21 60 percent of the voters, guarantees us our
22 rights as minorities to participate in the
23 political process and to elect representatives
24 of our choice. So I hope you will remain -- I
25 hope you will maintain the district that

1 currently allows us to have that
2 representation.

3 House District 59 is very important to us
4 as black minority-majority district. Please
5 don't undo that. Also, please uphold Senate
6 District 18 and Congressional District 11 as
7 districts that let African-Americans and
8 Hispanics from around Tampa Bay join together
9 to elect candidates of our choice.

10 Please follow the law and let our voices
11 be heard at all levels of the government, and
12 thank you for your time.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Rachel,
14 very much for your testimony tonight.

15 Next we will hear from Willie James
16 Jackson, and following Mr. Jackson, Eva
17 Collette, and then Patricia W. Hall from the
18 League of Women Voters.

19 Mr. Jackson, thank you for coming, and you
20 have the floor, sir.

21 MR. JACKSON: Okay. Hillsborough 3 --
22 good afternoon. My name is Willie Jackson. I
23 am a native of Florida -- I mean, Tampa,
24 Florida.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Could you pull the

1 microphone up just a little bit?

2 MR. JACKSON: I have been from Tampa,
3 Florida, for 60 years. I appreciate -- I
4 appreciate you -- I can't get this right. I
5 have to hold it up. I appreciate you coming
6 here to listen to us.

7 My main concern here today is to urge you
8 all to continue to -- the political progress
9 that we in the black community have witnessed
10 -- have witnessed here in the Tampa Bay area
11 over the past few decades.

12 In House District 59, the black community
13 is the majority, and we may -- I'm sorry -- we
14 want you to keep it that way. In the state --
15 in the State Senate and Congress -- Congress,
16 uniting with Hispanics would form a coalition
17 district, allowing us the ability to select a
18 Representative of our choice.

19 I would like to remind you legislators
20 that not only are we -- are you legally
21 required to keep our community empowered, but
22 it is just the right thing to do. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you very
24 much, Mr. Jackson. Great testimony.

25 Eva Collette is next, and following Ms.

1 Collette, Patricia Hall, and after Ms. Hall
2 speaks, Kathy Brown.

3 Ms. Collette, thank you for coming and
4 taking time from your evening to share your
5 views.

6 MS. COLLETTE: Thank you. I just am in
7 such awe that y'all have sat here for so long
8 and listened to so many people's different
9 views. I thank you for listening to mine. I
10 am going to speak very slowly so y'all know
11 exactly what I am speaking about.

12 I agree with Dr. Lennard and Mr. Wolff. I
13 see Mr. Wolff is no longer here, he has left,
14 but those -- they had my -- they said
15 everything I wanted to say, and I didn't want
16 to leave and y'all call my name and I am gone.
17 Thank you very much.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: We appreciate your taking
19 time, and your comment's important to us.

20 Next is Patricia Hall with the League of
21 Women Voters, and then Kathy Brown and then
22 Michael Weinbaum.

23 Ms. Hall, retired teacher?

24 MS. HALL: Yes.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Glad to have you here

1 tonight.

2 MS. HALL: Retired teacher from Jefferson
3 High School, no doubt.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: All right.

5 MS. HALL: The Legislature has had the
6 data necessary to draw district maps since
7 March. In the five months since, not a single
8 map drawn by any legislator has been revealed
9 to the public. Other states that have public
10 hearings do so in order to allow citizens the
11 opportunity to comment on the actual proposed
12 maps. For example, after maps are finalized in
13 Arizona, they are made available to the public
14 for comment for 30 days before final passage.
15 Why are you not showing us any maps? You have
16 had the census data for five months.

17 While you have created My District Builder
18 for the public to draw their own maps, the
19 system does not provide the tools necessary to
20 draw real statewide maps with measures of
21 compactness and other data.

22 Maps submitted by the public will not be
23 voted on. This mapping for the public is a
24 charade intended to make people believe they
25 have input when the real maps will be drawn by

1 consultants and presented with little or no
2 meaningful public input. The real mapping will
3 be done away from the public eye and without
4 meaningful public input.

5 Committee leaders have said the public
6 will have an opportunity to comment during the
7 redistricting process in Tallahassee. What
8 about the vast majority of us, as Pat Spencer
9 mentioned, who live nowhere near Tallahassee
10 and members of the public will not be allowed
11 speak in time-limited meetings? You promised
12 the public that they will have two or three-day
13 comment period before any votes are taken on
14 any proposal. Get real. How can citizens
15 hundreds of miles from Tallahassee review,
16 analyze and comment on complicated statewide
17 maps in two or three days?

18 And how many people have computers in
19 Florida? They tell us to send e-mails or post
20 comments on the website. Are they serious?
21 Will they really read hundreds of last-minute
22 e-mails or posts during the two or three-day
23 period? It is no wonder that the vast majority
24 of citizens who have been attending these
25 hearings have expressed suspicion --

1 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Hall, if I could
2 get you to bring it in for a landing.

3 MS. HALL: I will.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

5 MS. HALL: -- suspicion about the true
6 motives of legislators. There's something very
7 strange about this refusal to present any maps
8 for comment.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much --

10 MS. HALL: Thank you.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: -- Ms. Hall. And next,
12 Kathy Brown, and following Ms. Brown, Michael
13 Weinbaum, and then after Mr. Weinbaum, Matthew
14 Cooper.

15 Ms. Brown, thank you for taking your time,
16 and we look forward to what you have to share
17 with us.

18 MS. BROWN: Senators, Representatives and
19 fellow citizens, I am Kathy Brown, a 37-year
20 resident of Valrico. I have been semi-retired
21 for the last two years and have now --

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Ms. Brown, could you move
23 over like two inches? There you go, you are
24 right on the mike now.

25 MS. BROWN: Is that better?

1 I have been semi-retired for the last two
2 years, so I now have time to do my civic duty
3 and try to participate in government.

4 Thank you for allowing me to speak here.
5 I am truly awed by the task you have before
6 you. You can please some of the people all of
7 the time, all of the people some of the time,
8 but you can never please -- you cannot please
9 all of the people all of the time. I fear that
10 at the end of your task, most people will not
11 be pleased. However, I do -- do see the reason
12 for having the redistricting and getting rid of
13 gerrymandering. I do know one thing:
14 Gerrymandering is not a good thing.

15 And I live in District 9, which sprawls
16 from Tarpon Springs to east of Plant City. I
17 do not believe that that is a good way to plan
18 a district. When my -- when my Congressman
19 holds a town hall in Tarpon Springs, it is
20 quite a hardship for people in my area to
21 attend that town hall and have our views heard.
22 And yet parts of Valrico are in Congressional
23 District number 12. Those people have an
24 equally difficult task to get to their
25 Congressman.

1 As I said earlier, I realize you have a
2 daunting task to accomplish, but I just ask
3 that you set district boundaries that make
4 sense and keep communities together.
5 Valrico should not be divided into two
6 districts. Thank you.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
8 Ms. Brown.

9 And next -- did I get it correctly, it is
10 Michael Weinbaum?

11 MR. WEINBAUM: I just wanted to say yeah,
12 most people don't get that right, so --

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, thank you,
14 Mr. Weinbaum, for being here tonight, and you
15 are recognized, sir.

16 MR. WEINBAUM: I am not here to recommend
17 a specific district or a specific community
18 that can't be divided, because I understand
19 that districts are just like puzzle pieces. If
20 you say, well, this community can't be divided,
21 then you got a big piece and you got to work
22 other little pieces around it, and then all of
23 a sudden, someone else's community is divided.
24 Someone's community has got to be divided.

25 So the first districts that you should

1 draw should start at the corners of the state,
2 and you should just work your way until you get
3 enough people. You should start at Key West,
4 go north on U.S. 1 until you get enough people
5 for whichever district it is. You should start
6 at the Alabama border, keep working your way
7 east until you get enough people. Now, I mean,
8 unless you run into a geographically compact
9 minority population.

10 I also heard that -- some of the
11 commenters said they didn't know what
12 "feasible" meant. Every district is feasible.
13 If you drew it, it is done. That means --
14 "feasible" just means it can be done.

15 "Practicable." That is, again, a
16 meaningless term. If I was able to do it, that
17 means someone else could do it, and it seems
18 practical to me.

19 So the only term I want you guys to focus
20 on is "compact." I went to high school in
21 Jacksonville, had a good geometry education, I
22 got my engineering degree, University of
23 Central Florida, so I am a product of you guys'
24 schools, thank you for that. And a circle is
25 the most compact shape possible. "Compact" is

1 the ratio of perimeter over area. A square is
2 a very compact shape, a rectangle slightly less
3 so. Something that is C-shaped or U-shaped,
4 like District 12, very non-compact. Now, what
5 this means, since "compact" is now in our
6 Constitution, that if you draw district lines
7 and I am able to simply move your lines and
8 make something more compact -- and, again, this
9 is a mathematical value, it is a ratio. If
10 mine is less than yours and therefore more
11 compact, and both of our lines affect the
12 minority representation about the same way, I
13 win, you lose.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: See you in court. Your
15 time is up. Thank you very much.

16 And next, Matthew Cooper, and then Sara, I
17 think it is Scher, with Planned Parenthood and
18 then Rod Jurado.

19 Matthew, thank you for coming tonight, and
20 you are recognized, sir.

21 MR. COOPER: Thank you. I am Matthew
22 Cooper. I am a fifth-generation Floridian. My
23 great-great-grandfather was one of the first
24 sheriffs of Dade County.

25 History is important. If we look back ten

1 years, it is important to remember our
2 Republican Legislature was able to gerrymander
3 districts so that in the DC Florida
4 congressional delegation, there are 16
5 Republicans now, only nine Democrats, even
6 though Florida boasts a 600,000 dollar more --
7 more Democratic voters than Republican.

8 The Fair District amendment threatened
9 this gerrymandering system, and, of course,
10 Republican domination. There could have been
11 only two responses, and there were, confusion
12 and delay, confusion by pushing two competing
13 amendments to confuse voters as to which was
14 the real one, delay by spending 2.5 million
15 taxpayer money to kill the amendments that
16 passed, confusion by encouragement now of
17 hundreds of maps when only one really matters,
18 delay by promising to release maps only days
19 before filing deadlines, and confusion by
20 forcing court challenges to overlap election
21 periods, finally, delay as shown by
22 Representative Weatherford's promise to give us
23 pertinent information, but only after all of us
24 have given our comments.

25 I suggest to you, Republican Gaetz and

1 Republican Weatherford, that you do have maps,
2 they do exist and they are very detailed. I
3 call on you both to reveal tonight the partisan
4 maps I submit you have, postpone these hearings
5 and reschedule them when we have something to
6 work with. Thank you for your time.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
8 Matthew.

9 And next is Sara Scher with Planned
10 Parenthood, and after Sara, then Rod Jurado and
11 then Jocelyn Dickman.

12 Sara, thank you for coming, and you are
13 recognized.

14 MS. SCHER: Thank you. My name is Sara
15 Scher, and I am on the Board and speaking on
16 behalf of Planned Parenthood of Southwest and
17 Central Florida.

18 It appears to us that the Legislature's
19 timeline for drawing districts is extremely
20 unfair to Florida voters. Along with so many
21 others, we question why the Legislature won't
22 prepare the new district maps earlier, leave
23 time to debate them this fall, then pass them
24 during the first week of the legislative
25 session, instead of waiting to finalize the

1 maps until the end of the legislative session
2 in March 2012.

3 Florida's maps will be approved later than
4 almost every other state in the nation. Our
5 new districts may not be finalized until
6 August, just two months before the
7 all-important 2012 elections. Election
8 supervisors will have insufficient time to
9 prepare for elections, and it is unlikely
10 absentee and oversea ballots will be finalized
11 by their deadline for mailing. Challengers or
12 new candidates will have little, if any, time
13 to mount campaigns. Uncertainty as to what a
14 district will look like helps incumbents,
15 because incumbents are already known to the
16 voters and have a huge advantage in raising
17 money. Challengers will be reluctant to throw
18 their hats in the ring.

19 One can only think that the current
20 timeline is designed as an incumbent protection
21 plan. Without maps to comment on, the public
22 does not have an opportunity for meaningful
23 comment before final passage. Is this the way
24 our democracy is supposed to work? We don't
25 think so.

1 Also, why is the Legislature spending our
2 precious tax dollars, over \$1 million so far,
3 to oppose Fair Districts passed during last
4 year's election by 63 percent of the
5 electorate? All of this money is being spent
6 unnecessarily while teachers are being fired,
7 social services are being cut, fewer women are
8 able to access healthcare and not a single job
9 is being created.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Scher, sadly,
11 sadly, your supporters used up the rest of your
12 time. So, therefore, we thank you for your
13 testimony.

14 And our next -- our next testifier is Rod
15 Jurado. Mr. Jurado, are you here? And
16 following Mr. Jurado, Jocelyn Dickman.

17 MR. JURADO: Rod Jurado. I have been --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Jurado, if you would
19 speak directly into the mike, it would be very
20 helpful.

21 MR. JURADO: All right. Rod Jurado. I
22 have been a citizen of Hillsborough County for
23 53 years now. In fact, my mother is a graduate
24 of Jefferson High School, my grandmother was a
25 student here.

1 When I was in high school, I was told that
2 there's no point in being a Republican because
3 you can't vote. And over the time, I studied
4 my civics, I know that for 120 or so years,
5 there really wasn't any discussion about how
6 districts are going to be laid out, and I, for
7 one, thank all of you, both Republican and
8 Democrat, for being willing to open up. I know
9 many of you here personally, I have talked to
10 you, I've got your phone numbers, we have
11 talked, whether it is in Tallahassee or in -- I
12 see Erik Fresen from Miami here. I appreciate
13 the fact that we have people from all over, and
14 I know it is -- you are hearing people telling
15 you -- living in Temple Terrace, last time ten
16 years ago, you started in the north and started
17 in the south and came to the middle, and we
18 ended up in a very fortunate situation with
19 three Congressmen. It will never happen again,
20 but it got us a chance to do a lot of things,
21 get a lot of things done. We also ended up
22 with two county commissioners in Temple
23 Terrace, and I think that we've got to be
24 careful about reminding people that more
25 representation is better than limited

1 representation by saying your boundaries are
2 more important than your people.

3 And so thank you very much for all the
4 time you have and all the work you are putting
5 in. You remind me of what is happening right
6 now in New York with the weathermen who are
7 being beat up because the storm wasn't as
8 strong as it should have been. So thank you
9 very much for being willing to be the
10 weatherman for us and trying to predict the
11 future and do the things by listening to us
12 before giving us your maps.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Rod,
14 for your comments. And next, Jocelyn Dickman,
15 and following Ms. Dickman, Joann Matthews, and
16 then in the on deck circle would be Mike
17 Michelin, please.

18 Ms. Dickman, thank you so much for coming,
19 and we are anxious to hear what you might have
20 to share with us.

21 MS. DICKMAN: I know you are.

22 Hello, everyone. First thing I want to
23 say is, you are asking us to trust you as a
24 body to do what is right for the citizens who,
25 as I said in Pasco, are your bosses. Your job

1 is to do -- do things for the voters, for the
2 citizens. It is very difficult to trust our
3 Legislature this year after the majority in the
4 Legislature, and you all know who I am speaking
5 to and who I am not at this point, this year
6 passed the most vial, despicable, depraved to
7 the point of criminal legislation against
8 voters in the state of Florida with the Voter
9 Suppression Act. How are we to believe that a
10 body who could pass that kind of law would do
11 anything for the people of Florida, number one.

12 Number two -- also, Representative
13 Weatherford, my Representative, when you
14 campaigned this year earlier -- last year,
15 sorry, you had ads that said you didn't believe
16 in bigger government, but you believe in better
17 government, which is very interesting coming
18 from an incumbent --

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Now, ma'am, if you want to
20 talk to Representative Weatherford, I know he
21 will stay after and chat with you, but let's
22 keep it to redistricting.

23 MS. DICKMAN: Okay, that is. That's --

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Let's see if we can bring
25 it back to redistricting.

1 MS. DICKMAN: It's coming right back there
2 if you let me have a chance.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Hey, ladies and gentlemen,
4 now we will listen to this lady with respect,
5 and she is going to keep it to redistricting.

6 MS. DICKMAN: It is coming back.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay. Let's see if we can
8 bring it into the zone.

9 MS. DICKMAN: It is the difference -- it
10 will.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay.

12 MS. DICKMAN: It is the difference of the
13 definition of "bigger government" versus
14 "better government." "Bigger government" is
15 you pick the district. It is Representative
16 Weatherford who advertises for better
17 government, drawing a district for his brother
18 to run for State House and himself run for
19 Congress.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: No, no, ma'am --

21 MS. DICKMAN: It's redistricting.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: -- ma'am, let's keep it --
23 let's keep it to the subject of the hearing.
24 If you want to meet with --

25 MS. DICKMAN: Is the subject drawing

1 districts? Because that is what I am trying to
2 speak about.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Try -- try to bring it
4 back to the subject of the hearing.

5 MS. DICKMAN: Okay, back to redistricting.
6 I know it's been said at these hearings that no
7 one on this panel has in the past drawn a
8 district for themselves, and I understand that
9 that is a truth. The issue isn't what you have
10 done in the past, it is what you are going to
11 do in the future with this new redistricting.
12 Yes, you haven't drawn your districts in the
13 past, but I want you to tell us that you are
14 not going to personally draw your districts the
15 way you want them for yourself in the future.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much for
17 your testimony. Following Ms. Dickman, we will
18 now have Joann Matthews. Ms. Matthews, are you
19 here? Joann Matthews? Well, I'm sorry, she
20 apparently gave up on us.

21 Mike Michelin. Mike, are you here?
22 Following Mike, we will have Greg Vawter and
23 then Helen Baines.

24 Mike, thanks for coming, and the floor is
25 yours.

1 MR. MICHELIN: I appreciate the
2 opportunity to be here. It is not every day
3 that the public gets to address a large
4 contingent of the legislators, so out of due
5 respect, I think that we should be able to say
6 anything we want.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Sir, I apologize, could
8 you speak a little more closely into the
9 microphone?

10 MR. MICHELIN: Sorry. I said that if you
11 want to talk about respect, I believe that
12 people should be able to state whatever they
13 need in the time that they have up here, and
14 that you should not be --

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, I apologize, sir,
16 but we are just here to talk about
17 redistricting, not about other subjects that
18 might be important --

19 MR. MICHELIN: Okay.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: -- so if you can keep it
21 to redistricting, we would be delighted to hear
22 your testimony.

23 MR. MICHELIN: I have a prepared
24 statement, and it is not because anybody handed
25 me a script, it was because I hear you can get

1 more respect and attention by withholding your
2 anger and criticism from your public comments,
3 which I find it very hard to do with what is
4 going on in Tallahassee right now.

5 Two of the biggest issues with
6 redistricting is what everybody else has said,
7 the delay tactics and the procrastination that
8 is going to push us right up into the midst of
9 the election cycle next year. Furthermore, the
10 litigation that is being --

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Mike, we are missing some
12 of your good comments. If you would stay right
13 on top of the mike, if you can. I apologize.

14 MR. MICHELIN: The litigation that has
15 been brought forth against the amendments that
16 were passed last -- the election, no matter
17 what you feel about Amendments 5 and 6, the
18 election was last year, they passed
19 overwhelmingly, and now the litigation that is
20 being brought using the same tax money from the
21 people that voted overwhelmingly to pass these
22 amendments is unconscionable and it should
23 outrage every citizen of the state.

24 The people have sent a voice to
25 Tallahassee that they want -- that they don't

1 want self -- political self-interest to
2 overrule the will of the people. The will of
3 the people says that we want fair districts
4 that are drawn based on geography, not
5 incumbency. So I would ask that you would stop
6 the tactics that advance your partisan causes,
7 and fulfill the will of the people.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thanks. And, Mike, if you
9 had some additional comments, turn them in, and
10 we would be happy to include them in the
11 record.

12 Next we will hear from Greg Vawter and
13 then Helen Baines, and following Helen, Vivian,
14 I think it is Bacca, B-a-c-c-a.

15 Greg, thank you for coming, and the floor
16 is yours, sir.

17 MR. VAWTER: Thank you, Senator,
18 Representative.

19 To some extent, I feel like I am thanking
20 the foxes for inviting the chickens to provide
21 input. Nonetheless --

22 SENATOR GAETZ: It was such a great line,
23 I am going to give you a chance to repeat it
24 into the microphone where they can all hear it.

25 MR. VAWTER: That is all right, you have

1 heard it, I am going to go on.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: I heard it, but they
3 didn't. It was so good.

4 MR. VAWTER: The point I would like to
5 make is that we are here to talk about power,
6 and the League of Women Voters has been called
7 out for not drawing maps. We have already
8 provided our position that the maps should be
9 drawn by the Legislature and then provided to
10 the public for comment, and that is what we are
11 looking for.

12 What we are interested in is whose best
13 interests are we looking out for here? I'm
14 sorry, I will wait.

15 A VOICE: Go ahead.

16 MR. VAWTER: All right. The fairness that
17 we are looking for is what is fair to the
18 people who you represent, not necessarily what
19 is fair for you as you are looking out for
20 your -- we know you are concerned for the
21 non-incumbent candidates who will be facing you
22 for election. We need to think about the fact
23 that to some extent the foxes are in charge of
24 the hen house to try to figure out what is
25 going to happen with this next election, and so

1 what we have are some defined rules that say
2 how this is supposed to be done.

3 For people who would like to have some
4 input as to whether the League of Women Voters
5 draws maps, I happen to be the membership
6 chairperson for the Hillsborough County League
7 of Women Voters, and I would be happy to enroll
8 anybody who would like to join our group and
9 have something to say about whether we have
10 those maps drawn, but in the meantime, we would
11 like to encourage our Legislature to do that
12 job. Thank you very much.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much.
14 Appreciate your comments, Greg. And Helen
15 Baines is next, and following Ms. Baines -- are
16 you here, Ms. Baines? Helen Baines? Going
17 once, twice. Well, we will come back to her if
18 we have time.

19 Vivian Bacca, did I get take right, ma'am?

20 MS. BACCA: Bacca.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Bacca, I'm sorry. And
22 then Neil Cosentino, Cosentino, I'm sorry, and
23 then Glenn Carr.

24 Thank you very much for coming tonight,
25 ma'am, and the floor is yours.

1 MS. BACCA: Hi, my name is Vivian Bacca, I
2 am from Brandon, Florida, and I voted for Fair
3 District amendments in part because I didn't
4 think it was fair that my portion of Brandon
5 was lumped in with Polk County voters when it
6 came to choosing our Congressional
7 Representative. I believe that as much as
8 possible, communities should be maintained
9 intact. Specifically, I would like to see all
10 of Brandon in the same congressional district
11 with our fellow eastern Hillsborough County
12 citizens.

13 And I would also like to suggest that if
14 you are going to time speeches, please bring a
15 timer. Most people are used to the dinging
16 that we can hear that warns us when our 30
17 seconds is getting close. Thank you.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. We
19 will give you a ten-second warning from now on.
20 That is a good point, good suggestion, Vivian.

21 Neil, you are up, and then Glenn Carr, and
22 following Glenn Carr, we are going to get to
23 Laura Simpson. Laura, come on down.

24 Neil, how do I pronounce your name, sir?

25 MR. COSENTINO: Cosentino.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Cosentino.

2 MR. COSENTINO: Thank you for asking.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Of course, sir. Thank you
4 for coming.

5 MR. COSENTINO: I am representing a think
6 thank. Our think tank is Camelot Florida. We
7 have been asked to look at this issue, and,
8 therefore, I am representing a spokesperson for
9 2.1 million NPA registered voters. That is
10 23 percent of the voters in Florida, and that
11 is significant.

12 We are optimistic that you will do the
13 right thing, we really are, I think we are
14 going to find that we will come up with
15 something better than what we had, and,
16 therefore, it will keep getting better. That
17 is the way we do it in America.

18 As a fighter pilot and Vietnam veteran,
19 Phantom -- if you've ever flown a Phantom,
20 anybody in here flown a Phantom, you keep your
21 eye on the mission, and the mission here is to
22 do the right thing, and hopefully I can bring
23 in all the soldiers that we have lost, because
24 when they died, they didn't die for
25 gerrymandering, I can tell you that for a fact.

1 And that might sound emotional, but I have seen
2 men die, and I know they didn't die for this.

3 So coming back to the issue of being
4 optimistic, I also caution you, everyone here,
5 we are going to have a Republican convention
6 here. If you don't do the right thing, okay,
7 there's going to be a lot of problems here in
8 this city. And as you know, it is July of next
9 year -- August, I'm sorry, August of next year.
10 If you mess this up, you are going to have
11 13,000 media here looking at it. So do it
12 right. If you are going to do it right, do it
13 right this time. Thank you very much.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, and
15 thank you for your service to our country.

16 Next is Glenn Carr. Is Glenn here? Glenn
17 Carr?

18 Laura Simpson?

19 All right. Tim Heberlein, Tim Heberlein.

20 And, I'm sorry, Tim, I didn't give you a
21 heads-up, but you are next, and then Eddie
22 Adams, Jr., representing Adams for Congress. I
23 wonder which Adams that is. Then Ruth Brewton
24 Talley, please.

25 Tim, thanks for coming, and you are

1 recognized before the committee.

2 MR. HEBERLEIN: Thank you very much. I
3 was actually at a previous hearing, so I will
4 keep my comments brief, just extended comments
5 that I had made at the previous hearing.

6 But I wanted to again thank you for
7 putting this hearing again -- appearing
8 together in Tampa. I know that you have
9 expended a lot of resources in having these
10 hearings and public comment, but, again, I am
11 still waiting for the maps, as I said in Polk
12 County. I am still waiting for the maps here
13 as well.

14 And I want to address the issue of asking
15 the public to provide these maps using the
16 District Builder software. It is -- you
17 mentioned earlier it is putting an answer
18 before the question if you had presented maps
19 before that. But instead what you have done is
20 asked us to give us an essay answer to a very
21 complex geography question, which none of us
22 are really -- I am not an expert in geography,
23 I am not an expert in geographical information
24 systems or minority voter regression
25 statistics. So when you are asking me to use

1 this software to cut lines through communities
2 which I know nothing about, it is doing a
3 disservice not only to the rest of the
4 communities in which I am drawing, but also it
5 is your job. And you are asking for our public
6 comment here, and our public comment came last
7 year in November when we voted yes on
8 Amendments 5 and 6.

9 And to the other point, actually just a
10 couple of months ago the Board of County
11 Commissioners did their redistricting process.
12 They actually provided six maps, and they have
13 just the same census data that we've had here.
14 So I would love to see at least one map being
15 provided with the information that you have had
16 for quite a while.

17 And, actually, someone had mentioned
18 earlier the software, that the Senate and the
19 House are using different types of software.
20 I, too, would like to know the differences.
21 Why is that happening? Why are you using
22 different types of software? Is the data the
23 same? That is a little bit disconcerting to
24 me.

25 And also, his other question, is any other

1 private entity contributing funds to help the
2 preparation of any map to any legislator. I
3 want to know that on record, please. Thank
4 you.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Sure, we will get to those
6 questions. Thanks for your testimony. And it
7 is good to see you again.

8 Eddie Adams, Jr., Adams for Congress. We
9 aren't going to talk about the congressional
10 race today, we are just going to talk about
11 redistricting, right, Mr. Adams?

12 MR. ADAMS: Well, thank you, sir, thank
13 you very much. Thank you for the opportunity
14 to be before you today, and part of the process
15 that we are dealing with today, ten years ago
16 they did not have a crystal ball to see what
17 the results of the last redistricting hearing
18 was all about. Ten years ago, there was a
19 mandate by the courts to create minority
20 congressional districts so that blacks would be
21 represented in the U.S. Congress and the State
22 of Florida. That being said, it appears that
23 we have come back full circle to try to undo
24 some of that that happened ten years ago. So
25 hopefully you guys' crystal ball will work a

1 little better this time.

2 District 11 goes from -- one of the
3 districts that is involved goes 100 miles in
4 one direction from one end of the district to
5 the other end of the district. I know because
6 I wore out a knee trying to work from one end
7 to the other end of the district. Now, that
8 makes no sense to a lot of folks back in the
9 old days when common sense used to be common.
10 It is no longer common, and the fact that you
11 got to get in your truck or car and drive
12 100 miles, and the folks that is in Manatee
13 County, those 15 precincts down there who don't
14 even know who their Congressional
15 Representative is.

16 So, again, hopefully this time we will
17 make it more effective in how we do it, and
18 that the people who actually have the
19 opportunity to vote for their members of the
20 state and for the U.S. Congress, the House and
21 the Senate and all those good things, actually
22 have an opportunity to participate in the
23 process by knowing who their Representative is
24 and being accessible to their Representative.

25 Thank you for the opportunity to speak before

1 you.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Adams, and
3 thank you for being a candidate for office.

4 Ruth -- I think it is Brewton Talley. Is
5 that correct, ma'am? And following Ms. Talley,
6 Ginny Zukowski, the PTSA Legislative Chair for
7 Bartels Middle School, and then Susan Smith, if
8 you would be down here, ready to testify.

9 Ma'am, thank you for coming, and the floor
10 is yours.

11 MS. TALLEY: Thank you for being here, and
12 we appreciate your coming, and we want you to
13 know that we would like to have a little fairer
14 districts.

15 I am in District 9 and I live in
16 Hillsborough County and I am relegated to -- to
17 District 9 instead of District 11, and I would
18 like to have a more concrete district for this
19 area where I live. And I appreciate the fact
20 that you are here, but I do hope that you -- I
21 had hoped you would have the maps, so I am
22 saying please bring the maps back and have
23 another meeting.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much. And
25 next is Ginny Zukowski, who is the PTSA

1 Legislative Chair for Bartels Middle School. I
2 will tell you, if you are working as a parent
3 to help kids in a middle school, then my hat is
4 off to you.

5 MS. ZUKOWSKI: Thank you very much.

6 Okay. Well, this has been very
7 interesting to watch this process, so this is
8 my first time coming to one of these, and it is
9 an eye-opening experience.

10 I want to just say most of you don't even
11 know, but we are watching you, and when he
12 talked about that 23 percent of voters, this
13 whole row was glued in, and it was just amazing
14 how your ears totally sparked up. My reasons
15 for coming here is really more of the school
16 and the voting that is going on like right now.
17 Every Monday is a half-day, so I know coming to
18 these things do affect our kids in the school,
19 so we are hoping that it is more fair, because
20 I am seeing the effects in the school, I mean,
21 is it impacting. So I hope you are making good
22 choices, because we do have to educate
23 ourselves because we are not seeing our
24 children go the lengths that they should, or
25 the opportunity as well. So I hope -- I hope

1 we get to see the maps, too. I guess that is
2 the main drive for this evening, see the maps
3 another meeting. Thank you.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Good, thank you. Susan
5 Smith, and following Ms. Smith is Joe Matta
6 with AARP, and then Mary Bright with
7 Moveon.org.

8 Ms. Smith, thanks for coming.

9 MS. SMITH: Hello. Thank you.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: The floor is yours.

11 MS. SMITH: Thank you. I am Susan Smith,
12 and I live in Odessa, Florida, which is in the
13 northwest part of Hillsborough County.

14 "Us versus them," I heard this term
15 yesterday from Dr. Susan MacManus, who is a
16 respected professor at the University of South
17 Florida. She has coined the term to describe
18 the upcoming 2012 election. "It will be us
19 versus them," she said. People expect their
20 governmental institutions to be forthright with
21 them, but trust in government is at an all-time
22 low, and a lack of transparency is at the heart
23 of it, according to Dr. MacManus. Even though
24 the topic they were discussing was the
25 Governor's mysteriously missing e-mails, that

1 same lack of transparency, along with the
2 delays and obstruction, have been the hallmarks
3 of this redistricting process so far in
4 Florida.

5 By holding these hearings without maps and
6 by using lawsuits to delay, you have caused
7 voters to suspect that you are not acting in
8 good faith. Your actions or lack thereof are
9 contributing to distrust both in you and in the
10 institution you have been charged with leading.

11 You claim that you came to hear what the
12 citizens want. Well, we told you very clearly
13 last November 2nd what we want. With the
14 passage of Amendments 5 and 6, we sent a
15 message that we no longer want the incumbent
16 protection racket known as gerrymandering. It
17 is time for true accountability at the ballot
18 box. Specifically we told you that we want
19 districts that do not favor any political
20 party, we want minority representation
21 protected, and we want contiguous and compact
22 districts of equal size that respect existing
23 geographic boundaries.

24 I urge you to return to Tallahassee to
25 draw the maps in a timely and transparent

1 manner. The results of this process will be
2 your legacy. Please approach it fairly and
3 without thought to your own political future.
4 Democracy cannot be sustained with a
5 distrustful and cynical electorate. Us versus
6 them is no way to run the state. Thank you.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Smith. Our
8 next speaker is Joe Matta. Is Joe here? And
9 following Joe, we will have Mary Bright with
10 Moveon.org, and then Frank Winch -- Wyche, I
11 believe -- then Mary Kay Ross.

12 Joe, you represent, it says here, AARP.
13 You don't look old enough.

14 MR. MATTA: I am. Believe me, I am.

15 Good afternoon, Chairman Gaetz and
16 Chairman Weatherford. I am here as a volunteer
17 with AARP.

18 I urge the legislation -- Legislature to
19 make the redistricting process to be fair and
20 equitable for all of Florida, not just a few,
21 but all of Florida. As you exercise your
22 constitutional duty to draw voting districts
23 for the next ten years, starting with our 2012
24 election, AARP urges you to ensure that there
25 is transparency for the Legislature's

1 redistricting process every step of the way.
2 Transparency means that redistricting
3 discussions among the members and by the
4 members should be open to the public, with
5 enough notice for them to plan for attendance.

6 Transparency also means that we, the
7 public, have the opportunity to comment, and to
8 have those comments be meaningfully considered
9 by the Legislature during all the redistricting
10 proceedings and on redistricting proposals,
11 both interim and final. And this must be done
12 before the Legislature makes their decisions.

13 You must ensure timeliness, and that seems
14 to be the biggest thing that we are all talking
15 about here. We want to see the maps, we want
16 to see them long before March.

17 Florida voters have always stated --
18 already stated their constitutional mandate to
19 the Legislature. We voted last November for
20 those things. The Legislature should complete
21 the redistricting process in a professional and
22 timely manner. The procedures, steps, have
23 been given to the Legislature, and that needs
24 to be completed.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Joe, could I get you to

1 summarize, please? Just because we've got a
2 whole bunch of people behind you who would like
3 to speak.

4 MR. MATTA: Yeah. Well, we should take
5 the steps to ensure that the redistricting
6 process is done timely.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

8 MR. MATTA: Thank you.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Joe.
10 That is very good testimony.

11 Mary Bright? Ms. Bright?

12 Frank Wyche? Frank, come on down, and
13 then Mary Kay Ross, then Cathy, and I
14 apologize, Paunov at 5134 29th Avenue North. I
15 am sure I butchered that name.

16 Frank, you are recognized. Thanks for
17 coming, and we look forward to your testimony.

18 MR. WYCHE: Thank you, good evening. I
19 will be quick, so keep up. I call this I have
20 seen things change.

21 When I was six years old, Daddy ran for
22 office, an office that no longer exists. He
23 got beat very badly, to say the least.

24 Twenty-five years later, I worked on the
25 Hillsborough County Environmental Land

1 Acquisition Program campaign, and we won.
2 Winning was fun. So when I saw Amendments 5
3 and 6 voted in this last year, I, of course,
4 said to myself things change.

5 Elected officials, I vote in the
6 congressional and State House districts that
7 cover three counties, and when I saw Amendments
8 5 and 6 pass, I was hoping that in the 2012
9 elections I would be voting for Representatives
10 that will be, hey, representing my geographic
11 area. Things change.

12 Now, a young man spoke earlier about how
13 it is your responsibility to present us
14 something to comment on, it is not our
15 responsibility to present you with the plan.
16 And ten years from now, most of you will not be
17 here, whether it is because of term limits, you
18 have gone on to other things or whatever -- or
19 whatever. But history will judge what you do
20 when things change, and from my experience and
21 from seeing things change, it doesn't have to
22 do with party, Republican, Democrat or
23 otherwise. It comes down to which side you
24 were on when choices were made.

25 Thank you very much, and have a nice

1 evening.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, sir.
3 Next, Mary Kay Ross, and then following
4 Ms. Ross, Cathy Paunov, I think. I'm sorry,
5 ma'am. Then Garry Spencer and then Edward
6 Quinones.

7 Mary Kay Ross, thank you for being here
8 tonight, and we are anxious to have your
9 testimony on the record.

10 MS. ROSS: Well, I can't thank you all
11 enough. I have looked so forward to this
12 particular gathering, and the information that
13 has been given has been really so significant
14 and I think it will help you along your way and
15 the task that you got forward.

16 And I am only speaking as me as a person.
17 I was fortunate enough to be involved in some
18 political campaign recently, and I am from the
19 11th District, and that experience is a great
20 teacher. And over the last year and a half, I
21 learned a lot about District 11, and I learned
22 how difficult it is. And I have walked Manatee
23 County and I have walked Pinellas County and I
24 have walked Hillsborough County extensively,
25 and I can tell you that this is an almost

1 impossible district in which to correctly give
2 representation. So we need to look at
3 Hillsborough. Hillsborough is such a viable
4 area and we have become such a wonderful city
5 and I think living in the Tampa area, that we
6 need a district that will well represent us as
7 a District 11. So I charge you with the huge
8 task of trying to not make us cross bridges and
9 not make us go to other counties. It is -- we
10 need this within Hillsborough County.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
12 Ms. Ross, and thank you for supporting the
13 candidates of your choice so vigorously.

14 Cathy, help me out.

15 MS. PAUNOV: Paunov.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Paunov.

17 MS. PAUNOV: You did real well.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, and I'm
19 sorry if I messed your name up. Go ahead. You
20 are recognized.

21 MS. PAUNOV: Thank you. Senators and
22 Representatives, my name is Cathy Paunov. I am
23 a high school teacher here in Hillsborough
24 County. I teach at Gaither High School. And
25 the course I teach is AP human geography, and

1 this is not the edition I am teaching out of,
2 this is the newest edition, but it has the same
3 map that is found in the edition I teach my
4 children.

5 In this particular case, there is a
6 discussion of gerrymandering. It cites one
7 good example of legislative districts organized
8 around geographic and county and city borders.
9 It then gives two examples of bad states and
10 gerrymandering. One of them, of course, is
11 North Carolina, and regrettably, the other one
12 is Florida. It actually blows up south Florida
13 to show that creative elements of 22, 23, 19,
14 17 and 20, which I have to say is almost
15 artistic in its -- in its shape and size, not
16 in a good way. I want the next edition of
17 Rubenstein's textbook for my students to show
18 Florida as, like Iowa, using geographic
19 boundaries, contiguous. Huh, my goodness,
20 doesn't that sound like Amendments 5 and 6?
21 Thank you.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you very
23 much, Cathy. There are some of us who want to
24 get Florida reshaped to look like Iowa, too.

25 Garry Spencer is next. Garry Spencer?

1 Not here.

2 Okay. How about Edward Quinones? And
3 following Mr. Quinones is Graham Stacy and then
4 Steve -- I think it's Phillippy or Phillippy,
5 with the ACLU of Florida.

6 Mr. Quinones, you are recognized, and
7 thank you for coming tonight.

8 MR. QUINONES: Thank you very much. My
9 name is Ed Quinones. I have been involved in
10 different Hispanic causes for many, many years.
11 I have recently been involved with the
12 redistricting process here in Hillsborough
13 County. We had public meetings just like this
14 one, we presented different maps, we had lots
15 of testimony from many, many quarters, many
16 different parts of this area, and lo and
17 behold, it didn't mean very much, because a
18 one-party system decided it was going to be
19 their way and that was it. There was no
20 respect for the public hearing, and I suspect
21 that this same type of hearing is what we are
22 facing today.

23 Tallahassee is going to be very hard to
24 change. We have no confidence that you are
25 going to be able to do very much in spite of

1 the law, in spite of all the regulations, and,
2 luckily, we have a court system in this country
3 where we can correct some of these things where
4 civil rights are respected and minority rights
5 can be respected. So, gentlemen and ladies, we
6 will see you in court.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
8 Mr. Quinones. And next we will hear from
9 Graham Stacy, and following Graham, Steve --
10 and I apologize, it is either Phillippy or
11 Phillippy, with the ACLU, and then Victor
12 DiMaio, President of the Hillsborough County
13 Democratic Hispanic Caucus.

14 Graham, thank you very much for staying
15 with us, and you are recognized for your
16 testimony.

17 MR. STACY: Thank you very much. My name
18 is Graham Stacy. Ladies and gentlemen of the
19 committee, thank you for letting me come and
20 speak here today.

21 Now, at this meeting and others, I've
22 repeatedly heard many people come up to the
23 stand and talk about how the system is unfair
24 and all the maps are rigged to favor some
25 random group of people and so on and so on.

1 Now, nobody's map can appease everybody, so if
2 you want a map that meets your standards, then
3 draw one yourself. But thus far, very few
4 people have actually proposed a plan to be
5 considered and scrutinized. So my mother,
6 sister and several friends and I have worked
7 together to create a Florida House district
8 plan named -- the proposed maps are named
9 proposed map one and proposed map two.

10 Now, while map one's focus is to follow
11 the standards required by Amendments 5 and 6,
12 compactness and fairness were considered the
13 main priority. While proposed map two was
14 developed with the federal government's
15 minority district standards --

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Folks -- excuse me,
17 Graham. Folks, if you want to look at the
18 proposed map, it is up there on the screen.

19 MR. STACY: While map two was developed
20 with the federal government's minority district
21 standards in mind, all the while still
22 attempting to comply with Amendments 5 and 6.

23 Districts can only be as compact as the
24 area that they represent are. Understanding
25 those limitations, map one and map two were

1 drawn in an effort to create not perfectly
2 compact districts, but to create districts out
3 of even population numbers and logical
4 boundaries.

5 Thank you very much.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Graham, could I just ask
7 you one question? Just out of curiosity, and I
8 apologize for prying, but can you tell us how
9 old you are?

10 MR. STACY: I will be turning 14 on the
11 15th.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: You will be turning 14?

13 MR. STACY: Yes.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Wow. You might be able to
15 be a consultant to the League of Women Voters.
16 Thank you. And your -- your proposed maps will
17 be included in what we provide to all of the
18 citizens of Florida, and all of our committee
19 members will study your maps and we really look
20 forward to studying them some more. Thank you
21 for your testimony.

22 And, Steve, is it Phillippy? Phillippy?
23 Help me out, Steve.

24 MR. PHILLIPPY: Steve Phillippy, just like
25 the park over in Pinellas County.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay. Representing the
2 ACLU, and you are recognized, sir.

3 MR. PHILLIPPY: Yes, and I don't -- I --
4 first of all, Mike Pheneger, the President of
5 the ACLU of Florida, has already spoken today,
6 so I don't want to steal his thunder.

7 I particularly like the gentleman before
8 us, okay, before me. A 14-year-old to do that
9 kind of work with his family, I think that is
10 the kind of thing we need in the future.

11 One of the things that I am concerned
12 about -- and, again, let me give the ACLU line,
13 and first we believe in Amendments 5 and 6 as
14 need to be enforced, and I also believe that
15 the timelines need to be relevant and you need
16 to work on those, and I think that conflict of
17 interest need to be avoided.

18 One of the reasons that I am involved and
19 have been involved in the ACLU since 1988 is
20 because I really couldn't find that I was
21 really politically involved. I wanted to be
22 just kind of involved in making things fair for
23 everybody and making certain people have the
24 right to speech, okay. That is -- free speech
25 is very important to me. So I am -- I am --

1 congratulate you for doing this speech, but --
2 this listening, but I am concerned about the
3 fairness.

4 One of the things that I have in my
5 background and currently doing, I work for the
6 Supervisor of Elections two or three days a
7 year as a clerk in my own district. I also am
8 involved in -- in doing some things in the
9 schools that I think are important, too.

10 So we -- these are wonderful
11 Representatives, and everyone here has gathered
12 here to talk about redistricting, which is all
13 about fairness and getting people involved in
14 their own representation, in governing
15 themselves. And I just encourage you to
16 continue to -- the long term is how does
17 democracy work, how effective is everyone's
18 involvement in democracy, and I just don't
19 think that some of the things that you are
20 doing, although I hope that you are good
21 intentioned, and I am not a cynic like some of
22 the others, I believe that most of you have
23 good intentions, but I believe that you need to
24 think about the big picture. The big picture
25 is how does democracy work and how much are

1 people involved so that they will be part --
2 feel part of the process.

3 Thank you very much.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, sir.

5 And next, Victor DiMaio, Mr. DiMaio,
6 representing the Hillsborough County Democratic
7 Hispanic Caucus, and you are recognized, sir.
8 Thanks for coming tonight.

9 MR. DiMAIO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
10 Chairman Gaetz, Chairman Weatherford, Senators
11 and Representatives, my name is Victor DiMaio,
12 I am president of the Hillsborough County
13 Hispanic Democratic Caucus, and one of the
14 things I am very proud of -- by the way,
15 welcome to District 58, which is the district I
16 have lived in my whole life. This district was
17 represented by state -- started when it was
18 first formed by State Representative Eldon
19 Martinez, who had the district for almost 23
20 years, after that, State Representative Deborah
21 Tamargo, who is actually in the audience
22 tonight with us, and after that, Bob Enriquez
23 and then Michael Scionti and then
24 Representative Cruz. So we have a long line of
25 Hispanic Representatives here, and we are

1 basically here because we want to keep it that
2 way. Our district that we drew -- my
3 Vice-Chairman, Chris Cano, was up here earlier,
4 and he presented a map, which was e-mailed to
5 the committee. We worked with a group called
6 LatinoJustice in New York with a professional
7 demographer, and we tried to keep the district,
8 which is what the amendments are for, is
9 contiguous, it follows the boundaries, and the
10 neighborhoods which you want to keep compact,
11 and we would like for you to take that under
12 consideration. We have worked very hard for
13 many years to, you know, keep our culture and
14 our community together, and we would just like
15 to keep the respect that we would like to
16 continue on with the continuity of the
17 district.

18 We would like to also make a suggestion or
19 recommendation, because we got together with
20 about 24 other groups here in Hillsborough
21 County for the first time in the history of our
22 county to fight for a county commission seat.
23 We've stayed together for this redistricting
24 issue. We would like to see if there is anyway
25 possible -- we are actually working with a

1 demographer, we may work on a Senate district
2 and a congressional district as well for a
3 Hispanic seat.

4 Just as a reminder, there is a famous case
5 in 1994, it was called DeGrande versus Johnson,
6 and at that time, the Legislature was
7 controlled by the Democrats, and DeGrande, who
8 represented the Republican party, fought the
9 Democrats at the time because -- as you
10 remember, when I mentioned Eldon Martinez, he
11 was at one time the only Hispanic
12 Representative for the entire State of Florida.
13 There was no other Hispanic Representatives in
14 the state.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: And could I ask you to
16 conclude just out of respect for those behind
17 you?

18 MR. DiMAIO: Yes, sir.

19 But that is what we are asking for. We
20 are asking for -- to respect the Hispanic
21 community, keep our -- keep Representative
22 Cruz's district intact and look for a district
23 that she might be able to advance to later on
24 as a Senator or a Congress lady. Thank you
25 very much.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir. We really
2 appreciate your comments. And I apologize to
3 this next individual, first because I didn't
4 give this person a heads-up, and secondly,
5 because I know I am going to butcher the name.
6 Ercilia Albistu. Ercilia Albistu, are you
7 here? Well, you got a round of applause
8 anyhow.

9 Joe Affronti with the City of Temple
10 Terrace. Joe? Thank you for coming. And
11 following Joe's testimony, Joan Alagood and --
12 just a moment, please -- and then Deborah
13 Tamargo.

14 MAYOR AFFRONTI: Thank you very much,
15 legislators, for being here.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Mayor? You are the
17 Mayor of Temple Terrace?

18 MAYOR AFFRONTI: Yes, I am.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Wow. We thank you for
20 being here.

21 MAYOR AFFRONTI: Thank you.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thanks for your service to
23 the community.

24 MAYOR AFFRONTI: Thank you.

25 Temple Terrace has about 25,000 residents,

1 which is a very diverse community. There is no
2 one political party that is a majority in
3 Temple Terrace. So what I am here to ask is
4 that we keep Temple Terrace the way it is.

5 We have -- we have been very privileged to
6 have three U.S. Representatives in Temple
7 Terrace, District 9, District 11 and District
8 12, and because of that, we are in the process
9 now of a \$160 million redevelopment,
10 \$160 million, and during these times. And it
11 was because of the support that we have
12 garnered from our Representatives, and also
13 District 60 for the Florida House and District
14 12 for the Senate.

15 So we would appreciate keeping things
16 intact as they are for Temple Terrace. We love
17 the representation that we got, and we hope
18 that you will consider leaving it that way.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and
20 your Senator Joyner knew exactly who you were,
21 and she was finishing your sentences in my ear.
22 So she is on top of this issue, believe me.

23 Joan Alagood, and following Ms. Alagood,
24 Deborah Tamargo, and then on deck, please,
25 Lydia Medrano.

1 Ms. Alagood, thank you for coming, and you
2 are recognized.

3 MS. ALAGOOD: And thank you, Senator, and
4 thank you, Representatives, for hearing us out
5 and for listening all night. And I have been
6 watching, because I went to one hearing like
7 this with the county commission, and there was
8 a guy on his Blackberry all night, so I have
9 been looking to see and I have been seeing some
10 attention here. This is a celebration --

11 SENATOR GAETZ: We are afraid of the
12 woodshed.

13 MS. ALAGOOD: -- of freedom and democracy
14 and personal responsibility, which is why I
15 drove here from the south end of
16 Valrico tonight. There are 40 of you here
17 listening to one of me, and that is quite an
18 honor.

19 The tool on-line is quite clear, as
20 evidenced by the 13-year-olds who can use it.
21 What is wrong with the rest of us? And he has
22 an opportunity to present that to you and for
23 you to take it into consideration, and I do
24 agree with the other folks that have said give
25 us some time after the -- you know, several

1 maps are out for us to comment again.

2 I would ask you to listen to the voters,
3 to keep the districts clear and compact. I,
4 too, helped work in an election campaign where
5 I went from Temple Terrace to Manatee County to
6 south St. Pete, and it was a little ridiculous.
7 I mean, I want contiguous lines and fair lines.

8 Now, James Madison didn't have a computer,
9 but we do, so I also ask you to avail
10 yourselves of the technology to make this work
11 better than what they could have done in those
12 days. Keep it fair, real and simple.

13 However, I want to make one side comment
14 about something ironic here, and that is the
15 folks that are getting up and saying, you know,
16 5 and 6, 5 and 6, listen to 5 and 6. These are
17 the same people who went -- when Nancy Pelosi
18 was saying elections have consequences and read
19 the bill after it's been written, you know,
20 give us a break. You can't say that in -- in a
21 national election. Okay. That is so. All
22 right.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: I think your time is up,
24 ma'am.

25 MS. ALAGOOD: Thank you, sir, appreciate

1 it.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much.

3 Next is Deborah Tamargo, please, and
4 following Ms. Tamargo is Lydia Medrano with the
5 LULAC of Florida, and then Gary Dolgin, I think
6 it is D-o-l-g-i-n. If I mispronounced that, I
7 apologize.

8 Deborah, thanks for coming, and you are
9 recognized.

10 MS. TAMARGO: Senator Gaetz and Senator
11 Weatherford, Chairmen, Senators and
12 Representatives, welcome to my hometown. I am
13 a second-generation Tampa native, and so I have
14 been through a few redistrictings and I have a
15 couple of comments to share with you this
16 evening.

17 One comment is regarding the listening.
18 My good teachers and my great parents taught me
19 to listen first, that that was the smart thing
20 to do, listen, assess and then act. So I want
21 to compliment you on being what my parents and
22 my teachers would have called smart.

23 The second point I would like to make is I
24 think I have heard a lot of very disingenuous
25 comments this evening. Obviously, the Fair

1 Districts amendments had a great campaign, but
2 what I think they failed to do was really
3 explain what it is that you are tasked with
4 doing. So I do understand that you have a
5 difficult task, and part of it is that
6 understanding. There appears to me in just
7 reading, without being an attorney, that there
8 may be some conflict with the Voter Rights Act
9 and with pre-clearance, so that is a very
10 difficult issue. It is not as easy as going to
11 the Webster's Dictionary and finding a few
12 definitions and then producing the maps. And I
13 will tell those of you who that are not from
14 Hillsborough County, that our county
15 commissioners did just that, they drew their
16 maps and they presented them to the public, and
17 guess what? The public was appalled here in
18 Hillsborough County. So I think it is very
19 disingenuous to tonight tell you that they want
20 to see maps when, in fact, they didn't like it
21 being force-fed by our county commission just a
22 very couple of months ago.

23 So I applaud you, I do feel like this Fair
24 District thing is a little bit of a ruse, and I
25 congratulate you for listening, assessing,

1 acting, and we will have plenty of opportunity
2 to comment again. Thank you.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
4 Ms. Tamargo.

5 Lydia Medrano with LULAC, and following
6 Ms. Medrano, Gary, I think it is Dolgin, and
7 then Elizabeth Belcher.

8 You are recognized. Thanks for coming.

9 MS. MEDRANO: Thank you. Good evening.
10 My name is Lydia Medrano, and I am the District
11 Director for LULAC, the League of United Latin
12 American Citizens, and LULAC is a national,
13 nonpartisan civil rights organization. And
14 LULAC, LatinoJustice and other Hispanic
15 organizations in the Tampa Bay area have come
16 together, formed a partnership with the sole
17 purpose of participating in redistricting. So
18 I don't want to hear like one time somebody
19 told me where have you been. So we are here.
20 We are participating.

21 The voter act -- the Voting Rights Act
22 provides protections to minority groups.
23 Hispanic is the largest minority group now in
24 Florida, and I want to speak in support of
25 District 58 that was presented to you before,

1 and Victor also spoke about it, which has
2 51 percent Hispanic population in that
3 district. I hope this information is useful
4 for you. Thank you.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Ms.
6 Medrano, and thank you for your group's
7 submission of maps. I think particularly your
8 group has been very, very helpful to us. Thank
9 you so much, ma'am.

10 And next is Gary Dolgin, I believe. Is it
11 Dolgin?

12 MR. DOLGIN: Dolgin.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Dolgin, I had it right the
14 first time. Thank you very much for coming,
15 and you are recognized, sir.

16 MR. DOLGIN: Good evening, everyone, and I
17 hope that you all --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Could you pull the mike up
19 just a little bit so everybody can hear you?

20 MR. DOLGIN: My name is Gary Dolgin, and I
21 hope all of you will be inspired by the
22 14-year-old to follow his example and draw some
23 maps.

24 Too much power in one party is a threat to
25 our democracy, whether it is Republican or

1 Democrat. We live in a equal divided state
2 with approximately half Democrats and half
3 Republicans. We elected Barack Obama in 2008,
4 and then turned around and elected Rick Scott
5 in 2010. That is pretty divided. But yet the
6 Legislature is made up of 75 to 80 percent of
7 Republicans right now, and the Senate is --
8 seems to be pretty similar. That doesn't seem
9 right, and when you look at it, it is because
10 of gerrymandering.

11 Talk about District 11 where I live, which
12 is a Democratic district, and the reason it is
13 a Democratic district is because you have areas
14 of Pinellas and Manatee in that district, you
15 have packed all the Democrats in the area into
16 that district so that the surrounding districts
17 can be majority Republican. Now, in
18 California, there is the same complaint that
19 the Republicans have against the Democrats.

20 We have a better democracy if we have
21 competitive districts. If I asked each of you
22 to raise your hand, how many of you had a
23 competitive election last year? You all swore
24 under oath to defend the Constitution of the
25 State. If you all meet your oath, that will

1 mean that some of you will not be reelected.
2 The question is whether you will have the
3 courage to follow that oath and put the
4 interests of the people ahead of your own
5 personal political interests. Thank you very
6 much.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, sir.
8 And next, Ms. Belcher, thank you for coming
9 tonight and giving of your time, and after your
10 testimony, I believe that Herbert Belcher is
11 speaking, and then after that, Maria Lopez, and
12 then Patrick Mantegia, I think.

13 SENATOR JOYNER: Mantega.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Mantega. Boy, am I lucky
15 I've got Senator Joyner here.

16 Ms. Belcher, you are recognized, and thank
17 you for sharing your time with us tonight.

18 MS. BELCHER: With all due respect, this
19 is a waste of time and expense for the
20 citizens. Where are the maps? Where are the
21 -- why is the Legislature wasting money on
22 lawsuits when the citizens made it abundantly
23 clear that -- with the Fair Districts amendment
24 that -- what citizens wanted? And why the
25 citizens strongly feel that this is a waste of

1 time is the fact that one of our own local
2 elected officials has apparently left the
3 building.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Ms.
5 Belcher. And next we will hear from the other
6 side of the Belcher family, Herbert. You are
7 recognized, sir.

8 MR. BELCHER: Thank you. I am Herbert
9 Belcher. I would just like to say I would like
10 to see Amendments 5 and 6 fully upheld. It is
11 straightforward. Unlike many other people here
12 who are against that, we would definitely
13 appreciate you following it to the law. Thank
14 you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
16 Mr. Belcher. Next, Maria Lopez, Ms. Lopez,
17 representing the Latino Professionals Network.
18 In fact, she is the Director. And then Patrick
19 Mantega and then Sharon Calvert.

20 MS. LOPEZ: Good afternoon and welcome.
21 My name is Maria Lopez, Director of Latino
22 Professionals Network. I am part of the
23 coalition that the Hispanic community has
24 formed.

25 I have a sense of disappointment, and it

1 has come from previous hearings regarding
2 redistricting. In the hopes that you, besides
3 hearing, you actually listen, we are here today
4 as well, but not only on behalf of the
5 Hispanics, but on behalf of everybody, because
6 we feel that we have not been heard, no one was
7 heard previously, and we hope that today we
8 are.

9 We sensed also that there were many bones
10 thrown to us, and those were that since we were
11 everywhere in the areas, in the regions, then
12 we can grow, and they didn't recognize --
13 didn't recognize the natural increase and
14 concentration of Hispanics, so they didn't
15 follow that line. They also said that we have
16 gone very far and that we should be happy for
17 not having our rights recognized. That is what
18 we read between lines of what happened
19 afterwards. But not only us, there were other
20 communities that were not heard at all.

21 We are as Hispanics an important factor in
22 the demographic change since in the last ten
23 years, we have grown 70 percent. It is not a
24 small percent, it is 70 percent. And we feel
25 that there is an effort to go contrary to that

1 growth. So we would like to -- that you
2 consider keeping District 58 intact and you
3 follow the natural ties that the communities
4 have formed, and not the opposites.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: May I ask you to
6 summarize, please, ma'am?

7 MS. LOPEZ: That is the summary, keep the
8 58 intact.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Great. Thank you.

10 MS. LOPEZ: Thank you. And then give us
11 another pat on the back so we should be happy
12 for not having our rights recognized.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, ma'am.
14 Next we will hear from Patrick Mantega, I am
15 getting it right here thanks to Senator Joyner,
16 and then Sharon Calvert, and then we will hear
17 from Gary Gibbons.

18 Patrick Mantega, thank you so much.

19 MR. MANTEGA: Thank you. I am here to ask
20 that you honor Florida's diversity. I believe
21 that with a little extra effort, the
22 Legislature can make compact, continuous
23 districts that respect concentrations of
24 Hispanic and black minorities.

25 The Hispanic community shares a mostly

1 common heritage, culture and cuisine. They
2 frequent the same bodegas and sandwich shops.
3 Hispanic community boundaries should be as
4 important in the redistricting process as
5 municipal and subdivision boundaries.

6 The census shows that Hispanics are the
7 state's largest minority population, but the
8 population of Hispanic elected officials falls
9 far short of our population percentage. No
10 prominent Hispanic congressional district in
11 central or north Florida, no prominent Hispanic
12 State Senate district in central or north
13 Florida. The only prominently Hispanic House
14 district on the west coast of Florida is where
15 we currently sit in District 58.

16 Florida's Hispanic population has grown by
17 leaps and bounds, but, sadly, the number of
18 elected officials that share Hispanic heritage,
19 culture and the love of cafe con leche have
20 not. Please rectify this problem.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
22 Next, Sharon Calvert, please, Ms. Calvert, and
23 then we will hear from Gary Gibbons and then we
24 will hear from Jane Gibbons.

25 Ms. Calvert, thank you for coming.

1 MS. CALVERT: Well, thank you, and I
2 appreciate having this opportunity, you coming
3 to Hillsborough County.

4 First of all, I would like to reiterate
5 again that those who were looking for a map
6 were given tools and opportunities to draw a
7 map and present it, so they could have had a
8 map.

9 I would like to see the maps created along
10 natural boundaries as much as possible as those
11 who reside, those voters, within those natural
12 communities and those natural boundaries share
13 commonalities, and voters within those natural
14 boundaries would feel more part of a process
15 that would foster better voter participation.
16 Thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
18 ma'am. Our next speaker is Gary Gibbons, and
19 then we will hear from Jane Gibbons and then
20 from John Russell, if you will be on deck.
21 Mr. Gibbons.

22 MR. GIBBONS: Hi. I believe this is the
23 20th hearing or so that you all have had, and
24 at each one the people have spoken just as they
25 spoke in November, and you aren't listening.

1 At each one of these hearings, they have asked
2 for maps. It is your constitutional duty to
3 prepare the maps, it is not mine. We elected
4 you. You work for me. Make the maps.

5 Now, believe it or not, some people have
6 characterized these hearings as a game, and I
7 have wondered what that game might be. Is it
8 the old 60s TV show, "I've Got a Secret"? No,
9 because on that one, the contestants had to
10 answer questions, and in this case, y'all have
11 a gag order that prevents you from answering
12 any of the questions. Is it charades where
13 there's a lot of acting and people trying to
14 guess what is going on? Maybe. Is it
15 Pictionary? I don't think so. If so, we would
16 have maps. But what I am really afraid about
17 is that what this is really about is the old
18 game of Monopoly. There are some people who
19 say that you want to control the districts, you
20 want to ensure your reelection, you want to
21 keep the districts a secret until the very last
22 second in order to prevent anyone -- any
23 opposing candidates from running against you,
24 and that you will do whatever it takes to stay
25 in office.

1 Now, I hope that is not the case, and I
2 want you to remember the oath that you took.
3 Each of you took an oath to uphold the
4 Constitution of the State of Florida and the
5 Constitution of the United States and --

6 SENATOR GAETZ: And could you --

7 MR. GIBBONS: -- Amendments 5 and 6 --

8 SENATOR GAETZ: -- wrap it up?

9 MR. GIBBONS: -- are in the Florida
10 Constitution.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: We will have to do Truth
12 or Consequences if you don't wrap it up.

13 MR. GIBBONS: I want you to remember that
14 when any of you allow taxpayer dollars to be
15 used in lawsuits to attempt to invalidate
16 Amendments 5 and 6, you are violating your
17 oath.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Gibbons.
19 And now, having heard from Mr. Gibbons, we will
20 hear from Mrs. Gibbons and see if we can slip a
21 cigarette paper in any way between their
22 comments.

23 You are recognized. Thank you for coming.

24 MS. GIBBONS: Hello, I am Jane Gibbons,
25 and I would actually like to share a phone

1 conversation that I had earlier today with a
2 friend of mine: "Hi, Farah, I would like to
3 talk to you, but I'm going to have to be
4 getting off soon because I am going to a
5 meeting."

6 "Where are you going?"

7 "I am going to Jefferson High School."

8 "Why are you going to Jefferson?"

9 "I am going to a hearing about
10 redistricting. Do you remember all those
11 petitions we got signed from all those people,
12 how we were going to get that gerrymandering
13 ended and we were going to have more sensible
14 districts and we were going to have competitive
15 elections? Well, they are trying to keep all
16 those changes from happening."

17 "What do you mean?"

18 "Well, they are being very secretive, for
19 one thing. They refuse to show us any of the
20 maps, they are not answering any questions at
21 any of the hearings. The Republican Speaker of
22 the House has actually put a gag order on all
23 the GOP members."

24 "Well, that is not what we voted for."

25 "No, it isn't, but it gets worse. The

1 House has set aside \$30 million, the Senate has
2 set aside \$9 million to spend in court to fight
3 redistricting."

4 "Don't tell me they are spending taxpayer
5 money to do this."

6 "Oh, they sure are. We didn't vote for
7 that either."

8 "I can't believe they are going against
9 the will of the voters. Didn't that pass by a
10 large margin?"

11 "Oh, yeah, 63 percent. The whole
12 situation is terrible. You know what? My
13 grandmother had a word for stuff like this and
14 for people like this. She called them crooked.
15 And you know what? My grandmother was a really
16 smart lady. When she thought somebody was
17 crooked or something was crooked, she was
18 usually right."

19 Thank you.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and thanks to
21 your grandmother. And I hope you will stay to
22 the end of the hearing to find out if some of
23 the things that you and Vera talked about were
24 actually true.

25 John Russell, and Mr. Russell, you have

1 two minutes.

2 MR. RUSSELL: Ladies and gentlemen, happy
3 to be here again. You know, I have heard some
4 people make some very good comments here.
5 Whether they will be put to use, I certainly
6 have my doubts.

7 I would like to talk about transparency.
8 Transparency is a word that has been used much,
9 including e-mails that I've received signed by
10 Mr. Weatherford. And what is transparency? Is
11 transparency allowing the public to come up and
12 give their commentary in this -- with respect
13 to this project? I don't think so. What is
14 transparency in the context of doing this?

15 We know that this redistricting, whatever
16 it ends up being, is going to be done on a
17 computer. Well, if it is done on a computer,
18 you have to put some information into the
19 computer. I talked about this before when I
20 saw you guys in Wesley Chapel. And so real
21 transparency would be when you put in front of
22 the public exactly the parameters that are
23 going to be put into program the computer,
24 okay, to program the computer and what it is
25 going to draw, because nobody's drawing these

1 things by hand, this is not a graphic arts
2 exercise. And, you know, we wouldn't even need
3 to have these meetings if there was any
4 integrity in this process. We all know it is
5 about money, we all know everyone is appointed
6 here, including the Democrats.

7 The Democrats should be standing up and
8 screaming, but they are such a minority, 70/30.
9 And, you know, it is funny that Amendments 5
10 and 6 passed by 63 percent of the vote. That
11 is typical for a gerrymandered election. And
12 it is pretty funny when a friend over here
13 whose name I forget stood up, raised his
14 hand -- when he said who had a competitive
15 election or didn't, he raised his hand and said
16 he had a competitive election. I know that was
17 like 60/40, so --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Russell, Mr. Russell,
19 bring it in for a landing now.

20 MR. RUSSELL: I am bringing it in for a
21 landing.

22 Bottom line is, bottom line is this is a
23 dog and pony show. It is the fig leaf, as you
24 referred to in the last one in Wesley Chapel,
25 and you are doing a good job as a blocking back

1 for Mr. Weatherford so he can continue his
2 career as a politician. Thank you very much.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Russell.
4 It has always been my ambition to be a blocking
5 back for such a good athlete.

6 Gail Parsons. Gail Parsons?

7 Susan McMillan with Protect Our Waters,
8 and then Boris Viteri. Ms. McMillan, I'm sorry
9 I didn't give you a long enough heads-up.
10 After Mr. Viteri, then we have Tatiana Denson.

11 You are recognized.

12 MS. McMILLAN: Thank you. I am not going
13 to speak on behalf of Protect Our Waters. I am
14 just going to speak on behalf of myself as a
15 citizen.

16 I have been a Republican for almost my
17 entire life, find myself falling sometimes with
18 the Democrats, sometimes with Republicans. I
19 am a mother of three. I am a small business
20 owner. I run a small agency for people who are
21 offenders of domestic violence and substance
22 abuse, and I see firsthand the effects of drugs
23 and alcohol on our youth and the effects of
24 budgets cuts, and I have all kinds of feelings
25 about it, but this is not what we are here to

1 talk about.

2 The reason I am telling you this is
3 because this amendment passed with 63 percent
4 of the vote, and a lot of those people were
5 Republicans and Independents and people
6 similarly minded to me. So I am one of these
7 people, I want you to hear from me. I should
8 be home with my kids tonight, but I am here,
9 and I want to let you know that I don't want to
10 live in a gerrymandered, rigged state. I want
11 my kids to have a state that they can count on,
12 politics that mean something. I want them to
13 feel like their vote means something. And if
14 you guys have maps and you wait until the very
15 last second to show it to the public, that
16 really raises a lot of suspicions and leaves a
17 bad taste in the mouth of everybody who wants
18 to believe in our government. And mistrust in
19 government is growing, and you guys have the
20 power to do something about that and to restore
21 some trust. So I am going to ask you to think
22 about that when you are making your decisions.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and thanks for
24 taking time from your family tonight.

25 Boris Viteri? Not so?

1 MS. PARSONS: Gail Parsons. I don't know
2 if you thought the former speaker was Gail --

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Oh, yes, Ms. Parsons, we
4 did call you.

5 MS. PARSONS: Yes, you did.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Please, you are
7 recognized.

8 MS. PARSONS: Thank you. I am a member
9 of -- or a citizen of Congressional District 9
10 in northwest Hillsborough County, Odessa area,
11 and that obviously is one district that is a
12 gerrymandered district. It is north Pinellas,
13 east Hills- -- or east Pasco and all of north
14 Hillsborough, all the way down to Plant City
15 and even below Plant City. I would like to see
16 that type of gerrymandering stopped, fixed,
17 when you do your redistricting. There's others
18 also, but this is the one that I live in.
19 Let's see that fixed. Let's see contiguous --
20 if there is one word that I would like to see,
21 when redistricting is contiguous, contiguous,
22 contiguous. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. That
24 is exactly the kind of testimony we need.

25 And Boris, are you here? Is it Viteli?

1 MR. VITERI: Viteri.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Viteri, I'm sorry. You
3 are recognized, and we are delighted to hear
4 your testimony.

5 Next is Tatiana Denson, and then after
6 Tatiana will be -- no, we have heard from her,
7 I'm sorry -- will be Dr. Carolyn Collins with
8 the NAACP.

9 You have the floor, please.

10 MR. VITERI: Thank you. Welcome to Tampa.
11 I am born and raised here in Tampa. And the
12 previous lady who was up here who said she took
13 time -- she came here instead of being with her
14 kids or family at home, she took the words
15 right out of my mouth.

16 I used to be a Democrat. I am now a
17 Republican. However, I did vote for this --
18 for this amendment. And, obviously, if the
19 amendment got over 60 percent of the votes,
20 that means Republicans, Independents and
21 Democrats voted for it. So it is important
22 that you consider that.

23 I am a swing voter, just like she is,
24 because I heard her say she sometimes agrees
25 with some things on the other side, I am on the

1 opposite side, and I can agree with things on
2 some sides, too, because at the end, it is all
3 about all of us, it is not just about one
4 specific party or one specific community.

5 And since you are in Tampa, I am here to
6 speak about U.S. District 11, congressional
7 district. I've heard a lot of people talk
8 about statewide Representatives and --
9 statewide districts. I am here to talk about
10 the congressional district.

11 This congressional district is
12 gerrymandered. There should be no reason why a
13 Representative that represents Tampa or
14 Hillsborough County should have to go all the
15 way to Pinellas County and speak with voters in
16 St. Petersburg or go to down to Manatee County
17 and speak to voters in Bradenton when they have
18 no connection to us here in Hillsborough
19 County. And, trust me, I will be in Pinellas
20 County tomorrow discussing Bill Young's
21 district, because it is the same situation.

22 This district here in Tampa and this
23 county should be more representative of
24 Hillsborough County. Where are all the
25 northern and western suburbs and eastern

1 suburbs of Tampa? They are not included in
2 this congressional district. You are missing
3 Westchase, you are missing Carrollwood, you are
4 missing Northdale, you are missing Brandon,
5 those are all suburbs of Tampa that should be
6 part of U.S. District 11. And St. Petersburg
7 and Bradenton are not part of the Tampa area.
8 They are part of Pinellas and Manatee. Maybe
9 one could go down to Vern Buchanan, the other
10 one can go the other way to Bill Young. But
11 please keep that into consideration if you want
12 compact and continuous districts, that is the
13 way they should be, because I have walked the
14 district, and there's no way I should have to
15 go all across a bridge to speak to voters over
16 there that have nothing in common with the
17 voters on this side, and vice-versa.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you
19 very, very much.

20 MR. VITERI: Thank you for your time.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Tatiana Denson.

22 MS. DENSON: Good evening. My name is
23 Tatiana Denson, and I am a resident and current
24 candidate for Florida House of Representatives
25 District 59. Last week during a redistricting

1 informational meeting by our current
2 Representative, Representative Betty Reed, we
3 were told that District 59 was short 15,000
4 residents and that was needed to ensure a seat
5 is maintained in the House.

6 The one request I have is please do not
7 put our district with one that does not have
8 the same needs as our own. And let's be
9 honest, human nature is to want things to work
10 out in one's own good, or for one's own good,
11 regardless of party affiliation. But what
12 about the good of the people? No offense to
13 anyone seated, but the 14-year-old presentation
14 is proof why we need more young people
15 represented in legislation, because we are more
16 flexible and innovative in our views. People
17 need officials who will get to the business of
18 doing what they were hired for, and that is to
19 serve the people. Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
21 Thank you, Tatiana. Next up we have
22 Dr. Carolyn Collins with the NAACP, and
23 following Ms. Collins is Russell Patterson.

24 DR. COLLINS: Good evening and thank you.
25 Representing the Hillsborough County branch

1 NAACP, I would like to just leave a couple of
2 basic principles that we would love for you to
3 consider, and we would like to start those off
4 by ensuring one vote for each individual, one
5 person, one vote.

6 We also would like for you to stick with
7 the concept you've constantly heard,
8 transparency, fairness, compliance with the
9 Voting Right Acts with equal protection.

10 While we look at redistricting as a sense
11 of common interest for those and the
12 individual, we want to also make sure that the
13 reference is made to Section 20 and 21 of the
14 Florida Constitution.

15 The maps, of course, by precincts, we
16 would love to see maps that are drawn that not
17 just deal with the increase in population, but
18 would seriously address the voting age
19 population. If you look at the 2010 census,
20 the results tell us that 51 percent of the
21 growth in the United States of America was in
22 the state of Florida, that 51 percent was with
23 foreign-born African-Americans and Hispanics.
24 We want to make sure that there is fair
25 transparency, equal representation, in those

1 areas.

2 I think sufficient information has been
3 given by Amendment 6. We have participated in
4 the Board of County Commissioners' maps. We
5 are here with you and with the school district
6 at the same time. We are asking not you, we
7 have seen it on your website, the maps, we have
8 tried it, we even had a workshop two weeks ago
9 to even try it. What we are saying is the maps
10 are necessary, so, finally, when you look at
11 the absence of the maps, we are asking that
12 once the maps are drawn, that the community at
13 large, state of Florida, have an opportunity to
14 look.

15 Finally, I would like to clearly say one
16 person, one vote, in summary, no packing, no
17 cracking, no stacking, compactness,
18 contiguousness, and district without seeing the
19 gerrymandering and clearly it is broken.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

21 DR. COLLINS: We ask that you fix it.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
23 ma'am. And our final speaker tonight, we are
24 sorry we couldn't get to everybody, but we will
25 have gotten to 93 speakers, then we are going

1 to find out if we have a gag rule.

2 Russell Patterson, Mr. Patterson.

3 MR. PATTERSON: I feel honored. Like many
4 folks, I came to Florida from another state and
5 I live here in Florida by choice, and I moved
6 here because I think it is one of the greatest
7 states in the nation. In the state I grew up
8 in, we used to make fun of other states, and
9 one of the states we made fun of as being kind
10 of backwards is Louisiana. Louisiana is one of
11 the states that's pretty much finished their
12 redistricting process. Let's get on the ball.
13 Let's be Florida, not Flori-duh.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: That is a great way to
15 end. And, Mr. Patterson, I hope you will stay
16 for the comments, because we are going to
17 specifically answer the question about
18 Louisiana. That is a great way to start.

19 Let's find out if we have a gag rule by
20 asking if there are any members of the House of
21 Representatives, Democrats or Republicans, who
22 wish to make any comments, ask or answer any
23 questions or offer any recommendations tonight?

24 Representative Adkins, you are recognized.

25 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Thank you,

1 Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to reflect on what
2 I heard from several individuals tonight,
3 including I believe it was the Supervisor of
4 Elections, and they referenced keeping specific
5 neighborhoods together. And, in fact, I think
6 one person even said that was the reason why he
7 voted for 5 and 6. So I just wanted to make
8 sure that -- I found those comments very
9 helpful. And the supervisor also referred to
10 the Voting Tabulation Districts and the
11 importance of those, so I will be keeping those
12 comments in mind as we move forward, but I
13 found those comments very, very helpful
14 tonight. Thank you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Representative.
16 Other members of the House? Over there on the
17 very, very end. We will get to you,
18 Representative Fresen, I'm sorry.

19 REPRESENTATIVE REED: I am Representative
20 Betty Reed, District 59. I just want to say
21 thank you to each and every one of you for
22 being here tonight and for speaking. And I
23 know that several people said, "I don't know if
24 you are listening or not." Well, this is being
25 recorded. So anyone that is not listening have

1 the opportunity to go back and hear this all
2 over again.

3 Thank you. Thank you so much for being
4 here.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. And
6 right behind you, Alex.

7 REPRESENTATIVE FRESEN: Thank you so much,
8 Mr. Chair, and I appreciate your indulgence and
9 I will be quick.

10 I just wanted to point out very simply,
11 first of all, thank you all for coming out here
12 tonight, it is always great to be in Tampa, but
13 being a Representative of a majority-minority
14 district, I appreciated the reminder from many
15 of you tonight, including former Representative
16 Tamargo and others, that the Fair Districts
17 amendment, the very one that everybody keeps on
18 talking about here today, prioritized electoral
19 protections for minority communities, amongst
20 other things. And I take those comments made
21 here tonight as a friendly and reasonable
22 suggestion to follow the prioritization of
23 standards as they are actually written in the
24 law, which we have been reminded to do and we
25 are taking as a task very seriously. But that

1 aspect is actually also a part of Fair
2 Districts, with, of course, an adherence to
3 those overarching principles of the federal
4 law. So I say this because while some
5 standards in Florida's new redistricting laws
6 may be discussed more frequently than others,
7 one in particular that was said three times in
8 the closing of a very recent person testifying,
9 it is critical that we, as legislators, always
10 attend to every single aspect of the law and of
11 the Constitution, not just one or two, and that
12 is what makes our task obviously difficult,
13 it's part of the reason why we have asked for
14 your testimony, so that we can figure out how
15 to actually combine all of those standards that
16 are in 5 and 6, not just one or two, and figure
17 out the best and fairest way to draw these
18 districts. So, again, I thank you all for your
19 guidance and appreciate your comments.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
21 Representative.

22 Representative Frishe, you are recognized,
23 sir.

24 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Thank you,
25 Mr. Chairman. There were several folks who

1 spoke tonight about compactness and the
2 different ways that it might be applied, and
3 one of the reasons we have these hearings is so
4 we can hear how you view it in your own
5 community, because obviously we don't know
6 every single community in the state. I have,
7 for instance, learned a lot about the Panhandle
8 when I was up there and the communities of
9 interest and how sometimes it is roads and
10 bridges and all that actually are what tie a
11 community together. And I appreciate y'all
12 talking about that, because that is going to be
13 very, very important when we get down to
14 considering the compactness of a district.

15 I happen to represent a district that has
16 numerous bridges in it, because I represent the
17 barrier islands of Pinellas County, and a lot
18 of the mainland also. So I understand how
19 bridges and roads and the geographic features
20 sometimes tie together communities, and they
21 sometimes separate them, too, but usually they
22 tie them together. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
24 Representative. Any other members of the House
25 wish to make any comments? If not, we will

1 turn to Senators who are here. Members of the
2 Senate wish to make any comments, offer any
3 observations, answer or ask any questions?
4 Senate Joyner.

5 SENATOR JOYNER: Thank you, Senator Gaetz.
6 I just want to thank all of you, the citizens
7 of Hillsborough, Pinellas, Manatee and all of
8 the other counties that are represented here
9 tonight. It is wonderful to have such an
10 outstanding group of citizens participating and
11 expressing their views. So thank you again,
12 and do continue to participate and follow what
13 this Legislature does.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Senator Joyner.
15 Any other comments by members of the Senate?

16 There was one question specifically asked
17 of me. I will try to answer it before I turn
18 to the Speaker Designate. And that was a
19 question about whether or not I had contributed
20 to an organization that opposed Amendments 5
21 and 6. The answer to that question is yes,
22 before the election. Before the election,
23 there were \$12 million contributed, most of it
24 for Amendments 5 and 6, and most of it by folks
25 out of state, but there were a number of folks

1 who contributed money because we thought
2 Amendments 5 and 6 should not be in the
3 Constitution. I was one of those people.
4 However, following Amendment 5 and 6 being
5 added to the Constitution, and following my
6 appointment to this committee, I have
7 contributed nothing to any lawsuit or any
8 action having anything to do with overturning
9 Amendments 5 and 6.

10 It is the ability of every citizen and the
11 right of every citizen to contribute your vote,
12 your walking door to door, your stuffing
13 envelopes, or if you wish to make a financial
14 contribution to or against any cause or any
15 candidate. However, as public servants, once
16 the election is over, we are obligated to
17 uphold the Constitution and the laws of the
18 State of Florida and of the United States, and
19 since that election when Amendments 5 and 6
20 were adopted, I have contributed nothing to any
21 effort to try to upend or to reverse those
22 amendments.

23 Having said that, let me turn to the
24 Speaker Designate. Representative Weatherford
25 has made extensive notes tonight, as have I, as

1 have many members of the committee, and we
2 would like to try to answer some of the factual
3 questions that were raised. Mr. Speaker.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
5 very much, Mr. Chairman, and ladies and
6 gentlemen, I am going to try to be brief. I
7 know everybody wants to get out of here. We
8 appreciate all the comments that have come
9 forth tonight. We've gotten a lot of great
10 advice, we have had some constructive
11 criticism, we have had some straight-out
12 criticism and we even had an offer to take us
13 to the woodshed, which I thought was unique on
14 this swing. My mother always said, she is the
15 mother of nine children, that spanking is good
16 for the soul, so we are getting our fair share
17 of that.

18 But I would just like to say the diversity
19 of comments that I think we have gotten today
20 has shown us, you know, how complicated this
21 process is, and, frankly, how important it is
22 that we hear from citizens. We heard about the
23 diversity of the county from the east side to
24 the west side, and how one side is more urban
25 and one side has more industrial and

1 agriculture base. We heard -- someone showed
2 us a map of the City of Tampa, and was talking
3 about the geographic boundaries of the City of
4 Tampa and then talking about compactness,
5 almost as if those two almost fall out of line
6 with each other, which they do. And so when
7 you talk about Hillsborough County, you talk
8 about the communities of interest, the
9 geographic boundaries of Hillsborough County,
10 it is very diverse. It is racially diverse, it
11 is geographically diverse, the municipalities
12 are diverse, and I think that is important that
13 we think about that.

14 There was a suggestion, Mr. Chairman, that
15 came about, and I don't have the person's name
16 who mentioned this, but I think this is a
17 tremendous suggestion, and, frankly, in the
18 House, we are going to look at this, and I hope
19 you will consider it in the Senate, they
20 mentioned that when Hillsborough County did
21 their redistricting, they actually proposed six
22 maps and they had different options for people
23 to choose from and for citizens to look at,
24 and, frankly, I think that is a very good idea
25 and something that we should consider going

1 forward. So that got my attention certainly.

2 There was a lady, I want to say this
3 right, Mrs. Morowati -- is that right? I just
4 want to say you get the MVP for tonight. I
5 have not looked at the maps you suggested, but
6 you showed up, you had comments, they were
7 detailed and then you actually had specific
8 suggestions that you gave forth, and I thought
9 that was tremendous and that's the kind of
10 feedback we are looking for. I just want to
11 thank you for doing that.

12 There was -- there were some comments in
13 regard to the maps, and I want to be very
14 clear. Everywhere we go, we hear the same
15 question, where are the maps, show us the maps.
16 And there are some groups that are a little
17 more vocal about that than others.

18 The first thing I want to point out in
19 regard to the maps is this: The Fair Districts
20 Chairwoman came and spoke before a joint
21 committee just like this in Tallahassee made up
22 of House members, Senate members, Democrats and
23 Republicans, and specifically said to the
24 committee, that is recorded and I will give you
25 a copy of it to any person who is in this room,

1 that she would not begin to draw the first map
2 until she heard from the public. This is
3 coming from the Chairperson of Fair Districts.
4 So for everybody who voted for that and
5 supported that cause, the leader of that cause
6 thought it was prudent for the Legislature to
7 listen, to listen first.

8 One of the biggest complaints I hear in
9 this process is that politicians tend to act
10 first and listen later, if they listen at all.
11 And we have made a statement in this process
12 that we are going to listen first. And if that
13 is the worst thing that you can accuse us of
14 doing, I will take it. If the biggest problem
15 I've got is being a listener, I will take that.
16 My mom didn't say that about me when I was a
17 kid, by the way, but I will take it now.

18 The other thing, and I am going to read
19 really quickly, last week in Georgia -- I was
20 just reading about this. Last week in Georgia,
21 the League of Women Voters in Georgia not only
22 prepared and publicized its own redistricting
23 maps, it organized a map fair at the Georgia
24 State Capitol to encourage members of the
25 public to present their own maps. And this

1 quote, "Our goal throughout this process is to
2 ensure that citizens have a choice," said the
3 President of the League of Women Voters of
4 Georgia, "and what better way to do that than
5 bringing people here with their own maps to the
6 Capitol." Interesting how we are hearing a
7 completely different story for the last four
8 hours this evening, Mr. Chairman.

9 Not only that, we had a young man by the
10 name of Graham, and everybody is calling you a
11 14-year-old. You are really 13-and-a-half,
12 right? Thirteen, okay, I thought that. They
13 were giving you credit for that extra year.
14 You look 14. But here is Graham with his
15 little -- with his older sister or younger
16 sister and his family who were able to produce
17 120 maps that we saw right there before us.
18 One student, one sister, one family that was
19 able to do that, and it was tremendous and it
20 was of great support. We are going to look at
21 that, we are going to learn from that, and we
22 have had 48 other maps just like that.

23 Ladies and gentlemen, we are going to have
24 maps. We are going to have maps for you to
25 look at, we are going to have maps to get

1 feedback on, but we are having an opportunity
2 to hear from you first, and I don't see why
3 that is such a bad thing.

4 Next on the timeline, a lot of people
5 talked about the timeline and the fact that we
6 need to speed this process up. One gentleman
7 actually mentioned I think Louisiana as a
8 state, and Lord knows, they have had their
9 challenges over the years, but apparently they
10 have finished the process. Well, I can give
11 you a very easy answer as to why Louisiana and
12 about eight other states have finished the
13 process, because they have elections in three
14 months. They have their elections in off
15 years. So their election is in 2011, not in
16 2012. So for states that you hear like
17 Louisiana and Mississippi and New Jersey and
18 others who are way ahead of us on
19 redistricting, first off, they got their census
20 data way before we did. We were one of the
21 last states, not the last, but one of the last
22 to receive our census data. But they also have
23 elections in November of this year. And so the
24 department -- the Census Bureau gave them their
25 data ahead of time so they could start to draw

1 their maps. I just think that is an important
2 thing to point out.

3 Also in regard to the timeline, the
4 Constitution is very clear, and I said this at
5 the beginning, but I will say it again for
6 clarity. It is very clear that we cannot vote
7 on legislative maps legally until January of
8 2012. That is the soonest we could possibly
9 vote on any map. So what we are doing is we
10 are spending the summer on a listening tour,
11 listening to folks just like you, hundreds of
12 hours of public testimony. Next we are going
13 to spend the fall looking at maps, drawing
14 maps, having the opportunity to debate, having
15 an opportunity for you to debate, to look at
16 maps, but we wanted to listen first. And so we
17 will get through the fall, and when we get into
18 session, I can assure you there will be votes
19 taken on maps on the floor and we will get them
20 out on time. We are very sensitive to the fact
21 that we have to have them done by qualifying.
22 We get it, we get it. And I can assure you,
23 and everyone here can assure you that we are
24 going to get that done.

25 Also, there was mention about the certain

1 dates that I think the -- the one I keep
2 remembering, someone mentioned March that we
3 had to -- we were going to vote in March and
4 that our timeline said a vote on March. That
5 is not true. Those are deadlines. We are not
6 operating by deadlines. We are moving at a
7 clip and at a pace that we hope is going to be
8 very, very fast. And so there is no plan to
9 vote in March or anything in the month of
10 March. I hope that we are done far before
11 that, Mr. Chairman.

12 Moving forward, something that I think is
13 very important that came up several times is
14 litigation. We also hear this argument every
15 time there are concerns. There is no
16 litigation in regards to Amendment 5. People
17 think there's litigation -- and those are the
18 legislative maps. There is litigation going on
19 on Amendment 6, which are the congressional
20 maps. And I want to be very clear about this,
21 and that is that there is litigation, but it is
22 our job, both as Chairman Gaetz and myself and
23 every member of this committee, the
24 Constitution says that 5 and 6 passed, it was
25 voted unanimously almost -- or overwhelmingly

1 by 64 percent of the citizens of Florida. We
2 are going to uphold it, we are going to honor
3 it, and every person here is going to make sure
4 that it is implemented in our maps, Amendments
5 5 and 6, okay. We are going to do that, no
6 matter what litigation is going on. And the
7 idea that the Legislature has stored away tens
8 of millions of dollars, which we continue to
9 hear, to fight the maps simply is not true. It
10 is not true. We hear it in every city we go
11 to. I am here to tell you, I am looking y'all
12 in the eyeball, it is not true. It does not
13 exist.

14 Lastly, I am going to finish off,
15 Mr. Chairman, there is an opportunity for every
16 member of this committee, Democrat, Republican,
17 Chairs, Vice-Chairs, any person can propose a
18 map, can submit a map, can debate a map, and I
19 think you even offered to members of your
20 committee that if they propose a map, you will
21 hear it at the very first committee hearing
22 that you have in September. And so ladies and
23 gentlemen, this is the beginning of the
24 process. It is not the end of the process.
25 Your input will continue to matter, it will

1 continue to hold water as we go through it.

2 And I know someone mentioned earlier that
3 there was different games being played, and I
4 won't speculate on different games, I like lots
5 of games. I always grew up liking Yahtzee and
6 Monopoly and, you know, everything else, but
7 sometimes I also enjoyed playing pop the
8 piñata, and sometimes, Mr. Chairman, I feel
9 like we get to be the piñata. But you know
10 what? That is our job. That is our job to sit
11 here and to listen to you no matter what the
12 comment is, and I thought we got some great
13 comments from members of the public. I learned
14 a lot. And we just thank you for taking the
15 time to do that.

16 I did notice one thing, there were two --
17 a couple of questions that were asked, and now
18 that I just looked down, I want to make sure I
19 hit them real quick. To my knowledge and to
20 any knowledge of any person up here that I know
21 of, there are no private funds being used to
22 assist with building districts. I want to make
23 that very clear.

24 The House and Senate did create in-house
25 two separate district building applications.

1 The data is the same, but the operating systems
2 were different. And I suggest that if you
3 want, you can talk to our staff, and they can
4 explain that.

5 And the last one was that eight of the 48
6 public submissions of plans we have received
7 thus far were made with different applications,
8 which means people used their own applications
9 and submitted those to us, and I meant to talk
10 about that in the beginning, but I missed it,
11 Mr. Chairman.

12 Thank everybody for bearing with me on
13 that long explanation. Thank you for your
14 comments. We learned a lot about Hillsborough
15 County, a lot about Tampa Bay, and I hope
16 everyone has a great night. Thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: And with that,
18 Representative Weatherford moves we rise.

19 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
20 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 208 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 20th day of November, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2011

8:00 A.M.

EPI CENTER at ST. PETE COLLEGE

LARGO, FLORIDA

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: Good morning.
3 My name is Will Weatherford, and I have the
4 honor of chairing today's hearing. The
5 Joint/Senate House Redistricting hearing is now
6 called to order.

7 We are pleased to be joined today by
8 several members of the Florida House and the
9 Florida Senate. I am going to ask them in just
10 a moment to briefly introduce themselves so
11 that everybody here understands who we are
12 talking to.

13 But we have Legislators from across the
14 state of Florida who are interested in knowing
15 about your community and having a better
16 understanding so that when we are drawing lines
17 in the future, that we have all the information
18 necessary.

19 And so we are grateful to be here this
20 morning, had a great hearing last night in
21 Hillsborough County, and happy to be here.

22 We want to thank St. Pete College and
23 President Law for having us here today. I saw
24 President Law earlier, right there in the front
25 row. We appreciate you for allowing us to use

1 this wonderful facility. This is a great
2 facility, and we are very happy to be here.

3 And we want to thank all the members of
4 the public, we've got a great turnout this
5 morning already, I am sure people will be
6 trickling in.

7 I got stuck on the interstate coming in
8 from Wesley Chapel, but I made it here just in
9 the nick of time, Mr. Chairman, and so I'll
10 tell you what we will do, before we get
11 started, I would like to -- if we have a spare
12 mike, John, we will start here, right here with
13 Representative Frishe, and go down and allow
14 them introduce themselves, and we will have Mr.
15 Frishe here welcome us here to Pinellas County.

16 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Thank you,
17 Mr. Chairman. I am Representative Jim Frishe.
18 I am Chairman of the Pinellas County
19 Legislative Delegation, and on behalf of the
20 delegation and my colleagues, welcome to
21 paradise, and to the public, thank you for
22 coming out and participating in your
23 government. Freedom is a heavy lift and it
24 needs a lot of hands helping, so thank you for
25 coming out.

1 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: Good morning. I am
2 Representative Peter Nehr, and I represent
3 north Pinellas County and south Pasco.

4 SENATOR DETERT: There's a gentleman for
5 you.

6 Good morning, I am Senator Nancy Detert,
7 and I represent parts of Manatee, most of
8 Sarasota County and parts of Charlotte County.
9 Very happy to be here to listen to you this
10 morning.

11 SENATOR BENACQUISTO: Good morning, I am
12 Lizbeth Benacquisto. Thank you all for coming
13 out this morning. I represent Florida Senate
14 District 27, which covers portions of Lee,
15 Glades, Charlotte, Hendry and Palm Beach
16 County.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Good morning, I
18 am Kathleen Passidomo, House District 76, which
19 is Collier County. I represent the City of
20 Naples, City of Marco Island and Everglades
21 City.

22 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Good morning. I am
23 Jim Boyd. I represent House District 68, which
24 is western Manatee County just across the bay
25 and just a small portion of Hillsborough

1 County. Glad to be here.

2 SENATOR NEGRON: Good morning, Joe Negron,
3 I represent the Treasure Coast and northern
4 Palm Beach County and Okeechobee in the Florida
5 Senate.

6 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good morning,
7 State Representative Mack Bernard, District 84
8 in West Palm Beach, Florida.

9 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good morning,
10 Chuck Chestnut, House District 23, a portion of
11 Alachua County and a portion of Marion County.

12 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Good morning.
13 State Representative Daphne Campbell, District
14 108, from Miami-Dade County.

15 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good morning, John
16 Patrick Julien, representing House District
17 104, which encompasses North Miami Beach, North
18 Miami, Miami Gardens, the City of Opa-Locka,
19 unincorporated Miami-Dade County and the City
20 of Miami, and it is a pleasure to be here.

21 REPRESENTATIVE ROUSON: Good morning, I am
22 Darryl Rouson. I represent House District 55,
23 south Pinellas, north Manatee, north Sarasota
24 and one little smidgen of Hillsborough County,
25 south.

1 REPRESENTATIVE BRANDES: Good morning,
2 State Representative Jeff Brandes. I represent
3 House District 52, which is portions of St.
4 Petersburg, Clearwater, Largo and Pinellas
5 Park. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE AHERN: Good morning, State
7 Representative Larry Ahern, representing five
8 cities: Pinellas Park, Largo, Seminole, South
9 Pasadena and west St. Petersburg.

10 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: Good morning,
11 State Representative Ed Hooper. I represent
12 District 50, which is parts of Clearwater,
13 Largo, Dunedin, Safety Harbor and
14 unincorporated Pinellas.

15 REPRESENTATIVE BURGIN: Good morning,
16 State Representative Rachel Burgin from
17 District 56, which is the City of Tampa and
18 eastern Hillsborough County.

19 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Good morning, my
20 name is Mike Horner. I represent State House
21 District 79 in central Florida.

22 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Good morning, I am
23 Janet Adkins from northeast Florida,
24 representing House District 12, which is
25 Nassau, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Union and Duval

1 Counties.

2 REPRESENTATIVE CRUZ: Good morning, my
3 name is Janet Cruz, and I am your partner in
4 the bay area, Tampa Bay, that is. I represent
5 District 58 in Tampa, which is the central part
6 of Tampa. Happy to be here.

7 SENATOR JOYNER: Good morning, I am
8 Arthenia Joyner, State Senator, District 18,
9 which encompasses portions of Manatee,
10 Pinellas, and the majority of the district is
11 in Hillsborough County.

12 SENATOR LATVALA: Good morning, I am Jack
13 Latvala and I am proud to represent the 16th
14 Senatorial District and want to welcome many of
15 my constituents here today, as well as
16 welcoming my colleagues to the 16th Senatorial
17 District, which is where we are sitting right
18 at this moment.

19 REPRESENTATIVE NUNEZ: Good morning, my
20 name is Jeanette Nuñez. I represent House
21 District 112, which consists of portions of
22 Miami-Dade, Broward and Collier County.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay. I
24 think that's everybody. Before we move
25 forward, I would like to take just a brief

1 moment to make a pledge to our flag, and
2 Representative Frishe is going to lead us in
3 that pledge.

4 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: I pledge
5 allegiance to the flag of the United States of
6 America and to the Republic for which it
7 stands, one nation, under God, indivisible with
8 liberty and justice for all.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
10 very much. Again, ladies and gentlemen, my
11 name is Will Weatherford, and along with my
12 Senate colleague, Don Gaetz, who is the future
13 Senate President of the Senate, we are here,
14 going to be co-chairing this meeting, which
15 will also be webcast live over The Florida
16 Channel and on the Internet, so hopefully
17 people will be watching us there as well.

18 Our sole purpose here today is to hear
19 about what you believe the legal standards
20 governing redistricting and how they should be
21 applied in your community, so that you are
22 represented in Tallahassee and in Washington,
23 fully, equitably and sensibly.

24 Our procedures today are going to be very
25 simple, but they are also very important. And

1 it is important that you sign in so that we can
2 create an accurate public record of all
3 attendees and speakers. Also, you may opt to
4 join our e-mail list so that we can keep you
5 informed about the redistricting process as we
6 work through it over the next few months.

7 If you have not signed in, please raise
8 your right hand, and a staff member will give
9 you an attendance card. Keep your hand up,
10 too. I see lots of hands out there, and just
11 keep them up and we will make sure and give you
12 an attendance card.

13 If you wish to speak today and you have
14 not filled out an attendance card, also raise
15 your -- I'm sorry, before we begin -- and you
16 would like to speak and not just to show that
17 you are here, but if you would like to speak,
18 also raise your hand, and we will get you that
19 attendance card and make sure that you get the
20 opportunity to speak. We want to make sure
21 that we have plenty of time to give everyone
22 that opportunity.

23 And before we begin, I would like to
24 recognize Senator Gaetz for a few moments to
25 walk us through what we are going to be doing

1 here today, what we hope the comments from the
2 public are focused on, and to give us a little
3 bit of background and history of redistricting.
4 So, Senator, if you could, maybe walk us
5 through that.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
7 Mr. Speaker. Every ten years, the Legislature
8 is required by our Constitution to redistrict
9 the state based on increases or decreases or
10 movements of population within the state of
11 Florida, and because our state has grown more
12 than other states in the last ten years, we
13 have actually picked up two additional seats in
14 the U.S. House of Representatives. We have
15 gone from 25 to 27 seats in the House of
16 Representatives.

17 And part of our job as voters, as
18 citizens, as a committee, as a Legislature, as
19 a judiciary, is to determine where those two
20 additional congressional seats ought to be
21 located.

22 Now, because some parts of our state have
23 increased or decreased disproportionately in
24 population, many Senate and House districts
25 will change. In fact, my guess, Mr. Chairman,

1 is that all Senate and House districts will
2 change because of the addition or the
3 subtraction of population or the movement of
4 population within the state. When
5 redistricting is completed, congressional
6 districts must be equal in population and
7 contain 696,345 people, 696,345 people in a
8 U.S. Congressional District. The 40 State
9 Senate districts must also be nearly equal at
10 about 470,000 people, and our 120 House
11 districts must also be nearly equal at about
12 156,700 people.

13 There are displays that you can see over
14 here to my right on the wall, and those
15 displays, I saw a number of you looking at them
16 when you came in, they show the current
17 boundaries of districts in this area of the
18 state and the number of persons which must be
19 added to or subtracted from current districts
20 in order to achieve equal representation.

21 Now, equality of representation is
22 important, but it is not the only legal
23 requirement that redistricting plans must meet
24 under the law. The laws and the important
25 court cases governing redistricting are

1 explained in detail on the House and Senate
2 websites. Those websites are listed in a
3 "Redistricting 2012" brochure that was
4 available when you came in. Did you get a 2012
5 redistricting brochure?

6 If you didn't, it is a tri-fold brochure,
7 raise your hand, and we will make sure you get
8 one. Lots of customers, okay. They were
9 available when you came in, but we want to make
10 sure everybody gets one.

11 The reason why they are important is
12 because they not only list the House and Senate
13 websites, but they explain how the websites are
14 packed with information about redistricting in
15 Florida, including the explanation of the laws
16 and important court cases governing
17 redistricting.

18 The two websites, the House and Senate
19 website, are complementary. They are not
20 exactly the same. They are complementary.
21 They are updated frequently. We hope you will
22 visit both and check back often, because it is
23 a great way to stay current about how
24 congressional, Senate and House districts are
25 taking shape.

1 The websites also deliver to your
2 fingertips all of the demographic data that
3 will be used in drawing districts and the exact
4 same computer programs that legislators and
5 professional staff would use. Any member of
6 the public can participate in building plans or
7 seeing maps or critiquing plans or critiquing
8 maps submitted by Legislators or other
9 citizens.

10 Before, during and after this hearing,
11 House and Senate professional staff are
12 available to show anybody the simple steps to
13 getting on-line and building districts in your
14 area, in your neighborhood, in your community,
15 or if you want to take a whack at it, the whole
16 state, and then submitting that information so
17 that we can use it as a basis for the
18 Legislature's deliberations.

19 If you think that it is too complicated,
20 it is not. I am pretty tech stupid, and it
21 took the professional staff about 15 minutes to
22 show me how to use the District Builder
23 software.

24 Recommendations from citizens and groups
25 of citizens will be made publicly available.

1 So any maps that are offered by anybody will be
2 available for everyone to see. In fact, as of
3 this morning, there are 48 different maps that
4 have already been submitted. So if somebody
5 says, "Where are the maps," you had to walk
6 past them when you came in. There are 48 of
7 them, and some of them have been submitted by
8 individuals who have come to hearings and then
9 literally gone outside during the hearing or
10 after the hearing and learned how to use the
11 software and submitted their maps.

12 Plus there are over a hundred additional
13 submissions we have had of written ideas for
14 how neighborhoods ought to be either divided or
15 communities ought to be held together, and all
16 of that is available on the Web.

17 The submission of proposed maps, the
18 submission of your ideas that makes sense for
19 your community, is the single most effective
20 form of public participation in the
21 redistricting process.

22 We are glad to have people talk to us in
23 any way they would like about the process
24 itself, if you have comments or criticisms,
25 that is fine, but the most valuable information

1 that you probably can impart is to tell us
2 about your neighborhood, your community, how it
3 is divided now, whether that makes sense and
4 what your specific recommendations are.

5 The redistricting schedule under which we
6 are operating is imposed by the state
7 Constitution. The Constitution does not permit
8 the Legislature to act on state legislative
9 maps before the second year after the census;
10 in other words, the Constitution of Florida
11 does not permit the Legislature to vote on
12 legislative maps until 2012. However, we have
13 accelerated this process as much as we legally
14 can in order to get done so that we will be
15 able to have elections in an organized and
16 thoughtful way in 2012.

17 We have moved up the 2012 legislative
18 session from March, when it would usually
19 start, to January, and we have begun our
20 statewide hearings five months in advance of
21 the 2012 legislative session, and we will begin
22 our committee weeks where we will vote -- we
23 will debate, discuss and vote in committees in
24 September instead of in December.

25 Now, it has been suggested that the

1 Legislature should draw maps first and then put
2 them in front of the public and say, "Here they
3 are." We believe this puts the answer ahead of
4 the question. We believe there ought to be no
5 preconceptions created by politicians, but,
6 rather, public testimony should be free and
7 unrestricted.

8 In fact, a principal author of Florida's
9 new redistricting standards, and Ellen Freidin,
10 the Chairperson for Fair Districts, are on
11 record testifying before the House and Senate
12 stating that new maps should not be drawn until
13 after the public has first had an opportunity
14 to comment in public hearings, and so that is
15 exactly what we are doing.

16 Our intent is to use the recommendations
17 made at the 26 public hearings and through our
18 Internet sites as the basis for developing one
19 or more options for district maps. I don't
20 think you will see one map come fully blown
21 from the brow of Zeus.

22 I think instead you will see several
23 options, drawing from the input we receive at
24 these hearings. We will discuss those options
25 in open public meetings before any votes are

1 taken, even votes in committee.

2 In other words, what we are saying is if
3 you look at the maps that you had to walk past
4 outside this room, and you look at the other
5 maps and submissions that are on-line, the ones
6 actually submitted to the Legislature, we are
7 saying that we are starting the legislative
8 process with those maps and with the other
9 input we have received from the public. So if
10 you want to know where we will begin our
11 deliberations and what Legislators will be
12 using as we start this process in Tallahassee,
13 it is with those public submissions, those maps
14 that you had to walk past when you came in the
15 door.

16 Throughout this process, we will solicit
17 additional public comment so that proposed maps
18 can mature with the public involved, all before
19 the Legislature approves any final maps.

20 And then whatever the Legislature passes
21 is submitted from judicial review. The
22 Legislature doesn't get to decide by itself
23 where the lines are drawn. Anything that we
24 develop based on the input we receive from the
25 public is then submitted to the Florida Supreme

1 Court and submitted to the federal judicial
2 level for approval to make sure that every
3 legal requirement, state and federal, is met.

4 Because our purpose today is to hear from
5 you, all of the time remaining between now and
6 11:00 a.m. will be used to ensure that every
7 member of the public who is here and wishes to
8 speak will have time to present testimony and
9 be listened to respectfully without
10 interruption. If after every citizen has had
11 her or his say there is time remaining before
12 our scheduled adjournment, and we hope there
13 will be some time, then any member of the
14 Committee, Democrat or Republican, House member
15 or Senator, may make any statement, answer any
16 question, offer any observation they would
17 like.

18 And you will see that Speaker Weatherford
19 and I will be making heavy notes, you will see
20 other people making heavy notes, so that if
21 there are data-specific questions or empirical
22 questions that come up during the hearing, we
23 will try to make sure, time permitting, that we
24 answer those so that we all leave here with the
25 same set of facts.

1 Mr. Chairman, I hope that this description
2 of our schedule and our process helps set the
3 stage for a successful hearing. John Guthrie,
4 our Senate Professional Staff Director,
5 admonishes me to remind you that you must sign
6 in with the professional staff if you wish to
7 speak.

8 So even if you have let us know on the
9 Internet that you are coming to the hearing
10 today, we are delighted you did let us know, if
11 you want to speak, be sure to let the
12 professional staff know so that Speaker
13 Weatherford has a speaker sheet for you and can
14 call your name.

15 And that is a recitation of the process
16 and where we go from here, Mr. Speaker.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
18 very much, Chairman Gaetz, great explanation of
19 the process here. And very quickly, before we
20 start public hearings, which we will start just
21 in a second, every hearing kind of has its own
22 personality, and we are happy to be a part of
23 this today and we've got a lot of members of
24 the Legislature that are here to listen to you
25 in a very respectful and thoughtful manner, and

1 all we would ask is in your comments that you
2 also make your comments in a very respectful
3 and thoughtful manner.

4 We want to hear your thoughts, whether it
5 is constructive criticism, whether it is, you
6 know, cheerleading, whatever it is, just do it
7 in a respectful way, and I can assure you
8 everybody on this Committee will treat you in
9 the same manner. So we thank you very much for
10 that ahead of time.

11 We've got several speakers; in fact, we've
12 got probably over 40 speakers already signed
13 up, and so we are going to try to limit to
14 about three minutes per person. We will try to
15 give you a little bit of latitude and let you
16 know, and I will lean towards the mike maybe
17 when we are getting close to the end, but try
18 to give everybody at least three minutes. We
19 want every person to have the opportunity to
20 speak.

21 I am also going to call out at least three
22 names at a time, and we have designated this
23 front row up here to my right and your left as
24 kind of an on deck circle. And so as I call
25 your name out, if you could, walk up to the

1 front, so that way we can get you to the mike
2 as quickly as possible and do this in an
3 orderly fashion.

4 So without any further ado, our first
5 speaker this morning is going to be B. J. Star,
6 and following B.J. is going to be Mary Freeman,
7 and following Ms. Freeman will be Jasmina
8 Forcan.

9 And so, B.J., we appreciate you being
10 here. You get the honor to go first, and we
11 are happy that you are here this morning, and
12 you are recognized for three minutes.

13 MS. STAR: Thank you very much. My name
14 is B. J. Star, and I am a woman. I had to wait
15 144 years before I was given the right to vote
16 in this country. Because of this struggle, I
17 do believe that all the women of this nation
18 appreciate the right of the franchise in a very
19 special way.

20 Women were imprisoned, force fed and
21 beaten during the battle to win the right to
22 vote, and, thus, our cry of one person, one
23 vote, is especially meaningful.

24 I come to you today repeating the message
25 of 63 percent of Florida voters that we -- all

1 we want for you to do is to follow the law, and
2 you don't need these expensive hearings to know
3 what that is.

4 The fact that you have set aside \$30
5 million to defend your maps once you finally
6 share them with us is disheartening. It is
7 like it is a foregone conclusion that you are
8 going to have to defend yourselves. If you do
9 it the right the first time, there won't be any
10 legal skirmishes.

11 Additionally, the two and a half million
12 dollars you have already spent fighting against
13 the implementation of Amendments 5 and 6 is
14 appalling. It is even more egregious that
15 Florida taxpayers are paying both for the
16 defense of the amendments and for the lawsuit
17 challenging the amendments. These expenses are
18 even more shocking in a state where you have
19 laid off thousands of teachers.

20 We are disappointed that you have chosen
21 to fight the very amendments that Floridians
22 want. We are disappointed you don't have maps.
23 It is especially disappointing that the
24 timeline you have chosen will only lead to more
25 confusion. It is bad enough that you wasted

1 this legislative session to pass a number of
2 egregious bills against women. In passing a
3 voter suppression --

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Star, if
5 we could, we are here to talk about
6 redistricting, not policy decisions that have
7 been made in the past or the future, just
8 redistricting. Ladies and gentlemen, please.
9 Please, ladies and gentlemen --

10 A VOICE: Let her finish.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: She's going
12 to get to finish, but we are going to keep the
13 comments on redistricting.

14 MS. STAR: Floridians have voiced their
15 opinions and given you their input, and you
16 have chosen to sue us. My foremothers suffered
17 and battled too hard to gain the right to vote.
18 For now to make a mockery of this process is a
19 shame. Please return to Tallahassee, draw us
20 legal maps, and then we will talk. And one
21 last word for the women of Florida: Uterus.
22 Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
24 Ms. Star.

25 Next up -- next up we have Ms. Mary

1 Freeman with the Democratic Women's Club of
2 Pinellas County, and then Jasmina Forcan, and
3 following Ms. Forcan we have Nigel Watson.

4 Ms. Freeman, you are recognized.

5 MS. FREEMAN: Hi, I am Mary Freeman, and
6 what I'm here to say is in today's economy, why
7 are you spending millions of taxpayer dollars
8 on fighting an amendment that was approved by
9 63 percent of Florida voters?

10 I want to know where the maps are and why
11 are you asking us to draw them up. If you
12 really need help, I and several others would be
13 more than happy to sit down with you and get it
14 done. This could save millions of dollars.
15 The stalling is merely a tactic made to help
16 incumbents who are afraid of being voted out of
17 office.

18 You are only seeking -- you say you are
19 only seeking clarification on reforms -- on the
20 reforms. Well, here is the clarification:
21 Stop wasting taxpayer money, start doing what
22 you are paid to do, draw the maps, have them
23 ready for filing by October 3rd. And, finally,
24 if you do have them ready, will you give us the
25 opportunity to review them to see if you have

1 responded to our requests? Thank you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
3 very much.

4 I know there were some -- there were some
5 questions that have been asked already thus
6 far. Just so everyone knows, what we will do
7 is we will make sure there is time at the end
8 for any member on the Committee to offer
9 suggestions or answer some of the questions
10 that are presented, and then Senator Gaetz will
11 also try to keep very copious notes, as I will
12 as well, and we will answer all the questions
13 that are asked. So you are recognized, thank
14 you for being here. And, I'm sorry, but after
15 Jasmina, we've got Nigel Watson and R. B.
16 Johnson. Thank you.

17 MS. FORCAN: I am Jasmina Forcan, and I am
18 glad for this opportunity. This is my first
19 involvement in the process, and I hope that
20 everything goes smoothly and the end result is
21 what we expect of you. Thank you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
23 We are offering bonus points for brevity,
24 ma'am, and I can tell you, you are leading the
25 charge, so thank you very much.

1 Next up we've got Nigel Watson, and
2 following Mr. Watson, we have R. B. Johnson and
3 Leo Murray.

4 Nigel is with the ACLU. Thank you for
5 being here, sir.

6 MR. WATSON: Good morning. I am not here
7 for Democrats or Republicans. I -- two
8 parties. I am for foreplay -- fair play --

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sir, I think
10 you are at the wrong public hearing.

11 MR. WATSON: No dirty tricks.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: The County
13 Commission is meeting several miles from here,
14 we encourage you to go to the County Commission
15 hearing.

16 MR. WATSON: I am getting ready to go
17 right after.

18 I live in a state in which Democrats had a
19 600,000 plus majority of registered voters, yet
20 two-thirds of the state leg is somehow
21 magically Republican. Does that make sense to
22 you all?

23 My input was in voting for Amendments 5
24 and 6 last November. Your input should have
25 been preparing the maps to show us at these

1 meetings.

2 It is disingenuous for you now to
3 cynically ask us for our version of amateur
4 maps -- no, we don't know how to use that
5 software -- that you then promise to consider,
6 but have no legal dictate to do so.

7 Where are the maps is the focus here, in
8 case you hadn't noticed what the focus was, not
9 productive dialogue. You've got it backwards.
10 No maps equals no debate, except what you are
11 doing. Add to this the millions of our tax
12 dollars being wasted to defeat or amend these
13 measures, excuse me, clarify, you can
14 understand why running out the clock comes to
15 my mind.

16 From gerrymandering the maps, we are now
17 gerrymandering the meetings. Being
18 intellectually honest, such tactics look mighty
19 like a betrayal of your non-partisan public
20 trust. Can we now rely on you to honor the
21 clear will of the people in both letter and
22 spirit, or will you present us with a *fait*
23 *accompli* at the 11th hour, leaving scant time
24 for candidates to plan or for courts to rule?

25 So that your reputations don't sink any

1 further, I suggest that you do right by the
2 people you have pledged to serve. Set aside
3 your grists and tricks in hopes the home folks
4 won't notice, they will. Look in the mirror.
5 Is this how you would want to be now governed
6 if the leg disagreed with your point of view?
7 Instead, withdraw your legal beagles, reset the
8 spacial coding on your mapping software and do
9 the better job two-thirds of us want done.

10 Thanks for your time and attention.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
12 And Mr. Watson, I say this with all sincerity,
13 we appreciate you, for lack of a better term,
14 warming up the Committee. Thank you very much.

15 Next up we've got R. B. Johnson, followed
16 by Leo Murray and then Doris Houdesheldt. I
17 hope I said that right. R. B. --

18 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: Mayor.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mayor
20 Johnson, I apologize, that's not written down.
21 And, Mayor, thank you very much for being here,
22 sir, and thank you for your service to the
23 community.

24 MAYOR JOHNSON: Thank you. I appreciate
25 y'all giving us a chance to speak before you

1 this morning.

2 I am the Mayor of Indian Rocks Beach, and
3 I am here to speak on behalf of the beach
4 communities, and what we would like to see, I
5 believe, is fairly universal amongst us,
6 especially the Representatives, the mayors,
7 city commissioners and councilmen up and down
8 Indian Rocks, or up and down the beach
9 communities, is after the redistricting process
10 is finished, we would like to see the beach
11 communities to remain essentially as a distinct
12 entity and within the same district, whether it
13 is the House, Senate, et cetera.

14 Now, when you look at this brochure that
15 you passed out here, it talks about the
16 districts being contiguous and compact and as
17 much as possible having the same geographic and
18 municipal boundaries, as much as possible be
19 close together and to be very distinct. And if
20 you look around Pinellas County, if you are
21 looking at an area that has a character that is
22 very distinct and to a large extent separate
23 from the rest of the county, the beach
24 communities would be it.

25 If you are on the beach communities, if

1 you live there, if you have a business there,
2 it is because you love beach living. You have
3 the Gulf of Mexico on one side, you have the
4 Intracoastal on another, and tourism basically
5 fuels our lives, and the businesses and the
6 people who live there have a certain way of
7 life and they are there for a particular
8 reason.

9 Gulf Boulevard runs north and south along
10 the entire length from St. Pete Beach all the
11 way up into Clearwater Beach. It is sort of
12 the life blood line of the beach communities.

13 And we have elected -- we have a series of
14 interests that keep us together and keep us
15 focused about the way of life that we have
16 there. As a matter of fact, we have our own
17 entity called the Big C, the Barrier Islands
18 Governmental Council, that meets once a month
19 to talk about our shared interests and to make
20 certain that when issues come before the State
21 Legislature, that we are united, when there are
22 issues that need to be discussed between
23 ourselves and the rest of the county, that we
24 are united, and that if we are not united, we
25 try to discuss things in an amicable way, but

1 as much as possible, we like to speak with one
2 voice. So we would like to see that continued
3 in the future, because we are our own -- I
4 won't say we are not totally separate from
5 Pinellas County, but like I said, we have
6 everything that determines essentially what you
7 are looking for here as far as redistricting to
8 keep ourselves into one separate district,
9 whether it is the state legislative district --
10 whether it is for Representatives, for Senate
11 or of a congressional district.

12 So we appreciate it if you would take that
13 into consideration, and I know there are other
14 representatives here from beach communities as
15 well, and that is pretty much all it is. Thank
16 you very much.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
18 Mayor, and thanks for your service, sir, we
19 appreciate it.

20 Next up we have Leo Murray, followed by
21 Doris Houdesheldt and then Mike Anderson.

22 Mr. Murray, thanks for being here.

23 MR. MURRAY: Hi. Good morning, Leo
24 Murray. I have lived in my present home in St.
25 Petersburg since 1979. I am in Senate District

1 16, House District 52 and U.S. Congressional
2 District 10.

3 I have been through this process, this
4 will be the fourth time since I have been here.
5 2002 was probably the -- in my opinion, the
6 most drastic and -- during that time.

7 I am going to repeat some of what's
8 already been said. Where are the maps, not
9 amateur drawn maps, but where -- professionally
10 drawn maps by the staff and what have you in
11 Tallahassee that are paid to do this and will
12 be doing it at some point? Why is it taking so
13 long to draw the maps? Again, the maps -- we
14 should have had maps that we could have
15 commented on here, not necessarily if they were
16 firm maps, but tentatively drawn maps that we
17 could have commented on and maybe some --
18 helped tweak them at this point.

19 And, again, why are you wasting taxpayer
20 money on lawsuits and on -- for these public
21 comment hearings? Again, because there's not
22 maps, it is something that's -- and many people
23 are saying is a waste of time to have these
24 meetings.

25 When the maps are drawn, I hope that they

1 will be compact and the districts shall, where
2 feasible, utilize existing political and
3 geographical boundaries. In my opinion,
4 Pinellas County should be one of the more easy
5 areas to redistrict. You've got the Gulf of
6 Mexico on one side, you've got Tampa Bay on the
7 south and east side, and in my opinion,
8 districts shouldn't cross the bay, shouldn't
9 straddle the bay.

10 Currently in District -- nor should they
11 be in three, four, five, six different
12 political communities, whether it is St. Pete,
13 Clearwater, Largo, Pinellas Park, Oldsmar,
14 Safety Harbor, whatever. Jack Latvala's
15 District 16 starts in St. Pete, goes all the
16 way around the bay and into Tampa. I don't
17 think that is fair representation for most of
18 those other communities, especially when the
19 office is in St. Pete.

20 Jeff Brandes' district starts in St. Pete,
21 and it also goes through three or four or five
22 different political communities, but the office
23 is in St. Pete, which is difficult for people
24 to visit.

25 We have other districts that also straddle

1 the bay, minority districts, and I know that is
2 going to be a challenge to maintain those
3 minority districts, because they do straddle
4 the bay. That is a challenge, but where
5 possible, I would like to see the districts
6 stay in Pinellas County and not be split
7 between two and three counties. Some districts
8 are -- start in St. Pete, they go into Manatee,
9 Sarasota, whatever counties. Others are in
10 both counties.

11 Congressional District 10, Bill Young's
12 district, that carved out the African-American
13 community in St. Petersburg, moved it to
14 District 11 in 2002. St. Pete should be in the
15 same -- in the same congressional district.
16 When they redraw that map, it should start at
17 the Skyway, Fort DeSoto, and just move north
18 until you meet your population, six hundred
19 thousand something, I think you said, and the
20 same with the other districts in Pinellas --

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Murray, I
22 am going to ask you to kind of wrap it up.
23 We've got a lot of speakers that want to speak
24 also.

25 MR. MURRAY: Okay. Just square it up and

1 make them as compact as possible.

2 I also see in a newspaper article that
3 quoted you, Mr. Weatherford, and it said you
4 remain hopeful that lawmakers can reach an
5 agreement on time and avoid litigations. I
6 think it is -- and I don't it think it is
7 rocket science. There is a way to do this and
8 a way to do it right, and I hope you live up to
9 that -- those quotes that are attributed to
10 you. Thank you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
12 very much.

13 Next up we have Ms. Doris, and following
14 Doris is Mike Anderson and then Mac McLaughlin.

15 MS. HOUESHELDT: Thank you very much.
16 First of all, thank you for pronouncing my name
17 almost right. I would say Houdesheldt, but
18 that is what my husband told me a long time ago
19 anyway, 57 years ago, to be exact.

20 I also appreciate your effort to follow
21 the Amendments 5 and 6 for holding these
22 redistricting meetings in our area. I think it
23 is important that you hear the views of the
24 constituents whose lives are being affected by
25 the lines being drawn. And I also wish to

1 specifically thank Representative Weatherford
2 and Senator Gaetz for your work.

3 I am in Congressional District 11, and I
4 think it is important as a resident of
5 Congressional District 11 that our district be
6 centered in Pinellas County.

7 The problem is that we have Tampa people
8 outweighing us when it comes to our opinion, we
9 are overpowered by them. And I do respect,
10 too, the fine work of Senator Joyner. The
11 people of District 11 in Pinellas should be
12 represented by a Pinellas Representative. It
13 is also important to keep the other districts
14 in Pinellas as close to current as possible.

15 Once again, I want to thank you for giving
16 me this time to speak on redrawing the lines of
17 Congressional District 11. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
19 very much. We appreciate your comments.

20 Next up we have Mike Anderson, followed by
21 Mac McLaughlin and then Dorine McKinnon.

22 MR. ANDERSON: Good morning. I am a
23 retired social studies teacher. I thank you
24 for permitting me to express my thoughts on
25 redistricting in this public forum.

1 In Monday's *St. Petersburg Times*, Senator
2 Gaetz is quoted as saying that there needs to
3 be a rationale why new districts are drawn.
4 Today I intend to give you my rationale for
5 supporting one of the plans for redistricting.
6 I hope my comments will be part of the road map
7 Senator Gaetz spoke of in the process of
8 drawing new districts for this state. I
9 applaud you for gathering the broadest range of
10 opinion on this subject as you have visited
11 numerous communities in Florida.

12 I am here to support the congressional
13 maps submitted on July 8th, 2011, by John Libby
14 of Duval County. It is HPUBC0003. I believe
15 the plan faithfully follows the Fair District
16 amendments to the State Constitution, as well
17 as the requirements of the Federal Voting
18 Rights Act.

19 In 2009, in a North Carolina case, the
20 U.S. Supreme Court in *Bartlett versus*
21 *Strickland* interpreted the Voting Rights Act to
22 only protect the voting power of minority
23 groups when they constitute a majority of the
24 electorate in a legislative district.

25 In this North Carolina case, their

1 Constitution required that legislative
2 districts respect county boundaries similar to
3 the passed Fair District amendments in Florida.

4 Mr. Libby provides district summary
5 statistics to accompany his map. And four
6 congressional districts are from south Florida.
7 Minority districts were proposed. In Districts
8 23, 25 and 27, Hispanics constitute at least a
9 majority of the voting age population. In
10 District 26, African-Americans constitute a
11 majority. In two other congressional
12 districts, one from southeast Florida and the
13 other from the Orlando area, the combined
14 minority populations constitute a majority of
15 the population. These are Districts 24 and 12.
16 These are minority access districts.

17 In one other southeastern Florida
18 district, the combined minority population is
19 48.9 percent of the population, and that is
20 District 22.

21 Florida's African-Americans and Hispanics
22 represent 25.7 percent of the state's
23 registered voters. Seven congressional
24 districts that is proposed by Mr. Libby would
25 give a minority a competitive chance to win,

1 which is 25.9 percent of the state's
2 congressional district delegation.

3 In five other congressional districts,
4 non-Hispanic whites constitute 55.1 percent to
5 59.8 percent of their districts. These are
6 Districts 4, 9, 10, 13 and 19. Those districts
7 include Jacksonville, Tampa, east Hillsborough,
8 west Orange and North Palm Beach. A minority
9 or a minority-backed candidate would be
10 competitive in those districts.

11 The census found that 42 percent of
12 Florida's population is comprised of
13 minorities. Under Mr. Libby's plan, 12
14 districts would be competitive to elect a
15 minority or a minority-backed candidate. That
16 is 44.4 percent of the delegation.

17 I also like Mr. Libby's plan because it
18 provides for five congressional districts along
19 the Sun Coast. Pasco and Hernando would have a
20 congressional district.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Anderson,
22 this is great detailed information, but we have
23 got to put a bow on it for us.

24 MR. ANDERSON: I ask the Chairman for
25 permission to have someone Xerox this --

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes.

2 MR. ANDERSON: -- and give it to the
3 members of the Committee.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: We will do
5 that. We appreciate the detailed information,
6 but what we will do is we know that a lot of
7 folks have more information than what they can
8 get out in three minutes, we will make sure
9 that every member of the Committee -- that goes
10 into the record. Every member of the Committee
11 will get a hard copy of that.

12 MR. ANDERSON: I understand, Mr. Chair,
13 and I appreciate your giving me permission to
14 be up here, and I hope the members of the
15 delegation will look this over. I think it is
16 important that you use this plan as a road map
17 to adopt a plan for us.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, sir.
19 Thank you, Mr. Anderson. We appreciate your
20 detailed testimony.

21 Next up we have Mr. Mac McLaughlin,
22 followed by Dorine McKinnon and then Aaron
23 Dietrich.

24 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Good morning, delegates.
25 I want to say thank you for this opportunity.

1 My name is Mac McLaughlin, and I am a resident
2 of Pinellas County, obviously. I am the former
3 Commissioner and Vice-Mayor of Safety Harbor
4 for eight years, and one of the things I am
5 concerned about is the city -- in the
6 Amendments 5 and 6 as it relates to cities and
7 boundaries. And as you'll look at this map
8 that has been made up by the State, that Palm
9 Harbor is not a city, Feather Sound is not a
10 city, Lealman is not a city, and the problem
11 with it is the whole Pinellas County needs to
12 be as one group for voting.

13 Now, I heard all of these numbers about
14 population, how we got the extra seats. But
15 the key to it is, where's the voters? We are
16 not basing this on votes or -- but basing it on
17 population. So there's never going to be
18 anything perfect, no matter what we do.

19 I am kind of disappointed that we're
20 spending all this money, because that -- that
21 really is what it is all about is the money and
22 who is going to get the money for doing this.
23 And for the lawsuits, both ways, okay.

24 Another thing I would like to see -- that
25 I live in South Pasadena, but I live in the

1 county of South Pasadena. How do I vote? How
2 do I vote? Where am I going to be? And it is
3 just like the beach people. We need to keep
4 them all together, the beach community, and
5 also keep the entire part of Pinellas County
6 together. Let's get Tampa, Hillsborough
7 County, stay over there, and so they are not --
8 so we have our representation here.

9 I understand the pressures that you are
10 all under, and it is a no-win situation. You
11 all knew that when you came here today. You
12 knew that no matter what you listened to, it is
13 never going to -- no one is going to agree.
14 And, once again, I want to thank you for your
15 time, and think about the cost to the Cities
16 and to the Counties in this deal and where are
17 they going to get their money to enact what you
18 all agree to, hopefully, and I am sure you will
19 come to some agreement. But the bottom line
20 is, no matter what you come up with and what
21 these people here want, there's only one person
22 that is going to make the difference, and that
23 is the Governor of Florida, because he is going
24 to veto it or not veto it, and we need to take
25 that into consideration.

1 I want to thank you for your time, and for
2 those who came a great distance here to be with
3 us, we all appreciate that, and thank you.
4 Come up with a good solution.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
6 sir. We appreciate that.

7 Next up we have Ms. Dorine McKinnon,
8 followed by Aaron Dietrich and then Jim Good.

9 MS. MCKINNON: Hi, I am Dorine McKinnon
10 and I am a member of the unincorporated
11 Pinellas County, and I would like to begin by
12 thanking the Committee, Representative Frishe
13 and Weatherford, and Senators Gaetz, Joyner and
14 Latvala for the exceptional work that is being
15 done to make this process transparent and
16 orderly.

17 I appreciate that it is being presented
18 earlier than the 2000 census and is more
19 transparent than previous sessions and that
20 these meetings do not just focus on more dense
21 urban areas, but also include less populous
22 areas and even rural communities.

23 I hope to see new districts that will
24 allow Pinellas constituencies to be represented
25 by a Pinellas legislature while staying as

1 close as possible to the current districting
2 lines. Pinellas is unique and different from
3 Hillsborough and Manatee, and our concerns --
4 and we want representation close to where we
5 live. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
7 very much. Bonus points for Ms. McKinnon. She
8 was done in less than a minute.

9 Next up we have Mr. Dietrich, followed
10 Mr. Jim Good and then Sean Krummerich, I hope
11 is the name, I hope I didn't say that wrong,
12 but, Aaron, you are recognized. Thanks for
13 being here, sir.

14 MR. DIETRICH: Thank you. Good morning to
15 all of you. I would like to start off by
16 saying I appreciate the situation that you are
17 in, it's a great deal of responsibility. I am
18 a graduate student from the University of South
19 Florida. I am also a resident of St.
20 Petersburg. I have a few concerns I would like
21 to address with you this morning. I will be
22 brief.

23 To start, I am troubled by the notion that
24 this body has taken valuable time -- valuable
25 time and resources in search of public input

1 across this great state. As many of us are
2 aware, you have already received the public
3 input that is necessary in the forms of
4 Amendments 5 and 6. There you will find clear
5 and concise guidelines for the task at hand.
6 The fact that this Legislature has spent \$2.5
7 million in a time when we are firing teachers,
8 \$2.5 million paying lawyers instead to defeat
9 these constitutional amendments, with all due
10 respect to all of you, that really calls into
11 question the true intent of these meetings, but
12 it casts serious doubt upon the integrity of
13 your leadership, ladies and gentlemen.

14 I will close by saying it appears to many
15 of us that these meetings lack any foundation
16 for discussion.

17 As there are no maps provided by the
18 Legislature, we have no basis for meaningful
19 input. We have not come here to see maps drawn
20 by schoolteachers and construction workers. We
21 come here to see maps drawn by the people we
22 paid -- we have elected to do so.

23 Thank you very much for your time. I wish
24 you the best of luck.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,

1 Aaron.

2 Next up we have Jim Good, followed by Sean
3 Krummerich and then Curtis Holmes. Jim, thanks
4 for being here, sir.

5 MR. GOOD: Thanks, good morning. As you
6 said, my name is Jim Good. I worked for the
7 Post Office for 31 years, and then for the
8 Letter Carriers' Union for nine years, and they
9 have a program they use, and although it is
10 certainly not perfect, it may be similar to the
11 program you have for building the districts.
12 So I am sure that you could have listened to
13 the community and got their opinions after
14 drawing maps and then just pushed a few buttons
15 and changed it to be based on what the opinions
16 were that you drew from those.

17 Also, I am, as other people have said, a
18 little bit upset with the idea that the Senate
19 and the House chooses to have a lawsuit against
20 Amendments 5 and 6 that were passed by the
21 people. I mean, that is the whole idea of our
22 system.

23 And one final note, if you could give a
24 message to Senator Haridopolos for me just to
25 let him know that I am appalled by the recent

1 posting that he put on YouTube that was paid
2 for with state funds. I think he will know
3 what I am talking about.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
5 sir.

6 Next up we have Sean Krummerich and then
7 followed by Curtis Holmes and then Steve
8 McFarlin, who is the Mayor of St. Pete Beach.

9 Thanks for being here, Sean.

10 MR. KRUMMERICH: Distinguished Senators
11 and Representatives, good morning.

12 Last November, on one issue Florida's
13 voters spoke with a clearer voice than on
14 virtually any other issue or candidate on the
15 ballot. They said we are tired, we are tired
16 of having politicians choose their voters
17 rather than the other way around, we are tired
18 of gerrymandered districts, we are tired of the
19 situation which in any given year a third of
20 the Legislature is automatically reelected
21 because nobody bothered to run against them.

22 Well, Amendments 5 and 6 represent the
23 fruits of that frustration, and as we go
24 through this process, we are counting on you,
25 our elected representatives, to adhere to both

1 the letter and spirit of the law that
2 63 percent of us voters approved. And as far
3 as I am concerned, you haven't done your jobs
4 unless on the final approved maps every
5 district in the state, be it State House, State
6 Senate or U.S. Congress, is fully competitive
7 for a candidate from either political party.

8 I know how much you love the convenience
9 of being able to plan so far ahead, but I'm
10 sorry, in a society in which a sparse if you
11 are Democratic, you simply should not be able
12 to plan out three years in advance who will
13 held legislative leadership positions.

14 And another thing -- one other thing,
15 please stop using our tax dollars to fight the
16 implementation of these amendments.

17 You have given your reasons for not
18 presenting any of your proposed maps prior to
19 embarking on this round of public meetings.
20 While I strongly disagree with your rationale,
21 things are what they are. I will tell you,
22 however, the people of Florida are expecting
23 for those final proposed maps to be made
24 publicly available for comment and response
25 well in advance of their final approval by the

1 Legislature. And by well in advance, I mean at
2 least a month. Don't think that you can throw
3 them on the website three days before the final
4 vote and think that that will be all right.

5 Just remember, the people of Florida, they
6 voted for and they expect fair and equal
7 districts, and we will be watching to make sure
8 that you deliver on that promise. Thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

10 Next up we have Commissioner Holmes, or
11 Councilman Holmes, followed by Steve McFarlin,
12 who is the Mayor of St. Pete Beach, and then
13 Mayor Kathleen Peters. We've got a lot of
14 mayors here today.

15 COMMISSIONER HOLMES: Good morning, one
16 and all. I am glad to see that Jack has
17 graduated to a cane.

18 SENATOR LATVALA: For protection.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: It is a weapon.

20 COMMISSIONER HOLMES: I appreciate all you
21 coming out on a day like today. It is --
22 people think that the Florida House and Senate
23 are such high rollers when it comes to the cash
24 department, but you people are vastly
25 underpaid.

1 Anyway, I am looking at -- yes, I will
2 take the hiss right now. I wouldn't -- I
3 wouldn't take your job as a gift. Anyway, I am
4 looking at this thing, and this -- you have so
5 many mandates on this redistricting that -- you
6 have population mandates, which you have no
7 choice on. You have mandates in here on the
8 Voting Rights Act, which you have no choice on.
9 Well, I have looked at your website, and I
10 thought to myself wouldn't it be smarter to
11 have an interactive website where if you want
12 citizens' comment on this thing, you have to
13 give us the option on this thing where you can
14 take the map and you want to change a district
15 line around, put your cursor on there and
16 scroll it, have the population numbers change,
17 have the voting rights districts changed. If
18 you need minority representation and you start
19 shifting this thing around, you ought to have a
20 little color chart that comes up and says,
21 huh-huh, that one's not going to fly. That
22 would be a lot easier.

23 This reminds me of what we did in Largo
24 when we were going to build a new fire station.
25 We had a public meeting, and we were going to

1 build a new station next door to HCA Hospital
2 on Indian Rocks Road. And I attended this
3 meeting and, it became so bazaar because every
4 speaker who got up there get into the weeds.
5 We didn't like the sirens, you don't have the
6 traffic, you don't have big enough road there,
7 et cetera, et cetera. And I went up to the
8 Chief afterwards and I said, "Wouldn't it have
9 been smarter just to draw a line on a map, and
10 seeing as the county commission is here, and
11 just say, 'The County has told us that we have
12 to locate this fire department within this
13 boundary. If you don't like where we are going
14 to put it, where do you want us to put it
15 within this boundary?'" That would have ended
16 it real quick, because there was no other
17 parcel available.

18 Well, on this redistricting, why don't you
19 just come up with an interactive map, you can
20 go on-line, just scroll the thing, you know, I
21 don't like Jim Frishe's boundary, okay, well,
22 let's change Frishe's boundary. Is that going
23 to work under the Voting Rights Act? Is that
24 going to work with the population? And it is
25 going to tell you in advance, instead of just

1 having these maps here, they are not going to
2 tell me anything. I want something that is
3 going to tell me when that comes up right and I
4 am still going to be in Jack's district, I am
5 not going to have any problem with that,
6 because this is going to comply with the
7 federal mandates, that this is what you are
8 dealing with here is federal mandates. This
9 isn't so much state law. This is what the Feds
10 are telling you we must comply with. That is
11 my suggestion. Thanks for coming out.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
13 Commissioner. And, Commissioner, if you will
14 stick around, I think Senator Gaetz will
15 address some of that, and, in fact, if you walk
16 outside, you will see some of our staff. We
17 actually have a website, the House and Senate
18 have a District Builder that has not all the
19 components you are talking about, but most of
20 them, and I know they would be interested to
21 hear your comments as well. So thank you very
22 much for being here.

23 And next up we have Mayor of St. Pete
24 Beach, Mayor McFarlin, followed by Mayor
25 Kathleen Peters and then Jim Jackson.

1 Mayor, thanks for your public service and
2 thanks for being here.

3 MAYOR McFARLIN: Good morning, Steve
4 McFarlin, Mayor of St. Pete Beach. I want to
5 thank you all for allowing us to come and
6 participate and possibly share some newfound
7 thoughts with you.

8 I was born in St. Petersburg. I owned a
9 business in downtown St. Petersburg, the
10 Cadillac dealership, for many years, operated
11 it.

12 I can tell you that the culture between
13 the mainlands, downtown St. Petersburg and the
14 beaches are entirely different. It is almost
15 like we are in a different state out there.
16 Since I moved out there, I retired and moved
17 out to the beach and gotten involved -- we are
18 in the hospitality business out there. Y'all
19 are in the hospitality business. You live off
20 of those. We are a feeder community, which
21 most of the barrier islands are.

22 I think it is important that we keep those
23 groups together out there, because it is a
24 different culture out there. It is -- it is
25 different, we'll just leave it at that, on some

1 occasions. We are currently going through some
2 redevelopment issues.

3 But just like the push Senator Jones and
4 Mr. Frishe have done for us on renourishment,
5 they didn't put that sand there for us to
6 frolic in. No visual there, but they did it as
7 an investment for tourists. Right now as we
8 sit, buses are on the way, shuttles are on the
9 way, they are bringing dollars into the
10 community, which are going to end up in your
11 hands.

12 This is something we need. We need
13 representation that understands that, works
14 that, and maximizes and capitalizes on our
15 natural resources. It is something different.
16 I know -- it is funny, to date -- I have been
17 in office for six months, and to this very day,
18 I have never spoken with the Mayor of St.
19 Petersburg, never had any communication with
20 him, never met him. We -- and I don't mean
21 anything negative by that, but we just don't
22 share in any daily issues. The beaches are
23 different. I just ask that we keep them
24 together and let's maximize it for economic
25 reasons. That is the reason. Thank you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
2 Mayor.

3 Next up, Mayor Kathleen Peters from the
4 City of South Pasadena --

5 MAYOR PETERS: Good morning.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: -- followed
7 by Jim Jackson, and Bonnie Agan.

8 Mayor, thank you for being here. Good to
9 see you.

10 MAYOR PETERS: Thank you, it is good to
11 see you, and I really want to thank you for all
12 of the work that you do.

13 I was listening to the earlier testimony,
14 and it brought me back, and I apologize to
15 going on a story, but I am just compelled to do
16 it.

17 About 15 years ago, I took a 17-year-old
18 student from Seminole High School to
19 Washington, DC, and we spoke to him -- maybe
20 it's longer, we were speaking to Senator Graham
21 at the time, and then we went to the Capitol
22 and we were sitting in the Senate Gallery, and
23 she sat over the edge and she is lying over the
24 side and she looks at me and she says, "This is
25 my best day."

1 Now, at that time, I was extremely cynical
2 about our government and our government
3 process. And I looked at her shocked, and I
4 said, "This is your best day?" And she said,
5 "Where else but in this country can a
6 17-year-old student come to our nation's
7 Capitol and speak to a Senator and tell him
8 what I think should be changed in our laws and
9 what should be done?" At that time, it was
10 about issues in juveniles and juvenile justice.
11 "And where else can I go to my nation's Capitol
12 and sit in the gallery and watch the process?"

13 We live in the best country and we have a
14 great government, and I believe that the public
15 comment and the public process is the
16 cornerstone of what makes our government great,
17 and so I want to thank you.

18 That young girl on that day changed my
19 life and my perception, and as a result, I now
20 serve in the local community. So I want to
21 thank you for your service. I appreciate this
22 process and I think it is a good process, and I
23 appreciate that you're willing to hear what we
24 have to say before you draw those maps, and I
25 know that you will be willing to hear what we

1 have to say after you draw those maps, so thank
2 you.

3 Now, regarding drawing those maps, I can
4 tell you I am in a very small city. And I am
5 not a barrier island, I am on the mainland.
6 However, my boundaries primarily are the
7 Intracoastal Waterway. And my commonalities
8 are closer to the barrier islands, because the
9 barrier islands are all small cities. Many of
10 us have smaller than 50 employees, and,
11 therefore, we all have small group health
12 insurance issues. Our fire departments are all
13 about the same size.

14 Therefore, we have the same pension and
15 small fire department issues. And I believe it
16 is those commonalities that make it important
17 that we can get together and we can get
18 representation for the small interests that
19 we -- our common interests. And I can tell
20 you, and no disrespect to the Representatives
21 that are in this room that have served my city
22 before, and currently, but there are some times
23 that we will ask for support or representation
24 on different issues and we feel that since we
25 are such a small city combined with a big city

1 like St. Petersburg and Largo and Pinellas Park
2 and Seminole, that small, little South Pasadena
3 doesn't get the representation that it should
4 relating to the other issues that we have that
5 are not consistent with the larger cities. So
6 I believe that we ought to have commonalities.

7 And I believe also that with this economy
8 that we are in that is going to take us a
9 decade to get out of and rebuild, that we need
10 to consider putting districts together with the
11 thought of economic development, commonalities
12 for infrastructure that we can work together
13 and we can build Pinellas County, the Tampa Bay
14 area, the state of Florida, so we can build
15 this state to be the best great -- best --
16 greatest -- although I believe it is, the best
17 and greatest state. But I think we can do
18 better, and I think that is where we need to
19 keep our focus. And thank you again, and I
20 appreciate your service to our state.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
22 Mayor, thanks a lot. Thank you for your
23 service.

24 Next up we have Mr. Jim Jackson, followed
25 by Bonnie Agan and then Douglas Hickman.

1 MR. JACKSON: Jim Jackson, south St.
2 Petersburg. I represent any number of groups.
3 I speak often at the school board, and it's
4 tradition there for people that support an
5 issue, that if you would stand, all those folks
6 that belong to groups that I belong to, would
7 you stand and support me on this? They know
8 who I am. Yeah, all of you who know me, if you
9 would stand. It's quite a few.

10 And I know many of you, especially my
11 House Rep, Darryl Rouson, my State Senator,
12 Arthenia Joyner. I met you last year when you
13 were speaking at a class size amendment rally
14 in front of St. Petersburg High School.

15 It says tell you your story. My story is
16 this: I am a voter. This is a non-partisan
17 issue. When you buy a house, I do due
18 diligence. I check out the roof, I check out
19 the comps, I check out the square footage, I
20 check out the walkability of the neighborhood.
21 It is buyer beware. What I didn't check out
22 was voter beware. I live in south St.
23 Petersburg. The tiny little red push pin on
24 this very primitive map way down there is me.
25 I am an educator of 43 years. I am using shoe

1 strings because we are on a shoe string budget
2 in education, as you know.

3 My districts absolutely make no sense.
4 These are based on 2002. These are not -- I
5 had a rumor that you didn't have maps.
6 Arthenia Joyner's district covers three
7 counties, divided by this large body of water,
8 Tampa Bay. Darryl Rouson's district covers --
9 55 covers four counties, again divided by this
10 large geographical barrier, Tampa Bay. Kathy
11 Castor, my Congressional Representative, her
12 district also covers three districts divided by
13 this large body of water, Tampa Bay. I live in
14 this little bitty area down here in south St.
15 Pete. They are not contiguous. They are not
16 compact. They have very definite geographical
17 barriers here. When you go to draw these maps,
18 I would like to see you make much more sense
19 about putting people together, no geographical
20 barriers, make them compact, make them
21 contrite, make them make sense. Fair
22 districts, 63 percent of us voted for fair
23 districts. Let's make them fair, let's make
24 them districts as well.

25 A few years back, at my age, I decided I

1 would run for a delegate to the presidential
2 election in Denver. I wanted to be an elected
3 delegate. I didn't realize that even though I
4 live in south St. Petersburg, I had to go to
5 Tampa to in fact run for that because Kathy
6 Castor is my Congresswoman. So I had to pack
7 up all my supporters, some of these folks in
8 the audience, truck them over to Tampa to vote
9 for me, and persevered and won. I know you got
10 thick skins. I ran for public office last
11 year. It is not easy being a public official,
12 I know that.

13 On here, red is actually Darryl Rouson, I
14 thought he'd wear red cowboy boots today, blue
15 is Arthenia Joyner and the beige is Kathy
16 Castor. Again, this looks like a tropical
17 storm or Hurricane Irene spaghetti model. I
18 know it makes no sense --

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Jackson
20 if --

21 MR. JACKSON: Wrap it up. But let's have
22 fair districts, let's get them soon, let's get
23 some maps, let's do the job we elected you to
24 do. Thanks so much.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you

1 very much. Thank you, Mr. Jackson.

2 Next up we have Bonnie Agan, followed by
3 Douglas Hickman and Rob Roberts.

4 MS. AGAN: Hello, my name is Bonnie Agan,
5 I live in St. Petersburg. I live in this
6 little, tiny green portion of District 18, and
7 State Senator Arthenia Joyner is my State
8 Senator; however, she lives over here, and even
9 in spite of her best efforts, she does -- I
10 don't feel that she represents my interests. I
11 am very lucky to have Representative Darryl
12 Rouson, who really does live in my community,
13 and I feel very well represented and I have
14 total access to him. I don't know that I can
15 say the same thing about the people in the
16 other three counties that his district slivers
17 into.

18 So I would ask that you consider the word
19 "community" when these lines are being drawn.
20 I think that is a very, very important
21 component, of course, along with contiguous and
22 compact.

23 And I believe you said that this is not
24 rocket science, and you are absolutely right.
25 This has been done since 1991 in Iowa without

1 court challenge. They have the software, they
2 have been doing it, and you don't have to
3 reinvent the wheel, just go ask them. I am
4 sure they would be glad to help you. Thank you
5 very much.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
7 If only Florida were a perfect square like the
8 state of Iowa, it would make my life a lot
9 easier.

10 Next up we have Douglas Hickman, followed
11 by Rob Roberts and Richard Piper.

12 Mr. Hickman, you are recognized, sir.

13 MR. HICKMAN: Yeah, thank you for coming.
14 I just wish that we really could have more
15 interaction here.

16 I have two points. One of them is
17 beaches, and it is very true, I have lived out
18 there for 34 years now, Redington Shores, okay,
19 and we are. But if you look at what 54 is now,
20 okay, it also takes in part of south St. Pete,
21 a part of Gulfport, much different communities
22 than the beach communities. It also takes in
23 the large black area of Largo, kind of dilutes
24 their thing, because they don't seem to have
25 much to do with the beach communities or

1 anything else.

2 And while I would like to see the beach
3 communities have a little clout, I don't know
4 if you could actually draw those maps and draw
5 them fairly when that's what the law states we
6 are supposed to do.

7 I've had to take a couple of oaths in my
8 life. You elected officials took an oath to
9 defend the Constitution of the State of
10 Florida. Like it or not, Amendment 5 and
11 Amendment 6 are right now the law of the State
12 of Florida. It is not your job in this case to
13 fight it. It should be the people, if they
14 don't like what we voted for, that should do it
15 by an amendment, okay. You should not be
16 spending our money doing this. You took an
17 oath. Follow your oath, you know, please do
18 that and think about it. A lot of us died for
19 our oaths, okay. It means something to me,
20 thank you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
22 sir.

23 Next up we have Rob Roberts, followed by
24 Richard Piper and Gail Trask. Rob? Rob is not
25 here right now, so we will put him to the side.

1 How about Richard Piper, is Richard here?

2 MR. PIPER: I am here.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right.

4 Sorry I didn't give you more -- more room to
5 breathe there, sir. Richard Piper, followed by
6 Gail Trask and then Karen Hodgen.

7 Mr. Piper, thanks for being here. You are
8 recognized.

9 MR. PIPER: Thank you. I am Rich Piper.
10 I live in unincorporated Largo. I am a
11 Professor Emeritus of government at the
12 University of Tampa, and I would like to repeat
13 some of what has been said before, but I will
14 keep this very brief.

15 I would strongly urge the Legislature to
16 comply fully with Amendments 5 and 6 and cease
17 the lawsuit against them, present us promptly
18 with redistricting plans that meet the legal
19 criteria of these and the other laws governing
20 the process, seek genuine feedback on your
21 proposals, providing clear maps to which people
22 can react, and enact appropriate redistricting
23 time for candidates to prepare their campaigns
24 effectively for the 2012 elections.

25 One of my biggest concerns is the last of

1 those four, that drawing this process out well
2 into 2012 is discouraging potential candidates.
3 I have talked with several of them myself.
4 They said, "Well, we just don't feel like
5 running when we have no idea what the district
6 lines are going to be." So I think it is
7 important that you get out some preliminary
8 proposals and get feedback on them promptly.

9 I have gone on-line, you do have a very
10 good website, and I have drawn up districts.
11 They do comply with many of the suggestions
12 that have been made here, and I will leave
13 those -- those with you. I didn't have time to
14 send them. I would still like to fine-tune
15 them a little bit, quite frankly, but I did
16 draw one going down along the beaches as the
17 mayors out there requested. I happen to live
18 in District 54 right now.

19 I live on the mainland in Harbor Bluffs,
20 but we are a part of that beach community in
21 many, many respects.

22 The problem is, of course, the population
23 isn't quite big enough there to justify a
24 district unto itself, so then the question is,
25 which other communities do you include with it.

1 I would include places like South Pasadena and
2 Gulfport rather than inland areas of Largo. I
3 think we should try to keep the districts
4 contiguous. We should respect community
5 boundaries as much as possible.

6 The districts I have drawn for Pinellas
7 County would keep the whole county together,
8 with one exception, and that is the southern
9 district, currently Representative Rouson's
10 district. I would not take it across four
11 counties, but I would still take that one, let
12 it overlap a little bit down into Bradenton.
13 There is an African-American community there
14 that has a good deal in common with the
15 African-American community in south St.
16 Petersburg and Midtown, and this would be a
17 district that would be likely to elect a
18 minority Representative still. With that one
19 exception, I would keep the county together.

20 I would have a congressional district that
21 is all Pinellas County, currently the Young
22 district, and I would have another
23 congressional district that would be north
24 county. Because of the population shortfall,
25 it would need to spill over a little bit into

1 Pasco or Hillsborough, but one can easily find
2 communities there that fit well with north
3 Pinellas County. I think that makes good
4 sense.

5 On the State Senate districts, again, you
6 are going to have to spill over a little bit,
7 but I think that can be done in much the same
8 way, St. Petersburg up to about Ulmerton Road
9 all together, and then on north district, it
10 spills over into Pasco or Hillsborough.

11 So, again, I think there are good ways of
12 doing this. I really regret that you haven't
13 put forth some thoughts. They don't have to be
14 formal proposals yet, but I would like to see
15 what the Legislators are thinking. I know many
16 of you are thinking about it. I have heard
17 what Senator Latvala has suggested --

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Piper,
19 you're going to have to wrap it up for me, sir.

20 MR. PIPER: Great. Just hopefully get
21 this process moving forward expeditiously and
22 fairly. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
24 sir. Okay. Next up we have Ms. Gail Trask,
25 followed by Karen Hodgen and then Vince Cocks.

1 I would also want to mention, I know when
2 we first started, I had mentioned that there
3 was about 40 people who had signed up to speak.
4 We now have over 70 people signed up to speak.
5 And is Burt Benner here? Burt, are you here?
6 Somewhere in the back.

7 Burt is the one who signed up last, and so
8 we want to get to Burt. We want to give
9 everybody an opportunity to speak, and so we
10 are going to try to do it -- you know, if we
11 could get every speaker to be about two to two
12 and a half minutes, we want everyone to get an
13 opportunity to have something to say, and a lot
14 of folks came a long way to speak, we want to
15 give them that chance. So I'm sorry for that.

16 Ms. Gail, you are recognized, and thank
17 you for being here.

18 MS. TRASK: Thank you. Thank you for
19 being here to listen. I, for one, appreciate
20 the opportunity --

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: If you could
22 speak a little closer to the microphone. Thank
23 you.

24 MS. TRASK: If I was a little taller, that
25 might help.

1 Okay. I, for one, do appreciate the
2 opportunity to influence the way my districts
3 are drawn before you draw the maps and make up
4 your minds. I disagree with the notion that
5 we, the people, are too stupid to help draw our
6 own districts. Our government was never meant
7 to be left to the professionals.

8 Our representatives are supposed to be
9 just that, our representatives, not
10 professionals that make proclamations from on
11 high and send them down to we, the people. So
12 I appreciate the opportunity to be here and be
13 heard.

14 I am concerned about districts such as the
15 U.S. Congressional District 11, which may be
16 drawn according to the letter of the law, but
17 it is certainly not drawn according to the
18 spirit of the law, allowing communities to have
19 a common vote. Gerrymandered districts such as
20 this one with pieces taken from three counties
21 and different communities ripped apart and
22 diverse communities stuck together, those are
23 not going to be tolerated by the people when we
24 see these new districts drawn. We are going to
25 hold you accountable. I know that they go

1 through other layers of government to be
2 approved and disproved; however, you are our
3 representatives, you are the ones that we will
4 hold accountable. We expect you to draw these
5 districts lines fairly and honestly and
6 according to both the letter of the law and the
7 obvious spirit of the law to keep communities
8 together. I say it is of utmost importance
9 that you keep districts truly compact and
10 follow existing political and geographic and
11 community boundaries, and these are readily
12 available.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
14 Next we have Karen Hodgen with the Pinellas
15 Democratic Executive Committee, and then Vince
16 Cocks, followed by Peter Franco.

17 Karen, you are recognized. Thanks for
18 being here.

19 MS. HODGEN: Thank you. Defining
20 communities and preserving them are an aspect
21 of redistricting. I live in Gulfport, which is
22 a fairly small town. We have less than 13,000
23 in population, and we are only 2.8 square miles
24 in area. So we are pretty small with size and
25 population, but we are pretty big in spirit.

1 The interesting thing is Gulfport has been
2 one of those communities that's been a victim
3 of gerrymandering. For our size, we have two
4 U.S. Congressional districts, two State Senate
5 districts and three State House of
6 Representative districts, and this simply
7 divides individuals our community. Either we
8 must be pretty important and we deserve
9 super-special representation, or either we have
10 been carved up to justify or to dilute our --
11 to dilute our vote. So that definitely takes
12 away our sense of community.

13 Gulfport really should be represented by
14 one Congressperson, one State Senator and one
15 State House of Representative. The size we are
16 simply does not justify how we have been
17 divided.

18 Amendments 5 and 6 are important to us.
19 Now it is your duty to act accordingly. We
20 need and expect fair districts so communities
21 like Gulfport and other similar communities
22 will remain intact. We like the language of
23 the Fair Districts. Terms like "compactness"
24 and "contiguous lines" struck a cord with us.
25 It spoke of fairness. Unfortunately, our

1 Florida Legislators can't seem to keep their
2 fingers out of the pie. Some states have
3 independent commissions that determine the
4 districts so it is done fairly and impartially,
5 and I would like to think that maybe Florida
6 could be one of those states as well. Thank
7 you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
9 Next we have Vince Cocks, followed by Peter
10 Franco and Matthew Lettelleir.

11 MR. COCKS: Good morning. I reside in
12 south St. Petersburg. I am represented by
13 Honorable Darryl Rouson in our House, and
14 Honorable Arthenia Joyner in our Senate. I
15 applaud your voting record this session. That
16 is Darryl and Arthenia, I applaud that.

17 I am in total agreement with earlier
18 speakers such as Mr. Murray, Jim Jackson and
19 Rich Piper, who stated that Pinellas should
20 remain contiguous and one area when
21 redistricting. Darryl is a neighbor of mine,
22 lives four blocks away, he lives directly
23 across from where I worship. Arthenia lives in
24 Tampa. I don't get to see her often. I see
25 Darryl often. But I admire your service, I

1 really do, Arthenia.

2 Recently Bill Maxwell in *The St. Pete*
3 *Times* reported a quote of a former university
4 professor. This was in last Sunday's edition.
5 The quote was, "When money takes over politics,
6 only a shadow of democracy remains." The
7 author of this was Pope Benedict XVI, and he
8 represents over 1.1 billion Catholics
9 worldwide.

10 Not only has the love of money cast a
11 shadow over our democracy in Florida, there is
12 a total eclipse now. In the session this year,
13 our Legislature voted along party lines to
14 resurrect House Bill 1207, leadership --

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sir, we are
16 here to talk about redistricting, so tie it to
17 redistricting for me.

18 MR. COCKS: This is, because you know
19 what, when you don't -- you started this by
20 saying we wouldn't be interrupted by you.
21 Please don't interrupt me. I won't interrupt
22 you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: As long as
24 you are talking about redistricting, I can
25 assure you you won't be.

1 MR. COCKS: This is about redistricting,
2 money is about redistricting.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Keep it to
4 redistricting.

5 MR. COCKS: My God. Special interest
6 groups now line up to give House and Senate
7 leaders obscene amounts of money anonymously.
8 Howard Troxler of *The St. Pete Times* described
9 this as campaign slush funds operated legally
10 and officially by the leaders of the
11 Legislature themselves. This is Florida where
12 the laws of democracy are now openly and
13 officially for sale.

14 This folly continues with House Bill 1355,
15 a voting bill that has to do with
16 redistricting. This is under the guise of
17 reigning in voter fraud.

18 Then we got -- I will leave this one out.

19 All right. Here is another one, House
20 Bill 45, shouldn't even go into that, that is
21 control of gun laws that will now be done by
22 the State, and no, you know, local control.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Vince, if you
24 could, wrap it up for me, sir, because we are
25 short of time now.

1 MR. COCKS: Oh, sure, I am not taking a
2 lot of time here. And my Mayor last night, he
3 spoke at my father-in-law's church, and he
4 stated this is the stupidest law that he's ever
5 seen.

6 That being said, I ask you, elected
7 officials, please enact fair districts with
8 utility in mind. Let the demons of special
9 interest be vanquished. Do the greatest amount
10 of good for the greatest amount of people. And
11 I leave you with, "Alas, poor Yorick, I knew
12 him well." Thank you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
14 Next up we have Peter Franco, followed by
15 Matthew Lettelleir and Joseph Saportas.

16 Peter, you are recognized, sir.

17 MR. FRANCO: Yes, thanks for giving me the
18 time. My name is Pete Franco. I am a resident
19 in South Pasadena, Pinellas. I just want to
20 first acknowledge the Board for putting this
21 meeting together.

22 My thoughts are that I am glad that you
23 are doing this and giving us a chance to give
24 you some feedback on what we think with respect
25 to redistricting, so I acknowledge you for it.

1 And, in general -- so my general purpose of
2 being here is to acknowledge you for putting
3 this together.

4 As many others have said, I would -- one
5 of my strong requests would be to keep the
6 boundaries as contiguous as possible,
7 especially congressional districts that
8 currently are crossing over into Tampa. I
9 think Pinellas should be Pinellas, pretty much
10 the bottom line, and to keep the districts as
11 contiguous as possible.

12 And, yeah, I -- with respect to the whole
13 timeline of this hearing, I actually -- again,
14 I appreciate that you have taken the time to do
15 it and not rushing it right up off to the
16 courts, and to keep in line with the
17 regulations, both state and federal, but to
18 give us an opportunity to give you our input.
19 That is pretty much what I came to say, and
20 thank you for giving me the time.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
22 sir.

23 Next up we have Matthew Lettelleir,
24 followed by Joseph Saportas and then Wendy
25 Grassi.

1 MR. LETTELLEIR: Good morning. My name is
2 Matt Lettelleir, and I am born and raised and
3 now live in northeast St. Pete. Thank you for
4 allowing me to speak this morning, and thank
5 you for holding these hearings. I, for one,
6 believe these hearings are important and show
7 how much this Legislature appreciates its
8 constituents. I also appreciate you all being
9 here and taking time away from your families.

10 I agree with the Mayor from Indian Rocks
11 Beach that our communities have distinct
12 characteristics that should be considered. I
13 believe that downtown St. Pete has more in
14 common with downtown Tampa than with St. Pete
15 Beach.

16 I believe lines can be drawn while staying
17 within the constitutional provisions, but very
18 few of the people in this room will be happy,
19 no matter what you do. I say to these that are
20 unhappy with the Legislature, to run for office
21 themselves, and if elected, you may begin to
22 understand and have an appreciation for your
23 hard work.

24 I also say that if you don't like the
25 timeline, then propose an amendment to allow

1 the Legislature to move the time frame up.

2 Thank you very much.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
4 sir.

5 Next up, Joseph Saportas, followed by
6 Wendy Grassi and Kofi Hunt.

7 Joseph is with the Citizen and Native of
8 Florida. Joseph, are you here? I don't see
9 him here, so we will move forward to Wendy
10 Grassi.

11 Wendy, thank you for being here, followed
12 by Kofi Hunt, and Winnie Foster. Wendy is with
13 Planned Parenthood. Thanks for being here.

14 MS. GRASSI: I am, I am with Planned
15 Parenthood of Southwest and Central Florida.

16 It appears to us that the Legislature's
17 timeline for drawing districts is extremely
18 unfair to Florida voters. Along with so many
19 others, we question why the Legislature hasn't
20 prepared the new district maps earlier, leave
21 time to debate them this fall and then pass
22 them during the first week of legislative
23 session, instead of waiting to finalize the
24 maps until the end of the session in March.

25 Florida's maps will be approved later than

1 almost every other state in the nation. Our
2 new districts may not be finalized until
3 August, just two months before the 2012
4 elections. Challengers or new candidates will
5 have little, if any, time to mount campaigns.
6 Uncertainty as to what a district will look
7 like helps incumbents, because incumbents
8 already -- are already known to the voters and
9 have a huge advantage in raising money.
10 Challengers will be reluctant to throw their
11 hats in the ring. We can only think that the
12 current timeline is designed as an incumbent
13 protection plan.

14 Also, why is the Legislature -- why is the
15 Legislature spending our precious tax dollars,
16 millions of dollars, to oppose Fair Districts
17 passed during last year's elections by
18 63 percent of the voters? All of this money is
19 being spent unnecessarily while teachers are
20 being fired, social services are being cut and
21 fewer women are able to access healthcare.

22 All of this -- all of this leads us to
23 believe that the real mapping is going on in
24 back rooms, and that the real new maps will be
25 presented at the end of the upcoming

1 legislative session to be rammed through
2 without the public really knowing what is going
3 on.

4 We call on the Legislature to heed the
5 voters. This issue is a test of our democracy
6 and the will of our people. Thank you very
7 much.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

9 Next up we have Kofi Hunt, Kofi is with
10 Awake Pinellas, followed by Winnie Foster and
11 then Darden Rice.

12 MR. HUNT: Hi. Thanks for letting me talk
13 today. I am in Jeff Brandes, Jack Latvala and
14 Bill Young's district. I was born and raised
15 in St. Petersburg, Florida.

16 You know, one thing with me is I have a
17 difference from a lot of people, maybe it is
18 because I am a lot younger, is I don't see race
19 as much. I don't see -- I see more the
20 communities that I think that that should be
21 considered definitely when considering the
22 districts.

23 Also about we don't want any maps that are
24 hard, we would like maps that are flexible, so
25 that we could, you know, discuss them, and just

1 open democratic debate and discussion.

2 I don't think that we do have adequate
3 information or resources on hand. I personally
4 work two jobs to contribute to the process, and
5 I would appreciate the maps, you know, as well.
6 And when you do create the maps and you bring
7 them to the public, I would like you to, you
8 know, participate in the open dialogue with all
9 of the challenges you get, the logical ones.
10 And also I would like all the information
11 regarding the legal challenges to Amendment 6
12 to be provided to the broader public for voter
13 scrutiny. Beyond that, you know, we would like
14 fair districts. Fair districts, fair
15 democracy, that is my saying. Thanks.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

17 Next we have Winnie Foster, followed by
18 Darden Rice and then Mary Louise Ambrose.

19 MS. FOSTER: Okay. That is not senility.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Somebody
21 knows how to take control of a room.

22 MS. FOSTER: I am 84 years old -- thank
23 you, gentlemen, for your assistance -- and I
24 have a 40-year history in south St. Petersburg
25 where I have been a grass roots organizer. I

1 now have a program called the Sojourner Truth
2 Center. Much of my organizing has been done in
3 south St. Petersburg. I was part of the group
4 that helped to elect the very first black judge
5 in Pinellas County when everybody said it can't
6 be done. So I know that things can change and
7 happen, and I am always willing to try
8 something new.

9 I see many friends that I am acquainted
10 with in the Pinellas delegation, and we are
11 proud to be able to contact them, but I wanted
12 to tell you about the redistricting that I
13 remember when we got what was called the bug
14 splat districts. They really looked like
15 somebody just threw something against the wall
16 and tentacles went out, and we know that they
17 have been not really as successful as I guess
18 the drawers had hoped.

19 It was done as a compromise negotiation
20 between two groups, and I think one of the
21 groups that compromised on that really realized
22 later that they had lost something very
23 important, they had lost some very effective
24 Legislators.

25 One of the lines was drawn in my district,

1 a block away from the house of one State
2 Senator, and moved a Tampa Representative into
3 St. Petersburg district, so that she only had
4 17 precincts left in Tampa and something like
5 70 in Pinellas County. So that -- that was not
6 a win for those incumbents. It was a result of
7 a compromise.

8 And I can remember that we talked a great
9 deal during the hearings for that redistricting
10 about being compact and contiguous and
11 community, and I can remember many of us
12 standing up and like people are here saying
13 that that is something to be adhered to, and
14 yet it wasn't.

15 And so I just want to tell you this
16 history because, as you know, if we don't know
17 our history, we are going to repeat it, perhaps
18 not in pleasant ways. So thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
20 very much. We appreciate it, Ms. Foster.

21 Next up we have Darden Rice with the
22 League of Women Voters, followed by Mary Louise
23 Ambrose and then Joe Barkley.

24 MS. RICE: Thank you. Good morning. My
25 name is Darden Rice, and I am the President of

1 the St. Pete League of Women Voters. I am also
2 the former Chair of the local Fair Districts
3 Now campaign where the League, along with many
4 others, worked for the passage of the Fair
5 Districting amendments.

6 I want to thank you for your service. We
7 know this isn't an easy job. I have spoken and
8 worked with many of you sitting here.
9 Sometimes a good friend is the friend that
10 tells you what you need to hear and not what
11 you want to hear, so I am here in the spirit of
12 I am offering criticism, but I know that you
13 are working hard at what you do and I know that
14 we share the common goals of wanting to see
15 democracy work in our state.

16 The Florida asks -- excuse me, the League
17 asks the Florida House to stop spending our own
18 taxpayer money against us. Please respect the
19 will of the 63 percent of Florida voters who
20 want new redistricting standards to be applied.
21 The House is using our taxpayer money against
22 us to attack and invalidate Amendments 5 and 6.
23 It is spending our money to join a lawsuit
24 asking the court to strike the amendments, and
25 we ask you to withdraw from this lawsuit

1 immediately. As the State makes major cuts,
2 these efforts to thwart voters wastes money and
3 doesn't do a thing to create jobs.

4 In addition to the 30 million, 30 million,
5 set aside to avoid Fair Districts, *The Miami*
6 *Herald* reported yesterday that the cost of
7 fighting redistricting continued to mount. In
8 addition to the two and a half million spent on
9 lawsuits, the paper also reported that these
10 hearings, which are perhaps less than useful
11 because we have no maps to comment on, have
12 cost the House \$48,000 through July. In the
13 spirit of transparency and fairness, please
14 provide documents to either refute *The Miami*
15 *Herald's* claims, or provide invoices to give
16 the public reasons for your expenses.

17 Finally, PolitiFact and *Orlando Sentinel's*
18 malarkey meter weight the Legislature's denials
19 of wasting money as false.

20 If you would stop fighting this, instead
21 applying these standards as voters intended,
22 there would be no need for wasting massive
23 amounts of taxpayer money.

24 And thank you for listening to my
25 constructive criticism.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

2 MS. RICE: Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
4 very much. And, Ms. Rice, if -- I hope you can
5 stay to the end of the meeting, because Senator
6 Gaetz will have an opportunity, and other
7 members will too, to address some of those
8 questions. And sometimes information gets out
9 there that may not be completely factual. We
10 will make sure that we address each and
11 everything that you mentioned there. So thank
12 you.

13 MS. RICE: I look forward to that. If
14 there's an opportunity for a dialogue to ask
15 questions back, we would appreciate that.
16 Thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
18 Next up we have Mary Louise Ambrose with the
19 Pinellas County Democratic Executive Committee.
20 Thank you for being here. And followed by
21 Ms. Ambrose, we have Joe Barkley and then
22 George Gonzalez.

23 MS. AMBROSE: Good morning. My name is
24 Mary Lou Ambrose, and I am from Belleair
25 Bluffs. Mr. Frishe is supposed to be my

1 Representative.

2 My question to you is, why haven't you
3 done what we asked you to do?
4 Sixty-three percent of us said we want fair
5 districts, we want contiguous, we want compact,
6 we want no political input. What we got and
7 you guys -- what we have now and what you guys
8 proved to us this morning when you introduced
9 yourself is a malarkey of various lines and
10 snakes and little districts butting into other
11 little districts in order to do one thing.

12 This is what we have. The only reason for
13 this is sitting here in front of me.
14 Incumbency is what it is all about, and we want
15 you to stop it. We want fair districts. I am
16 thinking more like squares and rectangles here
17 instead of whatever this is.

18 And the second thing I want you to do is
19 stop spending our money fighting us. There is
20 absolutely no reason why you should sue your
21 constituents. What is wrong with you?

22 The fact is we want fair districts, we
23 want them now, we don't want to wait until next
24 June. We want to be able to bring up people
25 who will at least give you some competition.

1 You need it.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

3 Next up we have Mr. Joe Barkley, followed
4 by George Gonzalez and Maria Shurggs -- or
5 Scruggs.

6 COMMISSIONER BARKLEY: That is a tough act
7 to follow. That lady is my wife.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Well, you
9 were smart to let her go ahead of you then.

10 COMMISSIONER BARKLEY: I didn't even know
11 I was speaking, she put my name on the list,
12 but I will just say a few words.

13 I live in Belleair Bluffs, I am a
14 Commissioner there. Like many folks who are
15 local elected officials, they want to serve
16 their communities more. The way to do that is
17 to seek wider office, to seek a higher office.

18 When you run for office -- I hope other
19 people in the back realize this. When you run
20 for office, you don't just wake up one day and
21 decide to run for office. It takes a long time
22 to run for office. You have to develop a
23 committee, you have to develop a plan, you have
24 to raise money, you have to knock on doors, you
25 have to make phone calls. You have to do

1 everything possible to get your name out and
2 your ideas out.

3 When we have this kind of situation where
4 we have no time as an elected official who
5 wishes to run for office to form a committee,
6 to decide where to make a phone call, to decide
7 where to knock on a door, to decide how we can
8 best represent people, this is depriving the
9 citizens of Pinellas County and the State of
10 Florida of the right to have a vote. This is
11 extremely, extremely bad behavior on your part,
12 and I take personal offense at this and I hope
13 we will correct this immediately.

14 We need to have a competitive elective
15 system. You guys are all shoe-ins because we
16 have no way to make a valid campaign when we
17 have no way to know where our elected
18 representation is going to be. Thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
20 Commissioner.

21 Next we have Mr. George Gonzalez, followed
22 by Maria Scruggs and then Judy Landon.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: Good morning. In my
24 statements, you will probably sense a man that
25 has lost all faith and hope in his political

1 system and his legislative process. I am not
2 really here today to give you my opinion about
3 redistricting, how to draw the districts, or to
4 plead that you create fair districts that more
5 aptly represent the voter composition of our
6 state, because I know the money and time wasted
7 on these meetings is only for show.

8 If you were truly representatives of the
9 voters, these meetings would have been held
10 months ago, would surely include maps,
11 suggested districts, their voter composition,
12 and you would not be trying to circumvent the
13 will of the people with lawsuits.

14 I am here to sound a warning. Sixty-three
15 percent of the voters of this state, well above
16 your ability to claim partisanship,
17 resoundingly ordered you to redraw districts to
18 be more competitive, that reflect the fact that
19 we live in an evenly divided state. They asked
20 you to stop creating districts that tap into
21 surrounding minority or opposing party areas
22 that there is no commonality with where you are
23 putting it, and doing it for the sole purpose
24 of strengthening one district for your party
25 while weakening the other district to make it

1 competitive for your own party.

2 Despite your lawsuits to circumvent the
3 will of the people, despite the fact that you
4 insult our intelligence by trying to make us
5 think you come to us for political comment,
6 even though you bring us no maps to comment on,
7 you and everybody in this room knows what the
8 intent of the voters was, regardless of party
9 affiliation.

10 By now your brains are probably saying to
11 yourself, "Let's discount this guy's
12 commentary, he is just an angry Democrat."
13 Yes, I am a Democrat by default, because
14 Republican policies have devastated my family.
15 I could care less if I was represented by the
16 wigwam party.

17 Frankly, however, what I yearn for is the
18 America and Florida of my childhood where
19 Republicans and Democrats did not operate under
20 the premises of obstruction, where the parties
21 were not obsessed with keeping unfair balance
22 in the Legislature and did not -- and did not
23 reflect the voters they represented. I long
24 for the days when I respected Republicans even
25 though I disagreed with them, not hated them

1 for the pain they are causing my family. I
2 long for the days when both parties either
3 chose or were forced to compromise in order to
4 do what was best for the citizens, not what was
5 best for themselves or their reelection.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: George, I am
7 going to have to ask you to wrap it up, sir.
8 We are getting tight on time.

9 MR. GONZALEZ: They chose to -- they chose
10 redistricting to send you a clear message, and
11 the intent was clear, so my warning is this:
12 You ignore and circumvent the will of the
13 people at your own peril.

14 If you do not do this honestly and adhere
15 to what is right, ethics charges, lawsuits and
16 federal investigations. I beg you, do this
17 right, you could begin the healing that has
18 this state and this country divided. You could
19 be the catalyst that causes us to find common
20 good for all instead of the selfish need for
21 one.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
23 sir.

24 Next up we have Maria Scruggs, followed by
25 Judy Landon and Marilyn Hafling.

1 I just want to remind everybody, we've got
2 probably almost 40 speakers left, and not a lot
3 of time, so, please, we don't want to be rude
4 and interrupt anybody, but we do want to keep
5 to a very tight time frame, so be brief.

6 Thank you very much for being here. You
7 are recognized.

8 MS. SCRUGGS: You are quite welcome, and
9 for the sake of brevity, I will be brief.

10 First of all, good morning, and thank you
11 for the opportunity to come to present to you
12 this morning. My name is Maria Scruggs, and I
13 live in Representative Rouson's district and
14 Senator Joyner's district. And contrary to an
15 earlier comment made that the minority -- the
16 community of Midtown, which is primary
17 African-American, does not need lines drawn
18 that are compact and contiguous is not true.

19 We do not necessarily have the same
20 interests of African-American communities in
21 Manatee just by the nature of our ethnicity.
22 So, please, when you are drawing the lines,
23 consider that not to be the case.

24 For the sake of brevity, I will not repeat
25 a lot of what has been said today. I say that

1 Amendment 5 and Amendment 6 have been passed by
2 63 percent of the voters. As you can tell from
3 the comments here, from the comments that have
4 been heard around the state, taxpayers are
5 frustrated and they are weary. I beg of you to
6 take the framework of Amendment 5 and Amendment
7 6 and ensure that the lines are drawn to fall
8 within that framework, and then after your work
9 has been done, for the sake of transparency and
10 the sake of clarity, establish a framework that
11 clearly demonstrates that you have adhered to
12 what the voters asked you to do by the passing
13 of Amendment 5 and Amendment 6.

14 And, finally, withdraw from the
15 litigation. That does not lend well to the
16 voters, and I am certain that if this
17 litigation is to ensue, many of you probably
18 will not be here in your next terms. Thank
19 you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

21 Next up we have Judy Landon, followed by
22 Marilyn Hafling and then Mary Pugh.

23 MS. LANDON: Hi. Thank you so much for
24 allowing me to speak with you today. A lot of
25 what I have to say is just going to be a repeat

1 of what other people have said, so I am going
2 to keep it brief.

3 Please stop fighting Fair Districts with
4 taxpayer dollars. That is just not right. It
5 really isn't.

6 Eliminate multi-county districts as much
7 as you possibly can, because they really don't
8 make any sense. And in the past, they have led
9 the districts that have crossed the entire
10 state. That is insane.

11 We have -- another thing I would like to
12 say here is that it seems like we have the cart
13 before the horse, which a number of people have
14 said here, but we don't have maps to comment
15 on. These maps aren't going to be coming out
16 until the legislative session, from what I can
17 see from the timeline. It would be best if
18 they came out earlier.

19 At the time that they do come out, what
20 type of review and comment will the public get?
21 What type of input are we going to get? Will
22 there be more public hearings? The last thing
23 that I -- well, see, and here's another thing
24 that kind of concerns me. Those of us who want
25 to play by the rules and use the mapping

1 software, My District Builder, we have a key
2 component of it taken out, *The Sun Sentinel*
3 brought this out, that the -- let's see -- we
4 have the removal of the compactness and
5 geospatial software between the first release
6 last year and the second release of My District
7 Builder, and I do believe that would have made
8 things a little bit easier. I will try to do
9 it as best I can without.

10 And the last thing that I would like to
11 say is to -- well, at the very end, even though
12 we have very little time, to move up the plan
13 approval, to bring to the floor the first week
14 of the legislative session and try to vote on
15 it as soon as possible so that we will be able
16 to meet the June 8th deadline for qualifying
17 for state and federal elections in Florida, to
18 be able to get those district boundaries set
19 before people are trying to qualify and run for
20 office, not only for the candidates, but for
21 everybody involved. I work for the Supervisor
22 of Elections' office, and I am holding my head
23 thinking what that one is going to do to us
24 really.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Landon --

1 MS. LANDON: So thank you very much.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
3 very much. Thank you for being here.

4 Next up we have Marilyn Hafling with the
5 League of Women Voters -- I hope I said that
6 right, ma'am, I apologize if I didn't -- Mary
7 Pugh and then John Brysacz.

8 You are recognized.

9 MS. HAFLING: Thank you. I am Marilyn
10 Hafling. I am a board member of the League of
11 Women Voters of St. Petersburg. I've lived in
12 Pinellas County since 1979, the last 31 years
13 on Madeira Beach. I have appreciated hearing
14 all of my fellow Pinellas County people speak
15 so passionately today, and I really don't think
16 there's a lot I could add to their eloquence.

17 I would certainly urge all of you to stop
18 fighting Fair Districts. We worked very, very
19 hard to get Fair Districts passed and it is
20 what the citizens want, and I really am boggled
21 that people think they can set aside what the
22 voters have said they want with our money.
23 That just blows me away that we as taxpayers
24 pay both sides of lawsuits all the time. It
25 happens in our little towns, it happens in our

1 county, it happens at our state, and I am
2 really beginning to feel very victimized, and I
3 am just asking that you get on with the
4 business and draw up these districts the way
5 they are supposed to be, the way the citizens
6 asked it to be. As Mr. Hickman said, you took
7 an oath to support our Constitution, and that
8 includes the Fair District amendments, so
9 please get on with it. Thank you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

11 Next we have Mary Pugh, followed by John
12 Brysacz and then Marg Baker.

13 MS. PUGH: I am Mary Pugh, just an
14 ordinary citizen here in Pinellas County. I
15 live in Florida. I want to thank you for
16 hearing me.

17 I have to say that watching this, there is
18 a huge and ominous disconnect between the
19 Florida Legislature and its citizens, and I can
20 see it in your body language in some of you.

21 As a citizen of the State of Florida, I
22 would like to believe that my voice is my vote,
23 and I need to protect that voice by insisting
24 and demanding that my vote is counted
25 accurately and fairly. We as citizens have the

1 right to expect that our Legislature follow the
2 law as voted upon by the people and enshrined
3 in the Florida Constitution. Florida
4 politicians will be held accountable by
5 citizens demanding the new districts will be
6 drawn fairly and legally.

7 It is time that Florida citizens start
8 choosing their leaders and stop politicians
9 from choosing their voters.

10 Florida leaders must follow Amendment 5
11 and 6 as voted on by 63 percent of the
12 citizens. Florida politicians must address
13 disfranchisement laws and census miscounts,
14 which screws a lot of -- I mean, skews a lot of
15 the -- it does that, too, but it skews a lot of
16 the census and how this is followed up on.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: We have had a
18 couple of Freudian slips today already.

19 MS. PUGH: Oh, yes. Well, we are angry,
20 we are angry. We want fair districts. It begs
21 the question that in a largely Democratic
22 state, our Legislature is largely Republican.
23 This is due to crafty legislative line drawing,
24 and this is a conflict of interest and allows
25 for politicians to design their own districts.

1 I am hurrying.

2 35.8 percent of the voters in Florida are
3 registered Republicans, 42 percent are
4 registered Democrats, but 63 percent of the
5 House is Republican and 65 percent of the
6 Senate is Republican. These numbers are
7 possible due to the 1992 court-drawn maps.
8 This move concentrated minority majority
9 districts. Since then, there have only been
10 three African-Americans and three Hispanics
11 elected to Congress.

12 These maps diluted the Democratic
13 congressional and legislative districts, thus
14 allowing Republicans to control the Legislature
15 and assume the majority since the mid 1990s.
16 These court-drawn maps clearly favored one
17 party over the other, so who is protecting my
18 voice and my vote? Our elected officials are
19 sent to the Legislature to protect the
20 citizens' rights, not their seats. It is time
21 to watch the watchers.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

23 Next up we have John Brysacz, I hope I
24 said that right, sir, followed by Marg Baker
25 and then Jason Smith.

1 MR. BRYSA CZ: I noted that for you
2 phonetically. It is a Polish name, so I can
3 understand why you may have difficulty with it.

4 My name is John Brysacz, and I am a
5 profound skeptic. All types of interested
6 parties, including the League of Women Voters,
7 the Sierra Club, private citizens and various
8 members of ethnic, agricultural and business
9 communities have stated their desires and
10 wishes regarding redistricting. In those
11 statements, they hoped, prayed, encouraged,
12 cajoled and treated, beseeched and even begged
13 that our Legislature consider and pay heed to
14 those during its upcoming and untimely
15 deliberations. The language of supplication
16 that characterizes citizen speakers at those
17 forums has shown that there is little
18 understanding about just who serves whom.

19 Let there be no mistake or confusion. You
20 work for me. You work for us. A theater of
21 the absurd has existed in these forums.
22 Interest in and mindfulness of the statements
23 and messages of the citizen speakers seems to
24 be merely famed.

25 One gentleman speaker at Key West forum

1 nailed it when he stated that there's little
2 need for such forums when computers could
3 simply, with a legitimate and appropriate use
4 of mathematical logarithms and geometric
5 fractals, resolve any challenges accompanying
6 fair redistricting, and in a completely
7 non-partisan fashion.

8 A kind of sophistry permeates these
9 forums. Wikipedia refers to the definition of
10 "sophism" thusly, quote, "Plato was largely
11 responsible for the modern view of the sophist
12 as a greedy instructor who uses rhetorical
13 slight of hand and ambiguities of language in
14 order to deceive or to support fallacious
15 reasoning. In this view, the sophist is not
16 concerned with truth and justice, but instead
17 seeks power," end quote.

18 What folly are these forums? Let me
19 iterate some reasons for my skepticism and
20 discharge of --

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sir, I'm
22 going to have to ask you to wrap it up, too.

23 MR. BRYSAZ: "Despite the vote of the
24 people, we, the Legislature, don't support
25 certain amendments to the Florida Constitution

1 that call for fair, compact, contiguous
2 redistricting, so we are going to fight you in
3 the courts" is the mantra of the Florida
4 Legislature. Too, "we don't believe in global
5 warming" is a mantra among certain leading
6 elements of a certain political party. One
7 might glean from these two seemingly disparate
8 statements two things. In the former, they
9 don't believe the power of the people in a
10 democratic society. In the latter, they don't
11 believe in scientific fact and observation.
12 Both are losing propositions.

13 Despite that, the Legislature has sent its
14 minions among the populous to assert their
15 beliefs as truths. They are sophists. They
16 are --

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Brysacz,
18 you are over three minutes, so I am going to
19 have to ask you to stop.

20 MR. BRYSACZ: -- ancient Greece, they will
21 employ --

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Brysacz,
23 there's people behind you that need to have the
24 opportunity to speak, sir. There's a lot of
25 people here.

1 MR. BRYSA CZ: -- to attempt to deter the
2 inevitable.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Please.
4 Thank you, thank you for being here. If you
5 turn those in, we will get those in the record,
6 okay? Thank you, sir.

7 MR. BRYSA CZ: We watched that guy for four
8 minutes talk about some guy named Libby's map.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
10 sir. Thank you.

11 Okay. Next up we have -- next up we have
12 Ms. Marg Baker. Marg, thank you very much.
13 We've got Jason Smith after Marg, and then
14 after Jason, we have Tom Tito. And, please, we
15 want to remind everybody to be respectful to
16 people behind you that want to have an
17 opportunity to speak.

18 Thank you for being here, Marg. You are
19 recognized.

20 MS. BAKER: Thank you. First of all, I
21 would like to contend with the stated law that
22 63 percent of the population voted for. This
23 is what I disagree with and think is
24 unconstitutional. Districts shall not be drawn
25 to deny racial or language minorities. The

1 State cannot change the Federal Constitution,
2 which states, "We, the people of the United
3 States," not we, the racial segments.
4 Contiguous and physical boundaries seem to
5 contradict. I can see why you guys are having
6 so much trouble. There should not be anything
7 to do with minorities or languages. All that
8 we should be concerned with are contiguous and
9 physical boundaries.

10 We are not a democracy. We are a republic
11 which relies on law, not a few people. We're
12 just one state trying to change, we, the
13 people. There are non- -- there are no
14 minorities referred to in our Constitution
15 until we just voted this in.

16 Now we have language and minorities in --
17 as an amendment of our Constitution. This
18 needs to be deleted. There are no minorities.
19 Citizens of the United States are all created
20 equal. And English is Florida's constitutional
21 language. Thank you.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
23 very much.

24 Next up we have Jason Smith, followed by
25 Tom Tito and Craig Glaser. Mr. Smith.

1 MR. SMITH: Well, she just said there's no
2 minorities, but I feel like a discriminated
3 minority. I am a Union member.

4 On-line program maps, first of all, they
5 are not practical, they are not user friendly
6 and they are not our job. By law, only
7 Legislators can submit a map. And I have no
8 reassurances that if I do take the time to
9 actually learn your software and draw your maps
10 for you, are you really going to look at it, is
11 that going in the trash can, are you going to
12 cherry pick from a group of, you know, people
13 who made maps that you wanted to make maps? I
14 don't know what that is all about. That seems
15 like a waste of our time.

16 Third party, we should have hired an
17 independent firm to draw several versions of
18 the maps for us to comment on and discuss
19 during these hearings. It would have been
20 really great to have something to bounce back
21 and forth and actually have context with which
22 to have a discussion. We are talking about
23 stuff that, you know, we have no control over.

24 The interim session begins in September,
25 and I know that you will take the time to focus

1 on career creation. Jobs are things that we do
2 when we graduate from high school so we can pay
3 for gas money. I would like to see careers
4 that give educated adults a chance to live a
5 middle-class life. I would ask you to spend
6 your interim session working for all Floridians
7 this time around and not squander it focusing
8 on social issues and Union bashing on behalf of
9 your corporate donors. Thank you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Next up we
11 have Tom Tito, followed by Craig Glaser and
12 Darren Ayres.

13 MR. TITO: Thank you. I came here to make
14 three points. First, I would like to see the
15 maps. You have heard other people ask for
16 that. It is not our job to make the maps.
17 Please get on with that, let us discuss it, and
18 in January, you can vote on it.

19 Second point, please respect our
20 Constitution. Amendments 5 and 6 were voted by
21 a lopsided majority. You really don't need a
22 hearing to tell you what the people want. The
23 people told you want -- if we want to amend
24 that, we can.

25 Third point, please stop spending our

1 taxpayer money on a lawsuit suing the people of
2 Florida, your constituents. It is a waste of
3 money. We have people crying for tax relief,
4 schools, medical care, Medicaid. There are
5 needs that are greater than suing the people
6 you represent.

7 I would like to tell you why I came today.
8 I live in District 55, south St. Pete. You
9 have heard some other folks talk about the
10 discrimination we have suffered, the hardships
11 in our neighborhood. Now we are being
12 discriminated against through gerrymandering.
13 I am in a district for State Senate and a
14 district for the U.S. Congress in the Tampa
15 district. And I think Senator Joyner is doing
16 a fine job, I think Representative Kathy Castor
17 is doing a great job for our people. I think
18 they will do a better job if they didn't have
19 to run across the Skyway Bridge and the Howard
20 Frankland Bridge to attend a neighborhood
21 meeting or to -- if they could learn -- build a
22 relationship with a handful of city councils
23 and county -- and one county commission instead
24 of dozens, they could just do a better job. We
25 have suffered discrimination. Please stop

1 that.

2 I think the Hispanic population is also
3 gerrymandered. We have a county district, it
4 is not something you are talking about today,
5 but it is an example in Hillsborough County,
6 cut the Hispanic population in the middle.
7 Orlando, we have the Hispanic population that
8 could be in a district, I think some of them
9 are in the Jacksonville district. It doesn't
10 make any sense.

11 Speaking of not making any sense, the year
12 2000, Florida botched the election. We became
13 the laughingstock of the United States. It was
14 great for late night comedians. They started
15 spelling Florida with d-u-h. Now, let's --
16 let's do our jobs, gain the respect of the
17 country, get these maps out, let us see them
18 and let's, Florida, hold our heads high.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thanks, Tom,
20 we appreciate it.

21 Next up we have Craig Glaser, followed by
22 Darren Ayres and Sandy Oestreich.

23 MR. GLASER: I am Craig Glaser, I am a
24 resident of Treasure Island, and I am not a
25 professional speaker, just a common working

1 class guy. I want to talk about the 8:00 a.m.
2 start time of this. A lot of us had to take
3 time off from work to be here, and we know how
4 precious jobs are right now, and a lot of
5 people that wanted to have their voice heard
6 are not here because they want to keep their
7 jobs. At this time, a job is a precious thing.
8 A career, I mean, that is a dream at this
9 point.

10 We, the people, have already spoken with
11 our votes on Amendments 5 and 6. And I have
12 been listening to the hearing here, and it
13 seems about 80 percent of people are in
14 agreement with two issues: Maps, where are
15 they, we need something to work off of, and
16 this lawsuit is just a waste of time. Please
17 stop the lawsuit against the people. Many
18 states have legislation that may contradict
19 federal law. We voted, it is our Constitution.

20 As far as the maps go, we have nothing to
21 work off of. It is just a fantasy right now.
22 We have to have something to work off of. It
23 is putting the cart before the horse.

24 And I want to thank you for letting my
25 voice be heard. Let's get some maps and let's

1 stop the lawsuit.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

3 Mr. Ayres, you are recognized, followed by
4 Ms. Sandy Oestreich, I hope I am saying that
5 right, I apologize if I am not, followed by
6 Glenn Paul.

7 MR. AYRES: Good morning, and thank you
8 very much for all of you coming and being here
9 and being a part of this. I do appreciate the
10 transparency, and I appreciate the opportunity
11 for us to have input into this process from the
12 very beginning. It certainly gives a better
13 impression that you haven't already created
14 something that you want to force upon us, but
15 you are giving us the opportunity up front to
16 speak about this.

17 I have heard people come up here today and
18 say, "This is your job, you should be doing
19 this, we don't need to have these meetings,"
20 and then in almost the same breath, they say,
21 "You could hire an independent company to do it
22 for you," or they say, "But if you don't want
23 to do it, me and five or six or eight of my
24 friends will get together and do it for you."
25 Seems somewhat contradictory for me to sit back

1 and listen to them as they say, "It is your
2 job, but we would be happy to tell you how to
3 do it," and that is what this meeting is all
4 about, and I appreciate that, we can stand here
5 and do this.

6 I have heard a couple of common themes
7 today when they weren't just complaining, but
8 the common themes I have heard about actual
9 redistricting is community and commonality,
10 community and commonality. I heard one person
11 to say race isn't important, I heard another
12 one say race is important. And then, again,
13 you've got the Voting Rights Act that you must
14 abide with, so that is important, and we have
15 to understand that role that you have to fill
16 there.

17 I have heard -- I think most of the people
18 when they have talked about community and
19 commonality, I don't know all the individuals
20 here, but it seems like that many of them are
21 talking about more the state positions as they
22 looked and saw the different districts within
23 Pinellas County itself, but when I attended the
24 one up in Wesley Chapel that happened up there,
25 I heard much the same thing that was really

1 addressing the U.S. Congress, commonality as
2 they talked about the U.S. 19 and the people
3 there who are more along the urban and the
4 commercial as opposed to the agricultural
5 community on the eastern side.

6 Commonality and community, and I hope that
7 you really take that into consideration when
8 choosing and laying out these lines, so that
9 people are best represented by their
10 individuals, and that there's not really strong
11 divergent groups that are within that as well.
12 Thank you for your time.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
14 Mr. Ayres. Good to see you, sir.

15 Next up we have Ms. Oestreich. I hope you
16 can make sure I am not saying that --

17 MS. OESTREICH: Don't worry about it.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay. And
19 then after --

20 MS. OESTREICH: It is, oh, strike up the
21 music.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Oestreich, I
23 like that. And then we've got Glenn Paul with
24 the ACLU after you, and then I believe
25 Dr. Pamela Settlegood, if y'all could come down

1 and get ready.

2 Ms. Oestreich, thank you --

3 MS. OESTREICH: Okay. I am Sandy
4 Oestreich, and I was Vice-Mayor in North
5 Redington Beach and have the same interests
6 that most people have expressed here.

7 I would like, if you don't mind, and
8 respectfully ask that the two Chairs would
9 grant me the opportunity -- clarifying one
10 point by asking a question. Okay?

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You can ask a
12 question.

13 MS. OESTREICH: Okay, thank you. And this
14 -- the answers can be very, very brief, and I
15 will try to be brief.

16 The question is, as one of the points that
17 is made, when will we actually see, the public
18 actually see and have input to the
19 redistricting maps that you are ostensibly
20 working on at present?

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Well, in the
22 essence of time, in about 30 minutes, we are
23 going to give Senator Gaetz and other members
24 an opportunity to address that question and
25 many others. So as opposed to getting in a

1 back and forth, we will answer that question.

2 MS. OESTREICH: Okay. I just thought it
3 might clarify for everybody, and me included.

4 And I do want to just say the vote is
5 terribly important to all of us and this does
6 disenfranchise bunches of people, but it
7 does -- and I agree with B. J. Star absolutely,
8 it does work against women, and we did work
9 very hard for the vote 50 years after all men
10 were just given it. Okay. And I have nothing
11 against men, I'm married to a wonderful guy.

12 So the second part of it is feeling this
13 for the rest of us in an ongoing way so that
14 women get put into the U.S. Constitution. We
15 are not -- females are not mentioned in the
16 U.S. Constitution in any way, shape or form.
17 Men and their pronouns are mentioned 30 million
18 times. We are not in the contract with our
19 nation. That has great psychological and
20 actual impact upon us. I, as you know -- may
21 know, am spearheading the Equal Rights
22 Amendment for -- ten years before the
23 Legislature, you will hear from us again, and
24 right here is our star, Senator Joyner, who
25 sponsored that bill for many, many years, and

1 to our dismay, there are those here who are
2 adamantly against equal treatment for men and
3 women, including Representative Frishe,
4 Representative Ahern --

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms.
6 Oestreich, this is not an opportunity to have
7 political statements.

8 MS. OESTREICH: Thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

10 Okay. Next we have Glenn Paul, followed
11 by Dr. Pamela Settlegood and then Mary
12 Griffith.

13 Glenn is with the ACLU. Glenn, thanks for
14 being here.

15 MR. PAUL: Hello. I will try to keep this
16 short. I am with the ACLU, but I am not
17 speaking on behalf of the ACLU. This is just
18 my opinion.

19 So I looked on the website the other day
20 and found that the Florida House district is
21 supposed to be approximately 156,000, Florida
22 Senate districts, about 470,000, and U.S.
23 congressional districts, 696,000.

24 Now, I am proposing something very basic
25 that's said before, why can't we go out --

1 Florida is like an L-shaped state. We've got
2 the Panhandle across its top and we've got the
3 peninsula.

4 Why in the hell can't we just go -- the
5 first 156,000, make up all the rectangles best
6 you can, starting over in Escambia, by Alabama,
7 cut it down, I don't care whose neighborhood
8 you cut it through, whatever, that is the end
9 of a district.

10 And then you need to go all the way over
11 to Jacksonville, and at that point, because the
12 state gets more populated, you go down the
13 middle and you make rectangles on each side and
14 let the chips fall where they may.

15 Now, I don't need to say anything about
16 all the money spent and all that stuff has been
17 said before. So let's -- basically my idea is
18 to have basic rectangles, and as the years go
19 by, we can be increased or decreased according
20 to population, and we don't care about
21 minorities or rich people or Naples or West
22 Palm Beach or this district or whatever else,
23 just make it blind boxes, rectangles. Okay.
24 That is my point.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you

1 very much, sir.

2 MR. PAUL: And I am not speaking for the
3 ACLU there, I am speaking for myself.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sure. Thank
5 you, thanks a lot.

6 Next up we have Dr. Pamela Settlegood. I
7 hope I said -- is that right, Doctor?

8 DR. SETTLEGOOD: Yes, thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay, great.
10 And after Ms. Settlegood, we have Mary Griffith
11 and then Judy McSwine.

12 DR. SETTLEGOOD: Thank you. I am a fourth
13 generation St. Petersburg resident, an
14 educator. I serve on the ACLU Boards, Pinellas
15 and Florida. I have some experience chairing
16 committees and forums, and I have lived and
17 been educated in other places. So this place
18 is a mess. It is a mess. And in part of it,
19 Mr. Weatherford and Mr. Gaetz, your cynicism
20 and arrogance towards the voter is evident.

21 This hearing process is very interesting
22 to me. It is very crafty. For example, take
23 Mr. Gaetz' positions. I do think we need to
24 have this public. He is a Senator and sharer
25 of the Florida Leadership Alliance. That is

1 the organization that is funding the lawsuit
2 against the people. He also chairs -- I
3 noticed a grimace there.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: I will correct the record
5 when you are done.

6 DR. SETTLEGOOD: He also chairs the Senate
7 reappropriate commission, or committee.

8 Now, Amendments 5 and 6, now part of the
9 Florida Constitution, and Chair Gaetz took an
10 oath to defend the Constitution, not the goals
11 of the alliance that he chairs, evidently Mr.
12 Gaetz is determined to overturn the Fair
13 Districts by suing the people of Florida. What
14 is glaringly wrong with our government nowadays
15 are individuals such as Chairman Gaetz.

16 SENATOR LATVALA: Mr. Chairman, I am not
17 going to sit here and have you insulted in my
18 district. We are not insulting the people that
19 are coming and speaking, and I would ask you to
20 not insult us.

21 DR. SETTLEGOOD: Point well taken.

22 These hearings were evidently an incumbent
23 protection plan. They're designed to protect
24 your power.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Dr. Settlegood, if I

1 could you to wrap up just out of respect --

2 DR. SETTLEGOOD: I am.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: -- for the many people
4 behind you --

5 DR. SETTLEGOOD: Two more sentences.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Sure.

7 DR. SETTLEGOOD: Floridians have spoken.
8 We want fair districts. So to use a phrase,
9 "Let's get to work." Thank you.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
11 Doctor.

12 DR. SETTLEGOOD: Thank you.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: And next we will hear from
14 Mary Griffith with the League of Women Voters.

15 MS. GRIFFITH: Good morning. Nice to be
16 here.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Hang tight for a second.
18 And following Ms. Griffith, Judy McSwine and
19 Wendy Risk, if you'd be on deck, please.

20 Ma'am, you are recognized. Thanks for
21 coming today.

22 MS. GRIFFITH: Thank you. My question has
23 to do with the timeline of drawing districts.
24 This process can simply and should occur long
25 before the end of the legislative session, as

1 by the law, the courts and the Department of
2 Justice have more than 90 days after passage to
3 review maps.

4 Under the present timeline, these
5 districts will not be reviewed and approved
6 before the June 8th, 2012, deadline for the
7 candidates to file papers, and elections
8 supervisors will have insufficient time to
9 prepare for elections. How will new candidates
10 have time to organize and wage campaigns? Does
11 this amount to an incumbent protection plan?
12 Your own lawyer has said this will cause
13 massive voter confusion. Voters will have no
14 opportunity to learn about candidates, despite
15 the fact you say there is nothing you can do as
16 the Constitution requires the maps to be drawn
17 during the session.

18 These maps could be the first order of
19 business and voted on by the end of the
20 session's first week, January 13th. This would
21 provide double the time for review by the
22 courts and the Department of Justice.

23 In the League's recent letter to the
24 Committee, we asked for an October 3rd deadline
25 for map presentation so that final passage can

1 occur by January 13th, 2012. This results in a
2 fair consideration for Florida candidates and
3 voters.

4 What is your intent? Will you commit to a
5 reasonable and democratic timeline to protect
6 the voting rights of the Florida citizens? It
7 is really the right thing to do. Thank you
8 very much.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, ma'am.

10 And now we would like to hear from Judy
11 McSwine, also with the League of Women Voters,
12 and then Wendy Risk and then Ernie Bach, if Mr.
13 Bach would be on deck.

14 Ms. McSwine, thank you for coming, and we
15 are delighted to hear your testimony.

16 MS. McSWINE: Thank you. Thank you for
17 the opportunity to speak.

18 I am the President of the League of Women
19 Voters of North Pinellas County, with members
20 from Largo, Clearwater, Dunedin, Palm Harbor,
21 Safety Harbor and Tarpon Springs. And for many
22 years, our League has joined the effort to work
23 for passage of fair districting, and now I join
24 the 3.1 million voters who voted for Amendments
25 5 and 6 to ask where are the maps. The

1 Legislature has had all the information
2 necessary to prepare these maps since March of
3 2010, over five months ago, and during all of
4 these 26 hearings, these expensive hearings,
5 there are no maps available for citizens to
6 review. It is the legislators'
7 constitutionally mandated responsibility to
8 draw these maps, and it has been the League's
9 experience in many years past that when the
10 League and other concerned groups have drawn
11 maps, they have been totally disregarded, not
12 considered. The bottom line, it is not our
13 job, it is your job to draw these maps.

14 You have heard by now in previous hearings
15 that other states finished this process because
16 the maps were presented 30 days before final
17 passage in order to provide an opportunity for
18 public input. This has happened in Alabama,
19 Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana,
20 Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska and Nevada and
21 Oklahoma. When will we have these maps in a
22 timely manner so that they can be reviewed by
23 voters long before the end of the legislative
24 session?

25 Please respect the wishes of 3.1 million

1 voters and comply with a good timeline. Thank
2 you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
4 Ms. Risk.

5 Next up we have Ernie Bach, followed by
6 Jim Lawrence and Dave Eggers.

7 MR. BACH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There
8 are some tough acts that we have to follow
9 here.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I'm sorry, I
11 think I may have skipped someone. I'll tell
12 you what, Wendy -- is Wendy Risk here?

13 MS. RISK: Yes, I ceded my time.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Oh, you did?
15 Okay, all right. Well, thank you, I'm sorry.
16 I didn't mean to miss you there.

17 Ernie, you are recognized, sir.

18 MR. BACH: I apologize for some of my
19 redundancy, but my card was turned in with the
20 speaker that spoke an hour and a half ago.

21 My name is Ernie Bach, and I am the State
22 Chairman of the Independent Party of Florida,
23 and you have not heard much from me or from the
24 party recently in the past, but you will in the
25 future.

1 If I may, Mr. Chairman, I am wondering how
2 many people are registered as Independents or
3 NPAs here? Just a few. All right. Well, we
4 are looking for more. I rarely come to these
5 meetings -- I could have --

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Apparently
7 somebody already did.

8 MR. BACH: I rarely come to these
9 meetings, because it is important -- yeah,
10 right. These citizens' comments are very
11 important, and as a rule, they're as pertinent
12 and as on target as mine, which is why I don't
13 show up at a lot of these, but we are at a
14 point where the nonsense does have to stop. So
15 I am here today to add my more than two cents'
16 worth to this.

17 As to the point that these hearings are a
18 waste of time, we are of the factual opinion
19 that dragging this on the way you have not only
20 could, but actually has already caused great
21 confusion that affects potential candidates who
22 wish to run next year but aren't even sure of
23 which districts they are running. Candidates
24 we are working with right now around the state,
25 and we are looking for more, by not getting

1 this job done, there is a very real potential
2 for those candidates missing their filing
3 deadlines, and that concerns us. So we
4 sincerely hope you get this dog and pony show
5 back on the road, get finished and get to work
6 on the actual job to be done.

7 Let's mention the money being spent on
8 this wasteful effort, \$30 million set aside, \$3
9 million already spent, with two and a half
10 million spent on lawyers by the Legislature,
11 that is you people sitting up there, attempting
12 to defeat 5 and 6. How many citizens told you
13 to do that? If you answer me, I'll be happy to
14 distribute that answer to over two and a half
15 million Independent and NPA voters in the state
16 of Florida.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Bach, I
18 am going to have to ask you to put a bow on it
19 for us.

20 MR. BACH: I have waited a long time here,
21 Mr. Weatherford, and I've got about two more
22 minutes, which I hope to finish.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You don't
24 have two minutes, because you've got about 35
25 people behind you that also want to speak, so

1 you are over two and a half minutes, and that
2 is all you've got.

3 MR. BACH: Remember -- and you are
4 interrupting me, too, and using my time.

5 Remember that we have about two and a half
6 million Independent voters --

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sir, we are
8 going to have to ask you to turn your comments
9 in. You are over two and a half minutes, that
10 is all we've got, and we've got 35 people
11 behind you that want to speak, so, please.
12 Ernie, come on, please. There's a lot of
13 people who want to speak, sir, there's a lot of
14 people who want to speak. I got it right here.
15 Ernie, please. Thank you, sir. Have a good
16 day. Have a good day.

17 Okay. Next up we've got the Mayor of
18 Indiantown Shores, Mr. Lawrence. Mayor, thank
19 you for taking the time to be here, sir. We
20 appreciate you being patient with us as well.
21 Following the Mayor, we have Dave Eggers and
22 Mr. Darrell Flaherty.

23 Mayor, thanks for being here.

24 MAYOR LAWRENCE: You bet ya. I am Jim
25 Lawrence, 18-year resident of Indian Shores,

1 the last 12 on the Town Council -- excuse my
2 voice, I've got a little cold -- and my last
3 six as Mayor.

4 During that 12 years, I have served in
5 many capacities, many committees. I am
6 currently the Secretary-Treasurer of the
7 Pinellas Mayor's Council, and I serve on the
8 Board of Directors of the EMS Advisory Council
9 and the Tourist Development Council.

10 My job today is to speak to you as the
11 immediate past President of the Barrier Islands
12 Governmental Council, affectionately called the
13 Big C. It is a non-legislative advisory
14 council made up of 11 beach communities from
15 Clearwater to St. Pete Beach. The goal of the
16 Big C is to speak with one voice on county and
17 statewide issues, such as tourism, insurance,
18 beach nourishment and offshore oil rig
19 drilling.

20 District 54 encompasses the Gulf shore
21 area from north of Clearwater Beach down to
22 Tierra Verde and mirrors the Big C
23 representation. Our Senate representative also
24 includes almost all of Big C territory. Past
25 and current District 54 Reps and our Senate rep

1 regularly attend our monthly Big C meeting, and
2 they have been our basic conduit to the State
3 Legislature on the issues of import to the
4 beach communities. It is our fervent hope that
5 we can maintain that relationship and keep that
6 district intact. Maybe you can add Mayor
7 Peters, south St. Petersburg there, or South
8 Pasadena. That is all I have, thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
10 Mayor. Thank you for your brevity and your
11 service, too, sir.

12 After the Mayor, we've got Dave Eggers,
13 followed by Darrell Flaherty.

14 MR. FLANERY: Flanery.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Flattery, I
16 apologize.

17 MR. FLANERY: Mike Flanery.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I'm sorry,
19 okay. Followed by Mike Flanery, and then
20 Barbara Haselden.

21 Is Dave here? Well, Mike, you are next,
22 my friend, so come on up. Thank you for being
23 here. And after Mike, again, we have Barbara
24 Haselden, if you could come forward, and then
25 Robert Kinder.

1 MR. FLANERY: Okay. I am Mike Flanery. I
2 live on Venetian Point in Clearwater, and this
3 is purely technical comments I am making. If
4 you know where Venetian Point is, you go down
5 Edgewater Drive, and there's Sunset -- there's
6 Stevenson's Creek, and because -- I tried to
7 contact my Congressman, Gus Bilirakis, with a
8 comment on the e-mail, and lo and behold, I
9 couldn't because 33755-1752 did not seem to
10 show up on his computer because -- although it
11 is clearly on my I.D. card. And I am asking
12 that if you make these boundaries, make them
13 clear enough that people can e-mail their
14 Congressman. It is -- you know, the computer
15 rejects it if you are not in their district.
16 So I couldn't get through, so I had to make one
17 up whereby I knew I would be able to get to
18 send an e-mail through. Now, I am not saying
19 who is at fault, I think it is a complicated
20 system, but the computer automatically says
21 "What's your ZIP code, you are not in my
22 district," back it comes. So I made up one for
23 me and one for my wife. That was just a
24 comment, and it should be easy to fix, but it
25 also shows how difficult the lines are, because

1 that straight line cuts off my point that I am
2 on and puts me in the wrong district, and even
3 the people that worked did not seem to pick
4 that up. I am not blaming.

5 The second suggestion I have, I know I am
6 sort of theoretical here, but it seems like we
7 have the computer maps, we have the census -- I
8 actually did censuses last year, and I know,
9 knocking on doors, what's on those forms, and
10 commonality and community are the two zingers
11 in this thing. I don't know how to define
12 those. I've heard 15 definitions today, but
13 there is enough in those things that you could
14 write simply a computer program that does these
15 things, looks at the -- this is what is done
16 all the time, and it would be wonderful if you
17 could get out of all the arguments, just let
18 the computer run it through. And what we
19 should be discussing today is which weight we
20 should give to community, commonality, race,
21 being close to something else, instead of --
22 well, or even all the politics we are today,
23 and that is my comments. Thank you.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
25 Mike. Thanks for coming today, sir.

1 Next up we have Barbara Haselden. I hope
2 I said that right, Ms. Barbara, I apologize if
3 I didn't. Following Barbara will be Robert
4 Kinder and Toni Van Pelt.

5 MS. HASELDEN: Okay. Thank you. My name
6 is Barbara Haselden, and I live in northeast
7 St. Pete, and I just want to say that I thank
8 you all so much, because anytime that we have
9 an opportunity to speak to our Legislators, I
10 think it is a great opportunity, especially
11 when we see what is going on all around the
12 world and how few people in the world get an
13 opportunity such as we are all having today,
14 whether we are happy or not happy. So I
15 appreciate everyone's work.

16 And I just wanted to also say that it is
17 my understanding that the process this year is
18 actually earlier than it was done in the year
19 2000 after the census, and that the process
20 this year has been more transparent and orderly
21 than after the 1990 census in which the
22 Legislature, after several special sessions,
23 simply passed a plan and adjourned, basically
24 turning the entire final process over to the
25 courts.

1 I want to thank Representative Weatherford
2 and Senator Gaetz and Senator Joyner and let
3 you know how much your efforts are appreciated,
4 and to say that the congressional districts
5 that are centered in Pinellas I think should be
6 not overpowered by Tampa and -- because we
7 really don't have that much in common with
8 Tampa.

9 And I just want to finalize by saying that
10 I personally was not happy when a doctor in
11 Pinellas County challenged the Amendment 10
12 last year and challenged the language on the
13 ballot, and I also was not happy when it was
14 challenged after Governor Scott turned down the
15 high-speed rail. So I think we just simply
16 live in the time when if people are unhappy,
17 they are suing, and if they are feeling like
18 things are not just, they are suing, and that
19 is our right as Americans. So thank you very
20 much.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
22 very much.

23 Next up we have Robert Kinder. Following
24 Robert, we have Toni Van Pelt, followed by the
25 Supervisor of Elections Deborah Clark.

1 MR. KINDER: Good morning, sir. I
2 appreciate the opportunity to speak. I am a
3 resident here for about ten years, and prior to
4 that, about 50 years in different communities,
5 and one of the things that I noticed over the
6 period of time is that we have somehow tried to
7 categorize America through our census reports
8 year after year.

9 That is passé. We are people, one as
10 Americans, and we should be treated as
11 Americans. I am tired of listening to all this
12 minority, plurality, whatever.

13 If you want to talk about a voting block,
14 I am looking at the biggest voting block right
15 here right now. You represent -- government
16 personnel represent 30 percent of the voting
17 people in the United States. Thirty percent
18 you represent. That is one of the biggest
19 voting blocks around. If you don't believe we
20 have diversity, 40 -- 50 years ago -- I will
21 get the right date. In 1952, I graduated from
22 high school. They taught Latin and Spanish.
23 In my high school today, they taught -- teach
24 11 different languages. They speak over 40
25 languages. This is unbelievable. You look

1 around today, if you don't believe there's
2 diversity, go to the local fast food place,
3 they got anything you want, and yet we are
4 still trying to categorize people.

5 We need to draw maps that are simple, that
6 are defined and can be left there until they
7 have to be changed by law because of the
8 population. Thank you.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
10 sir.

11 Next up we have Toni Van Pelt. Toni,
12 thank you very much for being here. Following
13 Toni is Deborah Clark, Supervisor of Elections,
14 and then Dawn Thompson.

15 MS. VAN PELT: My name is Toni Van Pelt.
16 It is nice to be here.

17 I would like to ask why the Legislature
18 won't commit in writing to prepare the maps
19 now, debate them in the fall and pass them
20 during the first week of the session. There
21 can be no transparency when there are no facts
22 on the table. You need to do your job.

23 We need more than a statement of intent.
24 We ask the Legislature to publish and
25 accelerate a timeline, adopt a rule requiring

1 that all maps should be filed by October 3rd,
2 2011, adopt a rule requiring all committee
3 action on redistricting plans to be completed
4 by the end of 2011, and adopt a rule requiring
5 that all plans be voted on during the first
6 week of the 2012 session.

7 Why is the Legislature continuing to spend
8 taxpayers' money on a court action to have
9 Amendment 6 invalidated? Why won't you
10 withdraw the lawsuit? We ask the Florida House
11 to immediately withdraw from the lawsuit and
12 respect the will of the 63 percent of the
13 Florida voters who want the new redistricting
14 standards to be applied.

15 Why won't the Legislature provide draft
16 maps for public comment? We ask the Florida
17 Legislature -- actually, we strongly suggest
18 that the Legislators commit to holding another
19 round of public hearings with real maps for
20 citizens to comment on this fall.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
22 very much.

23 Next up we have Ms. Clark, followed by
24 Dawn Thompson and Vicky Imes.

25 Ms. Clark, thank you very much for your

1 public service to Pinellas County and for your
2 patience today, and we are happy to have your
3 here. Thank you, you are recognized.

4 MS. CLARK: Thank you. Thank you. I am
5 glad to be here today, and thank you for the
6 opportunity.

7 I won't be redundant. I know you have
8 heard other supervisors speak at your different
9 hearings around the state, and I know you are
10 pressed for time. I do, however -- you know, I
11 could just throw my notes out the window right
12 now, because you have heard it all.

13 There can be no doubt in your minds how
14 incredibly important people's right to vote is
15 and how deeply they feel about the process and
16 how much they want to be included in the
17 process. Certainly you have heard that this
18 morning.

19 As Supervisor of Elections, I proudly
20 represent the voters here in Pinellas County,
21 but I am also here today representing the
22 Florida State Association of Supervisors. And
23 we are public servants as you are. I work for
24 the voters of Pinellas County, the supervisors
25 work for their voters in their counties, and we

1 have worked with your legislative staff and the
2 Census Bureau and we have made some progress.

3 Our main concern is time. And you have
4 heard several people comment about how
5 confusing it will be for candidates if we get
6 those lines late next year, and it's happened
7 before.

8 It is our responsibility as supervisors to
9 conduct impartial and accurate elections for
10 these folks and 11 million voters in Florida.
11 But you have the authority to move that process
12 along, to ensure that we get those lines in
13 plenty of time so that we can prepare for and
14 be ready for the fall elections. We are
15 perfectly capable of doing that.

16 You heard a reference to the 2000
17 presidential election. It would be shameful if
18 Florida lost all the ground we have gained in
19 the last decade with all the efforts that have
20 been put into election reform, beginning with
21 Senate Bill 1401 that was filed by Senator Jack
22 Latvala back in 2002. It moved Florida in the
23 right direction, we've kept moving in that
24 direction, and the spotlight hasn't been in
25 Florida, it is in other states now. You can

1 help us keep moving in the right direction.
2 Successful elections are achieved by minimizing
3 opportunities for failure, and we ask you to
4 please help us with that.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
6 very much, Ms. Clark. We will take heed of
7 your counsel and we appreciate your public
8 service. Thank you very much.

9 Dawn Thompson?

10 MS. THOMPSON: Yes.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Good to see
12 you, and you are recognized, but before that,
13 we've got Vicky Imes and Karen Doering.

14 Also, it is about 10:36, and at about
15 10:45 or so, we are going to have to allow
16 members of the Committee to offer some input
17 and suggestions, and also there have been a lot
18 of questions asked, and we do not want to leave
19 here without giving Senator Gaetz, my
20 co-Chairman, the opportunity to address some of
21 the very questions that you have asked from the
22 public, so we will not get to every speaker.
23 There are several who are here that we will not
24 get to, and we apologize for that ahead of
25 time. We will make sure and get your comments

1 in, but I just wanted everyone to know ahead of
2 time we are going to have a couple more
3 speakers and then an opportunity for the
4 Committee to comment.

5 Dawn, you are recognized.

6 A VOICE: Move to extend time. Move to
7 extend time.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Dawn, you are
9 recognized. Thank you.

10 MS. THOMPSON: Okay. Good morning. My
11 name is Dawn Thompson, and I live in Seminole.
12 My husband and our eight children moved here
13 three years ago, and the first thing I wanted
14 to do is point out that -- what may be the
15 obvious for many of us is that most of you here
16 that have voted were not here to vote on the
17 map that we currently have, but I look at this
18 map and I see things that are all over the
19 place. I come from Massachusetts, the Bay
20 State, and others were talking about not --
21 they are very concerned about their vote, their
22 vote counting. And I can empathize greatly
23 with that, coming from Massachusetts, where we
24 have -- oh, I would say Democrats represented
25 about 95 percent of the Legislators. I ran for

1 the State Senate in western Massachusetts back
2 in '04, and other than feeling very much
3 disenfranchised, we actually were
4 disenfranchised, which I won't go into, on two
5 different occasions by the Legislature. So I
6 appreciate that.

7 I also very much appreciate the fact that
8 the state of Florida is very much a 50/50
9 state. I think that a Democrat or Republican
10 has about as much opportunity to get elected in
11 this state, and we have a large constituency of
12 Independents.

13 And what I heard when I spoke with a lot
14 of constituents here when I was campaigning one
15 year ago and two years ago for the seat that
16 Representative Ahern currently holds is that
17 people are looking for equity. And so in one
18 word what I hear from people that are speaking
19 here today and those who I've spoke to in
20 campaigning, they don't like the
21 gerrymandering. They don't think that -- I
22 will just use Kathy Castor -- sorry, Kathy,
23 about this -- but Kathy Castor's seat, it is in
24 three counties, it's been brought up multiple
25 times, and that is probably the most extreme

1 example in this -- in this area. You shouldn't
2 have to go over two bodies of water to get to a
3 district. People want normal boundaries. They
4 want something that works. Most of all, they
5 want equity. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
7 very much, Dawn.

8 Next we have Vicky Imes. Following Vicki
9 is Karen Doering, and after Karen we have Karl
10 Nurse, who is a city council member for the
11 City of St. Petersburg.

12 You are recognized.

13 MS. IMES: Thank you. I want to thank you
14 all for being here today and coming to listen
15 to our views as constituents prior to any
16 decision on your redistricting.

17 I have three areas that are very simple,
18 but I think important. One is that the people
19 of Pinellas be represented by a Pinellas
20 Senator, to keep districts in Pinellas as close
21 to current as possible, and I would like to see
22 the beaches remain together. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
24 Bonus points.

25 Next up we have Karen Doering. Karen,

1 thank you for being here. Karl Nurse is after
2 Karen, and then Bambi Jones with the AARP.

3 You are recognized.

4 MS. DOERING: Thank you. My name is Karen
5 Doering, and I just have a few brief comments.
6 The reasoning and rationale behind my comments
7 have been addressed previously. I think it
8 should be obvious.

9 There can be no meaningful comment on
10 redistricting without maps. We, the people,
11 expressed our role about redistricting through
12 Amendments 5 and 6, which set the legal
13 parameters for how those districts must be
14 drawn. Please show us the maps. This process
15 -- this process has made a mockery of the
16 Florida Constitution, the legislative process,
17 and you are Florida Legislators.

18 Please stop, withdraw from the lawsuit to
19 thwart the will of the people, accelerate the
20 time table for this process, and please stop
21 gerrymandering our vote for your incumbent
22 protection plan.

23 Finally, if you wish to sue your
24 constituents, go for it, absolutely go for it,
25 but use your own money, not taxpayer money.

1 Thank you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Next up we
3 have Councilman Karl Nurse. Councilman, thank
4 you for being here and thanks for your public
5 service. Following Councilman Nurse, we have
6 Bambi Jones.

7 COUNCILMAN NURSE: To the beach
8 communities that weren't sure they had enough
9 communication with St. Petersburg, we do take
10 your sewage every day, so we hear from you.

11 It also is this: I would urge you all to
12 think about chaos reduction next year. The
13 later -- the later the process happens, the
14 more likely it is to be chaotic, not just for
15 candidates, but particularly for the voters.

16 And, you know, I want to reinforce the
17 Supervisor of Elections' concerns. You think
18 about when you want to have a primary next
19 year, you back up 45 days to mail out the
20 military ballots and 35 days to sort of mail
21 out the others, you could be talking about
22 finishing districts and mailing four or five
23 weeks later. I mean, you really have the
24 possibility of a very chaotic situation. So
25 the earlier you can move that, the better.

1 And I would -- as somebody who lives in
2 St. Pete, who lives in the doughnut, I live in
3 the doughnut for the -- for a congressional
4 seat that is essentially a Tampa Bay seat, the
5 doughnut for State Senate seat that is
6 essentially a Tampa seat, and then, of course,
7 Darryl Rouson has the snake that snakes through
8 several counties. That kind of thing is very
9 confusing for voters.

10 And then finally, let me say, please, I
11 urge you to limit the number of times you cut
12 up precincts. It is -- that is very disruptive
13 to a community, because you could have hundreds
14 of people who were voting in one location
15 today, and because the precinct has been
16 re-carved, which happened many times in the
17 last time, they are there and now suddenly
18 voting in a whole different neighborhood, and I
19 am saying that causes -- that is very chaotic.
20 So chaos reduction, thank you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
22 sir.

23 Next up we have Ms. Bambi Jones. Is Bambi
24 here? Okay, I don't think so. We have time
25 for one more. Ms. Ann Beamah. Is Ann here?

1 I'm sorry I didn't give you more time. I
2 apologize for that.

3 MS. BEAMAH: My point has been made over
4 and over and over.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right.
6 Thank you very, very much. We appreciate that.

7 Ellen Thompson. We have time for probably
8 one more person, Ellen Thompson.

9 Okay. Wendy Paser? Thanks, Wendy, I'm
10 sorry about that. But after Ms. Wendy, we are
11 going to give members of the Committee an
12 opportunity to respond and maybe answer some
13 questions, and certainly I know Senator Gaetz
14 has about 27 pages of notes over here, and so I
15 think he would like to have an opportunity to
16 respond as well.

17 Wendy, you are recognized. Thank you for
18 being here.

19 MS. PASER: Thank you. I work with public
20 school employees in Pinellas County. I work
21 with them and I work for them. They are really
22 concerned as we are bargaining with the little
23 bit of money that the County received this
24 year. They proposed exponential increases in
25 healthcare benefits, they have already taken a

1 three percent reduction in the money that is
2 available to them because of the contribution
3 to the Florida Retirement System, and also they
4 propose fuller days. I would like to know what
5 I can tell them about how we can justify
6 spending their tax dollars to fight what the
7 voters have already accepted.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
9 Ms. Paser, thank you for your comments, and I
10 will make sure that -- I know Senator Gaetz
11 will address that issue, so thank you for being
12 here and thank you for your service to our
13 children here in our community.

14 Okay. Ladies and gentlemen, I would like
15 to give a few minutes -- if there are any -- we
16 will start with House members. Are there any
17 House members who would like to speak or offer
18 a suggestion or contribution? We are going to
19 have Senator Gaetz address some of the
20 questions that were represented, but I don't
21 want to take away anybody's opportunity to
22 speak. I know we are running short on time.
23 Is there any House member? Yes, Representative
24 Ahern.

25 REPRESENTATIVE AHERN: Thank you, Chair

1 Weatherford and Senator Gaetz, for facilitating
2 this meeting. I think it has been very
3 productive for everyone here. I know I haven't
4 seen this many members of the Legislature since
5 the last session, so I think it does belie the
6 importance of this matter, how important it
7 truly is to us to get it right, and that it is
8 of the utmost importance to get the public
9 input so that we will have this when we vote on
10 the maps during the session. And also that
11 while we may not be able to please everyone
12 each and every time, that we are able to serve
13 each and every one of you in this community and
14 in the state of Florida, and that this process
15 is working. You know, it's been said
16 democracy, republic. This connection to
17 government when it comes to the people like
18 this I think is important. In some ways, it
19 may just be a pressure relief valve for those
20 that want to be heard, and we really appreciate
21 you coming out and expressing all your concerns
22 to us today.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much, Representative Ahern.

25 Any other members from the House? Seeing

1 none, any members of the Senate that wish to
2 offer any comments? Senator Latvala, you are
3 recognized, sir.

4 SENATOR LATVALA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
5 I want to make two quick points.

6 The first one is that, you know, one of
7 the themes that I hear today is how that
8 there's got to be better people to do the
9 redistricting process than the Legislature
10 itself. And I am reminded also that someone
11 mentioned today why in the world was St.
12 Petersburg and my district, Senate District 16,
13 why did that include both Pinellas and south
14 Tampa. Well, the reason that included -- the
15 original basis for putting south Tampa and
16 Pinellas County together was by the Florida
17 Supreme Court in 1993 when the Legislature
18 could not resolve the issue and the issue went
19 to the Court, and the Court is who put south
20 Tampa in with Pinellas County in the district.
21 And so you can't just sort of presume that the
22 courts are going to do things some kind of a
23 magical different way, because that is where
24 that actually started.

25 The second thing I want to say is that,

1 you know, I was on this committee ten years ago
2 and traveled the state, made more hearings than
3 I have made this year, frankly, and I don't
4 remember one single person anywhere in Florida
5 complaining about having hearings, complaining
6 about the Legislature going out and seeking out
7 people's opinions. And, you know, I find it
8 really very disconcerting to have our Chairmen
9 criticized when I sat here at the table today
10 and tried to calculate in my own mind how many
11 hours that they have sat for hearings. In 26
12 hearings, and in some cities more than one
13 hearing in a day, I calculate at least 80 hours
14 of their summer that our Chairmen have spent in
15 hearings. Today -- no, I listened to you. I
16 listened to you. I listened to you. Now you
17 listen to me for a second.

18 Just today we had one gentleman question
19 why do the meetings start at eight o'clock.
20 Well, the reason the meeting started early
21 today is because we have a morning hearing that
22 started at eight o'clock, and then we will have
23 another hearing in the Sarasota area, which
24 will be over at eight o'clock tonight, and then
25 our Chairmen have to get in their car and drive

1 to Naples for a hearing that starts at eight
2 o'clock tomorrow morning. So I personally want
3 to express my appreciation to the Chairmen for
4 the way they have spent their summer vacation.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
6 Senator. I think Senator Jones had a quick
7 comment. Senator Jones for a comment, and then
8 we will come back to Senator Gaetz.

9 REPRESENTATIVE JONES: I will be very
10 brief, but I might be the only one in this
11 entire room that has gone through this process
12 now for the third time. And I want to
13 compliment the two Chairmen for having these
14 public hearings. I can tell you, having done
15 this the previous two times, that you could not
16 go to Tallahassee and have committee meetings
17 without having statewide public input first.
18 And although you don't feel that your comments
19 are important, as you go around the state, all
20 these meetings are being videotaped, all your
21 comments are being recorded for the record that
22 will be reviewed by the court, and I would not
23 minimize your input at these local hearings.
24 Believe me, when you go back to Tallahassee and
25 have a committee meeting, you are not going to

1 be able to be up there at these meetings. That
2 is why your comments here at the local level
3 are important and the Committee does take it
4 seriously.

5 So, believe me, I am hoping this Committee
6 can do their job and basically survive the
7 initial review of the courts, because if you
8 think the courts are going to spend this much
9 time to draw maps, then you had better look at
10 the courthouse they built.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
12 Senator.

13 Listen, before we go, I want to give --
14 Senator Gaetz, I was looking over earlier
15 during the hearing, has got literally tons and
16 tons of notes, page after page he has
17 meticulously written down, lots of comments and
18 questions. I think it would be appropriate to
19 give him a chance to respond and to also answer
20 and maybe, frankly, Mr. Chairman, to clarify
21 some things that seem to have been in the
22 bloodstream at every stop we go to, but I think
23 the citizens would love to hear from you. So
24 you are recognized.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and most of my

1 notes are the kind of notes that I make at
2 every hearing. I am a former newspaper
3 reporter, an editor, so even though there's
4 videotaping of everything, this all goes in the
5 record, I still like to make my own notes to go
6 over later in every evening.

7 One thing I wanted to begin with,
8 Mr. Chairman, was the persistent theme that we
9 heard and I think very well spoken by
10 representatives of the League of Women Voters
11 as to why the Legislature, in their opinion at
12 least, ought to draw maps and present them, and
13 the public ought not to and the League ought
14 not to. And I thought it might be useful to
15 note that Leagues of Women Voters in different
16 places in the country, and even in Florida,
17 don't necessarily agree with each other. It
18 sort of helps us understand the tension of this
19 issue. For example, ten years ago, the League
20 was the first group that developed maps and
21 presented them. In Georgia, there the League
22 of Women Voters this year, right now, not only
23 prepared and publicized their own redistricting
24 maps, they organized a map fair at the Georgia
25 State Capitol to encourage members of the

1 public to present their own alternative maps.
2 Quote, "Our goal throughout this whole process
3 is to ensure that citizens have a voice," end
4 quote, said the President of the League of
5 Women Voters of Georgia, quote, "and what
6 better way to do this than bringing people and
7 maps to the Capitol," end quote. How right she
8 is.

9 Let's go through some questions that were
10 raised. We will try to provide, where we can,
11 some factual answers. That great Democratic
12 Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan said,
13 "Everybody is entitled to their own opinion,
14 but everybody is not entitled to their own set
15 of facts." And I made a number of notes, we
16 will get through some of them.

17 First, there were a couple of references
18 to a \$30 million fund that the House of
19 Representatives is allegedly using to fight
20 Fair Districts. I would encourage you to go to
21 the state website, which is
22 transparencyflorida.gov. That way you can see
23 exactly what the Legislature is spending on
24 each program and each cost center. I think you
25 will find that the \$30 million is the entire

1 reserves of the House of Representatives to be
2 used for all purposes. So the \$30 million
3 figure, it sounds good, it is a fun bumper
4 sticker, it is just not a fact.

5 And then someone mentioned early in the
6 hearing today if you do it right, there won't
7 be any lawsuits. I wish that were true, and
8 grasping the larger hope, I pray for that every
9 night, but the representatives of some special
10 interest groups have already testified before
11 these hearings that there are going to be
12 lawsuits. They have already said there will be
13 lawsuits even before the Legislature has cast
14 its first vote. So, sadly, I think those who
15 feel that the best way to resolve this matter
16 is in the courts have already indicated that
17 there will be lawsuits. I sure hope there
18 won't be many.

19 A question, will the public see the
20 legislative maps before they are voted on? The
21 answer is yes. Before any vote is taken, even
22 in committee, the public will see any and every
23 map.

24 Third, there was a comment made that there
25 are 600,000 more Democrats, yet there are more

1 Republicans in the Legislature, how can this be
2 true? Well, we have an interesting phenomenon
3 in Florida. We have 40 Senate districts -- I
4 will just use the Senate as an example. The
5 House could be used as well. There are 40
6 Senate districts, and currently 28 of them are
7 held by Republicans, but eight of those
8 Republican Senate districts voted for Barack
9 Obama for President.

10 So you can look at this two ways. First
11 you can say that the people in those eight
12 districts were independent enough to view
13 President Obama's campaign as more persuasive
14 and more worthy of their votes, or you could
15 view it this way, that there were eight
16 districts in the state of Florida that solidly
17 voted for Barack Obama, but yet in the opinion
18 of those voters, the Republican candidates for
19 the Senate had a more persuasive campaign or a
20 better message for the voters.

21 Here's the thing that we really can't do:
22 We can't force Republicans to vote just for
23 Republicans, or Democrats to vote just for
24 Democrats, and we surely don't know how the
25 largest -- not the largest, but the

1 fastest-growing group of voters, Independents,
2 are going to vote. So what we have found is
3 people make up their own minds, and some
4 Republicans vote for President Obama, and lots
5 of Democrats voted for Republican Senate
6 candidates.

7 The next question -- or the next comment
8 came from a representative of the ACLU who said
9 you don't want to see amateur maps, didn't come
10 here to see maps drawn by schoolteachers. I'm
11 sorry you feel that way about public input. We
12 don't view the submissions from the public as
13 being amateurish. Indeed, we have received
14 submissions from Columbia University, from
15 universities and groups of academics here in
16 Florida, but, yes, we have received submissions
17 from schoolteachers and we have also received
18 submissions for 120 House districts from a
19 13-year-old boy and his family last night. So
20 what that suggests is that there is an
21 opportunity to have input. And I would just
22 tell you this: Please don't assume that the
23 only people who ever have any good ideas are
24 people in Tallahassee. That is not true. Your
25 ideas -- your ideas -- sh, sh, sh, sh -- your

1 ideas and the ideas of schoolteachers and
2 construction workers and 13-year-old boys and
3 people from Columbia University and the
4 University of Florida and University of South
5 Florida are all valuable and will all be taken
6 into account.

7 Then there were a number of questions
8 about the time table, Mr. Chairman, and here I
9 think a few facts could be useful. First, the
10 Census Bureau does not release census data on
11 which these maps have to be based, they don't
12 release it all at once. They release it in
13 groups or tranches. Now, Florida didn't get
14 its census data last, but we were one of the
15 last states to receive it. So several
16 individuals mentioned states which received
17 their census data months before Florida.

18 Now, why would they receive their data
19 before we received ours? Well, one of the
20 states mentioned was Louisiana. Well,
21 Louisiana receives its census data earlier
22 because they have their elections on
23 odd-numbered years, not even-numbered years,
24 like Florida.

25 Then there was a reference by a testifier

1 to the State of Illinois, and it is true, they
2 got their maps done very quickly. They are a
3 one-party state. They had a group of
4 Legislators who literally did go into a back
5 room, who came out, put the maps down, said,
6 "Take it or leave it," the Legislature voted
7 quickly and they all went home. Now, as
8 Representative Frishe said when he started
9 today, you know, sometimes representative
10 government is a heavy lift. We chose to use a
11 process that involves the public more than the
12 State of Illinois did. Maybe we were wrong,
13 maybe Illinois was right, but we chose to use a
14 process that was much more interactive and
15 involved.

16 Then also I would point out, as
17 Representative Weatherford did at the beginning
18 of our meeting, that we are accelerating the
19 process as much as the Constitution allows. We
20 can't vote -- the Constitution says can't vote
21 until January. But there are those who
22 testified today as if there were not going to
23 be any votes taken, in some people's minds,
24 they said, until March. Well, that's just not
25 true. Votes can be taken as early as January,

1 and if you follow the public record of the
2 other hearings, you know that our Democratic
3 Leader in the Senate, Senator Rich, who is a
4 member of our Committee, indicated that ten
5 years ago when she happened to be in the House
6 of Representatives then, she didn't even get a
7 chance to present a map. She didn't -- she
8 didn't get a chance to make a proposal, and she
9 asked that the members of the minority party be
10 able to do that. So the commitment that I made
11 as Chairman of the Senate Reapportionment
12 Committee is that at the first meeting that we
13 will have, the first time we can have a meeting
14 in September, the very first thing we will do
15 after taking the roll and calling the meeting
16 to order is to turn to Senator Rich and give
17 her the chance that she didn't have ten years
18 ago. It was unfair ten years ago that she
19 didn't have a chance as a member of the
20 minority party, and we are going to give her
21 the first chance this year in September.

22 Then there was a comment made by a mayor
23 from one of the beach communities that he
24 wanted the beach communities to be kept
25 together, and he acknowledged that that would

1 mean that they wouldn't necessarily be compact,
2 because the beach communities are kind of long
3 and skinny, because of the nature of the
4 barrier islands, they are not necessarily
5 compact. I only point this out because there
6 is -- and you heard it today, there is some
7 apparent tension between those who say "we want
8 compact districts" and those who say "we want
9 communities of interest or commonality to be
10 able to be districts." There is some tension,
11 or apparent tension there, and we just -- you
12 know, we point that out so that you will know
13 that this really isn't a bumper sticker issue.
14 This is something that really requires us
15 balancing these values. That is why these
16 hearings are so important.

17 And then, Mr. Chairman, there was a
18 question, you know, couldn't the Governor just
19 veto all of this anyway? The answer is that
20 under the Florida Constitution, the Governor
21 does not have the veto power over legislative
22 maps. The Governor can veto congressional
23 maps, but cannot veto legislative maps. The
24 veto or review of legislative maps is by the
25 judiciary in our state.

1 And then there was a question -- there was
2 an individual who said that the Senate
3 President, Senator Haridopolos, posted a
4 YouTube paid for by public funds. Again, you
5 might hate the YouTube or you might like the
6 YouTube. I thought the music was a little
7 depressing in the beginning when I saw it last
8 night, but I called the President, talked to
9 him last night, and he gave me this
10 information, which I pass on to you. Not one
11 penny of state funds was used by President
12 Haridopolos in producing or distributing that
13 YouTube message that was released yesterday.
14 He used his own funds.

15 Then there was a question -- or there was
16 a comment that said you really won't do the job
17 unless every district is competitive. Sounds
18 good, but imagine, you've got areas in south
19 Florida, for example, and areas here in the
20 Tampa Bay area where there are very heavy
21 concentrations of Democrats or Republicans who
22 live in certain areas. So let me just take my
23 area, for example. We have a very high
24 registration of Republicans in my area. To
25 make my district -- to ensure by law that my

1 district had to be competitive, we would have
2 to draw my district all the way from Niceville,
3 where I live, which is on the northwest Florida
4 coast, all the way to Tallahassee, three hours
5 away. And if you go to south Florida, if you
6 insisted that some very heavily Democratic
7 concentrations of voters not be allowed to be a
8 district, but that they had to be competitive,
9 you would have to draw those districts a
10 hundred miles long. So it sounds good to say
11 every district should be competitive, but that
12 is why we provided you with the population data
13 that is on the -- that is on the House and
14 Senate websites, so that you can see that
15 unless we force people to move and say that
16 every district has to be competitive that way,
17 which is pretty impractical, it would be hard.

18 Then, Mr. Chairman, the -- there was a
19 mayor who said that she is a mayor of a
20 community on the Intracoastal, not on the
21 barrier islands, but on the Intracoastal. Her
22 argument was we have more in common with the
23 barrier islands, being an Intracoastal
24 community, than we do with other areas that are
25 further inland. So she said we have a

1 community of interest and we want the district
2 lines to cross the water. Well, that is a
3 legitimate and logical point of view. But you
4 heard other people testify and say -- in fact,
5 the very next speaker said, quote, "No crossing
6 of any waterway." I only point this out to say
7 that 160 members of the Legislature, Democrats
8 and Republicans, we also have differences of
9 opinion just as you do, and these values have
10 to be balanced. It is not as easy as it might
11 sound to some to just, you know, go there and
12 vote for something that is compliant with 5 and
13 6 when you have heard disparate comments here
14 by people of good will, people who mean no
15 harm, but make good, logical arguments on
16 different sides.

17 Then there was an individual who said --
18 and did an extraordinary job -- said consider
19 the word "community" as important in your work
20 as the words "compact" and "contiguous." We
21 wish we could. In fact, Representative
22 Weatherford and I tried to get the term
23 "community of interest" into the Constitution
24 along with Amendments 5 and 6, but the Supreme
25 Court said they didn't want that there, they

1 struck that down. So sadly for those who have
2 made eloquent arguments today for community and
3 commonality, the Fair Districts folks did not
4 include that language in the Constitution. So
5 these are -- these, again, are values that are
6 going to have to be very carefully balanced,
7 because clearly we wouldn't be able to make
8 both sides happy in that case.

9 There was a gentlemen who said drawing the
10 process out to 2012 is very hard on candidates,
11 and I surely agree, because I am a candidate.
12 But the Fair Districts people can still change
13 this. The Fair Districts folks, who did a
14 great job with their campaign, raised an
15 extraordinary amount of money, a great grass
16 roots effort, they could have changed this in
17 the Constitution so that we didn't have to vote
18 in 2012, that we could begin voting in 2011.
19 They, for some reason, chose not to accelerate
20 the process with constitutional language. But
21 I am considering as a sole member of the
22 Senate, I have not talked to my colleagues
23 about this, I am considering proposing a
24 constitutional amendment that would allow the
25 next redistricting process to occur in an

1 odd-numbered year so that we can get a year
2 ahead in Florida. Now, we can't do it now
3 because it is too late to change the
4 Constitution at this moment, but we certainly
5 could do it to make sure that that individual's
6 concerns are addressed in future redistricting.

7 Mr. Chairman, I've just got a couple more.
8 There was a gentleman who said, "Defining
9 communities and preserving them is an essential
10 ingredient of redistricting." Again, we
11 couldn't agree more. Sadly, the Supreme Court
12 would not allow that to be added to the
13 constitutional language.

14 Someone said we ought to have an
15 independent commission. Again, the Fair
16 Districts folks could have included that in
17 their amendment language, they chose not to,
18 and so under the Florida Constitution, it isn't
19 an independent commission. It is, instead,
20 elected officials, who you can un-elect, and
21 then judges who, depending upon your point of
22 view, it is either easy or not very easy to get
23 accountability from them for decisions they
24 make, who have the last word.

25 Then there was an individual who made the

1 point that "When money takes over politics,
2 only a shadow of democracy remains." Eloquent
3 quote. Over \$9 million was contributed to the
4 Fair Districts campaign. Vastly most of it
5 came in large contributions, much of it from
6 outside the state of Florida, but that was
7 legal and that was appropriate. There was
8 nothing wrong with that. There was nothing
9 wrong with that. And if you follow the news,
10 you know that President Obama has -- his
11 campaign has already indicated that they intend
12 to raise and spend more money than any
13 presidential candidate in history. Nothing
14 wrong with that. It is legal. There is
15 nothing wrong with that.

16 Here is the question, here is the
17 question: Will money be the only ingredient in
18 decisions that are made in public policy? And
19 the answer is, only if you allow it to be. And
20 clearly, with a group like this and the groups
21 that we are seeing across the state of Florida,
22 you are expressing opinions that truly matter,
23 you are having an effect that is, in my
24 judgment, as equally as important as all of
25 those people who contributed on both sides of

1 the Fair Districts campaign.

2 Someone said we should -- if we wait to
3 finalize the maps until August, that would be
4 wrong; if we wait to vote until March, that
5 would be terribly inconvenient. That is not
6 our plan. That is not our intent.

7 Now, there was someone -- a young lady who
8 said, "We want a commitment from the
9 Legislature when they will cut off maps, when
10 they will cut off debate." Well,
11 Representative Weatherford and I each get one
12 vote. We don't get to vote for everybody else.
13 There are 160 members of the Legislature, and
14 believe me, there would be some in both parties
15 who would stand up and scream from the rafters
16 if we said we are going to cut off debate, we
17 are going to cut off ideas, we are going to cut
18 off your opportunity to improve or refine any
19 proposal. So it is Representative
20 Weatherford's and my intent, our desire, our
21 plan, to move the process as we have expressed,
22 as quickly as is logical, but we can't control
23 what the other 118 members of the Legislature
24 may want to do with their plans and proposals.

25 Then there was a -- the President of the

1 League of Women Voters said that she wanted to
2 have some information about how much the
3 hearings were costing. Please go to
4 transparencyflorida.gov. You can see that. I
5 think that the information in Mary Ellen Klas'
6 story in *The St. Pete Times* and *Miami Herald*
7 was probably pretty close, if not right on. It
8 said that the House had spent something like
9 \$48,000; the Senate, something like 8,000. I
10 think the Senate spent more than that. I think
11 by the end we will find that the House spent a
12 little more, because there are more House
13 members, 120 House members, and the House
14 committee is larger.

15 And then the question was asked of me, and
16 that is, am I funding the fight against
17 Amendments 5 and 6. My wife I am sure is
18 listening, and she probably wants to know if I
19 am, too. Well, I am not. I am not. That is
20 just not true. When the Fair Districts
21 campaign was going on before the election,
22 before these amendments became part of our
23 Constitution, I joined thousands of other
24 Floridians in making contributions based on my
25 personal views. Frankly, I didn't think

1 Amendments 5 and 6 should have been ratified
2 without commonality and communities of interest
3 included, and so I did contribute money against
4 them. But since they became the law, since the
5 election and -- and since the election, I was
6 appointed to this Committee by President
7 Haridopolos, I have contributed nothing, no
8 money, I have not been part of any lawsuit
9 personally or publicly against Amendments 5 and
10 6, and I won't be.

11 Then I guess there was another question,
12 why can't the Legislature commit to a drop-dead
13 date? I think I answered that. We certainly
14 are going to try to move the process along. We
15 are going to start by asking for presentation
16 of maps at the very first committee meeting.

17 Last comment, and that is your Supervisor
18 of Elections, Ms. Clark, encouraged that the
19 process move along as much as we legally can.
20 And, yes, we commit to do that.

21 Some of those who were concerned today,
22 and properly so, with the process, we commit to
23 you that we will do everything that we
24 constitutionally can do in terms of voting on
25 the floor, and as I indicated to you, we will

1 move forward at the very first Senate committee
2 meeting, and we will give Senator Rich, the
3 Democratic Leader, the chance she didn't have
4 and should have had ten years ago, and I am
5 considering proposing a constitutional
6 amendment that would allow us to do this in the
7 future in odd-numbered years instead of even so
8 that we would never have to have that kind of
9 concern or angst again.

10 I apologize for the length of my
11 responses, but we had many, many, many good
12 questions. This has been an extraordinary
13 hearing. There's information about your
14 communities and neighborhoods I could never
15 have received if I would have just sat in an
16 echo chamber in Tallahassee. This was well
17 worth my time, and I thank you for your input.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
19 very much. Thank you very much, Senator Gaetz,
20 and thank you all for being here today.
21 Senator Gaetz moves that we rise.

22 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
23 adjourned.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF LEON)

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

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

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

Dated this 30th day of November, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2011

6:00 P.M.

NEW COLLEGE, HARRY SUDAKOFF CONFERENCE CENTER

SARASOTA, FLORIDA

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 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you all for being
3 here this evening. The Joint House/Senate
4 Redistricting Hearing is called to order.

5 We are pleased to be joined tonight by a
6 number of members of the House of
7 Representatives and the Senate, most of whom
8 serve on the Redistricting Committee in the
9 House or the Reapportionment Committee in the
10 Senate, and in a moment, we will ask them to
11 identify themselves and the area of the state
12 that they represent so that you will know who
13 you are sharing your views with.

14 We want to thank New College for allowing
15 us to use this very helpful facility. We want
16 to thank all of you for being here, especially
17 members of the public who have come to share
18 your comments and your recommendations to help
19 shape congressional, Senate and House districts
20 for the next decade.

21 My name is Don Gaetz. I am a member of
22 the Florida Senate. My Senate district runs
23 from Pensacola to Panama City in the Florida
24 Panhandle, out where we have Central time, and
25 I am pleased to be here tonight. I will be

1 chairing the meeting with my colleague, the
2 Speaker Designate of the Florida House of
3 Representatives, Will Weatherford, who is to my
4 left. And the hearing tonight is being webcast
5 statewide by The Florida Channel over the
6 Internet. So before you get up to speak, make
7 sure your hair looks good, check your makeup,
8 straighten your tie, because everybody across
9 Florida is watching you, and we welcome the
10 thousands and thousands of Floridians who are
11 joining us tonight by webcast.

12 I would like to begin, Mr. Speaker, by
13 asking each of those members of the Legislature
14 who are here if they would very briefly
15 identify themselves by name and whether they
16 are a Senator or a Representative and the part
17 of the state that they are from.

18 Where are we? We are down at the far end.
19 Representative, why don't you start?

20 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good afternoon,
21 Chuck Chestnut, House Representative, District
22 23, a portion of Alachua County and a portion
23 of Marion County.

24 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good afternoon,
25 State Representative Mack Bernard from West

1 Palm Beach, Florida.

2 REPRESENTATIVE STARGEL: Good afternoon,
3 thank you for being here. Kelli Stargel, State
4 Representative from District 64, which is north
5 Polk County, mostly the City of Lakeland.

6 SENATOR NEGRON: Good evening, Joe Negron
7 from southeast Florida. I serve in the Florida
8 Senate.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PILON: Good evening,
10 Representative Ray Pilon, District 69, which is
11 right here, the northern part of Sarasota
12 County and a small part of Manatee. Welcome.

13 REPRESENTATIVE FORD: Representative Clay
14 Ford from Pensacola. I get the award for the
15 farthest traveled.

16 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Hi, I am Jim Boyd,
17 House member, District 68, which is the
18 district just north of here, western Manatee
19 County. Thanks for coming this evening.

20 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good evening, John
21 Patrick Julien representing House District 104,
22 which is in Miami-Dade County. My district
23 encompasses North Miami Beach, North Miami,
24 Miami Gardens, Opa-Locka, the City of Miami and
25 unincorporated Miami-Dade County. It is a

1 pleasure to be here.

2 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: State Representative
3 Peter Nehr. I represent District 48, which is
4 in Pinellas County and parts of Pasco County.

5 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: I am State
6 Representative Jim Frishe, and I represent the
7 beaches in Pinellas County.

8 REPRESENTATIVE HOOPER: I am Ed Hooper,
9 representing Florida House District 50, which
10 is a portion of Pinellas County.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: I am Trudi
12 Williams, Representative from District 75,
13 which is portions of Lee and Collier County.

14 SENATOR JOYNER: I am Arthenia Joyner,
15 State Senator, District 18, encompassing
16 portions of Hillsborough, Pinellas and Manatee.

17 SENATOR DETERT: I am Senator Nancy
18 Detert, and I am very proud to say this is my
19 Senate district, Sarasota, a portion of Manatee
20 and about 30 percent of Charlotte County.
21 Thank you all for coming.

22 REPRESENTATIVE HOLDER: Good evening, and
23 welcome to Sarasota. I am Doug Holder. I
24 represent House District 70, which is the south
25 part of Sarasota County, and I would like to

1 welcome all of our delegates from across the
2 state in the House and Senate to this beautiful
3 place that we call home.

4 REPRESENTATIVE ROBERSON: Thank you for
5 being here this evening. I am State
6 Representative Ken Roberson. I represent parts
7 of Sarasota, Charlotte and Lee County, and I
8 represent the City of North Port in Sarasota
9 County, which is now the largest city in
10 Sarasota County. Thank you for being here.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: I am Kathleen
12 Passidomo. I represent House District 76,
13 which is in Collier County. It includes the
14 City of Naples, the City of Marco Island and
15 the City of Everglades City. Thank you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good evening,
17 I am State Representative Gwyndolen Clarke-Reed
18 from Broward County. I represent seven cities
19 in Broward County: Deerfield Beach, Pompano
20 Beach, Oakland Park, Wilton Manors, Ft.
21 Lauderdale, the northern quadrant, the Victoria
22 park area, North Lauderdale and Tamarac.

23 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good evening. I
24 am Hazelle Rogers. I represent the -- one of
25 the most diverse cities and counties in Broward

1 County, and that is representing over 1.8
2 million residents. My district is 94, eight
3 cities, which is Lauderhill, Lauderdale Lakes,
4 Plantation, Oakland Park, Tamarac, Margate, the
5 City of Sunrise. Thank you for being here.
6 Looking forward to hearing your comments.

7 REPRESENTATIVE CRUZ: Good evening. My
8 name is Janet Cruz, and I represent District
9 58, which is a piece of central Tampa. Thank
10 you very much for being part of this process
11 this evening. We are happy to be here.

12 REPRESENTATIVE ADKINS: Good evening. I
13 am Janet Adkins from State House District 12,
14 which is Nassau, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Union
15 and Duval Counties, rural northeast Florida.

16 REPRESENTATIVE BURGIN: Good evening,
17 State Representative Rachel Burgin, District
18 56, which is the City of Tampa and eastern
19 Hillsborough County.

20 REPRESENTATIVE HORNER: Good evening. My
21 name is Mike Horner. I represent State House
22 District 79 in south central Florida.

23 REPRESENTATIVE NUNEZ: Good evening. My
24 name is Jeanette Nuñez. I represent House
25 District 112, which consists of portions of

1 Dade, Broward and Collier County.

2 REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: Hi there and
3 welcome. I am Representative Dana Young, and
4 my District is District 57, which is a large
5 part of the City of Tampa and part of
6 Hillsborough County.

7 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Good evening.
8 My name is Daphne Campbell, District 108, from
9 Miami-Dade County.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Good evening. I
11 am Dennis Baxley, serving Ocala, Marion County,
12 in the Florida House District 24.

13 REPRESENTATIVE ALBRITTON: Hello, thanks
14 for coming out. My name is Ben Albritton. I
15 serve in the Florida House. I represent
16 southern Polk, Hardee and northwestern
17 Highlands County.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: I think that has given all
19 of our Senators and Representatives a chance to
20 let you know who they are and where they are
21 from.

22 Our purpose tonight is to hear from the
23 public about how you believe the legal
24 standards governing redistricting should be
25 applied. Let me emphasize that. It is not

1 whether the legal standards should be applied,
2 because Amendments 5 and 6 are part of the
3 Constitution, but rather how they ought to be
4 applied. And as you listen to each other's
5 testimony, I think you will see that there are
6 questions that we really need your input on.

7 Our procedures tonight are simple, but
8 important. It is important that you sign in so
9 that we can create an accurate public record of
10 all attendees and speakers, and you may also
11 opt to join our e-mail list so that we can keep
12 you informed about how the redistricting
13 process is proceeding. If you have not signed
14 in, but if you would like to speak or if you
15 have just come to listen, we still would like
16 to know who you are so that we can stay in
17 touch with you, so if you would like to speak
18 or if you are just here as a listener and we
19 have not had an opportunity to get your name,
20 if you will raise your hand, we will make
21 sure -- thank you, there is a young lady right
22 here in the second row -- if you will raise
23 your hand, we will certainly be sure to get a
24 card. It is the same card whether you wish to
25 speak or whether you are here simply to listen

1 to your friends and neighbors.

2 We also would ask you, even if you are
3 RSVP'd that you were going to be here, and
4 many, many people have, and we are so grateful
5 for that, be sure that you do sign in so that
6 we can call your name and give you an
7 opportunity to speak.

8 Before we begin, the Chair will recognize
9 the Speaker Designate, Representative
10 Weatherford, to explain how today's hearing
11 fits into the redistricting process and the
12 redistricting schedule. Mr. Speaker.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
14 very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you all for
15 taking time to be here. This is a great
16 turn-out, and we are excited to be here in
17 Sarasota County and excited to hear from your
18 public testimony. In fact, I was just chatting
19 with Representative Holder a minute ago, and I
20 think this is home to the finest beach in
21 America, if I am not mistaken, is that right,
22 Siesta Key. So, as legislators, we sometimes
23 have tough duty having to go into beautiful
24 places like Sarasota, so thank you very much
25 for welcoming us here.

1 I am going to walk you through just a
2 brief -- give you an understanding about what
3 we are here to do today and what we hope to
4 accomplish. Every ten years, the Legislature
5 is required by our Constitution to redistrict
6 the state based on increases, decreases and
7 movements in population. Because Florida has
8 grown dramatically over the last ten years, we
9 have actually picked up two new congressional
10 seats. So instead of having 25 members of the
11 House of Representatives, we will now have 27
12 members of the House of Representatives.
13 Because some parts of our state have increased
14 and decreased disproportionately, many Senate
15 and House Districts will change, either adding
16 or losing in population.

17 When redistricting is completed,
18 congressional districts must be equal in
19 population and have 696,345 people, the 40
20 Senate districts must also be nearly equal at
21 470,000, and people in our 120 House districts
22 must also be nearly equal at 156,700 people.

23 Now, we have displays at the very front of
24 the room that will show you the current
25 boundaries of the state, and more particularly,

1 the current boundaries in this area, and if you
2 feel free at any point during the hearing, you
3 can go back and get a look very closely at what
4 they look like.

5 Equality in representation is not the only
6 legal requirement redistricting plans must
7 meet. The laws and the important court cases
8 that govern redistricting are explained in
9 detail in the House and Senate websites. Those
10 websites are listed on the "Redistricting 2012"
11 brochure that was available to you when you
12 came in. Our "Redistricting 2012" brochure
13 summarizes federal and state laws, and outlines
14 topics that we hope we will be discussing here
15 at today's hearing. If you did not get a copy
16 of that brochure when you came in, they are
17 available at tables outside the meeting, or our
18 staff is more than willing to give you a copy.
19 If you just raise your hand and give us a few
20 moments, we will get a copy to you. Keep your
21 hands up, and we will get them to you.

22 These websites also deliver to your
23 fingertips all of the demographic information
24 that will be used in drawing districts in the
25 exact same computer programs that legislators

1 and professional staff will use when we draw
2 districts. Any member of the public can
3 participate in building plans or seeing maps
4 submitted by legislators or other citizens.
5 Before, during and after this hearing, Senate
6 and House professional staff are available to
7 show anyone the simple steps in going on-line,
8 building districts and submitting maps now or
9 in the weeks to come.

10 Recommendations from citizens and groups
11 of citizens will be made immediately -- will be
12 made public immediately. In fact, as of this
13 morning, we've had 49 public submissions of
14 partial or complete maps, and many other
15 written ideas for maps available on the week,
16 and I am sure that number will increase. In
17 fact, Mr. Chairman, just last night, we were in
18 Tampa Bay and a 13-year-old young man, student,
19 actually has drawn an entire House district map
20 for the entire state of Florida, and did it
21 with -- he and his sister, and that is the kind
22 of participation and the opportunity that you
23 can get with the websites that we have, and so
24 we hope that everyone here will also
25 participate in that manner. The submission of

1 proposed maps that makes sense for your
2 community is the single most effective way that
3 you can communicate with this Committee and
4 with the redistricting process.

5 The redistricting schedule under which we
6 are operating is imposed by the State
7 Constitution. Let me say that again. This
8 always comes up every hearing. The
9 redistricting schedule under which we are
10 operating is imposed by the State Constitution.
11 The Constitution does not permit the
12 Legislature to act on state legislative maps
13 before the second year after the census; in
14 other words, before 2012. We have accelerated
15 this process as much as we can by moving up the
16 2012 legislative session from March to January,
17 and by beginning our statewide hearings five
18 months in advance of the 2012 session.

19 It has been suggested that the Legislature
20 should draw maps first and then ask the public
21 to comment. We believe that puts the answer
22 ahead of the question. There should be no
23 preconceptions created by politicians, but,
24 rather, public testimony should be free and
25 unrestricted. In fact, a principal author of

1 Florida's new redistricting standards and the
2 Chairperson of Fair Districts campaign are both
3 on record and in agreement with the notion that
4 new maps should not be drawn until after they
5 have received public comment.

6 Our intent is to use the recommendations
7 made at these 26 hearings and through our
8 Internet sites as the basis for drawing one or
9 more options for district maps. We will
10 discuss these options in open public meetings
11 before any votes are actually taken on the
12 maps, even in committee. In other words, what
13 we are literally saying here is that if you
14 look at the maps outside this room when you
15 first came in and you walked through on your
16 way into this room, and the ones that have been
17 submitted to the Legislature by citizens just
18 like you, we are literally saying that the
19 legislative process is starting with those maps
20 and those suggestions from the public. So if
21 you want to know where we begin our
22 deliberations, it is with those public
23 submissions and the testimony from meetings
24 that we have just like here this evening.
25 Throughout the process, we will continue to

1 solicit additional public comment so that the
2 proposed maps can mature with your public
3 involvement and more input as we go through the
4 process. Whatever the Legislature passes, it
5 is then submitted from judicial review to
6 ensure that the final maps meet every single
7 legal requirement.

8 Because our purpose today is to hear from
9 you, all the time now -- between now and
10 9:00 p.m. will be used to ensure that every
11 member of the public has an opportunity to
12 speak. If after every citizen has had his or
13 her say and there is time remaining on the
14 schedule before adjournment, any member of this
15 Committee may make any statement or any
16 observation. Of course, any member of the
17 Legislature may today, or, Mr. Chairman, at any
18 time propose a map or a plan, and we will make
19 it public immediately.

20 Mr. Chairman, I hope that this description
21 gives us a starting point for the process, and
22 I look forward to hearing from the citizens
23 here in Sarasota County. Thank you.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

25 The good news is that we have over 80 people

1 who have signed up to speak. That is
2 excellent. But what that means is that all of
3 those who signed up to speak -- in fact, more
4 than 80, I am just handed a note. What that
5 means is that those who do speak need to be --
6 if we could ask you to be respectful of the
7 fact that there are others of your friends and
8 neighbors who would like to speak also. So in
9 deference to them and out of respect for the
10 many people who would like to share their
11 views, we are going to ask those who speak to
12 confine their verbal testimony to two minutes.
13 Now, you can supply -- if you've got a script
14 or you have some information that you have
15 written down, you can supply that to the
16 Committee, it will go in the record, every
17 member of the Committee will receive it and
18 have a chance to read it and review it. But we
19 would like your verbal comments, if you could,
20 to be short and to the point, because there are
21 so many of you who would like to share your
22 views with the Committee.

23 That being said, I am going to call about
24 three names at a time and ask if you would come
25 up to the center aisle and be ready, sort of in

1 an on deck circle, so that we could spend our
2 time listening to your views as opposed to
3 waiting for folks to work their way through the
4 crowd.

5 Kathy Dent, the Supervisor of Elections,
6 is our first speaker tonight, and follow is
7 Ms. Dent, Karen Berman, and then Ann Hardy from
8 the League of Women Voters, then Debbie Trice.
9 So if those individuals will come forward, we
10 will move expeditiously through the process.

11 And, Ms. Dent, thank you for being here
12 and thank you for your service to the people of
13 this county. You are recognized.

14 MS. DENT: Thank you very much, and I
15 appreciate the opportunity to be here and I
16 thank you all very much for being willing to
17 make this tour of the state.

18 I racked my brain trying to come up with
19 something that was not something you have heard
20 a thousand times before, and it all boils down
21 to two very simple things. Number one, the
22 Supervisors of Elections, contrary to rumor,
23 especially when I walked in this room tonight,
24 do not already have the lines drawn. We are
25 leaving it up to you.

1 And, number two, the two important things
2 that I am asking you to take into
3 considerations is the timing. We are going
4 into 2012, and this is Florida. If we don't
5 have enough time to get our ballots drawn, to
6 get our polling places located, to notify the
7 voters, to get our precincts approved by the
8 Board of County Commissioners, we will be more
9 likely to make a mistake and it could actually
10 impact over 11 million voters in the state of
11 Florida, which we don't ever want to have a bad
12 name here again.

13 And the second part is I am imploring that
14 you use the VTDs. Those are the Voting
15 Tabulation Districts. The Supervisors of
16 Elections -- and I think this is where the
17 rumor comes in. Supervisors of Elections
18 worked very hard in 2009 to make sure that
19 communities of interest were isolated to make
20 it easier for you all when you are looking to
21 draw those lines, that if you remain within
22 those communities of interest, you can't go
23 wrong. It keeps, for example, the Palmer Ranch
24 here in Sarasota County, The Villages, West
25 Villages in North Port, who actually are

1 divided right now between Representative
2 Roberson and Representative Holder. And we
3 made a mistake even just a couple of years ago
4 on a couple -- about 200 ballots, because it is
5 that easy to do to make a mistake when you have
6 all of these splits.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Dent, I apologize
8 profusely, but if you could wrap up, I would be
9 very grateful.

10 MS. DENT: I sure will.

11 And one last thing I would like to say is
12 history does repeat itself. I think that this
13 illustrious body can look ten years down the
14 road, you are all going to be term limited, and
15 to look at some way of dealing with this time
16 crunch that we have, constitutional amendment
17 followed with special session, or get creative
18 and just do some research --

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

20 MS. DENT: -- and not have this happen
21 again.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, ma'am.

23 MS. DENT: Thank you again for the
24 opportunity.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Dent, we hope

1 that you will be able to stay until the end of
2 the hearing, because a number of questions tend
3 to get raised during the hearing, factual
4 questions about timelines and other things, and
5 the Speaker Designate, as well as other
6 members, will be making copious notes. We will
7 try to answer factual questions, not get into
8 arguments about opinions, but answer factual
9 questions if there's time at the end of the
10 hearing. Thank you very much, Ms. Dent.

11 And now, Karen Berman, thank you for
12 taking some of your time tonight to come with
13 us, and you are recognized.

14 MS. BERMAN: Thank you. I came to implore
15 you and say just do it, implement the Fair
16 Districts amendments which we citizens voted
17 for. Set fair boundaries according to the
18 standards that are outlined. You know what
19 they are.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.

21 And now Ann Hardy, representing the League
22 of Women Voters, and behind Ms. Hardy will be
23 Debbie Trice and Doug Heinlen and I believe it
24 is Jutta Tolbert, and I apologize if I have
25 mispronounced that.

1 Ms. Hardy, thank you for coming tonight,
2 and you are recognized.

3 MS. HARDY: Thank you, Senator Gaetz.

4 Good evening, my name is Ann Hardy. I am
5 on the Board of the League of Women Voters of
6 Sarasota County, and thank you all for giving
7 me this opportunity to speak.

8 I would like to address two issues this
9 evening. First is the timeline for the
10 redistricting process. Say the Legislature
11 does not vote on the districts until March.
12 After the mandatory review period by the courts
13 and the Department of Justice and after
14 resolution of probable lawsuits, we will very
15 likely be hitting the filing deadlines for
16 candidates. In addition to putting a huge
17 strain on our Supervisors of Elections and
18 designating new placings and preparing overseas
19 and absentee ballots, this late date will give
20 candidates inadequate time to mount credible
21 campaigns, and most importantly, will give
22 voters little time to get to know their
23 candidates. Amendments 5 and 6 were in part
24 adopted to give candidates a fair shot at
25 presenting their case and getting elected.

1 Having a March date for passage of new
2 districts flies in the face of this intent.
3 Please set a deadline for proposed maps in
4 early October. Allow a reasonable amount of
5 time for the public to provide input on the
6 maps and on subsequent amendments, and complete
7 your committee review of the plans in December
8 so that the final maps can be voted on the
9 first week of session in January.

10 This brings me to my second and I think
11 most important point. The citizens of this
12 state approved Amendments 5 and 6 by
13 63 percent. I ask that you take special care
14 to respect the will of the voters. I have been
15 watching these hearings across the state, and
16 it is easy to see the frustration of citizens
17 who feel the system has been manipulated. The
18 Constitution now requires the districts be
19 compact, contiguous, and use existing
20 geographical and political boundaries. It also
21 requires that districts not be drawn to favor
22 incumbents or political parties. We can do
23 this. We can make fair districts. As the
24 Governor would say, let's get to work.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,

1 Ms. Hardy. And, Ms. Hardy, I hope you can stay
2 until the conclusion of the meeting as well,
3 because I think you will get the same
4 reassurance that we provided the League on
5 numerous occasions about the timeline.

6 Next we will hear from Debbie Trice, and
7 then Doug Heinlen, then Jutta Tolbert and then
8 Keith Dibell.

9 And, Ms. Trice, thank you for coming
10 tonight. You are recognized.

11 MS. TRICE: Thank you. Good evening.

12 Most Floridians know what county they live
13 in. Most Floridians know what municipality
14 they live in. Many can even identify where
15 they live in relation to major roads or
16 waterways. But few can tell you which
17 legislative district they are in. Why does
18 that matter? Well, of course, it matters
19 during election season when candidates are
20 soliciting campaign contributions and votes,
21 but why does it matter the rest of the time?

22 Knowing what legislative district you are
23 in is crucial to seeking services and
24 assistance from your Representative. Getting
25 the run-around after contacting the wrong

1 office is one reason for public anger with
2 public servants. I am sure none of you wants
3 to be voted out of office because what the
4 office holder in the neighboring district
5 failed to do.

6 Now, how relevant is that to this -- the
7 topic of this public hearing? I want to convey
8 to you how critical it is for district
9 boundaries to be placed where they will be
10 meaningful to the people who live in those
11 districts. Use existing political and
12 geographical boundaries as required by the
13 Florida Constitution. Remember, these
14 standards were supported by a two-thirds
15 majority of Florida voters.

16 Now, on a slightly different note, it is a
17 disservice to the people of Florida that these
18 hearings are being held before your Commission
19 has produced maps for the public to comment on.
20 Only the people who live close to the proposed
21 district boundaries can identify problems and
22 offer solutions.

23 Now, in the absence of a proposed map, I
24 will identify a problem with a piece of the
25 current map of House District 70, which

1 Representative Holder serves.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Trice, I am glad
3 you have gotten to that point, but I would ask
4 you to wrap it up just in deference to the
5 people who are signed up behind you.

6 MS. TRICE: Okay. Very quickly, the
7 northern boundary of the District is Clark
8 Road, State Road 72, which is a major
9 thoroughfare and exit off of I-75. That is an
10 excellent boundary. The problem, however, lies
11 in the exceptions. If you live north of Clark
12 Road between the railroad tracks and I-75, you
13 might be in District 70, but then again, you
14 might not be. So I urge you not to include any
15 meandering boundaries like this in drawing the
16 new district lines.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. That is
18 exactly the kind of information we need.

19 And next we will hear from -- is it -- did
20 I do it correctly, did I pronounce it
21 correctly, Doug --

22 MR. HEINLEN: Heinlen.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: -- Heinlen?

24 MR. HEINLEN: Heinlen, that is right.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Heinlen, thanks for

1 coming and give us some time tonight.

2 MR. HEINLEN: Good evening, Mr. Chairman
3 and committee members. My name is Doug
4 Heinlen, got that straight. I am a resident of
5 Sarasota, and tonight I speak as Florida AARP
6 State President, which is a volunteer position.

7 AARP Florida has 2.7 million members, and
8 we serve the older adult community of Florida
9 in many ways. Our Florida Tax-Aide volunteers
10 prepared at no cost 230,000 tax returns last
11 season. There were 48,000 graduates of our
12 driver safety program, and 5,000 job seekers
13 were served at 17 SCSEP sites in Florida with a
14 placement rate of 74 percent, the highest in
15 the country.

16 One of the areas that AARP Florida is most
17 engaged in is advocacy. Our staff in
18 Tallahassee is assisted by 200 active advocacy
19 volunteers, and active they are, as
20 demonstrated by the fact that Florida led the
21 country in petitions to Congress about the
22 recent suggestions to cut Social Security and
23 Medicare, with 80,000 signatures collected from
24 Florida AARP members in a very short time.

25 It is to advocate the AARP position that I

1 speak to you tonight, specifically a position
2 on redistricting. Transparency, timeliness and
3 trust, these principal elements of the
4 redistricting process need to be adhered to.
5 The voters of Florida have spoken, supporting
6 the Fair District plan by almost two to one,
7 about fair districts. But we are concerned the
8 project is going to proceed without full
9 disclosure and public presentation. The public
10 needs the opportunity to comment and to have
11 those comments be meaningfully considered. We
12 ask you to post the proposed map designs in a
13 timely manner so they can be reviewed by all.
14 We ask for the posting of the proposed map
15 designs to allow enough time for public review.

16 And, finally, I would like to take note of
17 the tremendous effort by the Florida League of
18 Women Voters on Fair Districts issues. They
19 led this fight really. I remember my
20 daughter's middle school civics club --

21 SENATOR GAETZ: And, sir, we are over two
22 minutes, so if you could wrap it up, I would be
23 very grateful.

24 MR. HEINLEN: A few more sentences.

25 -- working with the local League

1 collecting signatures for the first ballot
2 initiative on Fair Districts at one of the
3 Sarasota reading festivals. My daughter is now
4 a senior in college, which goes to show you
5 what a long-time, sustained effort the League
6 put in. So thanks to the League and thanks to
7 all of you for taking on this very difficult
8 task.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: And thank you, sir, for
10 your testimony, excellent testimony.

11 And now, Jutta Tolbert, and did I get that
12 right, ma'am?

13 MS. TOLBERT: It's Jutta.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Jutta Tolbert, I am so
15 sorry. Thank you for coming tonight. And next
16 will be Keith Dibell, or Dibell, and then
17 Joseph Blais, I think, and then Earl Beckwith,
18 if you would please line up in the on deck
19 circle.

20 Ms. Tolbert, the floor is yours.

21 MS. TOLBERT: Thank you. My question is,
22 as far as the committee meetings, is there a
23 schedule already set for those that once we are
24 done here and you guys go into committee, what
25 is the schedule there?

1 SENATOR GAETZ: That is a great question.
2 The Speaker Designate can answer that. The
3 answer is yes, but he will be able to point you
4 to a website so you can see what the
5 Committee's schedule is.

6 MS. TOLBERT: Okay. And my other question
7 is, how many of those present here will be on
8 those committees?

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Again, we will answer
10 those questions, but we want to give everybody
11 a chance to speak first.

12 MS. TOLBERT: Sure. Thank you.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, ma'am,
14 for your testimony.

15 And next, Keith -- is it Dibell or Dibell?

16 MR. DIBELL: It is Dibell.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Dibell. I had it wrong
18 both ways.

19 MR. DIBELL: That's all right, I was in
20 the military.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, I understand. My
22 name gets butchered from time to time, too.
23 You are recognized, sir, and thanks for coming
24 tonight.

25 MR. DIBELL: My name is Keith Dibell. I

1 am from Manatee County. I want to thank each
2 and every one of you on this panel for being
3 here.

4 One of the reasons that I am standing here
5 is my vote does not count in Manatee County.
6 That is not right. I work for the City of
7 Bradenton. The policies that are set by y'all
8 go to Pinellas County in Hillsborough County,
9 not to the City of Bradenton.

10 Now, over it all, it all filters down
11 throughout the state and gets to me eventually.
12 I would like to have a direct result to the
13 City of Bradenton about governing my county.

14 There are a number of Representatives,
15 there are a number of Senators. Y'all set
16 policy, y'all make laws. We, the voting
17 public, gave you a mandate to correct this.
18 Please do so.

19 The idea of having a map prior to a
20 committee meeting. Gee, I am not really sure
21 what I am commenting on other than I would like
22 to know what you have done. Doing it in a
23 timely manner would be welcome, because I will
24 see you in Tallahassee, each and every one of
25 you. Have a good evening.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: And looking forward to
2 seeing you.

3 MR. DIBELL: Oh, no, you won't.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
5 Keith. We'll look forward to seeing you in
6 Tallahassee. I am at Senate 420.

7 MR. DIBELL: I know where your office is.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Come on down.

9 Joseph Blais. Is it Blais, sir?

10 MR. BLAIS: Blais.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: And after Mr. Blais is
12 Earl Beckwith, and then Monia, I think it is
13 Joblin, with the Planned Parenthood
14 organization, and then Glenda Wright, if you
15 would be on the on deck circle, please.

16 Joseph, thank you for coming, and we are
17 looking forward to your observations, sir.

18 MR. BLAIS: Good evening, everyone. I
19 want to commend this body for the website. I
20 think this is very important. Keep it current,
21 keep it updated. We -- you know, if we don't
22 look at it, it is our fault. You have made the
23 effort, you have met us halfway.

24 I think the other thing, having this
25 televised is incredible. To have this

1 communication to the people is essential. I
2 mean, there shouldn't be any excuses. If you
3 want to know what it is about, there's ways to
4 find out.

5 My situation is I lived -- I have been in
6 Florida for 20 years. I lived in Tampa Bay. I
7 am used to a larger population. I moved to
8 Charlotte County about close to six years ago.
9 Unfortunately, Charlotte County has under
10 250,000 population, approximately 160,000 in a
11 vast, undeveloped -- we have a lot of land, and
12 it's -- I think when I look at the maps
13 currently, it is like you've -- whoever did
14 this before -- because I have never been
15 involved in anything like this before. This is
16 my first time up at bat.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: You are doing well.

18 MR. BLAIS: Exactly. And I, for instance,
19 there's the congressional districts. We've got
20 three congressional districts in our county.
21 And, you know, it is hard for us to go and
22 meet, like we have to go to either West Palm or
23 Naples or wherever Connie Mack -- because that
24 is my Congressman, and then there is Buchanan,
25 I believe. So we just feel that we are being

1 underserved, and we have regional concerns,
2 because we are looking for Florida to grow
3 again, because I think Charlotte County had a
4 great plan, and the recession hit, the housing,
5 so on and so forth, so our growth has been
6 stunted, but we are making plans to grow again.
7 So, you know --

8 SENATOR GAETZ: And if I could ask you to
9 bring it in for a landing.

10 MR. BLAIS: Yes, I will.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

12 MR. BLAIS: Whatever you can do, I know we
13 are limited by our population, but please try
14 to find common ground, because I really don't
15 want this to go to the courts, because I am a
16 taxpayer, and we pay the legal and we pay the
17 price. So let's find a way to be bipartisan,
18 like you are trying to do tonight, and let's
19 find a solution that gets us more on a
20 regional, cooperative basis. That is what I am
21 looking for.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

23 MR. BLAIS: Thank you.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much for your
25 testimony. And next we will hear from Earl

1 Beckwith, and following Mr. Beckwith, Monia
2 Joblin from Planned Parenthood and then Glenda
3 Wright and then Bill McGrath.

4 Mr. Beckwith, thank you for coming
5 tonight. The floor is yours.

6 MR. BECKWITH: Thank you. I just want to
7 know how much this lawsuit is going to cost the
8 taxpaying public for something that is
9 basically trying to thwart the will of the
10 taxpaying public initiated by the House.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: We will certainly provide
12 you any information we can at the conclusion of
13 the hearing. Thank you, Mr. Beckwith.

14 And I apologize, is it Monia, Monia?

15 MS. JOBLIN: It's Monia.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Monia. Is it Joblin?

17 MS. JOBLIN: It is Joblin.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Joblin, from Planned
19 Parenthood. Thank you for coming and sharing
20 your perspective tonight.

21 MS. JOBLIN: You're welcome. I am
22 speaking on behalf of Planned Parenthood of
23 Southwest and Central Florida, and it appears
24 to us that the Legislature's timeline for
25 drawing districts is extremely unfair to

1 Florida's voters. Florida's maps will be
2 approved later than almost every other state in
3 the nation, and our districts may not be
4 finalized until August, just two months before
5 the all-important 2012 elections. One can only
6 think that the current timeline is designed as
7 an incumbent protection plan.

8 And I agree with the previous speaker, why
9 is the Legislature spending our precious tax
10 dollars, over a million dollars so far, to
11 oppose Fair Districts passed during last year's
12 elections by 63 percent of the electorate? All
13 of this money is being spent unnecessarily,
14 while teachers are being fired, social services
15 are being cut, fewer women are having access to
16 health care. What the Legislature should be
17 working to uphold, the constitutional
18 provisions placed there by almost two-thirds of
19 the electorate last November, not spending
20 taxpayers' money to avoid the voters' will.
21 You are spending our money -- it would seem you
22 are spending our money to protect your own
23 seats.

24 Now, there is something very suspicious
25 and anti-democratic about the procedure that is

1 being followed, all of the do-it-yourself maps
2 notwithstanding. Look, it leads us to believe
3 that the real mapping is going on in back
4 rooms. We call on the Legislature to heed to
5 the voters. This issue is a test of our
6 democracy and the will of the people of
7 Florida. Thank you.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much.

9 Next we will hear from Glenda Wright, and,
10 folks, this is a public meeting, so you are
11 welcome to applaud, you are welcome to emote,
12 you do anything you want. Just bear in mind
13 that the time we take is time that then folks
14 won't be able to use to speak. No, no, no, no.
15 I said you are welcome -- you are welcome to do
16 it, but just understand that the laws of
17 physics do pertain and you can't do two things
18 at the same time.

19 Glenda Wright.

20 MS. WRIGHT: Hi, good evening. My name is
21 Glenda Wright.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Now, let's give Ms. Wright
23 our attention, okay?

24 MS. WRIGHT: Thank you. My name is Glenda
25 Wright, and I am speaking tonight as a private

1 citizen. I live in Manatee County and I work
2 in Sarasota County. I believe I bring a unique
3 perspective to the redistricting issue. I have
4 worked for two members of Congress who have
5 represented Sarasota and Manatee Counties.

6 During the redistricting process in 1990,
7 and again in 2000, I was very involved in the
8 debate regarding the lines of congressional
9 districts, and became very familiar with both
10 the process and the need for areas of similar
11 interest to remain in one congressional
12 district.

13 With that in mind, I would like to read
14 into the record just a couple of excerpts from
15 an article written by my -- one of my former
16 bosses, Congressman Dan Miller, who could not
17 be here this evening. This column appeared in
18 *The Sarasota Herald-Tribune* on June 3rd of this
19 year. Congressman Miller and I share the same
20 view, that Sarasota and Manatee County should
21 be combined into one congressional district.

22 Here are a few comments: "Manatee and
23 Sarasota Counties have formed the heart and
24 soul of our congressional district for 20
25 years. There is compelling evidence that they

1 should continue to do so for another decade.
2 The state constitutional amendments passed by
3 Florida voters last November were designed to
4 produce honest, non-gerrymandered districts
5 that serve the public's interest, and not the
6 interest of incumbents or a political party.

7 "It is less than 11 miles from downtown
8 Bradenton to downtown Sarasota. The fabric of
9 both communities is deeply interwoven.
10 Separating them will tear apart years of
11 economic and geographic collaboration. The
12 relationship between Manatee and Sarasota
13 Counties is far greater with the communities to
14 the south and the north -- is far greater than
15 with the communities to the south and north of
16 our area. Keeping Bradenton and Sarasota
17 together maximizes the influence of these two
18 key cities in the halls of Congress. Keeping
19 Manatee and Sarasota Counties together is the
20 right thing to do for the people who live in
21 the district and for the integrity of the
22 process. Logic dictates the two counties
23 should remain in the current district."

24 Thank you.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. And if you

1 have more -- Ms. Wright, if you had more that
2 you were not able to get in --

3 MS. WRIGHT: I turned it in.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay.

5 MS. WRIGHT: I turned it in.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: We would love to have it
7 in the record.

8 MS. WRIGHT: Thank you.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for your
10 testimony.

11 Next, Bill McGrath. And, Mr. McGrath, you
12 will be followed by --

13 MR. GRANT: That is just Grant, G-r-a-n-t.
14 That is a middle initial.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Oh, okay.

16 MR. GRANT: First I want to thank you all
17 for coming from all over the state here rather
18 than make us drive up to Tallahassee.

19 I started the political business some 50
20 years ago, and I can't say that we did, my
21 generation, a great job. We have given you one
22 enormous challenge. With our best big hearts,
23 we instituted all these entitlement programs.
24 The results, of course, have been catastrophic,
25 as we see by the number of people --

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Sir, if we could -- no,
2 no, no, no, no. If we could bring it back to
3 redistricting, okay?

4 MR. GRANT: Okay. It is -- well, it is
5 coming to redistricting.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, let's get there
7 soon. You now have a minute and 30 seconds
8 left.

9 MR. GRANT: That is enough time.

10 The next couple of years are going to be
11 very traumatic periods, a lot of challenges,
12 and it is important that as we undergo these
13 challenges, that all of our residents believe
14 that they are represented. And to that extent,
15 even though I am a little against the idea of
16 trying to manipulate districts, I think it is
17 important that minorities continue to be well
18 represented in our state. So I would recommend
19 that District 55, which under the files would
20 say, hey, let's change that, not be changed.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

22 Next, Patricia Benson -- I'm sorry?

23 MR. McGRATH: It is a little uncanny,
24 there must have been two Bill McGraths in the
25 hall, both of whom were recognized.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, Bill McGrath, the
2 second, you are recognized.

3 MR. McGRATH: Exactly, not a junior.

4 And my questions basically have already
5 been asked, but I think one point probably
6 needs to be reiterated. I think if these
7 hearings are to be considered seriously by the
8 public, why then at the same time has *The St.*
9 *Petersburg Times* and *The Miami Herald* within
10 the last week stated that the Legislature has
11 spent over \$2.5 million in last year and this
12 year alone challenging the Constitutional
13 Amendments 5 and 6? If the Committee doesn't
14 accept the *Times* and the *Herald* figure of \$2.5
15 million, I think you could at least accept the
16 figure that was given out by the House
17 spokeswoman, Katie Betta, I believe is her
18 name, who has already stated that this year
19 alone, one-third million dollars has gone to --
20 for the House challenge of Amendment No. 6.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

22 And now -- just a moment -- Patricia
23 Benson with the Democratic Women's Club of
24 Manatee, and following Ms. Benson we will have
25 Virginia Hitchcock, then Mildred Headdy with

1 the League of Women Voters and then Larry
2 Grossman with Manatee County Democrats.

3 Ms. Benson, thanks from coming, and we are
4 delighted to hear from you.

5 MS. BENSON: Thank you. Basically I just
6 want to reiterate what everyone else has said
7 in the past. I was a teacher for 33 years, and
8 when we went before the community with changes
9 within the school district, we came with the
10 maps, the parents saw it, they then raised
11 questions and we made changes, but we came with
12 the maps. And as far as I am concerned, this
13 is a waste of time and waste of money. Thank
14 you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

16 Next, Virginia Hitchcock. Ms. Hitchcock,
17 thank you for being with us tonight, and you
18 are recognized.

19 MS. HITCHCOCK: Good evening. Please
20 excuse my reading my statement.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Not at all. Go ahead.

22 MS. HITCHCOCK: My family and I moved to
23 Sarasota from Washington, DC, 12 years ago.

24 Thank you for taking the time and making
25 the effort to get public opinion on this very

1 important issue. The long haul of 26 hearings
2 is almost over for you.

3 Unlike many, I agree with your decision to
4 get public input first, as this is an important
5 first step in creating ownership of any process
6 of change. If you had come with proposed maps,
7 you would have had nothing but unhappy people
8 asking why you didn't get their opinion first.

9 I have been so impressed by the My
10 District Builder system. It was developed for
11 state officials and offered to the public for
12 input.

13 When you take all this input and opinions
14 and begin to create your proposed districts, I
15 hope you will follow certain principles. The
16 most basic is to follow the wording of the
17 amendments passed by 63 percent of our citizens
18 to create compact, contiguous districts of
19 approximately equal populations that follow
20 county and city boundaries, as well as Voting
21 Tabulation Districts and natural boundaries.

22 When I created my own U.S. congressional
23 map, I thought it would be easy. Just combine
24 counties of low populations or divide counties
25 of large populations to arrive at the target

1 numbers. I was wrong. First of all, it is not
2 that easy to create compact districts at the
3 county level when some of our counties are
4 definitely not compact. How did they come up
5 with Lake County anyway?

6 My basic building unit was the Voting
7 Tabulation District. Even though the
8 redistricting software allows changes on the
9 block level, I would hope that you would
10 likewise leave the VTDs untouched. The 2002
11 congressional district map did not respect the
12 VTDs. I think local Supervisors of Elections
13 must have the autonomy to create the districts
14 that serve their populations best.

15 For areas south of the heavily developed
16 I-4 corridor, I differentiated coastal urban
17 areas from rural central ones. In these areas,
18 the transitions between open land and dense
19 housing developments are very distinct, and I
20 think the inhabitants of each markedly has
21 different issues and concerns. I suspect that
22 the concerns of residents of rural areas have
23 been overshadowed by those of the more densely
24 populated coastal regions.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Hitchcock, we

1 really appreciate your submission of a map, but
2 if you could wrap it up in a sentence or two,
3 that would be respectful to those behind you.

4 MS. HITCHCOCK: Okay. Okay. I have not
5 considered racial or ethnic makeups in the
6 proposed districts. I think it's time for
7 Florida to have a system that is color blind
8 and see how it works.

9 Several friends have asked --

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you very
11 much. And we really appreciate you becoming
12 the 50th submitter of maps, and we will take
13 your maps deeply into consideration and thank
14 you very much. We will put them on the
15 Internet so that everyone can see them, and if
16 you have extended remarks, please supply them
17 for the record.

18 MS. HITCHCOCK: I will.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.

20 MS. HITCHCOCK: Thank you.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: And now we will hear from
22 Mildred Headdy with the League of Women Voters,
23 and following Ms. Headdy, we will have Larry
24 Grossman from the Manatee County Democrats,
25 then Bonnie Hepburn.

1 So, Ms. Headdy, thank you for coming, and
2 you are recognized.

3 MS. HEADDY: Okay. I am Millie Headdy,
4 and I was going to address timing this evening.
5 It has already been addressed, so for brevity,
6 I give the rest of my time. Thank you.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, and
8 please stay if you can so that you will have an
9 opportunity to hear some of the answers to the
10 timeline questions at the end of the hearing.

11 MS. HEADDY: Thank you.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, ma'am.

13 MR. GROSSMAN: My name is Larry Grossman,
14 I live on Longboat Key, and by profession, I am
15 a city planner, so I walk around with maps all
16 the time. I know it is damned if you do and
17 damned if you don't. If you had the maps
18 already prepared, people would say, "That is a
19 solution to what problem? We haven't had any
20 input." And so now you are getting the
21 opposite, "Where's the maps, where's the
22 solution?" And I think it is preferable for
23 you to get the input from people to say -- cite
24 problems they see, because that will help in
25 your decision-making.

1 Okay, so here goes. I was very surprised
2 -- I have only been here for a couple of years,
3 so I am very surprised that Nancy Detert
4 represents me, because I live on Longboat Key.
5 I visited my friend in Punta Gorda recently,
6 and now I can't believe that we are in the same
7 Florida Senate District 23.

8 A VOICE: 76,000 thousand people.

9 MR. GROSSMAN: Right. And then, lastly
10 perhaps, I think that -- so one of the things I
11 do want to look at, you know, District 21, 23,
12 and rearrange the geographics there.

13 The other point is that I think the
14 barrier islands should all be in one district,
15 and I think they are not. And I think they
16 have more to do with each other than -- because
17 they have issues of beach re-nourishment and
18 tourism and all kinds of other stuff, so they
19 should be together. And, lastly, you know, the
20 House District 55 looks really strange, because
21 it just hits a lot of different jurisdictions,
22 it should be more compact. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. That
24 is exactly the kind of input we need.

25 And now we will hear from Bonnie Hepburn,

1 and following Ms. Hepburn, Robert -- I think it
2 is Waechter, Waechter, with the Sarasota
3 Manatee Airport Authority, and then Sarah
4 Hernandez, and then if David Matthews would be
5 ready.

6 Ms. Hepburn, thank you for coming tonight,
7 and we are anxious to hear your testimony.

8 MS. HEPBURN: Thank you. I am a Sarasota
9 resident, and I heartily endorse the comments
10 made by the Supervisor of Elections and the
11 representatives of Planned Parenthood, League
12 of Women Voters and many of the previous
13 speakers.

14 I am particularly interested in a comment
15 made in the Tampa -- quoted in *The Tampa*
16 *Tribune* today by Speaker Designate Weatherford
17 from the meeting last night at Jefferson High
18 School in which Speaker Designate Weatherford
19 agreed, committed even, to get final maps out
20 in time for candidates to qualify to run. And
21 I am very, very adamant that that should work
22 for non-incumbents as well as incumbent
23 candidates, and that steps taken -- would be
24 taken that are necessary so there would indeed
25 be time to put together viable campaigns for

1 non-incumbents.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
3 ma'am, and the Speaker Designate will have a
4 chance to restate his position at the
5 conclusion of the meeting tonight if we have
6 time.

7 Let me -- let me recognize -- and I
8 apologize, would you pronounce the last name,
9 sir?

10 MR. WAECHTER: It is Waechter.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Waechter. Well, Senator
12 Detert is whispering in my ear, and I should
13 have listened to her.

14 MR. WAECHTER: You should always listen to
15 Senator Detert.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: I know. She chairs two
17 committees I am on, she controls my
18 legislation.

19 Mr. Waechter, thank you for being here,
20 and you are recognized, sir.

21 MR. WAECHTER: Thank you, Chair, and thank
22 you, all of you, for giving me the opportunity
23 to do this. I am going to read this in the
24 interest of brevity.

25 My name is Bob Waechter, I serve as

1 Chairman of the Sarasota Manatee Airport
2 Authority and I am speaking to you in that
3 capacity this evening. I am addressing only
4 the congressional districts in this appeal from
5 the airport authority.

6 The airport authority is a special
7 district straddling the county line dividing
8 Sarasota and Manatee Counties. We have a good
9 relationship with our host communities and
10 enjoy strong support in both of them. This
11 fact is evidenced by the recent pledge of both
12 counties to contribute 200,000 in support of
13 our attempt to secure a small community air
14 service grant from the Federal Aviation
15 Authority to solicit new air service for the
16 airport, thereby benefiting the business and
17 residential communities of both our counties.

18 When dealing with federal agencies that
19 oversee airport authorities, it is imperative
20 that we have a strong voice in Congress
21 representing our interest. We have that strong
22 voice now in the person of Congressman Vern
23 Buchanan. We are concerned that any proposed
24 redistricting that would divide our two
25 counties between congressional districts would

1 adversely impact our representation at the
2 federal level. Bifurcation of the district
3 along the county line would actually divide the
4 airport into two separate congressional
5 districts, as the county line goes through the
6 center of the airport property. This could
7 lead to having two congressional
8 representatives taking opposite positions on an
9 aviation matter, especially if one district has
10 another competing airport in the district, a
11 likelihood.

12 We strongly recommend that any
13 redistricting map retain both Sarasota and
14 Manatee Counties in one congressional district.
15 At the August board meeting of the airport
16 authority, we voted to authorize me to express
17 to you our belief that our region will be
18 better served if Manatee and Sarasota Counties
19 continue to be within a single district with a
20 unified voice as they are now. I thank you for
21 this opportunity.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

23 Next, Sarah Hernandez. Ms. Hernandez, are
24 you here? Thank you so much for being here,
25 and the floor is yours. And following

1 Ms. Hernandez, David Matthews, if you will be
2 ready, and then Manuel, and I think it is
3 Chepote, UnidosNow, and then Peggy Simone.

4 Ms. Hernandez, thanks for being here.

5 MS. HERNANDEZ: Thank you for the
6 opportunity to speak to you here today.

7 I want to speak to three issues. The
8 first one, which has been mentioned before, has
9 to do with the current lawsuit. My comment in
10 relation to that, it seems to me that that
11 lawsuit should be left to be done by a private
12 citizen who might not have agreed with the
13 citizens' vote. It is the responsibility for
14 legislators to support and defend that law as
15 the voters voted for it.

16 The second point you have heard enough
17 about has to do with the timing for these so
18 that we have enough time for candidates to come
19 forward and run their campaigns.

20 The third item had to do with District 55.
21 I live here in Sarasota, and I notice that the
22 way in which my own neighborhood is affected,
23 it is affected by my neighbors east of where I
24 am on the west side of 41. It seems to me that
25 having that representation for aspects that

1 affect the development in District 55, which is
2 my next-door neighbor, that also impact me. So
3 having us be together makes a lot more sense,
4 because we will be supporting each other.

5 Thank you.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thanks, that is very
7 helpful testimony, very useful.

8 David Matthews is next, and following
9 Mr. Matthews, Manuel, and I believe it is
10 Chepote, and then Peggy Simone, former
11 Representative Simone, and then Rita Ferrandino
12 with Arc Capital Development.

13 Mr. Matthews, we are looking forward to
14 your testimony, and you are recognized.

15 MR. D. MATTHEWS: Good evening. Welcome
16 to the Manatee/Sarasota area. My name is David
17 Matthews. I was born in Sarasota and grew up
18 here. I currently live in Manatee County in
19 the City of Bradenton. Thank you for coming
20 today and listening to our concerns and our
21 comments.

22 One of the things that you have heard a
23 lot lately is the need to follow Amendment 5
24 and 6 by drawing compact, contiguous districts
25 that don't do things like split up cities and

1 counties. That doesn't sound bad, but I was
2 curious and did some research on what some city
3 boundaries actually look like. As you can see
4 here -- as you can see here, the -- this is a
5 map of Bradenton where I live. If you will
6 notice, Bradenton is not compact, and it is
7 actually not even entirely contiguous. If
8 you -- if you look at -- there is a ward over
9 here and then there's separation with county
10 and then a ward here, so you don't have compact
11 and you don't have contiguous, which begs the
12 question, how can you do things like make
13 compact districts that follow city lines when
14 you have to follow boundaries like Bradenton's
15 that don't qualify as compact or contiguous? I
16 am sure there are some cities where there is a
17 -- where that is the case, but there are many
18 cities like Bradenton in our state that have
19 the same jagged boundaries that people dislike
20 about legislative districts. If you follow
21 city boundaries, I fear the districts will not
22 meet the compactness requirements of Amendment
23 5 and 6, and that residents may actually be
24 just as upset at what the districts look like
25 as they are now.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
2 We -- you have used your time, and if you could
3 leave any additional comments you have, we
4 would be happy to have the Committee consider
5 them. Thank you very much.

6 MR. D. MATTHEWS: Okay.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: And our next -- thank you.
8 Our next speaker is Manuel -- and I apologize,
9 is it Chepote?

10 MR. CHEPOTE: You did it right, thank you.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir, for being
12 here. And you represent UnidosNow?

13 MR. CHEPOTE: UnidosNow.org.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Please go
15 forward. You are recognized.

16 MR. CHEPOTE: Thank you very much.

17 I would ask you to respect the voters'
18 wish with 63 percent of them voting on
19 Amendment 5 and 6. Please do not waste our
20 hard-earned tax dollars.

21 Number two, do it timely so we can have
22 those maps ahead of time, and not to waste time
23 and give the chance to everyone.

24 And the third item, please consider the
25 tremendous growth of the Hispanic population in

1 the counties of Sarasota and Manatee.

2 Thank you.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

4 And now the Honorable Peggy Simone, former
5 State Representative. Representative, thank
6 you for being with us, and thanks for your
7 service to the State of Florida. You are
8 recognized.

9 MS. SIMONE: Thank you, Senator. I want
10 to compliment all of you for serving on this
11 committee. It is very difficult. It is almost
12 impossible to do a fair job with the two
13 amendments that passed on the ballot. But
14 those I did not support, and I will tell you
15 why. I sat on this redistricting committee in
16 '90 to '92, and we got a lot of minority
17 districts, and you are going to lose minority
18 districts if you do compact districts.

19 I will give you my comments here after --
20 after I list them. I did not confer with
21 anybody about the congressional district
22 Manatee and Sarasota County, but I have -- that
23 is my number two hope, that the congressional
24 seat that we have in Manatee County be combined
25 with Sarasota County as it is now.

1 Also, my number one priority is two
2 Florida House seats in Manatee County, plus the
3 remainder of the population needed based on the
4 districts, what you have, 156,000, Manatee
5 County has 322,000 people, so you need about
6 10,000 more, and you could get those from
7 eastern Sarasota County, which would take in
8 the community of interest of Lakewood Ranch.
9 Or if you don't do that, put Hardee County back
10 with Manatee again, that's about 10,000 people.

11 The third priority -- my third priority is
12 that a Florida Senate seat be based in Manatee
13 County and that a Florida Senate seat be based
14 in Sarasota County.

15 And I hope -- wish you the best of luck.
16 I'm sorry that you are going to lose a lot of
17 minority districts if you go to compact
18 districts, because we made sure in 1992 that we
19 got a lot of minority districts, and I am just
20 going to be sorry to see them go. Thank you
21 very much.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Representative.

23 Next, Rita Ferrandino with Arc Capital
24 Development, and then Bruce Brunette, please,
25 then Michael, I believe it is Verbil, and then

1 Richard Jackson.

2 Thank you so much for being here tonight,
3 and we are looking forward to anything you
4 might have to share with us.

5 MS. FERRANDINO: Well, hello there. I am
6 Rita Ferrandino. I am almost never brief, but
7 I will make an exception this time --

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

9 MS. FERRANDINO: -- because many of my
10 fellow Sarasotans have spoken up, and I just
11 want to urge the committee to take the vote --
12 the voters were really clear. They want fair
13 districts. They want to be connected to their
14 government. And I would like to just reiterate
15 how important that is for us here in Sarasota
16 to feel that the will of the voters are being
17 heard. And as you move forward, we would like
18 you to move quickly so that we are able to have
19 everyone understand the districts so that we
20 are able to have fair elections. So thank you
21 very much.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and you get
23 extra points for brevity.

24 Bruce Brunette, and then after Bruce,
25 Michael, I think it is Verbil -- if I've

1 mispronounced it, please accept my apologies --
2 then Richard Jackson and then Jack Wetherson
3 with the Venice Duplicate Bridge Club. I am
4 sure there is a relationship to redistricting.

5 Bruce, you are recognized, and thanks for
6 being here.

7 MR. BRUNETTE: Thank you. I am a Venice
8 resident, a business owner, a member of the
9 Chamber. Thirty million dollars, Legislature
10 has set aside \$30 million to fight the will of
11 the people. You have already spent one to two
12 million dollars in a year when we really don't
13 -- can't afford it and we've got lots of cuts.
14 Why are you doing that? I don't get it. This
15 is supposed to be a government by the people
16 and for the people, not by the politicians and
17 for the politicians.

18 In 2008, you fought the Supreme Court
19 approval of a law. In 2010, you tried to go to
20 court again and get it knocked out. That
21 didn't work. In 2007, since you couldn't do
22 that, you came up with this fake Amendment 7 to
23 try to get around it. That got thrown out.
24 When are you ever going to learn? This is what
25 the people want. Drop the lawsuit and stop

1 fighting the will of the people.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Bruce -- Bruce, I
3 hope you can stay for the end of the hearing.
4 Sometimes things get put in the bloodstream and
5 we begin to think that they are true because
6 they get repeated a lot. The Speaker
7 Designate, I think, will have some good
8 information for you that might to some extent
9 help reassure you.

10 Next is -- how do we pronounce your last
11 name, sir?

12 MR. VERBIL: Verbil.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Verbil.

14 MR. VERBIL: Michael Verbil, I am a
15 resident of north Sarasota County.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much for
17 being here. You are recognized.

18 MR. VERBIL: Thank you all for your
19 service. Though we all may come from different
20 political parties, I know that I don't have to
21 remind anybody that you are all representing
22 everyone in your constituency.

23 That said, Sarasota and Manatee Counties
24 are unique in their concentrations of arts
25 organizations, institutes of higher learning,

1 such as New College here. Under the mandate of
2 the citizens to make the districts compact, I
3 would ask that this special area not be divided
4 in any separate districts. I understand that
5 this there is a possibility that having two
6 Representatives representing one area may make
7 it easier to get something done in Congress and
8 legislation, but I think that this is a special
9 area that should stay together.

10 That said, I have been looking at District
11 Builder. I started working on it. I have
12 learned a little bit about it. Then I found
13 last night that there was a 13-year-old who did
14 it, and I said, "Well, who am I if a
15 13-year-old can do it?" But you as our elected
16 Representatives are being paid to do this work.
17 You are the experts. I have to ask why you are
18 not doing it. I think it was a mistake. I
19 think this process of not having the maps first
20 is flawed. Rather than discussing your maps
21 and getting the work done before the legal vote
22 is allowed, I think that we are all being asked
23 to work in a vacuum. And we are not experts.
24 We are really working in the dark here.

25 I understand the legislation can't be

1 voted on before 2012, but there is no time to
2 prepare for the 2012 elections if we wait until
3 March 2012 for a final vote.

4 Here is what I want to see happen: You as
5 a body publish your ideas for maps now. We can
6 debate them and refine the maps before and
7 during the fall session, with two-way input
8 from the media using interactive media, all in
9 the sunshine. Then when voting is allowed, the
10 lion's share of the work will be done, and then
11 we can get the vote done at the earliest
12 possible legal date rather than wait until the
13 last possible date.

14 One question I would like to ask, I would
15 like to hear answered tonight by the panel:
16 After all of the hearings you have conducted,
17 what concrete changes, improvements to your
18 ideas, have you each made based on the public
19 input you have heard?

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and we will
21 certainly give folks a chance to respond to
22 that.

23 MR. VERBIL: Can I have one more minute?
24 Can I have one more second?

25 SENATOR GAETZ: If you can wrap it up just

1 in --

2 MR. VERBIL: It will be very quick. It is
3 only a comment.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Sure.

5 MR. VERBIL: We have little enough time
6 before you. I am only speaking to a minority
7 of the people on the panel. If you didn't come
8 here to hear us and would rather spend time on
9 your cell phone or doing e-mail, please don't
10 insult us by ignoring our presence. Thank you.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

12 Next, Richard Jackson. Mr. Jackson?
13 Richard Jackson? Richard Jackson, then Jack
14 Wetherson from the bridge club, and then
15 Rochelle Wetherson from Temple Beth-El and then
16 Fred Falkner.

17 Mr. Jackson, thank you for being here,
18 and, please, the floor is yours.

19 MR. JACKSON: Thank you. Most of my
20 comments have already been made, but if you
21 will take Manatee County and draw a line from
22 north to south, you will wind up with two
23 Representatives. Within a couple thousand
24 people, you will be right there. If you did
25 the same thing with Sarasota County, went out

1 to the eastern edge, lopped off 50,000 people,
2 you could have two more House members. So you
3 could have four House members, it would be
4 easily done.

5 If you wanted to make a Senate district
6 out of that, you could keep the two -- let me
7 get my directions right now. You could get the
8 two -- you could get the two western counties
9 -- I'm sorry, the western Representatives in
10 those districts and take one of the other two.
11 You could also take Manatee and Sarasota County
12 and make one U.S. House district. And that
13 is -- the numbers add up. It is compact, it is
14 contiguous, it is consistent economically,
15 socially and culturally.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much.

17 MR. JACKSON: You're welcome.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Very helpful.

19 Jack Wetherson? Jack? Jack went home and
20 had to play bridge.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: He is waving.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: He is waving. Are you,
23 are you ceding your time, sir?

24 MR. WETHERSON: I am.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, thank you very much.

1 I was really looking forward to your testimony.

2 Rochelle Wetherson. You are not going to
3 talk either? Well, you could correct Jack if
4 you spoke.

5 Fred Falkner is next, and then Casey
6 Welch, and following Casey Welch, Tom Walker
7 and then Tina Steele. And I'm sorry we didn't
8 give you as much time to work your way down,
9 but Fred Falkner, then Casey Welch, then Tom
10 Walker and then Tina Steele.

11 Fred Falkner? Fred? Going once, twice,
12 three times.

13 Casey Welch? Mr. Welch, thank you for
14 coming, and we are delighted to have your
15 testimony this evening.

16 MR. WELCH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
17 Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you,
18 Representatives and Senators. Welcome to
19 Sylvan, Sarasota County. Appreciate you all
20 being here tonight.

21 I am speaking as a private citizen here
22 tonight. I am a seventh-generation Floridian,
23 and my three-week-old son, born in Sarasota
24 Memorial Hospital, is the eighth. So bear with
25 me, I have been on diaper duty, so I will be

1 brief.

2 I just want to talk for a few minutes --
3 excuse me, two minutes about the communities of
4 interest in this area. As growing up in the
5 rural parts of this -- of Sarasota and Manatee
6 County, and now living in the urban section of
7 Lakewood Ranch, there are distinct communities
8 of interest in this area. The areas of Myakka
9 Head, Old Myakka and Myakka City, while they
10 are pronounced and spelled differently, they
11 are communities of interest, they are rural,
12 they have a lot more in common with south Polk
13 County, eastern Hillsborough County, Hardee
14 County and DeSoto Counties than with the urban
15 areas. And talk about the urban cluster of
16 Lakewood Ranch, it is divided by Manatee and
17 Sarasota County, but it is a community of
18 interest. That is where I live. We should be
19 represented by one State Representative, one
20 State Senator and one U.S. Congressman. And
21 that is all I have to say.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much. And
23 good luck with the two o'clock feeding.

24 Next we will hear from Tom Walker, if
25 Mr. Walker is here.

1 MR. WALKER: Yes.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Steele, don't go
3 away, because we want to hear from you, too.

4 Mr. Walker, you are recognized, and thanks
5 for being here tonight.

6 MR. WALKER: My concerns have already been
7 expressed by the previous speakers, so I won't
8 say much, except to ask you to respect the
9 intent of the legislation and do the right
10 thing as you know it in your own hearts. Thank
11 you very much.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, sir.

13 And now, Ms. Steele, we are glad you are
14 here, but behind you, if Charlie Clifton will
15 be ready, and then Diane Desenberg and then
16 Henry Jorgensen.

17 Ms. Steele, you are recognized.

18 MS. STEELE: Thank you very much. Good
19 evening. Thank you for all being here. You
20 are hearing the will of the people tonight by
21 the cheers, by the jeers and by the applause.
22 Amendments 5 and 6 were passed by us. We are
23 the people, and you need to listen to us.

24 There is another reason I am here tonight,
25 and that is because I am always a poll watcher

1 at the elections, and I also represent the
2 disabled. You need to get those districts
3 drawn, and drawn now. We have a hard enough
4 time with people showing up at the polls who
5 have not got the right district, they don't
6 have the right polling station. There is going
7 to be confusion in spades if you don't get your
8 job done and get it done now. Thank you.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and thanks for
10 your work as a poll worker.

11 Charlie Clifton? Charlie Clifton?

12 MR. CLIFTON: Right here.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Clifton, thank you for
14 coming. We are delighted you are here, and you
15 are recognized.

16 MR. CLIFTON: Thank you for the
17 opportunity. I will be brief since a lot of my
18 ideas have already been stated, but one thing I
19 would like to reiterate is the -- I think a lot
20 of people here feel that the \$30 million that
21 you are using to defend -- challenging the will
22 of the electorate should be used for a better
23 purpose, like maybe it could be given to
24 education instead. Thank you.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. And, Charlie,

1 I appreciate your time so far, but if you can
2 give us a little bit more time and stay to the
3 end of the hearing, I think you may get some
4 facts about that that either would reassure you
5 or at least give you a better sense of what the
6 real numbers are.

7 Next we have Diane -- is it Desenberg?

8 MS. DESENBERG: Desenberg.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: And following Diane, Henry
10 Jorgensen and then Betsy Roberts and then Ruth
11 Brandwein with the National Association of
12 Social Workers.

13 Diane, thank you for coming, and we are
14 looking forward to your testimony.

15 MS. DESENBERG: Thank you. Normally I am
16 a big fan of getting public feedback before
17 making government decisions. In this case, I
18 think that your request for lots of feedback
19 before drawing maps is entirely disingenuous.
20 You already have public feedback. We spent a
21 lot of time getting a citizen amendment on
22 there for Amendments 5 and 6. You know what
23 the public thinks. We want compact,
24 contiguous, respecting political boundaries and
25 geographic boundaries. So draw up your maps.

1 We are looking forward to making comments on
2 that.

3 That said, the only thing we really have
4 that we can make comments on is the timing, and
5 I think it is really important to get this done
6 more quickly than more slowly. Getting it all
7 voted on and finalized by the beginning of the
8 session in January I think should be your
9 paramount concern, and I think in order to do
10 that, you guys have got to get your maps drawn
11 now. There is no reason not to get anything
12 out by the end of September, I would say, get
13 it through your committees in a few weeks, and
14 then you need to spend time getting feedback
15 from the public.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much.

17 Henry Jorgensen. Henry, thank you from
18 coming by tonight and giving us some time. You
19 could have been somewhere else, but you came
20 here, and thank you for that.

21 MR. JORGENSEN: Thank you. I am from
22 Venice. We don't see any maps here. That
23 means the dollar has been spent to divert this,
24 and more millions planned on it. Doesn't give
25 me a very confidence in this body. It is

1 really dirty politics, period. I am one vote,
2 and I don't want to feel like a pawn in a
3 shuffle board game of dirty politics. Fair
4 districting, that is a no-brainer if you take
5 the dirty politics out. You don't understand
6 what fair is, go back to kindergarten.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. And next is
8 Betsy Roberts, and following Ms. Roberts, Ruth
9 Brandwein from the National Association of
10 Social Workers, then Marilyn Harwell, and then
11 if Rosalie Shaffer will be on deck, and she as
12 well is with the League of Women Voters.

13 Ms. Roberts, thanks from coming, and we
14 look forward to your testimony.

15 MS. ROBERTS: Okay. Thank you for being
16 here.

17 This should be a non-partisan issue. I am
18 not sure it is. And someone mentioned earlier
19 that there are a lot of -- there would be a lot
20 of unhappy people if we saw the maps ahead of
21 time. Well, I am hearing a lot of unhappy
22 people because we did not see the maps ahead of
23 time, and we have no idea what you are thinking
24 and what is ahead.

25 And we just have to stop gerrymandering.

1 This map on the front shows what the
2 gerrymandering has done. So let's get good,
3 compact districts and stop this silly lawsuit.
4 Thank you.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

6 Is -- Ruth, are you here?

7 MS. BRANDWEIN: Yes.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much for
9 being here and for representing NASW.

10 MS. BRANDWEIN: Thank you. My name is
11 Ruth Brandwein. Thank you for the opportunity.
12 I am the new Legislative Chair for Sarasota
13 NASW. I will be seeing a lot of you,
14 Mr. Holder, and some of the rest of you.

15 I moved here a year ago as a resident, and
16 the first thing I did was I signed up,
17 registered to vote, and have been involved, and
18 I am pretty surprised at some of the politics
19 going on here, but -- and I come from New York,
20 which is -- you know.

21 But two-thirds, 63 percent of the voters
22 voted for fair, contiguous and equitable
23 districts. I would hope that that would be
24 respected, and also that it would not -- as the
25 amendment says, that without regard for

1 partisan politics or for incumbency. And I
2 know you all are incumbents, and I know that
3 your first job is to get reelected, but that is
4 not what this is about. This is about fairness
5 and representing the people.

6 I will be very brief. A lot of good
7 comments have been made, and I support what the
8 first League of Women Voters speaker suggested
9 in terms of timing. You have had these
10 hearings, we can't undo that, but I would hope
11 that you would go back and have your staff do
12 the work. It is not up to us to do it. You
13 are getting paid and your staff are getting
14 paid to do the work. Present something in
15 October so that we can have another opportunity
16 to give you feedback before a final vote, and
17 it does need to be sooner than March. Thank
18 you.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ruth.

20 Is Marilyn -- are you Marilyn Harwell?

21 MS. HARWELL: I was when I walked in, yes.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, good. Well, I can
23 guarantee you this --

24 MS. HARWELL: Yes.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: -- you will be Marilyn

1 Harwell when you walk out.

2 MS. HARWELL: Well, I sure hope so.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: And behind you -- behind
4 you will be Rosalie Shaffer with the League of
5 Women Voters, and then Frances Rice and then
6 Lois Congdon with the Manatee Democratic Party.
7 Ms. Harwell.

8 MS. HARWELL: Okay. If these hearings are
9 for the purpose of learning how to redraw
10 districts, it begs the question why you don't
11 all just go in a corner, read Amendments 5 and
12 6 and -- you know, those are the amendments
13 that were approved by the Florida Supreme
14 Court, the Justice Department, of course
15 overwhelmingly by the voters of Florida. Those
16 amendments give you the framework within which
17 to satisfy the voters. Simply stated, they
18 require you to draw lines based on factors
19 unrelated to party and incumbency within
20 contiguous territory. Who but people in
21 Tallahassee would know how to do that best?
22 Certainly not me or the other people sitting
23 here.

24 What these hearings confirm is that
25 Tallahassee does not want to comply with these

1 amendments. Tallahassee -- Tallahassee
2 politicians do not want to give up the power to
3 draw districts that benefit themselves. You
4 proved this by spending our tax money to fight
5 the new redistricting standards in court, and
6 now while you have cut billions from the
7 education and social services 2012 budgets, you
8 have set aside tens of millions of dollars to
9 mount still more legal assaults on these
10 amendments.

11 The perception is you only want to draw
12 districts that will preserve your own seats.
13 It is a perception which counts more than
14 reality. You know that if Amendment 5 and 6
15 rules are followed, the districts that have
16 guaranteed the reelection of just about every
17 incumbent during the last ten years will no
18 longer be safe.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Harwell, you --

20 MS. HARWELL: I will finish.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Excuse me, you are making
22 some great points, but I would like to ask you
23 to summarize, because we have a whole bunch of
24 people.

25 MS. HARWELL: I have one sentence, and if

1 you hadn't interrupted, I'd be sitting down.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Go for it. Go for it. Go
3 on.

4 MS. HARWELL: These hearings have no
5 purpose other than to derail the process. You
6 should not be wasting our time and money this
7 way. Just imagine if you had spent all these
8 hours --

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Now, that is -- you're on
10 to your third sentence.

11 MS. HARWELL: -- talking about job
12 creation, look what you could have done.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Harwell.

14 Next is Rosalie Shaffer with the League of
15 Women Voters. Ms. Shaffer. Thank you very
16 much for being here tonight, and your time is
17 running.

18 MS. SHAFFER: Hi, I am Rosalie Shaffer,
19 and I am representing the League of Women
20 Voters of Manatee County.

21 First I want to tell you what we don't
22 want. What we don't want is what we have in
23 Manatee County, which are two U.S.
24 Representatives, three State Senators and four
25 State Representatives. They are in some very

1 strangely shaped districts, and many of the
2 office holders only have slight slivers of
3 Manatee County, so we don't really see them too
4 often in our county. So we are looking forward
5 to districts drawn according to the new Fair
6 Districts rules.

7 Gerrymandering is what happens when the
8 office holders choose their voters rather than
9 the other way around. Hopefully that is an end
10 to that.

11 And along with so many who have told you
12 this tonight, we are asking you to drop your
13 lawsuits against Fair Districts. This is not a
14 good use of state taxpayers' money. And to
15 make it even more ludicrous, in one of the
16 suits, the Secretary of the State is a
17 Defendant, and the Legislature is -- has joined
18 the suit against. So the taxpayers are
19 defending both sides of the suit, to sue and
20 defend. The Legislature should stop trying to
21 get out of following the new Fair Districts
22 rules, and apply them as the voters intended.
23 Thank you very much.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

25 Frances Rice. Next we will hear from

1 Frances Rice, and then Lois Congdon with the
2 Manatee Democratic Party and then Carole Malone
3 and then Roy Sorenson with IATSE Local 412.

4 Ms. Rice, thank you for being here, and
5 you are recognized.

6 MS. RICE: Good evening. Thank you so
7 much for giving me a chance to speak. I am a
8 retired Army lieutenant colonel and I am a
9 lawyer, and I hope -- I hope no one here wants
10 to adhere to Shakespeare's admonition to kill
11 all the lawyers.

12 I have lived in Sarasota County for 11
13 years. People have been expressing concern
14 about the cost of lawsuits, and being a lawyer,
15 I am also concerned about lawsuits, and they
16 have a right to be concerned about how our tax
17 dollars are being spent, but I think they may
18 be missing the point. The best way to prevent
19 lawsuits is to have an airtight contrast where
20 everything is defined and nothing is ambiguous,
21 because where confusion exists, lawsuits
22 follow, meaning judges get to decide who is
23 right and who is wrong, and what one thing
24 means or doesn't mean. I am afraid that we are
25 in for a lot of lawsuits, because Amendments 5

1 and 6 are filled with vagueness and lawsuit
2 justifications waiting to be decided in court.
3 Key words such as "compact" and "existing
4 political boundaries" are undefined, and then
5 other words, like "predictable" and "feasible"
6 are used, which are too subjective. Five and 6
7 also say an incumbent cannot be disfavored,
8 but --

9 SENATOR GAETZ: And I'd ask you to bring
10 it in for a landing.

11 MS. RICE: Yes, indeed, sir.

12 In a situation where two incumbents are
13 forced to run against one another, could they
14 sue for being disfavored? And I am going to
15 wrap it right up now. Amendments 5 and 6 are
16 subject to interpretation that I can't imagine
17 a scenario that is not ripe with lawsuits. As
18 a taxpayer, that concerns me. I would rather
19 see my money being used for something more
20 important than paying for a bunch of lawyers,
21 myself included. So, legislators, please be
22 careful in drafting these districts so we don't
23 waste the money on tons of lawsuits.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you.

25 And thank you for your service to our country.

1 Next, Lois Congdon with the Manatee County
2 Democratic Party. Ms. Congdon, thank you.

3 MS. CONGDON: I thank you for listening to
4 us --

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Of course.

6 MS. CONGDON: -- before you draw the maps
7 so that we can give our ideas. I especially am
8 interested in making sure that the districts
9 are compact, and as much as possible, follow
10 political lines. I am the precinct captain in
11 precinct 46, which includes both the House
12 District 55 and House District 68, and that can
13 lead to a lot of confusion, even for a
14 hard-working, marvelous Supervisor of
15 Elections.

16 In 2008 -- you see, part of Bradenton
17 Tropical Palms is in one district, and part is
18 in the other. And in 2008, they sent us all
19 the primary ballots for absentee ballots for
20 District 55. So I had to call Mr. Sweat and
21 say, "I am not in District 55," and that dear
22 man came by on a Saturday afternoon and
23 exchanged something like 27 ballots for the
24 right ones.

25 Now, that shouldn't be. That District 55

1 is compact up in St. Petersburg and the
2 northern part of Manatee County, and if you can
3 find some other areas right next to it that can
4 preserve the minority-majority, that would be
5 great. But that tail comes that all the way
6 down Route 41 the whole length of Manatee
7 County way over into Newtown in Sarasota County
8 is not compact. You need -- the part that
9 adjoins 68 should go to 68, and the part that
10 adjoins 69, one of you represents, should go to
11 69. The people from Newtown shouldn't have to
12 go all the way to St. Pete to see their
13 Representative. So I hope that you will keep
14 them compact.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, ma'am.
16 That is very helpful testimony and right to the
17 point.

18 Next we will hear from Carole Malone and
19 then Roy Sorenson and then Charles Smith with
20 the Southern Christian Leadership Conference
21 and then Joe Gruters.

22 Ms. Malone, thank you.

23 MS. MALONE: Good evening, and I am so
24 happy I am here.

25 I believe that if you say something often

1 enough, people will start to really believe
2 you, and I think you have heard a lot tonight
3 about the \$30 million, and I would like to
4 repeat that. We don't need to spend that, we
5 taxpayers don't need to spend that. And what
6 really, really concerned me was on the heels of
7 all those devastating cuts that Florida just
8 went through, then we read that you have set
9 aside \$30 million for these lawsuits, and I am
10 appalled.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: And thank you. And,
12 Ms. Malone, Ms. Malone -- Ms. Malone, please --
13 no, that is okay. Please hang in there with
14 us, because I -- you are right, sometimes when
15 things get repeated often enough, people
16 actually think they are facts. So we are
17 going to -- we are going to give an opportunity
18 for some information to be provided tonight so
19 that you can decide for yourself -- sh, sh, sh.
20 We are going to provide an opportunity tonight
21 for Democrats and Republicans on the Committee
22 to respond to that specific point. So thank
23 you for making it and putting it at the top of
24 our list.

25 Next we will hear from Roy Sorenson, and

1 following Mr. Sorenson, Charles Smith and Joe
2 Gruters, and then if Kelly Kirschner would be
3 on deck.

4 You are recognized, sir, thank you for
5 coming.

6 MR. SORENSON: Thank you, Senator and
7 legislators. Welcome to Sarasota. We got
8 democracy here, and we are very proud of it,
9 and we are very glad you came down to be part
10 of this process.

11 I do have the same concerns that you have
12 heard all night long about you not producing
13 maps that we can compare the maps that we had,
14 or the time frame, which is going to put many
15 of the new candidates behind -- in a
16 disadvantaged situation.

17 I have lived here for 30 years in Sarasota
18 and Manatee. If you travel from south Sarasota
19 County up to northern Manatee, you are still
20 within more or less the same community of
21 interest, but you are going through three
22 congressional districts, you are going through
23 several Senate districts and four different
24 House districts. That is not right.

25 I would suggest that you take

1 Congressional District 13 and not use DeSoto
2 and Hardee County as part of it, that you make
3 that district -- that congressional district
4 both Sarasota and Manatee County, that the
5 district north of here that Representative
6 Castor represents, that that not be part of
7 our -- that it become part of that
8 congressional district and not be part of the
9 one north of us. If you look at the body of
10 water that we have north of us, there are so
11 many different like jigsaw puzzles around it.
12 I would suggest you use that body of water to
13 divide the districts fairly.

14 And back when you talk about the money
15 that you've put away for fighting this,
16 whatever amount of money it is, it is not
17 right. It should be used for you to hire
18 consultants and demographers and cartographers
19 to get this process in the fair way it should
20 be. Thank you.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you very
22 much, sir.

23 Next, Charles Smith with the Southern
24 Christian Leadership Conference, then Joe
25 Gruters, then Kelly --

1 MR. SMITH: Charles --

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Just a second, please.

3 Then Kelly Kirschner, if you would be on deck,
4 and then Charles Dudley.

5 Mr. Smith, you are recognized, and we are
6 delighted you are here.

7 MR. SMITH: I am Charles Smith, the
8 President of Manatee/Sarasota County Chapter of
9 the SCLC and national board member of SCLC and
10 national director of chapters.

11 I am here to support Amendments 5 and 6.
12 For Manatee and Sarasota County, it is simple.
13 The congressional seats should remain in
14 Manatee and Sarasota County. Your State
15 Representative and Senate seats can easily be
16 divided in Manatee and Sarasota County. A
17 combined population of about 700,000. You say
18 the seats need to be estimated at 150,000. You
19 can draw four State Representative seats in
20 Manatee and Sarasota County. So for the
21 residents here, it is simple. And with the
22 population of just Latinos and
23 African-American, not counting other, you've
24 got an estimated 100,000 population from that
25 standpoint. They be combined to one different

1 area, you would know your Representative. Make
2 no mistake, we have fine Representatives in
3 Mr. Darryl Rouson and Sister Joyner. They have
4 represented us well. But when -- 5 and 6 was
5 kind of a shock for me, support it, but our
6 organization has took a firm position that we
7 are going to support 5 and 6. That means if we
8 have to go to court, we are going to court. We
9 are prepared to do that also through civil
10 disobedience anyway. We need to be more
11 concerned about not who is a Republican and
12 Democrat, we need to be concerned about people.
13 And so I encourage you to take issue to
14 providing cited representation and keep it
15 compact and 5 and 6, and I thank you very much.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

17 Joe Gruters? Mr. Gruters? Did he give up
18 on us?

19 Okay. Then Kelly Kirschner, and Kelly
20 will be followed by Charles Dudley and then
21 Jackie Fountaine, or Fountaine, and then
22 Mitchell, I think it is Zavon or Zavon.

23 Kelly, thank you so much for being here,
24 and we are delighted to have your testimony
25 tonight.

1 MR. KIRSCHNER: Thank you, Senator Gaetz,
2 Joe Gruters ceded his time to me. We are
3 former classmates at Cardinal Mooney High
4 School, and --

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, Joe can cede his
6 time, but you've got two minutes.

7 MR. KIRSCHNER: All right. I see you are
8 listening to Senator Detert again.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Yeah. It is a good thing
10 I do from time to time.

11 MR. KIRSCHNER: I appreciate the
12 opportunity to speak. Coming in here with the
13 folks in the parking lot, it actually looked
14 like a college football game, so I think at
15 least it is stimulating conversation that
16 everybody is obviously excited about.

17 I am here representing a relatively new
18 nonprofit organization, it is called UnidosNow,
19 that is specifically working in the southwest
20 Florida area mobilizing and engaging our
21 Hispanic population to start participating at
22 much greater levels in our local democracy. I
23 just stepped down as Mayor of the City of
24 Sarasota in May. Twenty percent of Sarasota's
25 population now is Hispanic, yet only two

1 percent of our registered voters are Hispanic.
2 If you contrast that with the Pew Hispanic
3 Center that says conservatively 70 percent of
4 our Hispanic residents are legal citizens, you
5 can appreciate that we have a fundamental
6 problem right now with franchising this
7 population and actually participating and
8 contributing to the vibrant fabric of our
9 democracy.

10 And I think what is concerning about
11 tonight and what you read about last evening in
12 Tampa and what you all have heard throughout
13 the state is that the perception is here that
14 the game is fixed. And so instead of us
15 talking about -- instead of us talking about
16 Latin America and Banana Republics and Latin
17 America, what we are talking about is,
18 unfortunately, that sense of mistrust with
19 government in our hometown, in our home state
20 and our own communities with the people that we
21 elect.

22 I think a hallmark of vibrant democracy,
23 which is what we want to take place, is
24 competition, and when you have competition, I
25 think it breeds an honesty in the process. And

1 what Charles Smith just said from SCLC from
2 Manatee County, I think probably for the entire
3 Hispanic community in both counties would be
4 the exact same type of testimony that we would
5 want to give to you, and for the entire state,
6 create a competitive marketplace where ideas
7 matter and gerrymandering doesn't, and I think
8 the state of Florida is going to benefit for
9 it.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Mr. Mayor,
11 thank you for your service.

12 Next we will hear from Charles Dudley, and
13 after Mr. Dudley, Jackie Fountaine, then
14 Mitchell Zavon, or Zavon, and then Donna
15 Cubit-Swoyer with the Sarasota Alliance for
16 Fair Elections.

17 Mr. Dudley, thanks for being here, and
18 you've got the floor.

19 MR. DUDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My
20 suggestion is directed to congressional
21 redistricting. As you noted, the ideal
22 population of a district is 696,345. To
23 provide some flexibility and to make greater
24 use of county boundaries, we could allow the
25 deviation of one percent above and below the

1 ideal number; in other words, from 689,382 to
2 703,308.

3 Two examples using this population range
4 are, one -- and this should not be a
5 surprise -- combining the populations of
6 Sarasota and Manatee Counties, 702,281;
7 grouping Collier, 82,387, from south Lee,
8 Monroe, Hendry, Glades, Okeechobee, Highlands
9 and DeSoto Counties will give you 702,665. A
10 marginal case involves Escambia, Santa Rosa,
11 Okaloosa, Walton and west Bay, 10,489,
12 counties. That gives you a total of 695,345.
13 However, given the small portion from Bay
14 County, and to keep this as uncomplicated and
15 simple as possible, it might be better just to
16 lump this in with the Bay County group, which
17 would result in the total incidentally of
18 702,980, but would leave the Escambia grouping
19 with 684,856.

20 In summary, Mr. Chairman, don't be too
21 fascinated with the famous number of 696,345.
22 Do not try to slice and dice these districts
23 into tiny parts.

24 For the record, I would like to submit a
25 congressional redistricting plan based on the

1 one percent deviation described --

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir,
3 for that information.

4 One of the -- one of the frustrations of
5 this process is -- for some people is the
6 federal court rulings on exactly the question
7 you have raised. So I hope you can stay,
8 because that will be one of the facts that we
9 will try to provide you tonight. We really
10 appreciate the submission of maps that you
11 made.

12 And now, Jackie Fontaine. Is it
13 Fontaine or Fountain?

14 MS. FOUNTAINE: Well, originally it was
15 Fountain, and my husband's father didn't like
16 that, so he put on an E.

17 THE COURT: Is that right? Well, ma'am,
18 tonight you may have it either way you want.

19 MS. FOUNTAINE: It doesn't matter.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: And you are recognized.
21 Thanks for coming tonight.

22 MS. FOUNTAINE: Thank you. I just have
23 three items. Okay. Are you honestly
24 serious --

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am, just so that

1 everybody can hear your comments -- there we
2 go. Now you are much closer.

3 MS. FOUNTAINE: Are you honestly serious
4 about finishing redistricting in time for the
5 2012 elections?

6 SENATOR GAETZ: And I think you will hear
7 an answer to that question --

8 MS. FOUNTAINE: Good.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: -- at the end, just like
10 you heard at the beginning, but go ahead.

11 MS. FOUNTAINE: Why is Florida one of
12 seven states that does not automatically give
13 ex-felons the right to vote? They should be
14 able to walk out of prison or jail and go and
15 register to vote, because they have been
16 punished.

17 And my last comment, if you do the right
18 thing, you will be reelected regardless of what
19 district you are in in 2012.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much.

21 Is it Zavon, Zavon?

22 MR. ZAVON: Correct.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much for
24 being here and --

25 MR. ZAVON: I thought you had lost me. I

1 came first.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, you came 52nd,
3 actually, but --

4 MR. ZAVON: Well, I signed up before it
5 opened.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: I understand. You are
7 recognized. We are glad to have you.

8 MR. ZAVON: Thank you for coming. I am a
9 health physician and occupational physician,
10 have worked as a consultant for the federal and
11 state governments.

12 A majority of the voters who voted for the
13 amendments, and I am being redundant, to
14 eliminate the gerrymandering, I expected to
15 have you and the staff to have developed proper
16 for the next elections the establishment of the
17 state and federal retiring. At that, I could
18 have made opinion including Newtown as directly
19 part of Sarasota, for example, not a division
20 of parts. You have failed. If part of a
21 corporation of whom I also worked over 57
22 years, you would be more now failed and no part
23 of the job. I would have failed you for not
24 doing.

25 As years 88, I live long enough for the

1 2012 election, I expect to vote strongly out
2 for anyone that is taking our money out of the
3 budget to kill our action against the members
4 voting to use -- contradict what our majority
5 voted to certify the amendments, and to
6 eradicate the gerrymandering. Enough.

7 Briefly, I stated I believe that the use
8 of the election for -- of the state and federal
9 should compact geographically, where possible,
10 each city and county should be compact by
11 population, both compact and graphically and
12 feasible transportation as possible.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: And, sir, we would be
14 happy to take the rest of your comments in
15 writing.

16 MR. ZAVON: It is over.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: We have a whole bunch of
18 folks.

19 MR. ZAVON: Thank you very much.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you very
21 much. Thank you very much, sir.

22 And next, Donna Cubit-Swoyer, I believe,
23 with the Sarasota Alliance for Fair Elections,
24 and then Ted Mackie, Frank, and I believe it is
25 Hedy, and then Tess Canja, if I have it

1 correctly, and Arthur Levin.

2 Ma'am, you are recognized, and we are
3 delighted to have your testimony this evening.

4 MS. CUBIT-SWOYER: Thank you. I do want
5 to thank all of you for being here. I sat
6 through half of Tampa last night until now, and
7 I am sure you must be weary.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: No, no.

9 MS. CUBIT-SWOYER: I was -- well, some of
10 you look a little weary, regardless of what you
11 say.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Which ones?

13 MS. CUBIT-SWOYER: And I do thank you for
14 being so courteous.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Of course.

16 MS. CUBIT-SWOYER: Nevertheless, I have to
17 say --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: I knew this was going
19 somewhere.

20 MS. CUBIT-SWOYER: I knew you knew.

21 I have to say that Monia said it all for
22 me, and I thank her for saying it so well, so I
23 am not going to repeat all of the things that
24 she said.

25 I do want to say you should have the maps

1 here, it is your job, not our job, and it is
2 incumbent on you to make maps in a fair and
3 timely manner, and it is incumbent on all of us
4 to remember what happens come election time,
5 because we still have power, we still have the
6 power, so remember. Thank you.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.
8 Thank you very much.

9 Next is Ted Mackie. Is Ted here?

10 MR. MACKIE: Tad.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Or Tad, I'm sorry. And
12 then Frank, I think it is H-e-d-y.

13 MR. HEDY: Yes.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: And then Tess Canja, I
15 believe, if I have it correctly.

16 Tad, thank you for being here, and you are
17 recognized.

18 MR. MACKIE: Sure, Tad Mackie, I have been
19 in Sarasota for 45 years, just John Q. Public.

20 In the U.S. Constitution, it says you are
21 supposed to count us every ten years. It
22 doesn't say you are supposed to count us by
23 color, doesn't say you are supposed to count us
24 by race, creed, demographics of any kind. It
25 says you are supposed to count us, just

1 numbers, just people.

2 District 55 starts up someplace in
3 Clearwater or St. Pete and comes all the way
4 down to Fourth and 301. That is like 45 miles.
5 That is absurd. It is absolutely absurd.

6 Now, on the other hand, we have these
7 amendments that say it is supposed to be fair.
8 Now, I don't know about your definition of
9 "fair" is different than his definition of
10 "fair" is different than his definition of
11 "fair." Nobody knows what "fair" really means,
12 not really. But I submit to you that "fair"
13 means nobody has an advantage, nobody. Okay.
14 If you can take -- we have most of our
15 population on the coast, and if you can take a
16 little small slice on the coast and go deep
17 inland, you have covered everybody. You've
18 covered the rich folks on the coast, you've
19 covered the poor folks in the middle, you've
20 covered the middle folks out there in rural
21 whatever. Why do we need to separate us by all
22 these different demographics? All you do is
23 separate us. We are supposed to be one nation.
24 We are supposed to be the melting pot. We are
25 not supposed to be divided by all this

1 nonsense, okay.

2 And I understand the lawsuit. I don't
3 have a problem with that. You got to test it
4 ahead of time. I really don't have a problem
5 with that.

6 I also understand we don't have a
7 democracy, we have a republic. I don't have a
8 problem with that.

9 I also understand why you don't have your
10 maps here, because you don't know what they are
11 supposed to be, and you want to hear from us
12 first, and I appreciate that. I really do
13 appreciate that.

14 So that is basically it. All I am asking
15 you to do is make it so that nobody has an
16 advantage. There's no reason for the beaches
17 in St. Pete to have their own Representative
18 when they can go all the way across. Okay.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Your time has
20 elapsed, and we appreciate your testimony.

21 Frank -- and I apologize, it is not your
22 handwriting, it is my eyes. Would you
23 pronounce your last name?

24 MR. HEDY: My name is Frank Hedy.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: I got it right, by golly.

1 You are up, and then following you, Tess, I
2 think it is Canja, then Arthur Levin, and then
3 if Marcella Levin would be on deck.

4 Frank, thanks for coming, and the floor is
5 yours, sir.

6 MR. HEDY: Thank you very much. My name
7 is Frank Hedy, I am an Air Force Vietnam
8 veteran, and after 41 years I have -- they say
9 I have been diagnosed with Agent Orange
10 exposure. That is the government we have.

11 My question is about redistricting
12 tonight. I just want everybody here -- we are
13 Americans first. Why don't all the Democrats,
14 Republicans, work together for the good of our
15 country, our state and our nation and all the
16 people that is in it, wherever they came from?
17 We shouldn't be over here arguing about
18 districting this, districting that. We should
19 all work together. I hope the State Senators
20 and State Reps all work together for the good
21 of our state. And I have the same basically
22 speech that Frances Rice had earlier, and I
23 want take anymore of your time, but I just hope
24 everybody works together in Tallahassee and we
25 do the right thing for everybody in our state,

1 and I hope this U.S. Congress, U.S. Senators
2 and the President can work together instead of
3 always arguing about everything. We are sick
4 and tired of all this arguing. Have a good
5 night.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you,
7 sir.

8 Tess, are you here?

9 MS. CANJA: I am here.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, thank you for
11 coming, and behind you will be Arthur Levin and
12 then Marcella Levin and then Martha G. King.
13 And is it Canja?

14 MS. CANJA: Canja, that's very well done.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Canja. Thank you for
16 coming, and we are delighted to have your
17 testimony on the record tonight.

18 MS. CANJA: Thank you so much. Thank you
19 for the opportunity to speak today. My name is
20 Tess Canja. I live in Charlotte County, which
21 basically is within Congressional District 16.

22 CD 16 is so gerrymandered that it starts
23 on Florida's Gulf Coast, spreads north across
24 the state's agricultural center and ends on the
25 other coast. It was districts like ours that

1 brought about such an overwhelming vote for
2 fair districts, compact and contiguous.

3 Now, I recognize that a congressional
4 district is at least four times as large
5 population wise as Charlotte County. What we
6 need for fairness is to be joined in a
7 congressional district with other coastal areas
8 so that our problems, our concerns and our
9 needs are similar, with Sarasota County, for
10 example, or parts of Lee. All three counties
11 are working together for connected
12 transportation, and a Congressman would not
13 have to travel four hours to see his
14 constituents. So my first request is to keep
15 Charlotte County in one congressional district
16 on the southwest coast.

17 My second request is to make Charlotte
18 County one State House district. Right now, it
19 is parts of three. Our county has a population
20 of approximately 160,000. That is 3,000 more
21 than a population needed for a State House
22 district. So we have more than enough for one
23 district, and it certainly could be compact.

24 My third request is that our Florida
25 Senate district be a Charlotte/Sarasota

1 connection for the reasons previously given.
2 Our county is represented in the State
3 Legislature by three Senators. None of them
4 live in Charlotte County.

5 I couldn't help thinking, given these
6 realities, that Charlotte County must have
7 looked to the mapmakers like an unfrosted
8 cookie that could be broken up and passed
9 around. It would be easy for us in the county
10 to feel disenfranchised.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: And, ma'am, you are
12 getting -- you are over time, so if you could
13 wrap it up in fairness to the people behind
14 you.

15 MS. CANJA: I will. You know, I pray that
16 you all will do better. My hope is that you
17 will quickly get the maps drawn for public
18 review, and that we will be pleasantly
19 surprised and grateful that our testimony has
20 not been in vain, and I thank you.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you so
22 much. Very useful testimony. That is exactly
23 the kind of information we needed.

24 And now, Arthur Levin, followed by
25 Marcella Levin, and they appear to be related,

1 or at least they are in the same house.

2 MR. LEVIN: For sure.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: And then Martha King and
4 then Susan Brainerd.

5 Mr. Levin, thank you for coming, and be
6 careful now, because your wife does have the
7 opportunity to correct whatever you may say.

8 MR. LEVIN: She's already done that.

9 Thank you for having me. My name is
10 Arthur Levin. I am a resident of downtown
11 Sarasota.

12 Since you have not put forward any
13 criteria of your own which I might comment on,
14 I am here to offer to you a set of rules you
15 should follow in establishing a reapportionment
16 plan that will not only comply with the spirit
17 of the recent redistricting amendments, but
18 which will also cover the will of the people
19 who supported them in historic numbers.

20 Wherever possible, a district should be
21 contained within a single county. This fosters
22 communication up and down the layers of
23 government, and increases the probability of
24 working toward common goals driven by local
25 interests.

1 Wherever possible, whenever a district
2 spans a county line, the population drawn from
3 each county should be approximately equal.
4 This will reduce the prospect of one group's
5 interests overwhelming those of the other.

6 Further, when a district must span a
7 county boundary, a consideration of existing
8 relationships and common interests within the
9 affected communities should govern the
10 selection of which counties and which
11 communities to combine. For example, Sarasota
12 and Manatee share many cultural, civic, service
13 and religious facilities, as well as a common
14 labor market. If it were necessary to go
15 beyond the boundaries of Sarasota County, it
16 would be reasonable to combine Sarasota and
17 Manatee into a common district.

18 Finally, there is one critical rule that
19 must be applied in any reapportionment plan:
20 Apportionment factoring, factoring in party
21 registration in any form must be forbidden.

22 Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

24 And now we will hear from the upper
25 chamber of the house of Levin.

1 MS. LEVIN: That is right.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Ms. Levin, behind you
3 will be Martha King and Susan Brainerd and then
4 Marilyn Jacobs.

5 And you are recognized, ma'am. Thank you
6 for coming.

7 MS. LEVIN: Good evening and thank you for
8 coming to Sarasota to listen to us.

9 As was stated previously, the 2010 census
10 entitled Florida to 27 congressional districts,
11 each district averaging 696,000 plus people.
12 The combined population of Sarasota and Manatee
13 County is 702,000 plus, which is, as you heard,
14 a one percent differential. You have to start
15 redistricting someplace, you have to start the
16 mapping someplace, and, therefore, I propose
17 that redistricting of congressional districts
18 begin with this area. Combine Sarasota,
19 Manatee, a community of interest, and that
20 we -- and I propose that we be accorded a
21 Congressperson of our own.

22 As for redistricting the Florida House of
23 Reps and the Senate, I propose that you follow
24 the law. All districts must be compact and
25 contiguous. I don't mean to pick on you,

1 Representative Rouson, but your current
2 district of 55 is contiguous only because of a
3 bridge. This is a good example of what not to
4 do in redistricting. The redistricting must
5 conform to Fair District amendments as decided
6 by 63 percent of the Florida electorate.

7 And, finally, I am outraged that you could
8 find and set aside millions in the state budget
9 to defend redistricting plans that do not yet
10 exist. I'm sorry to say it seems that the
11 size -- that the size of the set-aside seems to
12 be intended to intimidate organizations that
13 might want to challenge the final maps.

14 Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you. I
16 would point out that it appears that
17 Representative Rouson is feeling sorry for
18 himself because he's been picked on so much
19 tonight, so we'll all feel sorry for you, we
20 will buy you dinner, Representative Rouson. He
21 is a good man. He didn't draw that district,
22 so we are not going to blame him.

23 Next up, we have Ms. Martha King. After
24 Ms. King, we have Susan Brainerd and then
25 Marilyn Jacobs.

1 You are recognized, ma'am.

2 MS. KING: Thank you very much, and I
3 would like also to thank all of you for being
4 here. We've applauded our local
5 Representatives, but those of you who had to
6 travel a long way, we are very appreciative of
7 that as well.

8 One of the real benefits, if we have our
9 way with Amendments 5 and 6, is that maybe many
10 of you will not have to do the amount of
11 traveling that you do now to cover your
12 districts, and it will give you a chance to get
13 to know your voters and they will get to know
14 the people who represent them, and that is, of
15 course, a very, very ideal view.

16 Because -- public perception is that
17 redistricting -- or districting favors one
18 party over another because of gerrymandering.
19 And this "Redistricting 2012" little pamphlet
20 that you handed out is just -- if you look at
21 it, there are so many wonderful examples.
22 There is actually the salamander up here at the
23 top, there is a donkey down on the left, and
24 there is actually a sea horse and a dragon and
25 who knows what else. So it is wonderful, and

1 you couldn't have chosen a better map to put on
2 the cover, because it makes our case.

3 Let's hope that you consider the will of
4 the people and not the strict letter of the law
5 if there is some vagueness. It is still very
6 clear that what people want is one voter and --
7 you know, one citizen and one vote, and so
8 please do that.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you
10 ma'am. Thank you very much. And, Ms. King, we
11 are not -- we are not creative enough to do all
12 those animals. Those were done by legislators
13 in the past. We are sort of into more boring
14 geometry. So maybe you can help us pin the
15 tail on that donkey.

16 Susan Brainerd is next and --
17 Ms. Brainerd?

18 Marilyn Jacobs, then Norma Dayton and then
19 Catherine Rodriguez.

20 Marilyn Jacobs, thank you for being here
21 this evening. You could be other places, but
22 thanks from spending some time with us.

23 MS. JACOBS: Thank you, and thank you for
24 your patience. My name is Marilyn Jacobs, and
25 I am a resident of Port Charlotte. And I know

1 you have heard this from Tess, but this is what
2 I deal with.

3 Congressional District 14, Collier,
4 Charlotte and Lee County; Senate District 23,
5 Charlotte, Manatee and Sarasota; House District
6 71, Charlotte, Lee and Sarasota. What we would
7 like is Charlotte County to be in one place --
8 we are in one place -- one district in every
9 way, shape and form. We are a little -- around
10 160,000, but either put us with the Lee or
11 Sarasota, but don't divide us. That is it.
12 Thank you very much.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much.
14 Thank you, that is very helpful.

15 Next is Norma Dayton and then Catherine
16 Rodriguez and then Carol -- I think it is
17 Dunkak-Dunekirchen.

18 Norma Dayton, thanks for coming.

19 MS. DAYTON: Hi. I just want to say thank
20 you very much for having these.

21 I do support the comments of the League of
22 Women Voters and Planned Parenthood. My major
23 concerns are the maps that we don't have and
24 the timing. The timing is very important for
25 candidates who want to run for office and don't

1 know what district they are in. So please
2 speed this up as much as possible. Thank you.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am. And,
4 Ms. Dayton, if you can hang with us until the
5 end, I think you will get some information that
6 either -- that might reassure you or at least
7 give you some additional data.

8 Catherine Rodriguez, Ms. Rodriguez, and
9 then, I apologize, my eyes again, not your
10 handwriting, Carol -- is it Dunkak-Dunekirchen?
11 Close enough for government work. You are
12 next, and then John Else and then Gregory
13 Stone.

14 Ms. Rodriguez, you have the floor, ma'am.

15 MS. RODRIGUEZ: I beg you to drop the
16 lawsuit and get to work on the redistricting as
17 the Florida voters have asked you to do. You
18 work for us, and we want you to do that. Get
19 to it.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Ms. Rodriguez,
21 we give extra credit points for brevity and
22 making your points succinctly, and so far, you
23 win tonight.

24 Carol, can you help me with your name,
25 please, ma'am?

1 MS. DUNKAK-DUNEKIRCHEN: It is
2 Dunkak-Dunekirchen.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: I thank I almost got that.

4 MS. DUNKAK-DUNEKIRCHEN: You were very
5 close, yes.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, thank you for being
7 here, and we are anxious to hear your
8 testimony, ma'am.

9 MS. DUNKAK-DUNEKIRCHEN: Thank you for
10 having me. I am a resident of Port Charlotte.
11 I live in congressional -- U.S. Congressional
12 District 16, which as you have heard, begins on
13 the west coast with part of Charlotte County
14 and ends on the east coast, beginning with St.
15 Lucie County and runs down the coast. It is an
16 excellent example of gerrymandering. My
17 Florida State House District 72 includes DeSoto
18 and parts of Charlotte and Lee Counties.
19 Finally, my Florida Senate District 23 consists
20 of parts of Charlotte, Manatee and Sarasota
21 Counties.

22 I know that you have heard this before.
23 Despite the good efforts of Senator Detert, all
24 of Charlotte County should be in one district.
25 Since it does -- it may not meet the minimum

1 standards for numbers in population in some of
2 the areas, it could be combined with more
3 community -- communities of interest. You
4 know, eastern Charlotte County is very rural,
5 so is DeSoto County, okay. We have the coastal
6 -- coastal areas that could be similar to Lee
7 or Sarasota. But I think you really need to
8 take all of that into consideration, and above
9 all, do not divide Charlotte County. Thank
10 you.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.

12 And John Else, E-l-s-e, how did I do on
13 that?

14 MR. ELSE: Else, like anything else.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: I was -- I had a little
16 bit of Norwegian going in there. John, thank
17 you for being here, and your testimony is
18 welcomed. Following you, we will hear from
19 Gregory Stone and Rosemarie Myerson, if you
20 will be on deck, and then John Eddins.

21 Mr. Else, thank you for coming.

22 MR. ELSE: I don't think the law -- the
23 amendment is confusing, in spite of my
24 colleague's statement. I lived for 23 years in
25 the state of Iowa, which is generally regarded

1 as one of the -- has one of the fairest and
2 least contentious systems for redistricting,
3 and it's been in place for 30 years, and it
4 uses many of the same terms that are in the
5 amendments. The responsibility for creating
6 the map is with the Legislative Service Bureau,
7 a non-partisan body connected to the
8 Legislature, and they create that by computer
9 models where the assumptions are all put in.
10 So it is a very objective system. They have an
11 advisory committee of two Democrats, two
12 Republicans, and the Chair selected by the
13 majority of those four. The principles are
14 much the same, as I said. The results in Iowa,
15 which passed -- made its reapportioning this
16 year, was that four of the five incumbent
17 Congressmen ended up in the same district with
18 another incumbent. So two of them moved into
19 -- were combined with two others. In this
20 case, two of them moved into other districts.
21 So that is a possibility, too, for you who are
22 incumbents.

23 I think it is a good idea for you to get
24 input before you make the maps, but then I
25 think the maps have to be drawn, and there is

1 no reason they can't be drawn within a month if
2 you use computer systems. And that you can
3 then have another round of these hearings going
4 on the maps in October and November, and into
5 December if you need to. So I just think your
6 job has been set and you have the possibility
7 of really doing something for us.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much,
9 sir.

10 Gregory Stone, is Gregory Stone still with
11 us? Mr. Stone?

12 How about Rosemarie Myerson? Ms. Myerson,
13 following your testimony, we will hear from
14 John Eddins and then Ina Rae Levy and then Joy
15 Davis.

16 Ms. Myerson, thank you for coming tonight,
17 and the floor is yours.

18 MS. MYERSON: Thank you for inviting me.
19 I am delighted to be here.

20 I didn't come to tell you exactly how to
21 do it. I think the two amendments gave the
22 ground rule of fair, compactness and getting
23 rid of gerrymandering. And as I listened to
24 what each one of these Representatives and
25 Senators represented, I clearly heard how not

1 to draw the map. I only try to keep track of
2 Collier and Lee Counties, and I heard at least
3 five of you represent pieces of Collier and Lee
4 Counties, and I don't think the population is
5 that big there. All right, so that's it.

6 The other thing I wanted to address is the
7 seriousness of this law case. I have followed
8 Betty Castor, who originally had one amendment
9 to get rid of gerrymandering in this state, and
10 it was thrown out at the courts in the end
11 because they said there should have been two
12 amendments, one addressing the federal
13 government redistricting, and the other
14 addressing the state. So now we drew up a
15 second one, and then everybody crying about
16 race representing or whatever, and they put in
17 all these other things, which now we hear a
18 lawyer saying, "Oh, that doesn't make any sense
19 whatsoever." Well, I think you people
20 understand the intent, and that Amendments 5
21 and 6 went right through the courts before they
22 were allowed to go on the ballot, and they were
23 declared legal all the way up, I think, to the
24 Supreme Court. I do not understand. I am not
25 going to discuss how much money you are

1 spending. I don't care. I mean, I do care,
2 but I can't understand at this stage, at this
3 time, when we need to choose candidates, we
4 need two new federal candidates, we have no
5 idea what the districts are in the whole state
6 are going to be, if they are going to be fair,
7 compact, contiguous, I can't understand your
8 taking this to the courts when it's already
9 been through the courts, and I hope you will
10 explain what courts you are going to and why.
11 And I -- I applaud all the wonderful things
12 that have been said here. I think Monia Joblin
13 said it for me very well.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Ms. Myerson.

15 And I think, if you are able to stay, the
16 Speaker Designate will explain to you how the
17 law requires us to go to the Supreme Court and
18 the federal courts.

19 Next is John Eddins. John Eddins, are you
20 here, sir? If not, we will go to Ina Rae Levy,
21 Ms. Levy, and following Ms. Levy, Joy Davis and
22 then Theresa Perkins and then Cheryl Brown.

23 Ms. Levy, you are recognized, and thank
24 you so much for being here this evening.

25 MS. LEVY: Good evening, and thank you for

1 this opportunity. But I would like to ask the
2 panel, have you heard the people tonight? Have
3 you heard what the feelings are in your
4 communities? Well, I am sort of getting blank
5 looks. I am wondering --

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Now, if you are asking if
7 the -- if you are asking if the loudspeaker is
8 working, it is working fine, thank you, but
9 please go ahead.

10 MS. LEVY: What the loudspeaker is -- how
11 the loudspeaker is working and how the brains
12 are taking it in are two different things.

13 I don't think there's any reason for me to
14 go over again the maps. Of course, you
15 understand clearly the feeling of the people.
16 The fact that it was passed by 63 percent, the
17 amendment, that is clearly understood by
18 everyone.

19 The only thing I want to say is I wonder
20 how many of you know that a camel is a horse
21 put together by a committee. And if we have
22 hundreds of thousands of people drawing maps,
23 who is going to examine them, who is going to
24 make them? Just get to work and do it now.

25 Thank you very much.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much.

2 MS. DAVIS: My name is Joy Davis.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Hold just a second. I
4 just want to make sure that folks are lined up
5 behind you: Theresa Perkins, Cheryl Brown and
6 Deborah Livingston.

7 And now, Ms. Davis, you have the floor.

8 MS. DAVIS: Thank you. My name is Joy
9 Davis, and I have been a life-long Republican.
10 I have lived here in Sarasota for over 20
11 years. I am a teacher, and sitting in the
12 front row, I have observed all evening who is
13 paying attention and who isn't. I don't care
14 how old you are, it is over two hours and we
15 all have our limit on listening. I want to let
16 you know that I appreciate those of you who
17 have really made an effort, and I have watched
18 you. I have contacted you by eye to listen to
19 each and every one of us. This is serious
20 business. I am not up here as a teacher, but I
21 am up here as a voter, and you have listened to
22 the people, and the people have told you what
23 they want.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Great classroom voice,
25 too.

1 MS. DAVIS: How -- excuse me, I know you
2 are trying to be very suave, and yes, you --
3 you and the one next to you are in charge of
4 this lawsuit to begin with. I am not impressed
5 with your smooth comments, sir.

6 How dare you use the taxpayer money for
7 your benefit and ignore the voters' wishes.
8 Obvious, it's been done. Get busy. It is like
9 you are a bunch of children in a classroom and
10 I can't get you to get your work done. Stop
11 the fighting. I would separate you, because
12 you aren't -- you aren't any better than a kid.
13 Do your responsibility to the State of Florida
14 and to your voters and get busy and do your
15 job.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: And, ma'am, your time is
17 up, thank you. Still a good classroom voice.

18 Theresa Perkins and then Cheryl Brown,
19 then Deborah Livingston and then Murray
20 Blueglass.

21 Theresa Perkins, thank you for being with
22 us tonight, and you are recognized.

23 MS. PERKINS: Thank you for coming
24 tonight, and I am Pastor Perkins from the
25 Newtown/Sarasota community, and what we -- the

1 District 55, when you redistrict, please
2 maintain Newtown in north Sarasota in the House
3 District 55. This district is very important
4 to us in our black community, because it let us
5 elect a Representative of our choice, we share
6 the same concerns with the other communities in
7 this district, and I also believe that not
8 keeping us in the district would violate the
9 Amendment 5, which was passed by over
10 60 percent of the vote. I also urge you to
11 also allow our area to be in a minority
12 district in the State Senate and in the
13 Congress. We want to be empowered, all levels
14 of government. Thank you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, ma'am.

16 Next, Cheryl Brown, and then Deborah
17 Livingston, please, and then Murray Blueglass
18 from the Longboat Key Democratic Club and then
19 Jim Hunter would be on deck.

20 Ms. Brown, you are recognized, and we are
21 delighted to have your testimony.

22 MS. BROWN: Thank you. Good evening.
23 Thank you for listening tonight. My name is
24 Pastor Cheryl Brown, and I am a citizen who
25 have lived actually in the Sarasota area for

1 over 40 years now. I am now living in Manatee
2 County, Lakewood Ranch, Florida.

3 I am here tonight to ask you to keep
4 Newtown and north Sarasota combined with
5 Manatee, Hillsborough and Pinellas County in
6 House District 55. This is a seat that gives
7 us an opportunity to elect a Representative of
8 our choice. If you do not keep us together, we
9 will lose our representation, and we are
10 concerned that we will be represented by
11 someone else who does not know our needs. This
12 is the law of Florida, so following the law
13 shouldn't be difficult.

14 Also, we would like you to give us
15 additional opportunities to elect candidates of
16 our choice in the State Senate and in the U.S.
17 Congress. Thank you very much.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, Pastor.
19 Deborah Livingston, then Murray Blueglass,
20 then Jim Hunter, then William Grant.

21 Ms. Livingston, you are recognized, ma'am.

22 MS. LIVINGSTON: Good evening. I was born
23 in Sarasota. Welcome to Sarasota, and thank --
24 thank you for being here to listen to our
25 concerns today.

1 On behalf of the black community here in
2 Sarasota County, I am here to say that we like
3 being with St. Petersburg, Palmetto, Bradenton,
4 in House District 55. Our community is small,
5 and being united with other similarity
6 communities gives us the opportunity to elect
7 Representatives of our choice. This request
8 shouldn't be considered a favorite or a special
9 treatment, but simply following the law passed
10 last November by 60 percent of the voters. Not
11 doing this will weaken our position as minority
12 voters and violate the law. Thank you again
13 for your time.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
15 ma'am.

16 And now, Murray Blueglass, if Murray
17 Blueglass is here from the Longboat Key
18 Democratic Club, and following Mr. Blueglass,
19 Jim Hunter and then William Grant, and if Wade
20 Matthews would be on deck, please.

21 Mr. Blueglass, thank you for coming, and
22 the floor is yours.

23 MR. BLUEGLASS: Thank you very much.
24 Thank you for -- all of you for being here this
25 evening. What an array of our Legislature to

1 take the time to come around the country -- or,
2 excuse me, come around the state and to listen
3 to us.

4 First of all, I would like to say thank
5 you to all the people in the audience. Last
6 year I watched town halls across this country
7 on TV. I was shocked by the lack of civility
8 that was displayed across the country. The
9 people in this audience really deserve a round
10 of applause, and I think you ought to give
11 yourselves one. Only in Sarasota/Manatee,
12 Florida, can such civility, good response and
13 positive feeling be felt. Thank you.

14 And, Senator Gaetz, I disagree with
15 somebody who spoke recently, just a couple of
16 speakers ago. I think you have handled this
17 with aplomb, with great patience and great
18 determination, and you have kept it on track.
19 Bipartisan politics, thank you for running a
20 good meeting.

21 Amendments 5 and 6 didn't just appear
22 mid-air. They were created because of a need.
23 Everybody at this table understands that. The
24 people in this county, the people in Manatee,
25 indeed, the people across the state were

1 determined that in the next redistricting in
2 2012, it would be fair and consistent. We need
3 you to understand that. That is bipartisan
4 politics. That makes good sense. We didn't
5 need the amendments. We don't need all the
6 fighting. We need to understand how important
7 it is to represent the people. Sarasota,
8 Manatee, that is a winning combination. Sorry,
9 Ray, but it is an absolute winning combination
10 to combine Sarasota and Manatee into a
11 district.

12 As you work across the state and you hear
13 other people, contiguous districts that don't
14 run from sea to sea will be so, so important.
15 Contiguous districts with common interests and
16 fair number of people represented by you is all
17 we are asking for.

18 So we thank you very much for coming
19 tonight. Remember, we, the people of these
20 United States, isn't that what we are all
21 about? Thank you.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

23 Jim Hunter, Mr. Hunter, and then William
24 Grant, then Wade Matthews for the Better
25 Government Association of Sarasota County and

1 then John Bellantoni, please.

2 Mr. Hunter, you are recognized, and we are
3 delighted you are here.

4 MR. HUNTER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, thank you
5 very much, and members of the Committee, thank
6 you for attendance tonight.

7 I am a retired businessman. I have been a
8 resident of Sarasota for over 35 years. This
9 is the first time I have ever even heard of a
10 hearing on redistricting. I am glad we are
11 having one.

12 If we can end gerrymandering, we have
13 certainly accomplished something in the history
14 of our state. And if we can respect the
15 boundaries of cities, counties, neighborhoods,
16 that would be a major accomplishment. We need
17 to drop the lawsuits, we need to save our tax
18 dollars, and I hope that our next hearing will
19 be on campaign finance reform.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.

21 Is William Grant here? William Grant? He
22 already talked?

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Ah, slid in early, did
24 you?

25 Wade Matthews. Mr. Matthews, you will be

1 followed by John Bellantoni and by Lois Regan.

2 And you are recognized, sir.

3 MR. W. MATTHEWS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 I put Better Government Association down
5 because I am co-President of it, but I am not
6 here to represent them. I have talked,
7 however, with the members that I have been able
8 to see of that and about the other ten or so
9 other organizations that I am either on a Board
10 of Directors with or an officer of, and they
11 all have the same general consensus of the
12 great majority view of what we have heard here
13 tonight.

14 I just want to address -- I was going to
15 address those things, but I just want to take
16 two quick points. One, it seems fairly easy to
17 form the districts compactly with contiguous,
18 not favoring or disfavoring any political party
19 or incumbent. There were two issues that were
20 brought up, though, about the idea of following
21 existing city, county and geographical
22 boundaries. One case of the City of Bradenton,
23 for example, it says here "where feasible" in
24 this law. So where it is not feasible as that
25 sort of case, you ignore it -- don't ignore it,

1 you do it to the extent you can, but you don't
2 do it otherwise.

3 The other case that came up is the idea of
4 not denying racial or language minorities
5 and -- the opportunity to participate and elect
6 Representatives. It says "not deny." It
7 doesn't say you have to have the complete
8 ridiculous gerrymandering that we have. And
9 I -- I have spoken with Representative Rouson
10 here. I personally believe that he could be
11 elected in almost any district with his -- with
12 his eloquence and his diplomatic approach to
13 things, whether it is a black district, a white
14 district or whatever. I think he is a fine,
15 fine person. However, I don't think he needs a
16 district all his own in order to do it, and
17 that would completely -- you cannot have that
18 done as equal to the other cases. You don't
19 need -- you will not be denying racial or
20 language minorities if you follow a system of
21 doing that away. We have the entire state of
22 Florida, which has elected one -- one Senator
23 who is Hispanic, and has one now who is
24 Hispanic. You have had -- in Sarasota County,
25 you have -- there's very few blacks in the

1 county district represented by one black member
2 of the county commission. You have --

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Could I ask you to put a
4 bow on it pretty soon?

5 MR. W. MATTHEWS: Absolutely. I am
6 finishing up right now.

7 You have a President of the United States
8 who considers himself black who was elected by
9 all the people, and I am convinced that black
10 Representatives can have their representation
11 and elect people without having this sort of
12 gerrymandering.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much.

14 John Bellantoni. Mr. Bellantoni, are you
15 here, sir? If not, we will pass you.

16 Lois Regan, or Regan, then Craig -- I'm
17 sorry, my eyes again, C-e-r-r-e, I think, t-a,
18 at Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance, and then
19 Ida Culbertson.

20 Lois Regan. Thank you for coming,
21 Ms. Regan, and we are delighted to have your
22 testimony on the record tonight.

23 MS. REGAN: I would like to go on the
24 record thanking you for having the meeting and
25 agreeing with the things that were said here,

1 and what I would like to -- just look at my
2 notes a little bit.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Sure.

4 MS. REGAN: I feel that having this
5 meeting without having concrete maps to look at
6 is really having the cart before the horse.
7 You have the material, you have the fair act,
8 voting act, to go by as your guidelines. You
9 have a lot of information about demographics
10 and everything that you need that we citizens
11 don't have. So the input that the citizens
12 could give would be after you gave some kind of
13 outline for us to look at based on the Fair
14 District Act and based on all the tools that
15 you have, like the gentleman who talked about
16 Iowa and what is available. So I feel that it
17 is very hard for us to really give sufficient
18 input without having a concrete thing before
19 us.

20 As far as the suit goes, I don't know what
21 the amount of money is that is being used in
22 this suit, but I feel that we have so many cuts
23 for urgent things that our citizens need, that
24 I think taking any money to use for a suit
25 against what 63 percent of the people voted for

1 is a misuse of taxpayer funds. I feel that it
2 is totally inappropriate for you to do that.

3 And I really feel that, just to summarize
4 it, that if you could give us something
5 concrete within a reasonable time and have
6 meetings for us to look at -- there are many
7 people who don't have computers. If you showed
8 me something with a map on a computer, I would
9 really have a problem with it. So if you
10 really want input, you need a public meeting
11 with some format that you are presenting to us,
12 and we need it in a timely manner so absentee
13 ballots could get out, all the -- Kathy Dent
14 could do or any of the Supervisors could get
15 their things done. And people who are not
16 incumbents, who are not known in their
17 districts, whatever their party is --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: May I ask you to
19 summarize, ma'am?

20 MS. REGAN: Yes, okay.

21 -- that they have time to know where they
22 are running and to do their campaign fairly.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much. Very
24 good testimony.

25 And now Craig -- is it Cerreta?

1 MR. CERRETA: Cerreta.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Cerreta. Mr. Cerreta with
3 the Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance, and then
4 Ida Culbertson and then John Hoover and then
5 Emmalou Kirchmeier, who says she is
6 representing the Methodist church.

7 Mr. Cerreta, thank you for being here, and
8 you are recognized, sir.

9 MR. CERRETA: Okay. Thank you very much
10 for having me.

11 For those of you Representatives who are
12 not familiar with Lakewood Ranch, it is a
13 little 33,000-acre development about six miles
14 directly east of here. It is a community. It
15 is a residential community and a business
16 community. I am here representing about 469
17 businesses that make up that business
18 community, from individual realtors to
19 businesses that have 600 employees or more.

20 From our perspective, obviously just like
21 all the residents, we want to work very closely
22 with our representation. Good, close
23 relationships help to get things done. To do
24 so, we feel that recognizing communities,
25 whether they are county communities or smaller

1 communities like ours that are not
2 incorporated, are very important when you are
3 drawing these lines.

4 So we cross county boundaries, similar to
5 The Villages that does. We don't want to see
6 Lakewood Ranch split up at the House -- at the
7 state level and have us divided in our efforts
8 as we are trying to get representation. So we
9 ask that when you are drawing the lines, you
10 take into consideration that it is not just
11 county lines, it is not just major roads, it is
12 not just those other geographic boundaries.
13 Communities make up a very important component,
14 regardless of those other boundaries.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, sir.

16 Next is -- I think it is Ida Culbertson.
17 Is that correct, ma'am?

18 MS. CUTHBERTSON: Cuthbertson.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Cuthbertson, I am very
20 sorry, it is my eyes. You are recognized, and
21 thanks for being here tonight.

22 MS. CUTHBERTSON: Thank you for the
23 opportunity.

24 This voter and millions more across
25 Florida spoke loudly and clearly last year

1 about redistricting this state. You know what
2 the voters instructed the Legislature to do.
3 Legislators can ignore the voters and even
4 fight them in the courts, but you do so at your
5 own peril. My advice to the legislators is to
6 heed the message from the voters from last
7 year, drop the lawsuit, but do redistrict into
8 compact districts.

9 You have also offered no draft maps for
10 citizens to look at. In my mind, that is a
11 rather strange circumstance. So I urge you to
12 place Sarasota and Manatee Counties together in
13 the same district for the U.S. Congress,
14 Representative and for the Florida State seats.
15 Thank you.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
17 ma'am.

18 And next, John Hoover, please, Mr. Hoover,
19 and following Mr. Hoover, Emmalou Kirchmeier
20 and then Glenda Williams and if -- I think it's
21 Logan Bartholomew, if Mr. Bartholomew will also
22 be on deck.

23 Mr. Hoover, thanks for being here, and
24 fire away.

25 MR. HOOVER: Thank you all for coming out.

1 We appreciate it. Thanks for holding these
2 hearings.

3 As I understand, you all have received a
4 certain amount of skepticism. Please excuse
5 your constituents, but we have been misinformed
6 time and again by politicians who have told us
7 one thing and done another.

8 Fair Districts mean fair to all, and I
9 think there is some wiggle room for compact
10 districts in ensuring minority representation.
11 We in the past have seen redistricting be the
12 spoils of electoral success by majority party
13 and/or incumbent. Now that Amendments 5 and 6
14 have passed, Floridians have a high hope for
15 districts that reflect regional commonalities.

16 Reports in the news that both State House
17 and Senate have tens of millions of dollars
18 stashed to fight challenges to the new
19 districts support citizen skepticism. Please
20 prove us wrong. Please don't be Lucy and us be
21 Charlie Brown. Thank you.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.

23 Just previews of coming attractions, we
24 are getting close to the nine o'clock hour. A
25 number of you have asked that members of the

1 Committee respond to certain questions you have
2 asked. We are going to try to do that. Those
3 that -- you know, the good news is that 109
4 people indicated their desire to provide input,
5 and if we aren't able to get to you tonight,
6 that doesn't mean we are not going to be able
7 to get to you. It just means that you can
8 submit your comments in writing. You can send
9 it to us by regular mail or by e-mail or you
10 can give them to us this evening if we don't
11 get a chance to get to you, but we are grateful
12 for everyone who has hung with us.

13 And now, Ms. Kirchmeier, it says here you
14 represent the Methodist church, and --

15 REVEREND KIRCHMEIER: Well, I put that
16 down because I have to, I am a reverend, and --

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, Pastor, thank you.

18 REVEREND KIRCHMEIER: It is kind of odd
19 not to.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Pastor, thank you very
21 much for being here.

22 REVEREND KIRCHMEIER: Thank you. But I
23 actually came here with the Bible in one hand
24 and a flag in the other, if you understand.

25 And I think that is the way most of us feel

1 about where we are and who you are. You
2 represent our government. Now, whether we like
3 you or not, it depends on how you vote, and,
4 you know, if you want us to like you, and you
5 are not being liked, change your vote.

6 I came here to save my husband's life 16
7 years ago to Myakka, and I learned about
8 eating, you know, those things that go on the
9 ground and have long tails and I never get
10 their names right -- alligators, and my
11 grandchildren were surprised I ate it for
12 Thanksgiving. And my husband lived seven years
13 instead of just the six months they talked
14 about.

15 So when it comes to Florida, I usually
16 only have good things to say, but Myakka and
17 Old Myakka and the way this other gentleman
18 talked about it, you have to know the
19 cattlemen's association, you got to go out
20 there and fish and, I mean, you've got to know
21 when the water comes up and you've got to move
22 the herd, what is going to happen to their
23 hoofs, you know, if they are in the mud. I
24 mean, you got to know all those things about
25 country living. And I just loved it all, and

1 then I moved to Bradenton when my husband died
2 and I became a democratic committeeman for
3 District 59, and then I did the census for
4 District fifty -- sixty -- 69, and I learned
5 about what they need -- they needed sewers,
6 okay, terrible situation, and I learned about
7 city government. And then I got very, very
8 upset, because if there's one thing I am
9 constantly fighting for, it is women's rights,
10 children's rights and black Americans' rights.
11 That is me, okay. And if somebody is in their
12 way, God help them when they are in my way.
13 And sometimes that is what you are doing. You
14 are getting me so angry I can't understand how
15 some of you got elected.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, blessed are the
17 merciful, Pastor, and we are running a little
18 short on time, so if I could ask you to get to
19 the --

20 REVEREND KIRCHMEIER: Well, what I am
21 going to say to you --

22 SENATOR GAETZ: -- three points in the
23 palm of the sermon.

24 REVEREND KIRCHMEIER: -- tonight is that
25 the 14th Amendment made a lot of promises to

1 us, and you are not keeping them.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

3 And now, is it Logan Bartholomew? Logan
4 Bartholomew, you are up, and then is David
5 Miner? Then Rodger -- I think it is Skidmore,
6 and then Tammy Cabrera.

7 Mr. Bartholomew, thank you for coming, and
8 you are on.

9 MR. BARTHOLOMEW: Thank you, sir, good
10 evening. I am a native of Boynton Beach,
11 Florida, over on the southeast coast, but I go
12 here to New College, I am a fourth-year
13 student, just for reference, Congressional
14 District 19, State Senate District 30, and
15 State House District 89, which I can't draw,
16 which is a problem for me. At least in South
17 Florida, I think that is what is going to make
18 or break the maps, especially when it comes to
19 the courts, because the way at least the
20 congressional districts are currently drawn, it
21 is drawn by socioeconomic strata with the
22 ultra-rich on the coast, the poor people
23 slightly more inland, and then obviously we get
24 richer as we go farther west.

25 I would ask that the Committee please draw

1 the lines east/west along the major grid
2 roadways in southeast Florida so that we get
3 more representative districts, that we get
4 districts that listen to ideas rather than race
5 or culture or any other -- we need better
6 ideas, sir. Thank you.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much.
8 Appreciate your testimony.

9 And now, David Miner, followed by Rodger
10 Skidmore, and Tammy Cabrera will be our last
11 speaker this evening. David.

12 MR. MINER: Chairman, I am Dave Miner, I
13 am from Manatee County, I work and live there.
14 I was born in Florida. I am a Marine Vietnam
15 veteran, proud to be here with y'all, and I
16 have some -- a lot of concerns about --

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Now, excuse me, Mr. Miner.
18 We have listened to everyone respectfully
19 tonight. If you would like to have a
20 conversation, that is fine, but would you
21 please take it out in the hall? This gentleman
22 is a veteran of our military services. He has
23 come here to share his opinions. Let's give
24 him our attention.

25 Mr. Miner.

1 MR. MINER: Thank you, sir.

2 One of the concerns I have is about the
3 attitudes of our country's people toward their
4 government. And in preparation for speaking
5 tonight, I talked with the Supervisor of
6 Elections' office. I had a contact, see how
7 many people actually voted the last time that
8 we had a general election, and it was
9 55 percent of the registered voters in Manatee
10 County. That comes down to about 42 percent of
11 the actual people who could vote, because not
12 everybody is a registered voter.

13 And I have talked with a lot of people
14 over time why they don't vote, and many of them
15 say, "Well, you know, I got other things to
16 do." A lot of them say, "It doesn't make any
17 difference." That is the main theme. It is a
18 cynicism that seems to pervade our populous
19 here in Florida and I think in this country.
20 And why are people cynical? And that is why I
21 ask them, and they say, "Well, it doesn't make
22 any difference. People get elected, and they
23 are just going to do what the money tells them
24 to do, what the leaders say to do, not what the
25 people tell them what to do." I don't think

1 cynicism is good for our country. It is not
2 what I fought for. I think that you all need
3 to take that into account when you do things.
4 I think that you need to act to reduce that
5 cynicism. I think you need to act to restore a
6 little more faith in our political process.
7 And I think two ways that you can possibly help
8 is that when you get to Tallahassee, remember
9 what happened here. Another thing is to
10 remember that it is important that you follow
11 the Constitution that you take an oath to, and
12 that oath includes Amendments 5 and 6. This
13 oath says that you are not supposed to do
14 something to favor political parties or
15 incumbents. And how do you enforce that?

16 SENATOR GAETZ: And, sir, out of respect
17 for you, I have given you a little extra time
18 because you were interrupted, but, please, if
19 you could bring it to a conclusion.

20 MR. MINER: Okay, two things. I think you
21 ought to make it an ethics violation if any
22 member of the House or Senate talks with
23 another member and says, "Hey, I want a favor,
24 I want you to take into special consideration
25 my district or what I want to run for," and

1 then have harsh sanctions.

2 And, too, I think you ought to -- or
3 number three, whatever money you are spending
4 -- and I know the Constitution says that you --
5 or Florida Supreme Court has to approve any
6 final districting. I don't have any problem
7 with that lawsuit.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Sir, I am going to have to
9 ask you to conclude.

10 MR. MINER: Okay. But if you are spending
11 money, you know, to fight 5 and 6, I don't
12 think that helps diminish cynicism, it
13 increases it. And I don't think that helps our
14 country, and I think you ought to change your
15 minds about that. Thank you very much.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for your service
17 to this country.

18 And now, Rodger Skidmore, if you will come
19 forward, and then Tammy Cabrera, if you could
20 be on deck. Mr. Skidmore, you are recognized,
21 sir.

22 MR. SKIDMORE: Thank you. I would like to
23 thank you all for bringing so many very, very,
24 very concerned citizens together in one room.

25 Earlier you said that we could go ahead

1 and applaud, but there is no real way to
2 quantitatively or qualitatively decide how much
3 impact we have with you, and we would like to
4 have a record of that. So I have created a
5 Petition that I would like to pass around,
6 people can sign it and let others sign it since
7 I've only got 100 of them.

8 The amendments state that the districts
9 will have to be compact and utilize existing
10 political and geographical boundaries. Very
11 simply, this means that one cannot for
12 political expediency take a region of Florida
13 and create four districts with a 60 percent
14 majority of one party's voters, and one
15 district packed with 95 percent of the other
16 party's voters or of minority members, that
17 thus ensuring a four to one majority vote for
18 that one party in Tallahassee. I understand
19 the law on minorities, I agree with it, but you
20 don't have to pack so many of them into one
21 place and take them out of their local areas
22 where they can vote on local ideas.

23 And, actually, the above example is not
24 fair to voters of any party, not just because
25 the second party will do the same if they get

1 into power, but because it also gives too much
2 party -- too much power to party bosses. We
3 have seen that local representatives of the
4 party in power wanting to vote the way they
5 feel their constituents would like them to vote
6 have been told to vote the party line or lose
7 funding on needed projects --

8 SENATOR GAETZ: And, sir, I am going to
9 have to ask you to conclude with one more
10 sentence, and then please feel free to pass
11 around the Petition.

12 MR. SKIDMORE: -- and if they vote wrong
13 too often, to have their districts
14 gerrymandered out of existence in future years.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir,
16 and please feel free to pass it around.

17 Tammy Cabrera, is it --

18 MS. WILLIAMS: My name is Glenda Williams.
19 You called my name one time, then you haven't
20 called it since, so --

21 SENATOR GAETZ: I'm sorry, is Tammy
22 Cabrera there? Ms. Cabrera, you are up, and we
23 are delighted to have you with us this evening,
24 and you are recognized.

25 MS. CABRERA: Legislators, welcome and

1 thank you for coming to Sarasota. I would like
2 to ask you to consider leaving District 55
3 largely the way it is from south St. Pete to
4 northern Sarasota. Though it only covers a
5 small part of our county, it allows us to be
6 united with other similar communities.

7 I hope that with the Amendment 5 and 6
8 passing, you will also be able to look at
9 additional opportunities for us to elect
10 representatives to the State Senate and
11 Congress. We relate to the community and know
12 our needs. Thank you.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
14 ma'am. I appreciate your comments.

15 A number of you asked tonight that before
16 we concluded, that some specific questions be
17 answered or observations be made by members of
18 the Committee, and so I am going to turn to the
19 Speaker Designate at the end to answer any
20 questions that hadn't been answered. He made a
21 list of them. But let me begin first with
22 members of the House of Representatives,
23 Democrats or Republicans. Any of you have any
24 comments that you would like to make before we
25 go to the Speaker D?

1 Yes, sir, you are recognized,
2 Representative Rouson.

3 REPRESENTATIVE ROUSON: It is hard to sit
4 here -- first of all, I am very grateful to the
5 number of people that came out tonight. It is
6 a testament to our Republic and to our
7 democracy.

8 It is hard to sit here hearing after
9 hearing after hearing and take some shots, but
10 we were elected for just that, to do the best
11 that we could, understanding that we will not
12 be able to please everybody. But it is
13 important to be heard. I think that to hear
14 from you and then go back and try and draw
15 something after having heard you over and over
16 and over again helps us, and I, for one, would
17 have been very distraught -- in fact,
18 Mr. Speaker Designee and Mr. President, tell me
19 if y'all got some maps somewhere. I want to
20 know. I want to see them. But this part of
21 the process is so that we can take back. And I
22 want you to know, I am taking it back. I ain't
23 scared of no ghost. And we will make sure that
24 what is done is fair. My daddy taught me one
25 lesson, he said, "Son, ain't no fairness.

1 There's only justice in the end." There is no
2 fairness truly when human beings are behind it,
3 but as much as possible, we seek fairness while
4 we expect justice.

5 Thank you for coming out tonight.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Representative,
7 well spoken.

8 Other members of the House who wish to
9 offer any comments? Please, Representative
10 Frishe.

11 REPRESENTATIVE FRISHE: First of all, full
12 disclosure, I am not running for reelection to
13 the House. Ms. Davis, I hope I paid attention,
14 I hope I met your threshold, but you weren't
15 watching me, were you?

16 So we have been told to follow Amendment 5
17 for legislative districts, but the question I
18 would like somebody to come up and tell me
19 after we adjourn is do we then split Lakewood
20 Ranch or not? Because we have heard both
21 arguments here tonight. Do we split the
22 airport or not, because the county line runs
23 down the middle of it, or not? But we have to
24 follow Amendment 5. So it is going to be a
25 problem.

1 The congressional seats, we heard
2 testimony that said we should keep Charlotte
3 and Sarasota together because they are a
4 community of interest, but Amendment 6 doesn't
5 allow for communities of interest. And we also
6 heard we should keep Sarasota and Manatee
7 together because they are a community of
8 interest, but, once again, we can't consider
9 communities of interest under the law.

10 So we are going to try and follow the law
11 and keep Representative Rouson's District 55
12 for those who want it, and get rid of it for
13 those who don't. Now, I am really trying to
14 pay attention here, folks, so hang on. Darryl,
15 behave yourself. Now -- and I don't really
16 mean to be all that humorous about that, but
17 what I want to point out is that issue,
18 especially at the congressional level, may well
19 be out of our hands, because the Federal Voting
20 Rights Act, as enforced by the federal courts,
21 are going to give us guidelines that we cannot
22 deviate from, just like the population of a
23 congressional district doesn't have a one
24 percent variation, it has a plus or minus one
25 person variation. So try drawing that

1 congressional district on the software, folks,
2 because I got to tell you, it took me two hours
3 to draw the first one, and I started in the
4 Panhandle, and that is easy up there because
5 there's lots of open space and small families.

6 The maps are out in the lobby. That is
7 what we are going to start with. If you've got
8 some changes to them, go tell us what they are.
9 Tell us what -- there are a couple of them,
10 pick your favorite one. There is one I happen
11 to like out there. But take a look at the
12 maps, reference the number, tell us what
13 changes you would like to see, because we are
14 going to start with the will of the people.
15 That is what we are elected to do.

16 There are a couple other things out
17 there -- that were said tonight that I think
18 are going to get answered, but we get paid to
19 get beat up. That is why they pay us the big
20 bucks, both of them.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.
22 Other members of the House? If not, Senator
23 Detert, you are recognized.

24 SENATOR DETERT: It is probably not in my
25 best interest to tell you what I think, but,

1 frankly, I am very disappointed in our
2 community. If you recall last year, we spent
3 about a half a million dollars to promote
4 civility, and for this woman in the front to
5 stand up and say, "Stop, the child is
6 fighting," this is our half of the table. This
7 is my good friend, Senator Joyner, from a
8 gerrymandered district, my good friend, the
9 Democrat. Nobody on this side of the table is
10 fighting. None of this group is fighting over
11 districts or anything else. We came to listen.

12 I thank the Representatives, look at the
13 size of the crowd that came here today, they
14 came early, they took a tour of the Ringling
15 Museum. I was hoping they would be impressed
16 with our community, because they all get to
17 vote on our budget, things like this
18 university, things that we want for our
19 community. This is an opportunity to showcase
20 the community. It is also an opportunity to
21 participate in your government. Now, you can
22 either have tons of paranoia run rampant and
23 you can protest, or you can pull up a chair and
24 you can participate.

25 In the past, districts were gerrymandered.

1 No one at this table probably drew any of the
2 districts, the salamander, the this, the that,
3 the whatever.

4 The best testimony we had today was this
5 morning in Largo at 8:00 a.m. from an
6 84-year-old woman who was probably the smartest
7 woman in the room. She's seen lots of
8 redistricting. And she referred to one map as
9 the bug splat. Peggy Simone, you probably did
10 that, for crying out loud. So it is not like
11 gerrymandering is new.

12 This is the most open, transparent
13 situation you will ever see up until now,
14 thanks to things like technology, the Internet.
15 There are no maps in the back room that we are
16 all going to run back there and arm wrestle
17 over. In fact, I have to congratulate our
18 Chairman, Senator Gaetz. The very first
19 meeting we ever had -- and he told this to me,
20 frankly, in private, he said, "I don't even
21 want to know where anybody on the Committee
22 lives." And you know what? I don't want to
23 know where anybody on the Committee lives
24 either.

25 I think -- I did participate in

1 redistricting in the year 2000. I personally
2 drew District 70. I think it is compact. I
3 think it is a community of interest. You have
4 to hit the numbers. There are certain rules.
5 And for you all to stand up and read us the
6 rules, guess what, we know the rules. We have
7 read the amendments, and we did not start out
8 this meeting by saying we have no intention of
9 keeping any of the rules.

10 So, frankly, I am a little disappointed in
11 the lack of civility. I think we have been as
12 polite on our side of the table as we can be.
13 We intend to be fair, and, really, you probably
14 won't know until we do produce the maps, and
15 then you will -- and then you will be --

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am, ma'am, ma'am --

17 SENATOR DETERT: And I thank you all for
18 staying this late, because you will hear some
19 of your questions answered by Representative
20 Weatherford, who I turn over the mike to now.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and with that,
22 I will recognize the Speaker Designate, and
23 he's made a list of some of the questions that
24 have not been responded to, and we will ask him
25 to respond to those questions now, and please

1 give him your attention.

2 Mr. Speaker.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
4 very much, Mr. Chairman. It's been a great
5 hearing, and thank you all for staying so late
6 and sitting through this entire hearing and
7 giving us an opportunity to talk to you and to
8 respond to some of the questions, a lot of the
9 questions that probably need to be clarified.
10 And so I am going to do my best to do that, but
11 first I did want to say there was one
12 gentleman, Mr. Chairman, who complimented your
13 ability to chair this hearing, and I stole one
14 of the band-aids from Darryl Rouson, I just
15 think you should have one yourself, too. So
16 feel free to partake.

17 But I want to say there were a lot of
18 things mentioned tonight, and I am going to try
19 to go through them systematically. One person
20 I thought had an interesting question, the
21 first time I have heard this, Mr. Chairman, in
22 probably over 1,000 people who have spoken
23 before this committee, maybe 2,000, and that
24 question was this: What have you learned since
25 hearing all this public testimony? And we have

1 probably had 70 hours plus of public testimony
2 thus far. And I thought that was a very
3 interesting question, and so I am going to
4 briefly tell you a couple of things I think I
5 have learned.

6 The first thing I have heard and I have
7 learned is I have heard from every Supervisor
8 of Elections that has talked to us about the
9 efforts you have put in in putting the VTDS
10 together, and to make sure, since you put all
11 that detail into work, that we utilize that and
12 honor that in our process, and I hear you loud
13 and clear, we hear all of you loud and clear, I
14 want to thank you for that. That has been
15 very, very helpful.

16 The other thing we have heard a lot about
17 is I have heard several people talk about
18 transportation corridors; in other words, talk
19 about how far it takes for them to get from
20 where they live to maybe the district office of
21 the person who represents them. And so
22 transportation matters, and roads and bridges
23 and railroad tracks and things that get you
24 from A to Z actually matter. And so I have
25 learned a lot about that, and I didn't know

1 much about Sarasota and Manatee except for the
2 few times I have driven through here or come to
3 visit some of my friends, and so we are
4 learning as we are sitting here about the
5 different transportation needs and corridors of
6 your community. I have learned a lot about
7 that today and about our state, and that has
8 been very helpful to me as well.

9 The last thing I have heard a lot about
10 that I think I didn't recognize until this
11 process started is that the Federal Voting
12 Rights Act mandates that the Legislature
13 analyze where cohesive minority communities
14 exist, and we have received tremendous
15 information, both in Orlando and in Miami and
16 in Tampa, on this exact issue. We have heard a
17 lot about it in regards to District 55 just
18 here tonight, and that has been very helpful,
19 too. So that was a great question. I could
20 probably go on for a long time about things I
21 have learned. Those are a couple of things,
22 but I hadn't heard that yet, and I wanted to
23 make sure I responded to it.

24 Something we hear everywhere we go -- so I
25 started with something I never hear, and now I

1 am going to start with something I hear
2 everywhere we go. Something we hear everywhere
3 we go, and there were several comments made
4 tonight about it, was the timeline. And I
5 stated this in my opening, but in case anybody
6 missed it, I want to say it one more time. The
7 Constitution of the State of Florida is very
8 clear. We cannot -- we cannot vote on
9 legislative maps until 2012. We cannot do it.
10 It is illegal.

11 Okay. Now, that being said, the question
12 is, what are we going to do with the time
13 leading up to that, right? Well, we have
14 already moved session from March to January,
15 that is a start. So what are we going to do
16 with the six or seven months before that? We
17 were one of the last states, not the last
18 state, one of the last states to get our census
19 data in the entire country. Okay. Now, we
20 have started since session got out on what we
21 are calling a listening tour. We started in
22 Pensacola. We are working our way all the way
23 down the state. This is our last week. You
24 are one of our last meetings that we are
25 having. We are going to spend -- we have spent

1 the entire summer listening to people just like
2 you, over 1,000 people thus far. And then we
3 are going to spend the fall months analyzing
4 the information that you have given us and
5 utilizing it to put it into action, into
6 drawing maps. And then when we get into
7 session, we are going to vote on maps. Ladies
8 and gentlemen, that is the process. That is
9 the timeline. We are not slowing down
10 anything. That is what we are going to do, and
11 I hope you hold me accountable to that, because
12 that is exactly what the Chairman and I plan on
13 doing going forward.

14 The other thing I want to mention in
15 regard to the timeline is that Fair Districts
16 could have easily addressed this. In other
17 states, they have constitutional requirements
18 about when they can vote on their maps, just
19 like we do. If this was such a big problem,
20 and if everybody recognized that we should have
21 sped up the timeline, why didn't we include in
22 the Fair District amendments the timeline and
23 made it an off-cycle amendment? They could
24 have easily said, "Let's vote on maps in 2011.
25 That way, we will have a year and a half to

1 decide who we are going to vote on and get all
2 this stuff out of the way." Somebody who was
3 crafting those amendments specifically chose
4 not to do that, and I can't tell you what the
5 reasons are, but my point is it wasn't
6 important a year and a half or two years ago,
7 but now it seems to be the most important
8 thing.

9 We are dealing with the timeline that we
10 have. Our Constitution says what it says, and
11 we are going to follow it and do it as quickly
12 as we possibly can.

13 Another question was Ms. Hepburn asked are
14 we going to be done in time for qualifying. I
15 can assure you there are deadlines that we
16 have, like we have to pass maps before session
17 is out in the first week in March. That is a
18 deadline. We have no plan or hope to go that
19 late in the process. We want to pass the maps
20 as quickly as we can possibly can. But, also,
21 something we have no control over is what the
22 Supreme Court will do or what the Department of
23 Justice will do. And so I hope, as you are
24 telling us to speed up our timeline, that you
25 will spend as much time and effort in reminding

1 those branches of government to speed up their
2 timeline as well.

3 Lastly, Senator Gaetz -- in regard to the
4 timeline, Senator Gaetz this morning brought up
5 something that I thought was very interesting,
6 and I hadn't heard this yet and I still want to
7 think it over, but he said -- we had heard so
8 much about the timeline and the confusion about
9 the timeline, he said, "Why don't we have a
10 constitutional amendment so that ten years from
11 now we won't have the exact same problem? We
12 will just say you have to draw the maps in
13 2011, or what now would be 2021, and we won't
14 have this problem anymore." And I think that
15 is a very interesting suggestion and something
16 that this Committee should consider going
17 forward.

18 Another question we hear everywhere we go:
19 Where are the maps, big question mark. Where
20 are the maps? Why haven't you brought the maps
21 to us? This is a chicken versus the egg debate
22 that we hear in every town hall meeting that we
23 have, and I want -- I want to articulate it
24 this way first: In politics, probably the
25 biggest criticism I get when I go to have town

1 hall meetings in my district or when I speak to
2 groups is they ask us why we voted on certain
3 things or why we made decisions without
4 listening to the citizens first. Senate Bill
5 6, I cannot tell you how many people over
6 Senate Bill 6 said, "Why didn't you listen to
7 us first? Why didn't you ask the teachers
8 first? Why didn't you spend time with your
9 constituents first?" Ladies and gentlemen,
10 this is a big deal. We are changing the
11 political landscape in Florida for the next ten
12 years. Wouldn't it be prudent of us to come
13 and to listen to people first and to give us
14 some thoughts and some guidance before we draw
15 maps?

16 Next, the Chairwoman of Fair Districts --
17 of the Fair Districts campaign spoke before a
18 joint committee of House members, Senators,
19 Republicans, Democrats, and stood at a podium
20 and told us she would not even attempt to draw
21 maps unless she had heard from the public
22 first, and that is the lady who crafted and
23 pushed and campaigned for the Fair District
24 amendments, which everyone in here has said
25 they are in support of.

1 Lastly, everywhere we go, the League of
2 Women Voters has talked about how important it
3 is that we draw maps now and that we don't ask
4 for public input. And I think the League of
5 Women Voters has done some unbelievably
6 tremendous things for our country, fighting for
7 women's suffrage, making sure that we do have
8 fair districts in this process across the
9 country. However, there seems to be some
10 inconsistencies within the League of Women
11 Voters when it comes to map making, and I want
12 to give you one example.

13 In Georgia, as of the last week, there the
14 League of Women Voters not only prepared and
15 publicized its own redistricting maps, it
16 organized a map fair at the Georgia State
17 Capitol and encouraged members of the public to
18 present their own maps. "Our goal" -- and I
19 quote, "Our goal throughout this process is to
20 ensure that citizens have a voice," said the
21 President of the League of Women Voters of
22 Georgia, "and what better way to do this than
23 to bring people and maps down to the Capitol?"
24 If it works for the League of Women Voters in
25 Georgia, I am a little bit confused as to why

1 it doesn't work for the League of Women Voters
2 in Florida. That is a very important thing to
3 mention as well.

4 Litigation, we have heard about the
5 litigation, and people -- there's a lot of
6 confusion around litigation. I want to be very
7 clear about this. Litigation is going on. It
8 is only going on in regard to Amendment 6. So
9 the amendment that deals with the legislative
10 maps, House and Senate maps, there is no
11 litigation in regard to that amendment.
12 Amendment 6 that deals with congressional maps,
13 there is litigation going on with Amendment 6.
14 The litigation was originally filed by a
15 Republican Congressman from Miami and a
16 Democratic Congresswoman from Jacksonville.
17 They were the ones who originally filed the
18 amendments. And it is going to have an effect
19 at some point, but myself, the Chairman and
20 every member of the Legislature has sworn an
21 oath to protect and defend the Constitution of
22 the United States and the Constitution of
23 Florida, and that means, to me, that Amendments
24 5 and 6 are the law, and we will follow every
25 single word. You have our word on that.

1 The indication that there is a \$30 million
2 fund for litigation, that somehow the
3 Legislature or the Florida House has set aside
4 a \$30 million fund to fight Amendments 5 and 6
5 is simply not true. Senator Gaetz said that
6 sometimes things get in the bloodstream, and
7 there was an article and there was one
8 newspaper who seems to think that it was true.
9 It is their opinion, it is not fact. And if
10 you do not believe me, if you do not believe
11 me, you can go onto a website, and the website
12 is called transparencyflorida.org, and
13 Transparency Florida will show you every dollar
14 that is being spent by state government, and I
15 will implore anyone who can show me a
16 \$30 million pot of money that is set aside
17 specifically for redistricting and lawsuits.
18 It does not exist, ladies and gentlemen, that
19 is not true.

20 A VOICE: How much has been --

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I tell you
22 what, I don't have that number. There was an
23 article that was written, and I think the
24 number that they threw up that had been spent
25 on litigation was somewhere in a couple hundred

1 thousand dollars, but, sir, to be honest with
2 you, I will get that number to you, we will
3 make that available and we will put it on our
4 website, on floridaredistricting.org. We will
5 find a number that has been spent, we will do
6 our due diligence, we will put it up there so
7 you can see it. Okay. We will do that.

8 I am not going to get into get into --
9 hold on. Ladies and gentlemen, we have been
10 listening for three hours, I am going to wrap
11 this up, and I will be here afterwards if you
12 want to ask questions, please.

13 There was a question about have we put out
14 the schedule yet for the fall. The answer to
15 that question is, no, we have not put the
16 schedule out for the fall. But if you go to
17 our website, floridaredistricting.org, or the
18 Senate website, you can get that information,
19 it will be forthcoming in the coming weeks.

20 The other question they had was were there
21 members on the Committee, will they all be --
22 are the members here all on the Committee?
23 Most of them are, but we encourage all members,
24 whether they are on the Committee or not, to
25 participate in the process.

1 A couple of things, and I am going to end.
2 There's a lot of tension involved in this
3 process. Some people here said, "We made our
4 voices clear when we voted for Amendments 5 and
5 6, just do your job." That is a fair
6 assessment, and I respect that position, but
7 let me point out a couple of things. I heard
8 some people show up here today and say that
9 minority seats should be the number one
10 priority and making sure there's no
11 retrogression whatsoever, no matter what. I
12 heard some people show up today and say that
13 compactness should rule the day, and that
14 Sarasota and Manatee County should be together,
15 no matter what. I heard some people come up
16 and tell me that county boundaries were the
17 most important thing, and some counties aren't
18 as compact as others. I heard some come and
19 say that the communities of interest, whether
20 it was the western end of the county or the
21 eastern end or the agricultural community or
22 the industrial community, was the most
23 important thing. I had some folks talk about
24 political boundaries and roads and bridges. I
25 had -- I think you get my drift in that this is

1 not easy. And the reason is amendments 5 and 6
2 has a lot of standards, and a lot of them --
3 and they are good standards, and we should have
4 standards. But we should also hear from you
5 about what you think about the -- what you
6 think about them and the legal requirements
7 that come with them.

8 There was a comment about congressional
9 maps and whether or not they had to be exactly
10 the same. I think Senator Detert addressed
11 that, but just to be clear, 15 years ago we
12 drew them with only one person deviation. If
13 we do more than that, we do put ourselves in a
14 situation where the federal government could
15 reject our maps, and so we have to be extremely
16 careful. I don't want to say we can't have any
17 deviation, but we have to be extremely careful
18 about that.

19 There was a gentleman who asked us, do we
20 go to the courts again, and why do we go to the
21 courts again. I think it was a lady that asked
22 why are we going to the courts again. Ladies
23 and gentlemen, it is mandated by the
24 Constitution, it has to go to the courts, it
25 also has to go to the Department of Justice,

1 and they will both look at these maps once they
2 are passed.

3 The last thing I will leave everyone with
4 is this: We want to get this right. We are
5 all here, we are here to listen to you, we are
6 here to hear a great amount of public
7 testimony. The last thing I want to do is do
8 this wrong. My mother always told me that she
9 would tell me when something was fair, she
10 would let me know if something was fair, and my
11 guess is you will let us know if it's fair when
12 we put it out there. So do me a favor, hold us
13 accountable. Continue to follow what we are
14 doing. Go to our websites, learn more about
15 what we are doing. Your input tonight has been
16 tremendous, and I thank you for that and thank
17 you for your attention and for your civility.
18 And, Mr. Chairman, thank you for a great
19 hearing. Thank you all very much.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: And with that,
21 Representative Weatherford moves we rise.

22 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
23 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 168 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 28th day of November 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2011

6:00 P.M.

VETERANS PARK RECREATION CENTER

LEHIGH ACRES, FLORIDA

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 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you all. You may be
3 seated. The Joint Senate/House Redistricting
4 Hearing is called to order. We are pleased to
5 be joined tonight by members of the House of
6 Representatives Redistricting Committee and the
7 Senate Reapportionment Committee.

8 We will ask them to identify themselves so
9 you will know with whom you are sharing your
10 ideas. We really thank the Lee County and Lee
11 County Parks and Recreation Department for
12 allowing us to use this wonderful facility.

13 We are very grateful to them and grateful
14 to you for being here, especially those who are
15 here to share their observations, share their
16 ideas and their comments, and especially those
17 who have come with specific assistance for us
18 and guidance for us on neighborhoods and
19 communities in this area and how and where they
20 ought to be districted.

21 My name is Don Gaetz. I serve in the
22 Florida Senate. My Senate district stretches
23 from Pensacola to east of Panama City. That is
24 way up in the Florida Panhandle in the Central
25 Time Zone, so I am an hour later -- you're an

1 hour later than I am, I am an hour earlier, so
2 I am not nearly as tired as you are.

3 My House colleague, Representative John
4 Legg, will be co-Chairing this evening's
5 hearing with me, which is being broadcast
6 tonight by The Florida Channel statewide over
7 the Internet.

8 So if you are going to speak tonight, be
9 sure to check your makeup, your hair,
10 straighten your tie, because you will be on
11 statewide TV.

12 Our sole purpose tonight is to hear from
13 the public about how you believe the legal
14 standards governing redistricting ought to be
15 applied in your community so that you are
16 represented in Washington and Tallahassee
17 fairly, equitably and sensibly. Let me
18 reemphasize that.

19 The question is not if our legal
20 standards, both state and federal, are going to
21 be applied. That is not debatable. What we
22 have come to ask for your guidance on is how
23 those standards, state and federal, ought to be
24 applied in your community, and we hope to get
25 some very substantive testimony this evening.

1 Before we go any further, I would like to
2 ask our House and Senate members if they would
3 identify themselves, indicate what House you
4 serve in and also what part of the state you
5 are from.

6 And maybe we can begin, if we can turn the
7 mike on and it doesn't feed back, with Senator
8 Benacquisto.

9 SENATOR BENACQUISTO: Thank you, Chairman
10 Gaetz. Good evening, everyone. Thank you so
11 much for coming. I am Lizbeth Benacquisto, and
12 I have the absolute incredible privilege to
13 represent Senate District 27, and I welcome all
14 of my colleagues in the House and Senate to my
15 district this evening, and I am glad to have
16 the opportunity to share some time with you
17 all, such a wonderful group of community
18 leaders who have come tonight to share your
19 opinions on how we should draw the maps and how
20 it relates to your particular community.

21 So thank you all for coming, and we look
22 forward to a great evening tonight.

23 SENATOR JOYNER: Good evening. My name is
24 Arthenia Joyner. I am State Senator from
25 District 18 encompassing portions of

1 Hillsborough, Pinellas and Manatee Counties,
2 Tampa, St. Petersburg and Bradenton, and
3 welcome and thank you for coming.

4 SENATOR NEGRON: Good evening. My name is
5 Joe Negron. I represent Senate District 28,
6 which is southeast Florida, northern Palm Beach
7 County and parts of Okeechobee County. And if
8 we have a little time after 9:00, we can have a
9 little pickup basketball game if anybody is
10 interested.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Good evening. I
12 am Trudi Williams. I represent District 75,
13 which is Lee and parts of Collier County, and
14 thanks for everyone being here, it is much
15 appreciated.

16 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good evening.
17 My name is Chuck Chestnut, House District 23.
18 That is a portion of Alachua County and Marion
19 County.

20 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good evening. My
21 name is State Representative Mack Bernard, and
22 since we are moving closer to my district, I
23 represent the cities of Belle Glade, Pahokee
24 and South Bay.

25 REPRESENTATIVE JONES: Good evening. I am

1 State Representative Mia Jones, representing
2 District 14 in Jacksonville, Florida.

3 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Good evening. I
4 am Dennis Baxley, serving in the Florida House,
5 District 24, from Ocala and Marion County,
6 Florida.

7 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Good evening.
8 My name is Daphne Campbell, State House
9 District 108 from Miami-Dade County.

10 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good evening.
11 I am State Representative Gwyndolen
12 Clarke-Reed, serving Broward County, House
13 District 92, serving seven cities: Deerfield
14 Beach, Pompano Beach, Oakland Park, Wilton
15 Manors, a little bit of north Ft. Lauderdale, a
16 little bit of North Lauderdale and Tamarac.
17 Glad to be here and good to see you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good evening,
19 Hazelle Rogers representing District 94, eight
20 cities in Broward County, one of the most
21 diverse counties in the state of Florida,
22 boasting 1.8 million in population. My cities
23 for District 94: Lauderdale Lakes, Lauderhill,
24 Margate, Tamarac, Sunrise, Oakland Park and
25 Plantation. Thank you very much, listening --

1 here to listen to you. This is my 24th
2 meeting, Mr. Chairman.

3 SENATOR ALTMAN: Senator Thad Altman,
4 District 24, which encompasses Brevard,
5 Seminole and Orange County, better known as the
6 Space Coast, runs from the Space Center to Palm
7 Bay over to Orlando.

8 REPRESENTATIVE BURGIN: Good evening,
9 State Representative Rachel Burgin from
10 District 56, which is Tampa, Riverview,
11 Brandon, Gibsonton, eastern Hillsborough County
12 area. It is wonderful to be here with you this
13 evening.

14 SENATOR STORMS: Good evening. I am
15 Senator Storms and I represent District 10,
16 which is Hillsborough County. If you think of
17 I-75, I am a little bit to the east of Tampa,
18 the Tampa community. I include a little bit of
19 Pasco County, which is Zephyrhills, and a
20 little bit of Polk County, a little part of
21 where Publix' headquarters is off of Wabash in
22 Lakeland, and I am so glad to be here. You all
23 have a high bar to set.

24 We left Naples, and those folks there,
25 even when they disagreed with us, were so kind

1 when they -- we felt loved on after they took
2 us to the woodshed. So I am really looking
3 forward to hearing from you all and seeing if
4 you can outdo in civility what Naples did for
5 us. Thank you very much for being here.

6 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good evening. I
7 am John Patrick Julien, representing House
8 District 104, which is in Miami-Dade County.
9 House District 104 encompasses the cities of
10 North Miami Beach, North Miami, Miami Gardens,
11 Opa-Locka, Miami and a large chunk of
12 unincorporated Miami-Dade. It is a pleasure to
13 be here.

14 REPRESENTATIVE ROBERSON: Good evening. I
15 am State Representative Ken Roberson. I
16 represent parts of Charlotte, Sarasota and Lee
17 County. District 71 runs from the City of
18 North Port in southern Sarasota County down to
19 North Ft. Myers. Thank you for coming.

20 SENATOR RICHTER: Greetings, my name is
21 Garrett Richter. I represent portions of
22 Collier and Lee County, and I want to extend my
23 appreciation to each and every one of you for
24 giving up your evening gear to come and be a
25 part of this public process. Thank you all

1 very much for being here tonight.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: I am Kathleen
3 Passidomo, and I represent House District 76,
4 which is Collier County, City of Naples, City
5 of Marco Island, City of Everglades City, and I
6 am thrilled to be here. Thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Good evening,
8 representative Matt Caldwell in the Florida
9 House, and happy that we are able to have this
10 meeting here tonight in my hometown here in the
11 district. Thank you very much. And I am
12 confident that this community will prove
13 Senator Storms correct and that we can
14 out-civil the community of Naples here this
15 evening. Thank you all very much for being
16 here.

17 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: Tough act to follow.
18 I am Representative John Legg, I represent west
19 Pasco County.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: And joining us tonight,
21 and none of what we discuss tonight is his
22 fault, unless we get into deep water and then
23 we do plan to blame him, is someone I think
24 many of you know very well, the former
25 Lieutenant Governor of the State of Florida,

1 the Honorable Jeff Kottkamp. Governor, it is
2 great to see you.

3 Folks, our procedures tonight -- I'm
4 sorry, a late addition.

5 REPRESENTATIVE AUBUCHON: Thank you. My
6 name is Gary Aubuchon, and I represent the
7 western side of Lee County and parts of
8 Charlotte County, and from 1985 to 1989 was a
9 resident of Lehigh Acres.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Getting the hometown
11 advantage.

12 Ladies and gentlemen, our procedures
13 tonight are simple, but they are important. It
14 is important that you sign in so that we can
15 create an accurate public record of all
16 attendees and all speakers. And, also, if you
17 sign in, you will be on our e-mail list so that
18 we can keep you informed about the progress of
19 redistricting as it goes forward.

20 If you have not signed in and you want to
21 designate that you were here tonight, and we
22 hope you will, please raise your hand, and
23 somebody will get to you with one of these
24 cards.

25 It is the same card to sign in just to be

1 here and watch your friends and neighbors as it
2 is if you wish to speak. So if you wish to
3 speak, and even if you told us by e-mail last
4 week or two weeks or three weeks ago that you
5 intended to be here, if you want to speak
6 tonight and you haven't filled out one of these
7 cards, it would be very helpful if you would
8 raise your hand, and one of our professional
9 staff will get to you, because we don't want to
10 miss a word of your testimony or a single
11 person who wants to testify tonight.

12 Before we begin, the Chair will recognize
13 Representative Legg on behalf of the House
14 Redistricting Committee to explain how today's
15 hearing fits into the redistricting process and
16 the schedule. Representative.

17 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: Thank you,
18 Mr. Chairman. Every ten years, the Legislature
19 is required by our Constitution to redistrict
20 the states based on increases, decreases and
21 movements in population. Because Florida has
22 grown more than other states in the last ten
23 years, we will move up from 25 to 27 members of
24 the U.S. House of Representatives. Because
25 some parts of our states have increased or

1 decreased disproportionately in population,
2 many Senate and House districts will change,
3 either by adding or losing population.

4 When redistrict is completed,
5 congressional districts must equal in
6 population containing 696,345 people. The 40
7 Senate districts must also be nearly equal at
8 about 470,000 people, and our 120 House
9 districts must also be nearly equal at about
10 156,700 people. We have displays at the front
11 of the room showing the current boundaries of
12 the districts in the area of the state and the
13 numbers of persons which must be added or
14 subtracted from the current districts to
15 achieve that equal population.

16 Equality of representation isn't the only
17 legal requirement redistricting plans must
18 meet. The law and important court cases
19 governing redistricting are explained in detail
20 on the House and Senate websites. Those
21 websites are listed on the "Redistricting 2012"
22 brochure that was available when you came in.

23 Our "Redistricting 2012" brochure
24 summarizes federal and state laws, and outlines
25 topics we hope you will discuss here at today's

1 meeting. If you did not get a copy when you
2 came in, they are available on the table
3 outside the meeting. Our staff will be happy
4 to get you a copy of the brochure if you need
5 it.

6 The brochure also lists House and Senate
7 websites. The websites are packed with
8 information about redistricting Florida,
9 including an explanation of the laws and
10 important court cases governing redistricting.
11 The two websites are complementary and are
12 updated frequently. Visit both and check back
13 often.

14 It is a great way to stay current about
15 how your new congressional, new State Senate
16 and State House districts are taking shape.

17 The websites also deliver to your
18 fingertips all the demographic information that
19 will be used in drawing districts, and the
20 exact same computer programs that legislators
21 and their professional staff will use.

22 Any member of the public can participate
23 in building plans or seeing maps submitted by
24 legislators or other citizens. Before, during
25 and after this hearing, Senate and House

1 professional staff are available to show anyone
2 the simple steps to getting an outline,
3 building districts and submitting a plan now or
4 in the weeks to come.

5 Recommendations from citizens and groups
6 of citizens will be made public -- will be made
7 publicly available. In fact, as of this
8 afternoon, 50 public submissions of partial or
9 completed maps and many other written ideas for
10 maps are available on the Web.

11 And during the time that we drove from our
12 meeting in Naples this morning to this evening
13 here, we received three more public
14 submissions. After this week, I am sure those
15 numbers will increase dramatically.

16 The submission of the proposed maps that
17 makes sense for your community is the single
18 most effective form of public participation in
19 this redistricting process.

20 The redistricting schedule under which we
21 are operating is imposed by the State
22 Constitution. The Constitution does not permit
23 the Legislature to act on state legislative
24 maps before the second year after the census;
25 in other words, before 2012. We accelerated

1 this process as much as possible by moving up
2 the 2012 legislative session from March to
3 January, and by beginning our statewide
4 hearings five months in advance of the 2012
5 session.

6 It has been suggested that the Legislature
7 should draw the maps first and then ask for
8 public to comment. We believe that is putting
9 the answer ahead of the question.

10 There should be no preconceptions created
11 by politicians, but, rather, public testimony
12 should be free and unrestricted.

13 In fact, the principal author of the
14 Florida's new redistricting standards and the
15 Chairperson for the Fair District campaigns are
16 on record and in agreement with the notion that
17 no new maps should be -- be not drawn until
18 after the public has an opportunity to comment.

19 Our intention is to use the recommendation
20 made at the 26 public hearings and through our
21 Internet sites as the basis for developing one
22 or more options for district maps.

23 We will discuss those options in an open
24 public meeting before any votes are taken, even
25 in committee.

1 In other words, what we are literally
2 saying is if you look at those maps outside
3 this room, the ones actually submitted by the
4 Legislature -- to the Legislature by Florida
5 residents, we are literally starting the
6 legislative process with those maps and other
7 suggestions from the public.

8 So if you want to know where we will begin
9 our deliberation, it is with those public
10 submissions, testimonies from these meetings
11 and other public input.

12 Throughout the process, we will solicit
13 additional public comment so that proposed maps
14 can mature with the public involved, all before
15 the Legislature approves the final map.
16 Whatever the Legislature passes then is
17 submitted for judicial review to ensure that
18 the final plans meet every single legal
19 requirement.

20 Because our purpose today is to hear from
21 you, all the time between now and 9:00 p.m.
22 will be used to ensure that every member of the
23 public who is here and wishes to speak will
24 have the time to present testimony and be
25 listened to respectfully without interruption

1 or argument.

2 If after every citizen has had his or her
3 say there is time remaining before our
4 scheduled adjournment, any member of the
5 Committee may make any statement or offer any
6 observation. Of course, any member of the
7 Legislature may today or at any time propose a
8 map or a plan, and we will make it available to
9 the public.

10 Mr. Chairman, I hope this description of
11 our schedule and process helps set the stage
12 for a successful and productive meeting
13 tonight.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Representative,
15 and you will notice that many of us will be
16 making notes during the hearing tonight. There
17 will be also a video record made of the hearing
18 so that everything that everyone says will be
19 on the record. We can refer back to it as we
20 are deliberating in Tallahassee, but, also, at
21 the end of the hearing, we are going to ask
22 members of the Committee to answer any
23 questions, offer any observations, make any
24 suggestions that they might want to make or if
25 the spirit moves them to make a statement of

1 some sort. We have done that at every single
2 hearing.

3 And then if there are questions of fact
4 that come up, and that has happened at every
5 hearing, we will try, time permitting, to
6 answer any questions of fact, because once in a
7 while, things get in the bloodstream that
8 aren't quite factual, and this is an
9 opportunity -- everybody is entitled to their
10 own opinion, but this is an opportunity for all
11 of us to leave here at least with the same set
12 of facts.

13 Now, we -- the good news is we have a
14 large number of people who would like to
15 testify tonight, and we want to hear every one
16 of them. That means that in fairness and
17 respect to your friends and neighbors who have
18 come to testify, we are going to ask everyone
19 to limit their verbal comments to about three
20 minutes.

21 Now, if you've got a longer script, we
22 would love to have it all. If you have
23 additional comments that you would like to make
24 and time doesn't permit it, then just provide
25 those comments to one of the members of our

1 professional staff.

2 All of what you would submit tonight in
3 writing or verbally will be in the record and
4 distributed to all the members of the House and
5 Senate committees, whether they are here or
6 not, and made available as a part of the public
7 record for all members of the Florida public,
8 all citizens.

9 What I would like to do is call three
10 names at once, and we have -- over here on my
11 left in the front row, we've got an on deck
12 circle.

13 So if I call you, please come forward and
14 get in the on deck circle. That way, you can
15 move right up and speak and we won't waste time
16 waiting for folks to wind their way through the
17 audience. Instead we will be able to get to
18 everybody, hopefully, who would like to chat
19 this evening.

20 We are starting with Curtis Hamilton,
21 representing the AARP, and Mr. Hamilton,
22 following your testimony, we would like to hear
23 from Lorenzo Tindal, and then if Kevin Shea
24 will come. Lorenzo and Kevin Shea, if you will
25 take your place in the on deck circle.

1 Mr. Hamilton, thanks for starting us off
2 tonight, and the floor is yours.

3 MR. HAMILTON: Thank you. Good evening,
4 Chairman, committee members, and visiting
5 legislators. My name is Curtis Hamilton. I
6 live in Cape Coral. I am pleased to speak as
7 an AARP volunteer and as President of the Cape
8 Coral AARP chapter.

9 AARP is a strictly nonpartisan
10 organization that seeks to improve the quality
11 of life for all of us as we age. It has over
12 39 million members nationally and almost three
13 million here in Florida.

14 Transparency and timeliness are key
15 elements of the redistricting process and must
16 be followed. The voters of Florida we feel
17 have spoken clearly about redistricting by
18 decisively passing Amendments 5 and 6 and I
19 want to compliment you for your 26 statewide
20 hearings, which have gone forward with full
21 disclosure and public input.

22 The public needs not only the opportunity
23 to comment, but to have those comments
24 meaningfully considered and not cast aside as
25 part of a political game. We expect our

1 Legislature to act with integrity and honor for
2 the citizens of Florida, and not to end up with
3 a gerrymandered mess that is left to the courts
4 to decide.

5 The timeliness of the process is crucial.
6 The procedural steps, both legislative and
7 non-legislative, must be achieved in order for
8 there to be timely qualification of the 2012
9 election candidates with new districts and for
10 campaigns prior to voters casting their
11 ballots.

12 So you need, obviously, to complete this
13 project sooner rather than later. We ask you
14 to post your proposed maps, of course, as soon
15 as possible, which you have indicated you are
16 willing certainly to do.

17 In conclusion, I want to say thank you for
18 your really excellent website. I hope that you
19 keep your focus on my favorite comment about
20 government, "Of the people, by the people and
21 for the people," which makes Fair Districts not
22 just a choice, but a necessity. Make Florida
23 proud of you. Thank you.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much.
25 Excellent testimony.

1 And now, following Mr. Tindal and
2 Mr. Shea, if Jim Roach would come forward and
3 take his place in the on deck circle.

4 Mr. Tindal, thank you very much for coming
5 here tonight. You could be other places, sir,
6 and we appreciate your giving us some time.

7 MR. TINDAL: Thank you, Chairman Gaetz,
8 and thank you all the Representatives from the
9 State of Florida for attending our fair city of
10 Lehigh Acres in southwest Florida.

11 I am sure there are many concerns here
12 tonight about the redistricting, and many
13 people, you know, who are not going to be able
14 to speak, you know, have concerns. My main
15 concern is that there may be a dilution of the
16 minority vote due to the -- due to the
17 redistricting.

18 And I have a question, you know, for the
19 Chair and Senator Benacquisto and
20 Representative Caldwell, who represent our
21 area: Is there a map currently drawn of the
22 proposed redistricting?

23 And in just closing, I would like for the
24 entire body here to keep with the spirit of the
25 state and federal standards, and I am asking

1 all of you to truly consider the framework of
2 Section 2 and 5 of the Voting Rights Act when
3 you are reviewing the redistricting public
4 input. Thanks.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
6 Appreciate your testimony.

7 Now we will hear from Kevin Shea, and when
8 Mr. Shea is finished, Jim Roach and then Ben
9 Nelson from the City of Bonita Springs.

10 Mr. Shea, thank you for coming tonight.
11 We are grateful for your testimony.

12 MR. SHEA: Mr. Chairman, Vice-Chair,
13 members, ladies and gentlemen, I am Kevin Shea
14 from Lehigh Acres. I have been very interested
15 in the issue of redistricting for 50 years. I
16 started studying intensely this issue in 1960
17 when I was in high school and subsequent
18 college and university. I have also done two
19 stints with the Department of Commerce, Bureau
20 of Census.

21 I was in the 2000 census, the area group
22 leader for Lehigh and the greater area of this
23 county. I have -- I am a retired federal
24 administrative hearing officer, and I have
25 studied this issue from history, political

1 science and law.

2 When this thing was adopted, as an
3 analyst, it appeared to me that things had
4 gotten a little too clever by two. However,
5 the proponents of this did not realize the
6 legal significance of the U.S. Supreme Court
7 case of Bartlett v. Strickland, which declared
8 that Section 2 of the CRA was not applicable in
9 certain ways.

10 What we need here is to think in terms of
11 Florida as a unified state of people working
12 together to solve our problems, not split into
13 a variety of competing ethnic clashes and so
14 forth. Miami-Dade has like 19 subgroups of
15 Hispanics.

16 We do not need ethnic warfare in this
17 state, ethnic gerrymandering, which is just as
18 bad as incumbent self-protection racket, which
19 has been the standard for redistricting for
20 multiple census.

21 The structure should follow natural
22 geographic and county lines per Section 21 of
23 Article III. However, I have listened to
24 numerous testimony in these meetings, and there
25 seems to be a repetition about community

1 interest.

2 However, community interest is not the
3 defined constitutional standard, although I
4 realize there was an attempt to propose such a
5 supplemental amendment during this last
6 election.

7 What is the natural process here locally
8 is to end the gerrymandered districts that we
9 already have, such as Senate District 27.
10 Also, on the east coast where Boynton Beach is,
11 it has an infamous reputation as one of the 20
12 most gerrymandered districts in the United
13 States.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Mr. Shea, I need to ask
15 you if you could put a bow on it just because
16 we have so many people behind you.

17 MR. SHEA: Thank you very much.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

19 MR. SHEA: The natural demarcation line is
20 the western boundaries of Palm Beach, Broward
21 and so forth, and to go north from that, the
22 natural three structures.

23 I will volunteer my analytics. If you
24 wish to, you can ask me for some analysis and
25 write-ups, and I would be most happy to do that

1 work.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

3 We appreciate your testimony and your offer.

4 MR. SHEA: Thank you very much, sir.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Our next speaker is Jim
6 Roach, and following Jim is Ben Nelson and then
7 Brian Farrar with the Bonita Springs Chamber.

8 Mr. Roach, appreciate your taking time to
9 come tonight, and the floor is yours.

10 MR. ROACH: Good evening, Senator and
11 Representatives. Thank you for coming to
12 Lehigh for taking our input. My name is Jim
13 Roach. I live in Cape Coral, but I come out to
14 Lehigh quite often, and I think Lehigh is a
15 good place to have this hearing. If you go
16 back ten years and look at the lines and you
17 look at the community of Lehigh, we have a
18 Senate district -- State Senate district that
19 divides Lehigh in half, north and south, and we
20 have a House district, two districts, that
21 divide it east and west.

22 So Lehigh being a community, as you draw
23 the maps this next time, would be nice to leave
24 us as a community here. I think that is
25 important.

1 I would also like to talk a little bit
2 about what we have heard a lot in the media
3 about providing us maps to talk about first,
4 and I think we have heard often enough, "Show
5 us the maps," and walking in today, I did see
6 the maps you have printed out from other
7 submissions, and that is a very good start.
8 But for the average voter, the average one of
9 us to look at that software and draw complete
10 state maps is a little difficult. We don't
11 have the resources you do. I am glad to see 50
12 people did submit maps. I think that is
13 important.

14 My question for our local Representatives,
15 Caldwell and Aubuchon, and Senator Benacquisto,
16 now that we have maps, and you had mentioned in
17 the opening that you were going to use those to
18 start from, do you plan on having public
19 meetings this fall so that we can come and talk
20 to you about the maps that have been submitted?
21 I think that would be an excellent way for us
22 to give you input based on something we can see
23 instead of something we might not see.

24 Let's see, a couple of other things just
25 on the general topic of what I think about when

1 I looked at those maps. I have to go back. My
2 father was in World War II, received a Purple
3 Heart, I was in Vietnam, received a Bronze
4 Star, fighting for our right to vote and
5 fighting, not only for that, but for our right
6 -- for our votes to count.

7 So if I can leave you with one thing as --
8 and most of you know I am a candidate for
9 Congress in an unnamed district in 2012, but
10 what I would like you to think about is what I
11 think about every day, and that is that my
12 country is more important than my party, and
13 the people of southwest Florida are more
14 important than my party, and the truth is more
15 important than my party. Please think about
16 that when you draw the lines. Thank you very
17 much.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir,
19 and thank you for your service to our country.

20 And now we would -- we will recognize Ben
21 Nelson from the City of Bonita Springs, then
22 Brian Farrar from the Chamber, and then Donald
23 Eslick, if you would come forward and join the
24 on deck circle.

25 Mr. Nelson, thank you for coming, and you

1 are recognized, sir.

2 MAYOR NELSON: Thank you very much. It
3 is good to be recognized somewhere.

4 I want to thank all of you, first of all,
5 for putting on this forum, for being here
6 tonight, and we really appreciate that.

7 It is really easy for us to kind of
8 critique the shape of the existing districts as
9 they are, it is real easy, as a matter of fact,
10 but one thing that I cannot do is discredit
11 your service. You have all served us very
12 well. For the City of Bonita Springs, on
13 behalf of our City Council and the 45,000
14 citizens, thank you so much for being
15 assessable for us, thank you so much for being
16 there for us and for representing us and -- the
17 best you can. You have always been there for
18 us.

19 We've provided your staff with a map. We
20 -- having invited us to tell you what to do, we
21 decided to tell you what to do. Isn't that
22 nice?

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Good man.

24 MAYOR NELSON: No problem. It is our
25 pleasure. And in a -- as a matter of fact, we

1 have our good neighbors here from Estero, we
2 agree on this subject. And is their
3 representative from Ft. Myers Beach here?
4 Seeing none, they agree with us, too. My City
5 Manager is going to have me for this, but --

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Are you sure you are not a
7 candidate for Congress?

8 MAYOR NELSON: Not at all, sir, not at
9 all.

10 But, anyway, I think that you will find
11 that our suggestion here, I won't go through
12 what it is there, but I think that you will
13 find them to be geographically compact, I think
14 you will find them to be concise, I think the
15 numbers add up, and I think that our
16 communities, more so over than that, we have so
17 much in common.

18 Our good friends here in Estero, ourselves
19 and Ft. Myers Beach, we share the Estero Bay
20 Aquatic Preserve, we share our watershed, we
21 share the DRGR. There are so many things we
22 have in common. We think that we are just --
23 all of these communities that you represent are
24 wonderful communities, but I think that this
25 speaks exactly to what this legislation ought

1 to reflect, and that is common need, common
2 good, common borders and good geographical
3 sense.

4 And I would thank you for your
5 consideration, and if you have any questions
6 during this process, especially -- especially
7 when you start to try to paste all of these
8 comments together, I have all the greatest
9 respect for that process, I have no idea how
10 you are going to do that, but we are there for
11 you. If you need some additional comments from
12 the communities and from municipalities, it is
13 our pleasure to comment. So thank you very
14 much, and, please, we are there for you. Thank
15 you.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, and
17 thanks so much for the submission. That will
18 be included in the considerations that the
19 Committee takes under advisement. We are very
20 grateful. This is the kind of information we
21 could not get otherwise.

22 Brian Farrar from the Bonita Springs
23 Chamber, then Donald Eslick, and then Marilyn
24 Edwards, if you would come forward.

25 And, Mr. Farrar, thanks for being here

1 tonight. The floor is yours, sir.

2 MR. FARRAR: Thank you very much. Thank
3 you, Mr. Chairman and all the committee members
4 that are here this evening. My name is Brian
5 Farrar. I am here on behalf of the Bonita
6 Springs Area Chamber of Commerce.

7 We are essentially a business
8 representative community that covers southern
9 Lee and part of northern Collier County, and we
10 see Mr. Richter here, thank you very much. But
11 we want to be here tonight to speak on behalf
12 of the City's recommendation. We support the
13 Mayor and the maps that the City of Bonita
14 Springs has provided to you all.

15 As a member of the Corkscrew Regional
16 Ecosystem Watershed Land and Water Trust Board,
17 I am a member of that as well, having that all
18 within one district as well means something to
19 me and the southern drainage of this whole
20 southern Lee area.

21 Beyond that, I will be brief and allow
22 everyone else to speak. Thank you very much.
23 Have a good evening.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir,
25 excellent testimony, and we look forward to

1 considering the information that you have
2 provided to us.

3 And Donald Eslick with the -- I think it's
4 -- is it Estero, sir?

5 MR. ESLICK: Yes.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Estero Council of
7 Community Leaders. And we very much appreciate
8 your taking time to be with us.

9 MR. ESLICK: Do you want to announce the
10 other backup here?

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Sure. Marilyn Edwards.
12 That is -- you're moving around. And then
13 Philip Douglas with Brooks Concerned Citizens.
14 Mr. Eslick, thank you very much.

15 MR. ESLICK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
16 am Dan Eslick. I Chair the Estero Council of
17 Community Leaders. Estero is a community,
18 unincorporated Lee County, and the Council of
19 Community Leaders is a network of all the
20 communities within that community. We have
21 about 25,000 registered voters, about 40,000
22 people. We tripled in size in the last decade,
23 so we've understood a little bit about growth.

24 Three or four major points I would like to
25 make. One is that the people of southwest

1 Florida deserve to have their own voice
2 represented by people from southwest Florida.
3 We don't need anymore cross-state districts.
4 We've had four of them this last decade. That
5 -- it is unfair. It is unfair to the
6 Representatives and the Senators, and it is
7 unfair to the citizens on the east coast, as
8 well as it is to those on the west coast. That
9 is especially down here in the southern part of
10 the state where you have the Everglades in the
11 middle. It just doesn't make a whole lot of
12 sense. So that is a key point that I would
13 like to make, and I hope you will carry that
14 back.

15 Secondly, Estero, like Bonita, is in the
16 southern end of Lee County. We are an
17 unincorporated community in Lee County, so our
18 government is Lee County government, so we want
19 to be in a Lee County district. We work
20 closely with our neighbors in Bonita Springs.
21 I like to identify with the maps that the Mayor
22 has just presented, both of which are all Lee
23 County, House and Senate districts, very, very
24 important.

25 The community of interest aspect of Estero

1 is very important. We have a community plan
2 for the entire community adopted by the county
3 board. Everything that we have done in
4 managing our growth over this last decade was
5 guided by that, so everybody in the community
6 really identifies with what we have been doing.
7 So it is very important for the whole thing to
8 be together.

9 The real key to the problem in -- as it
10 relates to the State Senate district if you
11 have west coast and east coast districts is how
12 you deal with the district to our south. I
13 would recommend that the Collier County Senate
14 district go up and include Hendry, Glades and
15 Highlands Counties. That would make -- it is
16 almost a perfect fit for that Senate district,
17 and that allows Lee County then to have four
18 House districts and an entirely -- an entire
19 Senate district with about 150,000 people left
20 over to move into another one.

21 So very much appreciate the opportunity to
22 talk to you tonight. Good luck in your
23 deliberations. We look forward to working with
24 you.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much.

1 And, Ms. Edwards, you are up next, Philip
2 Douglas and then Douglas Patterson.

3 Ms. Edwards, thank you for coming tonight,
4 and we are looking forward to your testimony.

5 MS. EDWARDS: Thank you very much, Mr.
6 Chairman. I am Marilyn Edwards. I am the
7 coordinator for the Brooks Concerned Citizens,
8 representing Spring Run and The Brooks.

9 I am here to ask you, and join the chorus,
10 that you eliminate cross-state legislative
11 districts; in particular, our district, State
12 Senate District 27. By doing this, you would
13 be meeting your redistricting objectives of
14 contiguity and preservation of communities of
15 interest.

16 The residents of southeast coast of
17 Florida face issues far different from the
18 issues facing those of us on the southwest
19 coast. Both of us need and deserve our own
20 Senate -- single Senator who can address our
21 unique concerns. Our community supports the
22 maps presented by Bonita Springs Mayor Ben
23 Nel- -- did I say the wrong thing?

24 SENATOR GAETZ: No, ma'am. You are live,
25 you are good, you are doing well.

1 MS. EDWARDS: We ask that Estero and
2 Bonita Springs be included in all Lee County
3 legislative districts, the House, the Senate,
4 as well as the -- along congressional lines, as
5 we all work closely together and share common
6 goals. Thank you for listening.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, ma'am.

8 After Douglas Patterson, our next
9 presenter would be Kimmie Correll.

10 And so Mr. Douglas, Philip Douglas, we
11 thank you for being here tonight, sir, and
12 honored to hear your testimony.

13 MR. DOUGLAS: Thank you very much,
14 Senator. It is a pleasure to be here. And I
15 wanted to reaffirm what Mayor Nelson said and
16 the two speakers following him. We do not want
17 cross-state districts. That is emphatic. I
18 cannot be more emphatic that that is something
19 that is not wanted in south Lee County and in
20 Lee County. We want to be represented by a
21 single Senator and a single Representative.

22 I also would like to say that recently
23 passed Constitutional Amendments 5 and 6, which
24 were not embraced by lot of members of the
25 Legislature, need to be followed, and if they

1 are followed, the community of interest for
2 south Lee County will be included properly.

3 Now, nobody is questioning the process,
4 but if we see gerrymandered cross-state
5 districts when the Legislature convenes and
6 puts these out for final disposition, we will
7 know two things:

8 One, you have failed to listen to the
9 residents here tonight; and number two, I hate
10 to unfortunately say this could be termed a
11 charade. I am not saying that, but the proof
12 is in the pudding. Hopefully you will hear us.

13 Thank you very much for your hard work,
14 and appreciate your time.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.

16 And for another dose of pudding, Douglas
17 Patterson, and following Mr. Patterson is
18 Kimmie Correll and then Gary Verwilt with the
19 Realtor Association of Greater Ft. Myers.

20 Mr. Patterson, thank you for being here,
21 sir.

22 MR. PATTERSON: Thank you, Chairman and
23 Representatives.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: And may we ask you to hold
25 the mike a little closer to you so we can get

1 every word.

2 MR. PATTERSON: Sure. Thank you.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

4 MR. PATTERSON: Thank you, Chairman and
5 Representatives. First of all, I would like to
6 make a statement and say that it is Lehigh
7 Acres, not Lehigh. And I want to thank you for
8 considering the valuable input of our citizens
9 in the redistricting plan and the procedure
10 that is following.

11 My comments basically are set up for House
12 District 27. I feel with 159.6 percent
13 population increase in our area, that we need
14 to increase House District 27 to reflect that
15 so that we will have a fair representation in
16 our area. That's basically all I have to say.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

18 Ms. Correll, did I get that correct?

19 MS. CORRELL: You did, thank you.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, and
21 after Ms. Correll, we have Gary Verwilt and
22 then -- this one is a little bit more
23 challenging for me, Ita Neymotin or Neymotin --
24 Neymotin, I'm sorry. Thank you very much.

25 Ms. Correll, you are recognized.

1 MS. CORRELL: Good evening to you all. I
2 am appreciative of being here and having the
3 opportunity to speak. This is the first time I
4 have ever done something of this nature. My
5 background is interior decorating, so this is
6 nothing like that.

7 I am a native of Florida, born in Miami,
8 Florida, raised there for the first two decades
9 and went off to college in Alachua County, and
10 then moved over here to Lee County. I spent
11 the years raising my children in Lee County,
12 down in Marco Island and Collier County, and
13 now am retired in Charlotte County. Now that
14 the -- I -- as a retired citizen of the state
15 of Florida, I understand now how important it
16 is that we pay attention to what is going on
17 within the politics, and so I am thankful to
18 have the opportunity to be a part of this.

19 It is important to me that District 16
20 that stretches from the east coast to the west
21 coast be modified so that it is more beneficial
22 to the people living in the areas. I feel that
23 Charlotte County has grown enough that it can
24 support a district of its own, and I understand
25 that the center of the state, though the

1 residents are very diversified and spread out,
2 need to be either grouped with the east coast
3 or the west coast.

4 I think for some reason it seems as though
5 from Interstate 95 east you seem to have a lot
6 of congestion, and, therefore, the population
7 supports one district, whereas we on the west
8 coast here are still in the growth of the area
9 and possibly could blend in with the center of
10 the state better. I believe that the
11 agriculture areas in the middle of the state
12 usually seem to work more with the west coast
13 than they do with the east coast.

14 So if those comments can be of any help, I
15 am thankful to be here and I will be watching
16 and I will get on the maps and do what I can.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Good. Thank you so much.

18 MS. CORRELL: Thank you all.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am.

20 Following Mr. Verwilt is -- try me again
21 on this -- Neymotin, Ita Neymotin, and then
22 Pete Quasius, or Quasus.

23 Mr. Verwilt, you are recognized, and
24 thanks for coming here on behalf of the
25 realtors.

1 MR. VERWILT: Senator -- let me try that
2 again a little bit further back. Thank you.
3 Senator, thank you very much for having us, and
4 I would like to welcome you all and thank you
5 for all of your interest, energy and
6 enthusiasm. It certainly is well noted, and we
7 appreciate you being here this evening to
8 listen to us.

9 For those of you who do not know me,
10 again, my name is Gary Verwilt. I am President
11 of the Realtor Association of Greater Ft. Myers
12 and the Beach. Our association is currently
13 over 4,500 strong, and we are greatly
14 interested and involved in the political
15 processes that take place here locally and at
16 the state and on the national levels.

17 We are looking forward to this
18 redistricting process and know how difficult it
19 is. Right now, Lee County has three state
20 Senate districts: 21, 27, 37. We also have
21 five State House districts, these being 71, 72,
22 73, 74 and 75. As such, our association
23 believes that it would be a real disservice to
24 our members to dilute this type of excellent
25 representation. Others have alluded to the

1 same issue in many of your other hearings.
2 This type of representation is critical for
3 southwest Florida.

4 We do agree with the fact that cross
5 district -- cross-state districts must be
6 eliminated, and we are going to take it one
7 step farther by saying the coastal areas --
8 first, we have diverse communities within our
9 own region. The coastal areas of Sanibel,
10 Captiva and Ft. Myers Beach are quite different
11 than the more rural areas of Alva, Olga,
12 Buckingham, parts of Lehigh Acres and over to
13 Hendry, Glades and the western portions of Palm
14 Beach County.

15 These locations have a rural texture with
16 large farms, citrus groves, large equestrian
17 lots and communities, and their needs are much
18 removed from those coastal areas, which is why
19 it doesn't make sense to lump these areas all
20 together. It also doesn't make sense to
21 aggregate these coastal communities, as well as
22 Cape Coral, with inland communities.

23 Our realtors are community experts, and
24 just as realtors specializing in Cape --
25 Captiva waterfront development wouldn't be the

1 expert to selling Buckingham farmland, we
2 shouldn't expect our elected officials to have
3 expertise for every area, and we feel these are
4 best left separated as they are presently
5 configured. This would be in keeping with the
6 preservation of community interests and the
7 preservation of cores of prior districts.

8 We ask that you look into this regrouping
9 in such a manner as keep -- keeping the
10 communities in separate districts, and I thank
11 you for the opportunity to speak to you this
12 evening, sir.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much.
14 Very useful testimony.

15 And is it Ida or Ita? Ita?

16 MS. NEYMOTIN: It is Ita, yes. Thank you,
17 Mr. Chairman.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and you are
19 recognized, and following Pete Quasius is
20 Council Member Thomas Leonardo, the City of Ft.
21 Myers.

22 Ita, you are recognized. Thanks for
23 coming.

24 MS. NEYMOTIN: Thank you. Good evening,
25 and thank you for taking time to listen to all

1 of us here today. My name is Ita Neymotin, and
2 I am an attorney. I have lived here in Lee
3 County for about 10 years. I have worked as a
4 prosecutor in both Hendry and Glades County.

5 Having seen the problems and having met
6 the people in all three counties, I can tell
7 you there is a great deal of common areas of
8 interest between Ft. Myers, LaBelle, Moore
9 Haven, and even Alga and Olga. I know we
10 Floridians are all hard-working people and we
11 all care about Florida. But we all have
12 individual concerns as well.

13 Ft. Myers Beach and other beach
14 communities are more concerned with tourism and
15 offshore drilling. We in the inland
16 communities are more concerned with the job
17 market and with the agricultural industry.

18 As it stands now, District 27 is
19 contiguous and compact. We are currently
20 represented by 7.5 percent in Tallahassee
21 through our legislators, and I ask that you
22 please not dilute our representation. I
23 likewise ask that you keep communities of
24 interest together.

25 Thank you for your time.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
2 ma'am. Very helpful.

3 Mr. Quasius, thank you for being here
4 tonight, and we are delighted to hear your
5 testimony, look forward it.

6 MR. QUASIUS: Thank all of you for your
7 service. I understand that this is not an easy
8 job. It is one that will dictate for the next
9 decade what kind of representation we have.

10 I represent the Caloosahatchee Citizens
11 Association, and I think I will add my refrain
12 to the common cause you are hearing: We want
13 our representatives to represent our community,
14 to understand what our concerns are, to share
15 them and hopefully to adequately represent
16 them. We were delighted with the cross
17 country -- or cross-state district we have,
18 because Ms. Benacquisto decided to see the best
19 side and move over to the west coast, so that
20 was to our advantage. And it is a hard job, we
21 understand that. It makes little sense to have
22 someone representing and living on the east
23 coast trying to understand the issues that we
24 have here in Lee County. I think we need to
25 have our own representation. I think we need

1 to have people who are living and working and
2 growing up in our communities to represent us,
3 and I look forward to seeing maps that
4 represent that.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

6 Following Council Member Thomas Leonardo
7 from the City of Ft. Myers, we have Joseph
8 Russo and then Bill, and I believe it is either
9 Dakos or Dakos.

10 Mr. Leonardo, council member, first thank
11 you for your service to your community and to
12 the people of the State of Florida, and you are
13 recognized.

14 COUNCILMAN LEONARDO: Thank you,
15 Mr. Chairman. Good evening, all honorable
16 elected officials, and welcome to beautiful Lee
17 County. My name has been mentioned, Tom
18 Leonardo, I am a city councilman for the City
19 of Ft. Myers, representing Ward 6, the newest
20 and eastern most of our city's six wards.

21 Our city has been described as the last
22 great city in Florida. We are the county seat
23 for Lee County and the urban center for
24 southwest Florida. Once the recession ends,
25 our city and Lee County will continue to grow

1 in population and prominence in the life of our
2 state.

3 I am here tonight to speak in favor of
4 maintaining the current boundaries of Senate
5 District 27 so ably represented by Senator
6 Lizbeth Benacquisto. There are many reasons
7 for this, and let me share a few of these
8 reasons with you.

9 Currently the City of Ft. Myers benefits
10 from Lee County being represented by three
11 State Senators and five State Representatives.
12 This fact has provided us with multiple
13 benefits, and obviously we would not like to
14 see this changed.

15 The way Senate District 27 is now
16 configured, we believe that we share many
17 interests with other communities within the
18 district, even though the district spans a
19 cross-section from the east to the west coast.

20 We are not a coastal community, as has
21 been previously mentioned, and thus we share
22 more in common with inland communities than
23 with the community -- coastal communities of
24 Sanibel, Captiva and Ft. Myers Beach, as an
25 example.

1 Historically, Ft. Myers has always been
2 linked to the inland communities of southwest
3 Florida. As in the past, as it is today, we
4 are the commercial hub for these inland
5 communities, and we will remain so far into the
6 future.

7 Thank you for the process which allows for
8 public input and complete transparency. You
9 mentioned the law that disallows any
10 predetermined map. We appreciate that law. It
11 would be like -- if that was allowed, it would
12 be like a judge making a decision without
13 hearing the evidence.

14 I wish you continued success in your
15 public outreaching, and thank you again for
16 listening to us.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
18 Councilman.

19 Mr. Russo, nice to see you, and we
20 understand that you have a map to show us as
21 well, is that right, sir?

22 MR. RUSSO: Yes, I do. It is very nice to
23 see you again, Senator Gaetz, and everyone
24 else. My name is Joseph Russo. I am here
25 today as a student from Florida Gulf Coast

1 University where, among other things, I study
2 political science, and actually, my newest
3 professor is actually Mr. -- Representative
4 Caldwell right there where I take his course on
5 redistricting, so --

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Now, wait a minute.

7 MR. RUSSO: -- maybe this will get me some
8 extra credit.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Wait a minute. At the
10 last hearing, you were trying to suck up to a
11 different professor.

12 MR. RUSSO: I am trying to do as much with
13 my grades as in due time.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Now, are you a student or
15 are you running for office?

16 MR. RUSSO: Give me a few years and we
17 will see.

18 Over here I wanted to talk about the
19 congressional districts in southwest Florida.
20 Since everyone is seemingly talking about the
21 State House and the State Senate districts, and
22 they are very knowledgeable, I want to bring
23 over a perspective of the congressional
24 districts in southwest Florida.

25 Obviously, due to the census, we have

1 grown over 20 percent in the southwest Florida
2 area, so we pretty much need another
3 congressional district, and this is my proposal
4 here for how that would best be solved.

5 In the north, you have in Manatee and
6 Sarasota Counties Congressional District 13,
7 currently seated with Vern Buchanan. In the
8 south, you have Congressional District 14,
9 currently seated with Connie Mack, and that
10 goes up with Lehigh Acres and just over in Ft.
11 Myers, just south of Colonial is the boundary.
12 And then you have Charlotte County, Cape Coral
13 and all of the interior counties taking up the
14 new district of 27 that I have numbered there.
15 But that is my proposal of how a district would
16 be set up in a southwest Florida area.

17 And I know there's been a lot of talk
18 about the east-west coast districts. I think
19 this kind of goes along with what everyone was
20 saying with that. And with the interior
21 counties all composed into one district, there
22 would be a lot of like representation in that
23 as well.

24 But, again, I would like to thank everyone
25 here for hearing me speak once again, and I

1 wish you the best to your trip in Clewiston
2 tomorrow on your clubhouse turn tour here, and
3 I think you very much for representing the
4 State of Florida and I hope to one day probably
5 be in your seat, but --

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you,
7 Mr. Russo. I have no doubt.

8 Bill Dakos -- is it Dakos?

9 MR. DAKOS: It is. Better than any
10 telemarketer.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: And then following
12 Mr. Dakos, Mark Castellano with the Teachers
13 Association of Lee County, and then Craig
14 Briscoe, if you will be in the on deck circle.

15 Mr. Dakos, thank you for coming tonight,
16 and you are recognized.

17 MR. DAKOS: Thank you so much for being
18 here tonight, and thank you for serving the
19 greatest state in the nation.

20 I would like to just re-elaborate what
21 Mr. Russo said actually, because I do feel that
22 we need another Representative here from
23 Congress. Living here for 22 years, I have
24 seen the growth, and it cannot be denied that
25 this area has grown tremendously over the past

1 ten years. I hope that you consider that, and
2 thanks again for being here.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir, very, very
4 much. Appreciate it.

5 And next, Mark -- Mark Castellano,
6 representing the Teachers Association of Lee
7 County. Thank you very much for being here,
8 sir, and we are anxious to hear your testimony.

9 MR. CASTELLANO: Thank you, Senator. I
10 appreciate the opportunity, all the legislators
11 here today.

12 Very simple, I don't have -- I wish -- I
13 don't have a plan or anything to offer you. I
14 do want to share just a couple of thoughts. I
15 think that you have heard the majority of
16 people talking about the lack of cross-state
17 districts. Senator Benacquisto, I want to
18 share with you, your predecessor, Senator
19 Aronberg, used to describe your district, which
20 I consider the poster child for gerrymandered
21 cross-state districts, he used to describe it
22 beautifully, he would say, "Oh, I represent
23 Palm Beach and I represent Lee County and I
24 represent some of the bass swimming in Lake
25 Okeechobee." We always loved that.

1 Basically I would say that you have heard
2 from a number of people and you are going to
3 hear from me that we want districts that
4 represent us fairly, and that are not -- and
5 the word "gerrymandered" has been used so much,
6 but basically that is the sentiment that many
7 of us have, and we have had for decades, and I
8 would urge you to please consider that, making
9 communities, local areas -- respecting the
10 counties more so than what is currently the
11 practice.

12 I think the last thing I want to share
13 with you is this thought: It is very
14 frustrating, and it has been for years, that in
15 Florida we tend to -- we feel compelled
16 oftentimes to legislate or to govern through
17 the Constitution, through constitutional
18 amendments. Amendments 5 and 6 were very
19 heartfelt amendments, and they passed rather
20 overwhelmingly. And we ask you to please
21 represent that, and I would -- I am so longing
22 for the day that we don't have to try to
23 legislate this state through constitutional
24 amendments, and that gives you -- that puts the
25 onus on you. That puts the onus on you to do

1 the right thing.

2 As a teachers --representative of the
3 teachers in this county, you know, class size
4 amendment is near and dear to my heart. I
5 don't mean to get off on it, but I've always
6 felt that the class size amendment was not
7 necessary if the Legislature had ever done what
8 I believe would have been the right thing to
9 do.

10 So this is another example, in my opinion,
11 of that. The reason that those amendments were
12 passed was because fair districting needed to
13 have been done. Thank you very much.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

15 And next Craig Briscoe, please, and
16 following Mr. Briscoe, Brenda Skupny and then
17 Cristina Cook.

18 Mr. Briscoe, the floor is yours, sir.

19 MR. BRISCOE: Thank you. I do want to
20 thank you for the opportunity of listening to
21 us this evening. Granted, there has been
22 critics of the process by various
23 contingencies; however, since we are a republic
24 and not a democracy, I have the full faith and
25 confidence that you, elected officials, will

1 draw the districts which best serve the
2 constituents that you serve, regardless of your
3 party affiliation. With that said, it is my
4 sincere hope, however, that Lee does get its
5 own Senate seat.

6 And finally, I do want to thank you for
7 the resources that you've made available
8 on-line. I watched this morning in Naples and
9 am here this evening, and you guys have done a
10 fantastic job of making this information
11 available, not only in the streaming, as well
12 as the documentation of the meetings and
13 agenda, and for that, I am very proud to have
14 many of you as my representative.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

16 Is it Skupny? Thank you very much for
17 being here, Ms. Skupny, and we are delighted to
18 have your testimony.

19 MS. SKUPNY: Thank you for having me.
20 Thank you for being here. I appreciate you
21 taking your time to visit us. And, again, my
22 name is Brenda Skupny. I live in Cape Coral.
23 I recognize a lot of faces here in front of me,
24 and thanks for being here and representing us.
25 I think you do a great job.

1 I personally have many concerns regarding
2 redistricting, particularly since the law under
3 Amendments 5 and 6 appear to conflict with the
4 Federal Voters Rights Act of 1965. I am sure
5 that lawsuits are unavoidable. I feel that
6 Amendment 5 and 6, that was the intent behind
7 some of the proponents of that. But I ask that
8 you take into careful consideration the cost to
9 taxpayers when you draft the new districts.

10 In 2010, Ft. Myers/Cape Coral metropolitan
11 area ranked sixth in population in the state of
12 Florida. We have over 700,000 people. Yet we
13 are the minority constituency in our State
14 Senate districts. In fact, in District 21,
15 Senator Bennett's district, we share him with
16 five other counties. I respectfully request
17 that in drawing Senate districts, that Lee
18 County is given the considerations due by
19 virtue of our population for a Senate district
20 contained with the majority of population Lee
21 County. Thank you again for being here, and I
22 appreciate all you do.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.

24 And next we will hear from Christina Cook,
25 and then following Ms. Cook, Gary Lee and then

1 Charles Dauray.

2 Ms. Cook, thank you so much for coming
3 this evening.

4 MS. COOK: Thank you for having me and
5 providing all of us with this opportunity. You
6 all have a very challenging task ahead of you,
7 and I would like to add my voice to those you
8 are hearing this evening and respectfully
9 request that you give serious consideration,
10 given the population of Lee County, of the
11 importance of having most, if not all, of Lee
12 County represented by one Senate district.
13 Thank you very much.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
15 ma'am.

16 After Gary Lee and Charles Dauray -- and I
17 hope I have that right -- John McNamara, please
18 come into the on deck circle.

19 Mr. Lee.

20 MR. LEE: Mr. Chairman, thank you very
21 much for the invite, and also for being here to
22 represent the Legislature. I am going to stick
23 to the first rule that was adopted this morning
24 and how you are counting brevity. I understand
25 you get bonus points for brevity.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: We give extra credit
2 points, bonus points, and you get a free piece
3 of pie at Perkins.

4 MR. LEE: Thank you. I praise the effort,
5 the transparency which you are doing on behalf
6 of the state. The public input that you are
7 doing is absolutely fabulous.

8 I have been a student of redistricting,
9 reapportionment, since 1972. I played a role
10 in '72, '82, '92, 2002 and now 2010, and a lot
11 has happened in the evolvement of the court
12 cases and so on that have come down by the
13 Supreme Court of the United States, by the
14 Voters Rights Act of 1965.

15 I am going to hand up to the Committee, if
16 I may, and not read the full resolution which
17 the Lee County Republican Party adopted this
18 past Saturday unanimously. May I give you the
19 guts of it, which says, "Now, therefore, be it
20 resolved that Lee County Republican Committee
21 calls upon the Florida Legislature to adopt a
22 redistricting and reapportionment plan that
23 protects the integrity of counties, cities and
24 other common interest, and provides for true
25 representation for resident citizens in

1 southwest Florida." That was adopted
2 unanimately by our committee on behalf of
3 160,000 Republicans in Lee County.

4 Three or four other points, if I may. We
5 prefer north-south districts has been
6 represented here by previous testifiers. We
7 hope you will do away with the east-west axis
8 for representation. For 20 years, Lee County
9 has been bifurcated, trifurcated, and not given
10 the representation that we should have for the
11 population in particular that we have achieved.
12 The Lee population has grown enormously in the
13 last ten years. When you combine it with
14 Charlotte and Collier County, you are looking
15 at a million two, a million three hundred
16 thousand people.

17 Next point that I would make is that we
18 prefer that we have a consolidated
19 congressional district as much in Lee County as
20 possible. We would like at least one and a
21 half or three quarters State Senate seats in
22 Lee County, which our population would justify.
23 And if you look at the House of
24 Representatives' representation, we should be
25 entitled to at least another seat that would

1 give us four members in the House of
2 Representatives.

3 I think your good efforts, again, are
4 laudable. The compliance problems you will
5 have with 5 and 6 will be enormous. If we were
6 betting people tonight, I am sure we would bet
7 that this will end up in the courts, which
8 means that a Special Master ends up drawing
9 those districts, bringing it back to the
10 Legislature for affirmation or ratification. I
11 hope that doesn't happen, but when I have read
12 carefully 5 and 6, I don't see how you can meet
13 the criteria.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

15 MR. LEE: And it is interesting that the
16 advocates of that have not -- have failed not
17 to draw seats that I think you had asked them
18 to do.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

20 MR. LEE: Yes, sir. Thank you very much.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Appreciate your testimony.

22 And next, Mr. Dauray, could you help me
23 with the pronunciation?

24 MR. DAURAY: Dauray.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Say again, sir.

1 MR. DAURAY: Dauray, Charles Dauray.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Very good. Thank you,
3 sir, and thank you for your testimony.

4 MR. DAURAY: Thank you, Senator. Thank
5 you, Senators and Representatives.

6 When this meeting began tonight, you
7 outlined and listed the communities from whence
8 you came. And I would venture to say, with all
9 due respect to some of the communities on the
10 east coast, which are wonderful communities,
11 that many of the people in the audience haven't
12 the slightest idea where you are coming from.
13 They haven't visited your communities. They
14 know little or nothing about you. Conversely,
15 some of you know little or very little about
16 the west coast, and that is understandable, but
17 yet we are joined. We are joined by what I
18 like to call political contrivance, political
19 manipulations, so that the west coast ends up
20 being an appendix to some perceived or real
21 power centers on the east coast, and we are
22 kind of tired of that over here on the west
23 coast, I want you to know that. We have
24 matured, we have a powerful power base, we are
25 common sense people and we are looking for home

1 rule. Thank you very much.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

3 Following Mr. McNamara, Ray Rodriques,
4 please, and then if Terry Miller will come
5 forward and join us in the front row.

6 Mr. McNamara, delighted to have you here,
7 and the floor is yours.

8 MR. McNAMARA: Thank you, sir. Good
9 evening. My name is John McNamara, I am from
10 Cape Coral.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: And could we get you to
12 speak just a little closer into the mike?

13 MR. McNAMARA: I'm sorry.

14 I voted in my first election at the age of
15 18 in 1986 as part of the voter uprising in
16 Alabama that elected the first Republican
17 Governor since reconstruction. My earliest
18 political memories, having my father sit me
19 down in January of 1977 to watch Jimmy Carter
20 be sworn in as President because he was from
21 neighboring Georgia. I've participated in our
22 democracy for a long time. I have been an
23 observer of politics for even longer.

24 I stand before you tonight because I fear
25 for the future of our democracy. While

1 gerrymandering is not new, it dates back to at
2 least 1812, we have taken it to new heights.
3 Only four times since 1970 has the re-election
4 rates for incumbents in Congress been less than
5 90 percent. Most Representatives run in such
6 safe districts they no longer have to answer to
7 the general public. All they have to do is win
8 their primary election. This means many
9 elected officials have to convince primary
10 voters, who are normally the most partisan of
11 people, that the candidate deserves the seat.
12 What we end up is not divided government, but
13 divisive government.

14 While a nation itself might be slightly
15 center right in its view of the world, the
16 elected leaders end up being either hard left
17 or hard right. This leaves a huge goal, which
18 as the most recent hissy fit over the debt
19 ceiling showed, is difficult, if not
20 impossible, to bridge. And while the extreme
21 left and extreme right shouts at each other,
22 the large number of us in the middle are
23 ignored. We don't have a voice. We aren't
24 given a choice. We aren't stuck with
25 dysfunctional government, we are stuck with

1 dysfunctional politics.

2 But in Florida, we have an answer to the
3 problem. In 2010, even as electing a very
4 large number of conservative voter candidates,
5 more than 60 percent of Floridians backed two
6 amendments which would outlaw gerrymandering.
7 More people supported these amendments than
8 supported Rick Scott or his opponent.

9 Ladies and gentlemen, the voters of
10 Florida have clearly spoken. They want these
11 protected districts to end. They want the
12 freedom to choose their representatives, not
13 have one forced on them by the minority of
14 voters. They want to have their voices
15 restored.

16 This redistricting process is an
17 opportunity for everyone. It is an opportunity
18 for Florida to take the lead and serve as an
19 example to the rest of the country on how
20 civility can be restored to our politics by
21 bringing back the center, it is an opportunity
22 to restore choice to thousands of
23 disenfranchised Floridians, and it is an
24 opportunity for our lawmakers to become
25 something more than just politicians. You can

1 become leaders, you can become statesmen and
2 stateswomen for the State. You were elected to
3 carry out the will of the people. In 2010,
4 they let you know what that was. Please, I am
5 asking you to just carry out your duty to the
6 state and its citizens. Thank you.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
8 Excellent testimony.

9 Following Ray Rodriques and Terry Miller,
10 if Tom Martin would come forward and be ready
11 to testify.

12 Mr. Rodriques, thank you very much, sir,
13 for being here, and we would love to hear what
14 you have to share with the Committee.

15 MR. RODRIGUES: Thank you. My name is Ray
16 Rodriques, and I am the Vice-Chair of the Lee
17 County Republican Party, and I want to thank
18 you for coming to Lee County tonight. I know
19 that the summertime is the time that you get
20 generally your break from session and you get
21 to come home, take care of your business and
22 your families, and I appreciate the fact that
23 all of you have volunteered to take on this
24 challenging assignment of redistricting and
25 spend your summer going all over Florida, and

1 we are happy that you are here tonight.

2 I have been a resident of Lee County for
3 17 years. In my time here, I spent a decade
4 working for GE corporate as a manager, and
5 during that time, I learned project managing
6 the GE way. And the GE way for project
7 managing was to identify a problem, gather the
8 data. After all the data had been gathered,
9 analyze the data, and then when you had
10 finished the analysis, then prepare a proposed
11 solution. I believe by coming here tonight
12 without maps, you are following that process.
13 You are gathering the data from across the
14 state in order to identify what your potential
15 solutions will be, and I thank you for doing
16 that and respecting the citizens of Florida
17 enough to get our input before you make your
18 decisions.

19 Ten years ago, Amendments 5 and 6 did not
20 exist. Today they are part of the state's
21 Constitution. The Fair Districts people led a
22 statewide effort, they collected \$9 million in
23 contributions and they ran a great campaign to
24 get these amendments passed. But now that they
25 have what they want, they are suddenly quiet

1 when it is time to do the real work, rolling up
2 your sleeves and implementing 5 and 6. Now,
3 normally silence wouldn't be a problem, except
4 for the fact that so many of the words in
5 Amendments 5 and 6 are ambiguous. Can someone
6 please explain the phrase, "denying or
7 abridging the equal opportunity of racial or
8 language minorities to participate in the
9 political process or diminish their ability to
10 elect representatives of their choice" in the
11 concept of drawing districts? How far should
12 the Legislature go to do things that will
13 ensure minority voters have the ability to
14 elect representatives of their choice? Should
15 you split up a city? Should you split up a
16 county? Or even multiple cities or multiple
17 counties?

18 I appreciate the fact that folks have
19 brought maps here for you to see, and I
20 encourage all of us to do that. What
21 disappoints me is you are near the end of this
22 process and no one from Fair Districts has
23 showed up and given you a proposal on how to
24 implement the amendments that they advocated
25 that we support. It is time for them to step

1 up and do the right thing and give you some
2 guidance. I think by being silent they are
3 dropping the ball and not finishing the job
4 when it comes to implementing 5 and 6. And
5 here's where I am coming from: I believe in
6 the Constitution. The Constitution is giving
7 you, the Legislature, the authority to do
8 redistricting. And my fear is this is nothing
9 but a back-door attempt to get it out of your
10 hands and put it in the courts where it does
11 not belong.

12 You have a very difficult job ahead of
13 you. I thank you for taking it on. Good
14 night.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

16 Terry Miller, Tom Martin and then Governor
17 Kottkamp. We will hear from Governor Kottkamp
18 tonight, that is great.

19 Mr. Miller.

20 MR. MILLER: Thank you. Again, my name is
21 Terry Miller, and I live in Cape Coral, and I
22 want to welcome you all here this evening and
23 thank you for giving us the time to bring our
24 input to you and take it into consideration in
25 that.

1 I think you all have your work cut out for
2 you. The job ahead of you is daunting, and I
3 do not envy you whatsoever. But my comments
4 tonight are going to be a little different than
5 what we have heard thus far this evening and
6 probably what you have heard throughout the
7 course of your travels through the state.

8 A lot of people have spoken about
9 east-west districts, north-south districts, and
10 while I believe we need to get rid of the
11 east-west districts, I want to talk about
12 following city lines as required by 5 and 6.

13 Five and 6 require that districts be
14 compact and they use the boundaries that are
15 naturally formed by cities. The problem with
16 this is that many city boundaries are not
17 compact, which means if you try to use the
18 boundaries to draw legislative districts, you
19 will not achieve the compactness as required by
20 5 and 6. While many of the cities in Lee
21 County may have compact lines, that is not the
22 case for the rest of the state of Florida.
23 Take a look at cities like Tampa, Orlando and
24 some of the other large cities throughout this
25 state, and you are going to find cities with

1 very uncompact lines, and I want you to tell me
2 how you can produce a compact district that
3 meets the requirements of 5 and 6. These
4 districts will be anything but compact.

5 To me, it seems you are going to have to
6 split many cities across the state in order to
7 draw these compact districts. That, or you
8 will have to follow some other sort of
9 political boundary lines to achieve the
10 required result.

11 I am concerned that just -- by just trying
12 to follow those wordings of these amendments,
13 you are going to result in your proposed maps
14 going to the court, just like Mr. Rodriques
15 spoke of, and it is important to point this out
16 now especially as it relates to municipal
17 boundaries. Thank you.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

19 Next, Tom Martin, then Governor Kottkamp,
20 and then Victor -- I think it is -- is it
21 Dotres, Datres?

22 Mr. Martin, thank you for being here, and
23 the floor is yours, sir.

24 MR. MARTIN: Thank you for your time, and
25 thank you, all of the Representatives and

1 Senators, for being here. I am a 25-year
2 resident of the area, and I just want to harp
3 on one point while I am here, and that is the
4 explosion of growth that has taken place during
5 my lifetime here in southwest Florida area. I
6 think that as a result of that, we definitely
7 deserve a representative district at the DC
8 level more so than currently exists, and I will
9 go off of the naïvety of youth and allow that
10 to happen by way of demographics and so on, but
11 that is all that I have to say.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Mr. Martin. That is not naïve at all.

14 And, ladies and gentlemen, it is a
15 pleasure to welcome the Honorable Jeff
16 Kottkamp, former Lieutenant Governor of
17 Florida. Governor.

18 LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR KOTTKAMP: Thank you,
19 Mr. Chairman and members. Welcome, again, to
20 southwest Florida. Having served on the
21 redistricting committee ten years ago, I am
22 very mindful of the time commitment that each
23 of you have made, the effort of your staff, you
24 put so much time into this, and it's just
25 begun.

1 I was asked to speak briefly about a
2 little historical context to the conversation
3 you are hearing here tonight about diluting the
4 county and splitting the county.

5 Ten years ago, as you will, we debated the
6 maps and debated the maps and debated the maps,
7 and voted and voted and voted. When we got
8 down to the final vote, we actually operated
9 under a motion to limit debate, five minutes
10 for, five minutes against. Not surprisingly,
11 the five minutes for was debate conducted by
12 the majority party, Republicans. But what may
13 surprise you is that most of the time in
14 opposition to the maps was also done by
15 Republicans; in particular, Representative
16 Bruce Kyle from right here in Lee County, and
17 his argument was Lee County is in the top ten
18 in population, but it is the only county in
19 Florida in the top ten in population that
20 doesn't have a Senate seat with the majority of
21 the population comprised from that county. So
22 that is why you are hearing this over and over.
23 This has been a long-standing issue for this
24 community.

25 I will say that we are enormously proud of

1 the members of our legislative delegation.
2 They are talented and they care deeply about
3 this region, and we are grateful for their
4 service, but I wanted to share that historical
5 perspective, because I think it is important to
6 know this is not a new idea here in southwest
7 Florida. Thank you for your service and thank
8 you for being here.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Governor.

10 Is it Dotres?

11 MR. DOTRES: Dotres, you had it right --

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Dotres, I had it right the
13 first time, okay. And following Victor's
14 testimony, Geri Gallagher with Planned
15 Parenthood, and then Lora Greenwell with IUPAT,
16 Local 2301, if you would please come forward.

17 Victor, the floor is yours.

18 MR. DOTRES: Thank you, sir.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: You are following the
20 Governor.

21 MR. DOTRES: I know, that is the big time.

22 Good evening, Senator. Good evening, all
23 the members on the panel. I want to thank you
24 for being here. My name is Victor Dotres.

25 As I was driving here today and when I

1 came in through the door and I saw all these
2 people in the gymnasium, I thought to myself,
3 wow, what a great country we live in if you
4 think about it. I mean, there's a lot of other
5 countries that people are not able to assemble
6 like this like we are, and I see all these
7 people here, and any one of us can come to this
8 microphone and we can grab the mike and we can
9 express ourselves freely, we can give our
10 comments, share our ideas, and, you know, we
11 can even give our critiques, like you have
12 heard tonight, you know. But then I think to
13 myself, you are going to have people who are
14 not going to be happy, you are going to have
15 some people who are going to complain about
16 certain things, and you have heard across the
17 state you will have a few people who are going
18 to file lawsuits, but, you know, in the end,
19 when all this is done, in the end, there will
20 not be one map, no matter who draws it up,
21 okay, no matter who draws up the map, there
22 will not be one map who is going to make every
23 single person happy, no matter what. But I
24 think the most important -- the most important
25 part is how this process and how these maps are

1 being created. That is the most important part
2 to me. And I believe, and I think I can speak
3 for many people here, most people here, if this
4 process is done openly, fairly and honestly,
5 that is the most important part. I want to
6 thank you all for your service to our state.
7 God bless you.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: God bless you, sir, and
9 thank you.

10 Now, Geri Gallagher from Planned
11 Parenthood. Is Geri Gallagher here? If not,
12 we will pass Geri and go to Lora Greenwell.
13 Lora Greenwell, are you here, please?

14 I'm sorry, Richard Jones, I don't give you
15 much of a warning, but if you are here,
16 Mr. Jones. Are you here, sir? All right,
17 thank you very much. I'm sorry that I didn't
18 give you much of a chance to get down here.
19 Then Edd Weiner with the Lehigh Acres Economic
20 Development Board, and then Armor Persons.

21 Mr. Jones, we are very pleased to have
22 your testimony, and you are recognized, sir.

23 MR. JONES: Thank your, sir, and thank you
24 for this opportunity, and I will keep it short.
25 I kind of have just a real quick question. I

1 was wondering why, after the voters -- 60
2 percent of the voters voted for Amendments 5
3 and 6, why the Florida House would appropriate
4 \$30 million to overturn those amendments.
5 Furthermore, to me, that would seem like if we
6 are spending 30 million to overturn it, we
7 would have to spend another 30 million to
8 defend it. So the State is essentially
9 defending itself, and I just don't understand
10 that after that kind of vote. Thank you.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much. And,
12 Mr. Jones -- Mr. Jones, I hope your time
13 tonight -- thanks for giving your time so far.
14 I hope you will have a chance to stay, because
15 you have asked a question, we have had a number
16 of other questions asked, and we are going to
17 give members of the House and Senate an
18 opportunity to speak to those questions when
19 you are finished with public testimony. So
20 thank you, Mr. Jones.

21 Next is Edd Weiner. Is that correct, sir?

22 MR. WEINER: Yes, sir, it is.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Mr. Weiner, you are
24 recognized, and then after you speak is Armor
25 Persons and then Joan A. Lewis Patterson.

1 Mr. Weiner.

2 MR. WEINER: Thank your, Senator. On
3 behalf of the Lehigh Acres Chamber of Commerce,
4 I want to welcome you all to Lehigh Acres. I
5 am a member of the Board, and I am appreciative
6 for Representative Caldwell and Senator
7 Benacquisto to using their baseball bats to
8 convince you that Lehigh Acres is the place to
9 hold this meeting.

10 On behalf of -- on behalf of Lehigh Acres
11 Community Council, I am the President of the
12 Community Council, we welcome you to Lehigh
13 Acres. On behalf of the Lehigh Acres Community
14 Planning Panel, I am the President of that, and
15 we welcome you to Lehigh Acres. And because I
16 am bored and have absolutely nothing to do with
17 my time, I am the CEO of Economic Development
18 in Lehigh Acres and again welcome you to Lehigh
19 Acres.

20 There are two things I want to get out
21 before I talk about Lehigh Acres specifically.
22 I was many hundreds of thousands of years ago
23 an elected official on the east coast in
24 Plantation. Representative Rogers, good to see
25 you again. And we had the same discussion many

1 years ago about connecting Broward County and
2 Collier County with dissimilarities. I would
3 suggest to you, ladies and gentlemen, that
4 connecting east coast and west coast is a
5 totally dysfunctional thing. There is
6 absolutely nothing in common since I have lived
7 on both coasts with the east coast and the west
8 coast, and I would suggest that you need to use
9 your north-south districts as your planning
10 areas.

11 I have heard several comments made on a
12 single Senator in Lee County. That is a
13 wonderful idea, except that the Senate district
14 is 470,000. We have 680,000 people in Lee
15 County. Do the math, 200,000 people fall off,
16 and the way things have gone in previous years,
17 Lehigh Acres is probably one of the areas that
18 would fall off the radar when you put that
19 Senate district together. So I would suggest
20 to you that maybe Lee County needs two Senators
21 equally representing the east side of the
22 county and the west side of the county.

23 On to Lehigh Acres specifically, we are a
24 community of 86,000 people, 86,724 people. We
25 are identical to Cape Coral. Well, Cape Coral

1 needs to catch up a little bit, but we are
2 identical to Cape Coral, because we are an
3 unplotted community as Cape Coral is. The
4 difference between Cape Coral and Lehigh Acres
5 is they are a city and we are not. We find
6 ourselves in the unenviable position of
7 bringing businesses to Lehigh Acres and having
8 to go through Lee County government.

9 I have spent the last two years trying to
10 work with the State of Florida, with Lee County
11 government, with other agencies, to see how we
12 can progress in Lehigh Acres. I would urge
13 you -- and I have produced some maps for the
14 House district and the Senate district.
15 Unfortunately, I am technologically challenged
16 --

17 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Edd, we are out of
18 time, so if you could bring it in for a
19 landing.

20 MR. WEINER: Very well. Thank you, sir.

21 I will distribute these. I will work with
22 Jason to get them on your computers. That is a
23 good way to get rid of me. But I would suggest
24 to you, sir, that Lehigh Acres needs to be
25 represented by its own House district and by

1 its own Senate district following the
2 interstate to the east of Interstate 75. Thank
3 you for your time.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.
5 Thanks, and we would be delighted to have the
6 maps that you have provided.

7 Next, Armor Persons and then Joan A. Lewis
8 Patterson and then Michelle Guerin, please.

9 Mr. Persons, thank you for being here, and
10 we are delighted to have your testimony.

11 MR. PERSONS: The -- there you go. I
12 appreciate as just a resident, not official or
13 anyone --

14 SENATOR GAETZ: We are going to let you
15 start over. We want to get every single golden
16 word.

17 MR. PERSONS: Testing.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Hang on just a second. Is
19 there a doctor in the house?

20 MR. PERSONS: Okay.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: You're good. Thank you.

22 MR. PERSONS: Thank you. I just want to
23 thank each of y'all for just letting a simple
24 resident of the Bayshore community -- I am not
25 representing any organization or anything. We

1 are a -- I live in a rural equestrian community
2 that is in Senate District 21 right now, and I
3 have been hearing all this talk about the east,
4 west. I would actually prefer being in an
5 east-west like Senate District 27, only because
6 so much of that area is a rural area. It to me
7 would make a lot more sense as the
8 Representative to have someone that is a lot of
9 area that is the same that I could talk to
10 rather than all of Lee County that represents
11 the beaches and the incorporated cities, we
12 would be lost. So I think the inner counties
13 and the western parts of Lee and of -- I'm
14 sorry, the eastern parts of Lee County and the
15 western part of Palm Beach is well represented
16 by that district, and I would like, it if it
17 would be possible, that Bayshore -- we run
18 right up next to District 27, Senate District,
19 and I would love to have that included in
20 there.

21 For the record, Bayshore is defined as
22 from, on the east side, State Road 31, on the
23 north, the Lee County line, on the west, I-75,
24 and on the south, the Caloosahatchee River.

25 Thank you.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.
2 Very helpful.

3 Next, Ms. Patterson, are you here? Thank
4 you so much for being here this evening, ma'am,
5 and we are anxious to hear your testimony.

6 MR. PATTERSON: Greetings to all of you.
7 I am going to speak in a very limited basis for
8 Lehigh Acres. I have lived here 21 years --

9 SENATOR GAETZ: And could you speak a
10 little closer to the mike, ma'am?

11 MR. PATTERSON: I have lived here 21
12 years. I have lived in the county 31 years.
13 This will be my 17th election, and I want to
14 break down our precincts here in Lehigh.

15 We have 15 precincts, and they are sliced
16 and diced in many ways. For instance, House 72
17 will have nine, 73 will have six. The Senate,
18 27 has 11, Senate 21 has four. We are
19 fortunate, I guess, that all 15 are in U.S.
20 House District 14.

21 We have been sliced and diced vertically
22 to the east, vertically to the west and right
23 down the middle in the times that I have lived
24 in this county, and we have never been a
25 collective unit except under Connie Mack's

1 district, which includes all Lee County
2 basically.

3 So my plea is that when you look at areas
4 like this, that if you are doing a better way
5 than splitting us across the state, which I
6 don't think works well for all of us in Lee
7 County, I would hope you would consider that.

8 But I also have heard a lot tonight, and
9 it's about what I intended to talk about, but I
10 would like to mention that Ms. -- Senator
11 Benacquisto is not the only one that has a
12 district that runs across the state. I believe
13 U.S. House 16 also has that problem of crossing
14 the state, going down into Immokalee and
15 picking up little groups of voters along the
16 way, and it was very gerrymandered. And for
17 you that have been a long as long as I have,
18 you might remember how we got rid of that guy
19 that was an incumbent. And I would like to see
20 the east-west end as long as that it is for the
21 good of the communities and the way you draw
22 your lines, and I recognize that it is a hard
23 job and I appreciate your efforts. Thank you.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
25 ma'am.

1 Next, Michelle Guerin, and following
2 Ms. Guerin, Arthur Wells and then Steve Sherman
3 with the NAACP.

4 Ms. Guerin, thank you so much, and we are
5 looking forward to what you might have to share
6 with us.

7 MS. GUERIN: Thank you very much for
8 having me here tonight and for listening to all
9 of us, we really appreciate it, and I will try
10 to remain as respectful as possible, but I am a
11 little annoyed.

12 The people spoke back in 2009 when myself
13 and hundreds of volunteers worked thousands of
14 hours collecting 150,000 signatures on
15 petition. The people spoke again in 2010 when
16 over 60 percent, close to 63, of registered
17 voters in Florida instructed the legislation
18 that we wanted fair districting. We were tired
19 of the gerrymandering that was going on.

20 Now you are asking the people to speak
21 again. This time I hope you are listening. We
22 want you to follow the amendments that were
23 passed back in 2010, Amendments 5 and 6, and we
24 want you to draw maps and present them to us
25 for comment in a timely fashion. We want to

1 make sure that our elections in 2012 will be
2 fair, that each voter in Florida has the right
3 to vote. One person, one vote. Thank you.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Very good
5 testimony.

6 We have more good news. The good news is
7 that we have had as we have progressed through
8 our hearing twice as many people sign up to
9 speak as we had at the beginning. That is the
10 good news. In order to make sure we hear them
11 and also give time so that we answer some of
12 the factual questions that people want answers
13 to tonight and questions they asked, we are
14 going to have to be a little tighter on the
15 time limit. Everybody's been pretty good so
16 far, but now I apologize, just in order to show
17 respect to all of those people now who have
18 signed up and still want to speak, I would like
19 to ask if you could hold your verbal comments
20 to two minutes, and then if you have written
21 information, we will take that beyond the two
22 minutes.

23 And with that, Mr. Wells, we are delighted
24 to have your testimony.

25 MR. WELLS: Senator Gaetz, I am thrilled

1 that you and the other Senators and
2 Representatives are here. My name is Arthur
3 Wells. I have been a resident of Lee County
4 for 12 years. I am a Korean era veteran. And
5 this expressive democracy is why I served my
6 country in that particular way. God bless
7 America.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: God bless you, sir, for
9 your service.

10 MR. WELLS: I've voted in every election
11 since 1956 when I was 21. I voted for
12 President Eisenhower. In 2008, I appeared on a
13 panel with Susan Eisenhower, the granddaughter
14 of the President, on behalf of President Obama.

15 Members of my family have been devoted to
16 the Republican party since 1863 when my
17 great-grandfather was freed as a slave. Again,
18 I voted for President Eisenhower in 1956.

19 I changed my resident -- my registration
20 to Democrat early this year because I was so
21 offended by the rhetoric in Tallahassee and in
22 Washington. I, like Mr. Ramirez, was a manager
23 at General Motors -- at General Electric. In
24 fact, I was the first -- among the first
25 African-American personnel managers in a

1 commercial business in General Electric.

2 Recently I -- I normally dress better than
3 this, but recently I suffered a monstrous
4 financial loss because of the lack of
5 enforcement of regulations in governing by
6 ideology and pledges --

7 SENATOR GAETZ: And, Mr. Wells, I am very
8 respectful of your service and your family's
9 history, but I would ask you --

10 MR. WELLS: May I have 30 seconds?

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, sir.

12 MR. WELLS: May I have 30 seconds?

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Please put a bow on it.

14 MR. WELLS: Okay, rather than common
15 sense, what I'd like to speak to is Amendments
16 5 and 6, which the citizens of Florida have
17 demonstrated overwhelmingly they favored. And
18 the House of Representatives and the State of
19 Florida is using my taxes to defeat something
20 that over 60 percent of the citizens of the
21 state of Florida voted in favor of, and that is
22 unconscionably wrong.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir. And,
24 again, thank you for your service.

25 Steve Sherman with the NAACP, and then

1 Clara Anne Graham, President of the League of
2 Women Voters of Lee County, then Dr. Pat Fish
3 with the League of Women Voters and then Laura
4 Miller with the League of Women Voters and then
5 Lloyd Fish with the League of Women Voters. So
6 we will get a -- we will get a good recitation
7 from the League this evening.

8 Mr. Sherman, thank you for being here, and
9 you are recognized.

10 MR. SHERMAN: Thank you. Thank you for
11 your service and holding this meeting this
12 evening.

13 My name is Steve Sherman. I am the
14 Political Action Chairman for the NAACP Chapter
15 5110 here in Lee County. We come to you this
16 evening to ask you to speed up the process as
17 much as possible by addressing redistricting at
18 the beginning of the legislative session, and
19 also providing as much time for public hearing
20 after the maps are produced as there is now.
21 This will provide a much smoother process and
22 also be of substantial savings to the citizens
23 of Lee County and make the jobs for our
24 supervisors of voting much easier. Thank you.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

1 And now we will hear from Clara Anne
2 Graham, President of the League, and then
3 Dr. Pat Fish with the League and Laura Miller
4 with the League, please be on deck.

5 Ms. Graham, thank you for coming and thank
6 you for your service to the League of Women
7 Voters.

8 MS. GRAHAM: Thank you. Good evening. My
9 name is Clara Anne Graham, President of the
10 League of Women Voters of Lee County, a former
11 state board treasurer for eight years,
12 currently a member of the League of Women
13 Voters of the United States 11-member Climate
14 Change Task Force, and a practicing accountant.

15 As you are aware, the League of Women
16 Voters was instrumental in the passage of the
17 constitutional redistricting Amendments 5 and
18 6. This effort was a culmination of 30-year
19 commitment to bring fairness into the
20 redistricting process, and the fifth campaign,
21 with many roadblocks along the way. The
22 voters, all voters, whom you are to represent,
23 have spoken.

24 We are concerned with what we perceive as
25 a lack of and concern for prudent and fiscal

1 responsibility by utilizing taxpayer dollars
2 for a lawsuit to try to circumvent the voters'
3 voice. In previous public hearings, the
4 Committee has stated that the entire
5 redistricting process will be 100 percent
6 transparent. Will you please tell us the
7 amount of taxpayer dollars that have been spent
8 in a full written disclosure in detail,
9 including the total lawsuit monies?

10 Also, Representative Weatherford, will you
11 as Chair of this Committee recommend to the
12 Speaker Cannon that the House drop its
13 participation in the lawsuit fighting
14 Amendments 5 and 6?

15 My League button is purple, an equal
16 blending of Republicans, red, and Democrats,
17 blue. We urge you to comply with Amendments 5
18 and 6.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, ma'am. Thank
20 you very much.

21 And next we will hear from Dr. Pat Fish
22 with the League, then Laura Miller with the
23 league and then Dr. Lloyd Fish with the League.

24 Dr. Fish, thank you very, very much for
25 being here.

1 DR. P. FISH: Thank you. I am a retired
2 chemistry professor, but after retirement, I
3 got -- had time then to become more involved in
4 voting, which has been through the League of
5 Women Voters. And I have a number of
6 questions, but the one I would like to ask now
7 is if you think that June of 2012 is going to
8 be soon enough for people to qualify for
9 districts for which they don't even know where
10 they exist, or is this really just going to be
11 another stalling tactic? Thank you.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
13 Doctor. And I hope, Doctor, that your schedule
14 will permit you to stay, because I think there
15 will be some useful and hopefully reassuring
16 information for you about the schedule.

17 And now we would be delighted to hear from
18 Laura Miller, then Dr. Lloyd Fish and then Rick
19 Murphy, the Superintendent of Hendry County
20 Schools.

21 Laura Miller representing the League.

22 MS. MILLER: Thank you for this
23 opportunity to have input in the redistricting
24 process. My name is Laura Miller, and I am a
25 past President of the League of Women Voters of

1 Lee County. I have been a member of the Lee
2 League for 25 years. Also, in my other life, I
3 was a university professor.

4 Some of us were in Tallahassee ten years
5 ago when redistricting was being considered the
6 last time, and we heard comments from a number
7 of legislators from both political parties. I
8 heard at least three Republican legislators in
9 a variety of venues volunteer the comment that
10 the Democrats have done this -- have done it
11 their way for years, and now it is our turn.
12 Since the League is nonpartisan -- a
13 nonpartisan organization, and our members
14 habitually look at both sides of an issue
15 before taking a position, we find such partisan
16 remarks distressing.

17 My question is this: In the current
18 redistricting process, can you assure us that
19 legislators are thinking of what is best for
20 the voters of Florida? Partisanship should not
21 have a place in a matter that involves all of
22 us, and we hope that neither party is
23 practicing it now.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
25 Ms. Miller.

1 And next we will hear from Dr. Lloyd Fish,
2 then Rick Murphy, Superintendent Murphy, and
3 then Tonda Soisson-Lawson.

4 DR. L. FISH: Good evening, gentlemen and
5 ladies.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Good evening, sir.

7 DR. L. FISH: I am Lloyd Fish, and I am
8 the Secretary of the League of Women Voters of
9 Lee County, although I am a male. And as a
10 matter of fact, you laugh, but there are
11 20 percent of our chapter that are males, so it
12 is in name only. We have both genders.

13 I guess two things that I would like to
14 say briefly. One, that I would second what Jim
15 Roach said earlier in the evening, and two, I
16 would disagree what Mr. Rodriques said insomuch
17 as he stated that it was the responsibility of
18 the fair elections committee, the people that
19 promoted 4 and 5 -- 5 and 6, pardon me,
20 amendments, to draw the lines. I feel that
21 actually it is your job, that is what you were
22 elected to do. You are the people that have to
23 draw the lines. We are not the experts, but --
24 and I guess the second part of that question is
25 when are you going to come back to us and have

1 another setting where you can show us what the
2 lines are so that we can make meaningful
3 comments? That's all.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
5 Dr. Fish.

6 Mr. Superintendent, having once played a
7 superintendent on television, I appreciate the
8 good work that you do, and we thank you for
9 your service to the people of the county and to
10 the children and families and employees of your
11 school district. You are recognized, sir, with
12 our gratitude.

13 SUPERINTENDENT MURPHY: Thank you, Senator
14 Gaetz, and it is a pleasure seeing you and some
15 of the committee members again. I will see you
16 in Clewiston bright and early in the morning, I
17 take it. I think you will enjoy the trip.

18 First of all, I would like to thank you
19 for all coming out, spending your time. Our
20 time is very valuable. I found that out later
21 in life, serving as a public servant.

22 Clewiston and LaBelle are two cities that
23 we have in Hendry County. We have outlying
24 areas, of course. Hendry County is about
25 39,000 plus people on record. A year ago,

1 unemployment was 20.6 percent. Right now in
2 July, we are the highest in the state, 16.2
3 percent.

4 One thing we do have, we have plenty of
5 land, plenty of natural resources, plenty of
6 water, clean air, some great people, a lot of
7 room from growth, and I welcome anything we can
8 do to promote growth and education. We want
9 growth in many ways.

10 Currently, the 27th District has served us
11 well. Aronberg was a great Senator,
12 Ms. Bullard is a great Senator. Congressional,
13 Alcee Hastings, one of the best,
14 congressional -- Congressman Rooney is doing a
15 great job. Grimsley is, of course, one of the
16 best. And so whatever we do -- whatever we do,
17 we want to represent Hendry County the fairest
18 way.

19 My idea, and it is only my idea speaking,
20 27th District is not going to work in the
21 future. I feel that since we have two cities
22 spread apart in a vast rural area, I think that
23 on Clewiston's side, I think the county could
24 be better served with a east coast majority, on
25 the LaBelle side, the west coast majority.

1 I do serve on the Southwest Educational
2 Alliance Board, and also the Work Force Board.
3 I deal with a lot of issues on both sides. It
4 is always hard to get service on both sides of
5 the county. I have fought the university
6 system to get dual enrollment in our high
7 schools. I think that needs to be considered
8 also.

9 You have some great plans, I've looked at
10 them, I've liked some of them, but I would like
11 that to be considered, because Hendry County is
12 a great place to have growth, and we are going
13 to have it, we welcome that change.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
15 Mr. Superintendent.

16 SUPERINTENDENT MURPHY: Thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Tonda Soisson-Lawson, and
18 then Larry Hart and then William Jennings,
19 followed by Ruby Daniels.

20 Thank you so much for being here, and you
21 are recognized, ma'am.

22 MS. SOISSON-LAWSON: Thank you. First of
23 all, thank everyone for coming and listening to
24 us, and I am here as a Lehigh Acres resident
25 since 1997. I have seen all the growth that

1 has happened since, and am anticipating and
2 looking forward to all the growth in our
3 future.

4 My head is spinning after all this
5 information, I know you all are as well, so I
6 am just going to get to my third point. With
7 everything that you have heard here tonight
8 about the communities or the city lines or the
9 populations, I am going to just remind you that
10 we are people, and we have -- this is our
11 community, and not even Lee County, I am just
12 speaking to -- from Lehigh Acres. We have
13 eighty -- almost 87,000 people. We are split
14 in half. We are trying to grow for the future.
15 We do not want to, as city councilman said from
16 Ft. Myers, rely on Ft. Myers being our economic
17 hub for the inland. We are going to be our own
18 economic hub out here in the future, okay. And
19 we need one Representative that is going to
20 advocate for us and help us grow and help us be
21 a great part of Lee County, but our own part of
22 Lee County. Thank you.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, ma'am.

24 Larry Hart. Thank you, Mr. Hart, for
25 being here, and we recognize you.

1 MR. HART: Thank you so much. For the
2 record, my name is Larry Hart. I had the
3 privilege of being born and raised in the city
4 of Ft. Myers, and let me thank each and every
5 one of you for what you do every day. But we
6 are at a critical point, and I believe in the
7 five Bs: Be brief, baby, be brief, because it
8 is going to be a long night if we are not.

9 We need to understand that this is the
10 state of Florida first, and we need to
11 understand that you have a responsibility to
12 the state of Florida. I cannot draw your map
13 for you, but I can give you input when you
14 bring the map back to us.

15 I would ask you to consider the
16 communities and consider our needs and not
17 yours. I would ask you to continue to do the
18 great job, because I do not know a Senator that
19 represents us, or a Representative, that I am
20 not proud of. I don't know one that I have not
21 had the privilege of visiting in Tallahassee,
22 did not welcome me with open arms, and believe
23 me, I spent a lot of time up there.

24 I had the privilege of serving this
25 community for 22 years in law enforcement and

1 six years as a police chief, I continue to
2 serve this community in a government capacity,
3 has made my government service over 32 years.
4 I want you to do one thing for me, and that is
5 very simple: Do the right thing.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much.

7 Next -- next we will hear from William
8 Jennings. Mr. Jennings, are you here, sir? In
9 that case, Ms. Daniels, we are delighted to
10 have you step forward. And Pat, I think, and I
11 apologize, it is not your handwriting, it is my
12 eyes, Pat Carnevale, with the Democratic
13 Women's Club, and then David Lindsay with the
14 water control district, if you will come
15 forward.

16 Ms. Daniels, it is all yours.

17 MS. DANIELS: Thank you. Good evening.
18 My name is Ruby Daniels. I am the President of
19 ALVA, Inc., and our name stands for A Living
20 Vision of Alva, Incorporated. We are a
21 relatively new organization in a very old
22 community in northeast Lee County. We are very
23 rural. And our focus for organizing was
24 community planning. We have developed a
25 community plan that will go before the Lee

1 County Board of County Commissioners at the end
2 of September for adoption, and we are now
3 beginning to work on developing the land
4 development codes to underwrite our community
5 plan.

6 In another year or so, our community
7 planning efforts will be pretty much finalized,
8 and we realize that while we plan for ALVA, we
9 are a part of the larger Lee County community.

10 Our concern is that we are a part of House
11 District 72, which seems to always be held by
12 someone who lives in Punta Gorda, Charlotte
13 County. That person is naturally more attuned
14 to representing the needs of his constituents
15 in Charlotte County than in the small number of
16 Lee County residents. Being so far apart
17 geographically, there is rarely any
18 communication between our community and our
19 Representative. Further, we feel more closely
20 aligned to Lee County and its issues than
21 Charlotte County.

22 As we look to the future, we believe our
23 interests would be better served by someone who
24 lives in Lee County and is subject to the daily
25 ebb and flow of what happens locally and is

1 familiar with our local issues. Also, a local
2 Representative would be more accessible to us.
3 We respectfully request that you pull us into a
4 House district that will require a Lee County
5 resident to serve as our Representative in
6 Tallahassee.

7 We are also in Senate District 27 and face
8 the same set of circumstances with the House
9 district: Isolation, lack of communication,
10 geographic distance. Senator Benacquisto and
11 her predecessor, Senator Aronberg, have both
12 made efforts to overcome this problem, and we
13 are appreciative of that.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: And, ma'am, because of
15 time and the many people lined up behind you,
16 if you could wrap it up, I would be grateful.

17 MS. DANIELS: Thank you. We support a
18 movement to have a senatorial district for Lee
19 County and that we be a part of it. Thank you
20 for giving me the opportunity to speak.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Of course. Thank you
22 very, very much, Ms. Daniels.

23 And I believe -- I apologize, Pat
24 Carnevale, Carnesvale -- all right -- with the
25 Democratic Women's Club, 213 Radcliff Avenue.

1 Okay, I'm sorry.

2 David Lindsay with the East County Water
3 Control District, then Michael Swords and then
4 Cheryl Byrd.

5 MR. LINDSAY: Good evening, everybody. It
6 is good to see so many people from our Lee
7 County delegation on this committee. That is
8 fantastic. I am the district manager of the
9 East County Water Control District that is
10 based in Lehigh Acres. I know you have heard
11 tonight that Lehigh Acres boasts a population
12 of 87,000 people, which would serve as a great
13 population center for a House district.

14 Lehigh Acres is not incorporated. We
15 receive a lot of our general services from Lee
16 County, but we do have two -- two governments
17 in Lehigh Acres that are based in Lehigh Acres:
18 The East County Water Control District and the
19 Lehigh Acres Fire District. The East County
20 Water Control provides the drainage, and, of
21 course, the fire district with the fire. And I
22 believe, and I think a lot of people believe
23 that the best government is the government that
24 is the closest to the people, and I think that
25 is very important. So I think that if we can

1 get a House district drawn around Lehigh Acres
2 and drawn around our fire district and our
3 water control district and around Matt
4 Caldwell, who is our resident here in Lehigh
5 Acres, that would be fantastic.

6 And also we have a district -- a Senate
7 District drawn around both of the two districts
8 in Lehigh Acres that would also have a Lee
9 County Senator in that district, we would
10 greatly appreciate it. Thank you.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

12 Michael -- is it Swords, is that correct,
13 sir?

14 MR. SWORDS: Swords, yes, thank you.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Swords. And I apologize,
16 sir, I don't know what LAEDB means, but that is
17 who you are representing, according to this
18 card, and maybe you can tell us about them.

19 Then Cheryl Byrd and then Nathan, I
20 believe it is Stovall, or Stovix, S-t-o-v --
21 Stout, Stout, okay. You should have been a
22 doctor, Nathan.

23 Michael, you are recognized, and thank you
24 so much for being here.

25 MR. SWORDS: Thank you. And that acronym

1 stands for the Lehigh Acres Economic
2 Development Board.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Great. Thank you so much.

4 MR. SWORDS: Distinguished Senators and
5 Representatives, thank you for coming to Lehigh
6 Acres, Florida, our community, a community that
7 is approximately 100 square miles with a
8 population of 87,000, as you have heard
9 tonight, according to the 2010 census.
10 Delegates, please note that our community is a
11 young community, approximately 60 years old.
12 We are one of the fastest-growing communities
13 in southwest Florida. Lee County, with
14 approximately 640,000 in the county, Lehigh
15 Acres is the second-largest community in the
16 county by land mass and population.

17 Our community began as a bedroom community
18 approximately 60 years ago. Approximately ten
19 years ago, we had a population between thirty
20 to 35,000, and in ten years, you have heard the
21 numbers, we are almost 87,000. That is a
22 phenomenal growth. Based upon previous growth
23 and homes available here in our community, we
24 anticipate that in the next ten years, our
25 community could reach the target population of

1 a community -- a complete community that
2 qualifies for its own Representative.

3 While we are an unincorporated community
4 today, please recognize that Lehigh Acres is a
5 sleeping giant in the making. We are evolving
6 into a major city in the state of Florida, and
7 we believe within the next ten years, we may
8 very well be a city.

9 We ask that based upon these
10 considerations, that you consider Mr. Weiner's
11 request for two Senators for our community, in
12 addition for a Representative for Lehigh Acres.
13 We have tremendous needs, we have a tremendous
14 land mass here and we have a tremendous
15 population that needs representation. Thank
16 you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

18 Cheryl Byrd is our next testifier,
19 followed by Nathan and then followed by Dennis
20 Holland, and if Michael Neven would be prepared
21 to come forward.

22 Ms. Byrd, thank you, and we are delighted
23 to hear your testimony.

24 MS. BYRD: Good evening. I am Cheryl
25 Byrd, a two-year resident of Cape Coral.

1 Previously I was a 19-year resident of Dare
2 County, North Carolina, where I served as a
3 county commissioner for eight years. While
4 living there, I actively participated in public
5 input processes for county redistricting in
6 1992 and state redistricting in 2002.

7 I urge you to seek help from groups in
8 other states such as North Carolina and
9 Virginia, which went through the same
10 experience after the 2000 census, and now have
11 legislative and congressional districts which
12 are regarded as fair by most residents of those
13 states.

14 An essential characteristic of a good
15 district is that residents who live in it know
16 who represents them and have some reasonable
17 ability to meet with their Representatives. I
18 think our -- many of our current districts
19 don't satisfy that criteria.

20 Districts which split up cities, small
21 counties and even unincorporated areas that are
22 active, identifiable communities discourage
23 citizen participation in their state and
24 federal government. They also create confusion
25 when voters see campaign signs or literature

1 for a person they like, only to discover that
2 the person's name is nowhere to be found on
3 their ballot on election day.

4 Finally, they also create unnecessary work
5 for county election boards, which are charged
6 with keeping track of who resides in every
7 district you create. Errors are almost
8 guaranteed when you split up local voting
9 jurisdictions.

10 Draw districts which -- first ignore the
11 question of adequate representation of our
12 minority populations. Then look and see if our
13 minorities don't have a better chance of
14 electing someone who more closely identifies
15 with them than the current voting district
16 plans. Zoo-shaped districts, which give a
17 district to minority populations outright while
18 preserving many more districts for non-minority
19 incumbents, are no favor to anyone. That is
20 why the voters so overwhelmingly voted for the
21 Fair District amendments to the Florida
22 Constitution. Other states have found that if
23 enough districts provide a reasonable --

24 SENATOR GAETZ: And, ma'am, again, in
25 deference to those behind you, could I ask if

1 you might summarize, please?

2 MS. BYRD: Okay. I will just finish this
3 last -- this one point, and I will pass these
4 comments on to you.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

6 MS. BYRD: Other states have found that if
7 enough districts provide a reasonable chance
8 for a person from a minority group to be
9 elected, their plans have passed through
10 federal review process successfully. The
11 districts do not have to be more than
12 50 percent minority.

13 And I have a few other comments, so --

14 SENATOR GAETZ: We will be happy to take
15 them for the record, pass them out to our
16 members. Thank you very much, ma'am.

17 Next, Nathan Stout. Mr. Stout?

18 MR. STOUT: You got that right, thank you.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Absolutely. Are you a
20 physician?

21 MR. STOUT: No, I -- no, I am a --

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Are you a teacher? That
23 is a classroom voice.

24 MR. STOUT: No. I am a certified public
25 accountant.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, I am going to listen
2 to you.

3 MR. STOUT: Yeah.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: You have the floor, sir.

5 MR. STOUT: Thank you very much, and I
6 welcome you here and I welcome everyone here,
7 and certainly Senator Benacquisto and Senator
8 Richter and my good friend, Gary Aubuchon, and
9 come back more often, Gary. And we are so
10 proud of Representative Caldwell. And I can
11 tell you right now, I have lived in this town
12 for 30 years, I am a fourth-generation Lee
13 Countian, and I have never seen this much power
14 east of the interstate in my life. So thank
15 you for coming.

16 I am Chairman of the East County Water
17 Control District, I am also on the Board of the
18 Chamber of Commerce, and you have heard
19 everything about our community, how it is
20 growing. We are going to grow and continue to
21 grow. We will be 300,000 people, close to
22 that, some day. So we need to start now with a
23 Representative that works this area solely. I
24 don't care who you attach us to, but put all
25 80,000 people in Lehigh Acres in one district.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

2 MR. STOUT: We are going to continue to
3 grow, and so we need that. And, again, I want
4 to thank everyone for coming out tonight.

5 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much,
6 sir.

7 Dennis Holland, and following Mr. Holland,
8 I believe it is Michael Neven and then Jerry D.
9 Carrick and then Pete Burkert.

10 Mr. Holland?

11 MR. HOLLAND: Yes.

12 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

13 MR. HOLLAND: My name is Dennis Holland.
14 I have lived in Lee County since 1980. I would
15 like to say I am a retired design engineer, but
16 I am an unemployed design engineer.

17 You folks are sitting here listening to us
18 to give testimony on a job that you are to do.
19 You've got staff. There is a program out
20 there. My main question, show of hands would
21 be a simple thing, how many of you have
22 actually used the program that is out there on
23 the Web right now for redistricting? How many
24 people in the audience have? They outnumber
25 you.

1 You folks should have had maps. You
2 should have had something laid out so that
3 people have something to talk about other than
4 what I saw in the lobby, which was a good first
5 start.

6 Your deadline is a little too long. You
7 need to shorten it up. It should be shortly
8 after the first of this year, not in June, to
9 get your work done. If you can't get it done,
10 say so to the public, and then we will do what
11 we have to do in order to get maps made up.

12 That is my comment. Have a nice week.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

14 MR. NEVEN: Hi, there. I am a little loud
15 normally.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: You woke us up.

17 MR. NEVEN: I just want to make sure you
18 are not sleeping, that is all.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: We are not anymore.

20 Thanks, Michael.

21 MR. NEVEN: My name is Mike Neven. First
22 of all, I want to say thank you for being here
23 tonight. I think it is wonderful you chose
24 Lehigh to have this forum. This is something
25 that is good for our image.

1 First of all, I would like to let you
2 know, I am a small businessman, I am a realtor,
3 and I am a chamber board member, but I am here
4 to speak for myself and not for them. I have
5 been living in the community of Lehigh Acres
6 for 27 years, and you notice I said the word
7 "community." Lehigh Acres is not, due to
8 manufactured fear and ignorance, a city yet.
9 We will be some day. We need to be.

10 I also am a member of what we call the
11 dumbbell district, and it is very well named
12 because of the fact that we have nothing in
13 common with the other end of the dumbbell or
14 the bar. Lehigh is part of Lee County, and
15 Lehigh is all part of Lehigh. My -- I am here
16 to say keep Lehigh together and keep Lehigh
17 part of Lee County where I pay my taxes and do
18 my entertaining. That is all I have to say.
19 Thank you.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.

21 Next is Jerry Carrick and then Pete
22 Burkert, and then Ken Thompson, if you would be
23 ready, please.

24 MR. CARRICK: Good evening, and thanks to
25 the delegation. Welcome to Lehigh Acres, the

1 fastest-growing community in southwest Florida,
2 saying that with a lot of excitement, I am a
3 business guy here for the last seven years.

4 Lehigh is a great community. We need to
5 be one district. We need to hold our community
6 together. We are fast growing, we have a lot
7 of challenges, and when we are split, it just
8 polarizes all the efforts that we do when we
9 need to come to you for help. We need a
10 Representative who we know him so we aren't
11 split so we have one common goal.

12 So thank you very much for coming, and
13 thank you for bringing Jason along out there.
14 He has helping me try to rig those maps out
15 there, I am lost, but he is going to aid me
16 this week and we will get an accurate map in to
17 you. So --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.
19 Thanks for your submission of a map.

20 Pete Burkert. Is it Burkert?

21 MR. BURKERT: Yes, it is, sir. Thank you
22 very much.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for being here.

24 MR. BURKERT: Good evening, everyone,
25 Senators and members of the House. My name is

1 Pete Burkert, I am a local attorney, been a Lee
2 County resident for 34 years.

3 I think what has become relatively
4 apparent from all the conversation is that the
5 Fair Amendments passed in a year that was
6 arguably very difficult for these kind of
7 amendments, which makes its victory even that
8 much more impressive, meaning that the
9 63 percent that occur generally would have been
10 perhaps higher in other years, which means that
11 the public meant it when they passed it and
12 they really wanted these amendments. And I
13 think as those of you who are going to be
14 responsible for the outcome of this, you ignore
15 the amendments, you work around the amendments
16 at your peril, and you should be cautious of
17 whatever you do and whatever comes out, that it
18 clearly meets the test of these amendments.

19 I believe that looking at the wording of
20 the amendments, there are two things that are
21 really clear, that when you start this from
22 your computer, that the drawing of these
23 district lines must be totally blind and
24 totally neutral in these two areas: One, the
25 voter registration by party of the people

1 involved. You cannot know when you start this
2 process off how many Democrats, how many
3 Republicans, are in each district. That
4 violates the Fair Amendment -- Fair Amendments.

5 Secondly, you can't put in the address of
6 incumbent members. That violates it. If it is
7 determined later on that your computer program
8 has those two components as part of the initial
9 setting of the districts, I believe you will
10 have violated the Fair Amendments. This --
11 those two elements need to be completely
12 excluded of it.

13 Going beyond that, I believe the most
14 important sub-unit for use in setting these
15 districts is the county. The county is used by
16 Florida in a variety of ways, whether it is
17 water management districts, judicial circuits.
18 The county needs to be the focus.

19 In order to try to make an effort, a
20 strong effort, to preserve minority districts,
21 I think you should work from the core of urban
22 areas and outwards. In other words, there's
23 got to be a place to start when you build a
24 district, isn't it? You could start in
25 Pensacola and work down, you can start in Key

1 West and work up, you can pick a county and
2 start there, but I believe the starting point
3 ought to be the core areas, the core urban
4 areas, and work out from there somehow, paying
5 attention to these county lines, first of all,
6 and in counties that are big enough that have
7 more than one district, you go down to city
8 lines.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: And, sir, you've made some
10 very good points, but in deference to those
11 behind you, I did let you run a little over --

12 MR. BURKERT: Thanks.

13 SENATOR GAETZ: -- and if you could
14 summarize, I would be grateful.

15 MR. BURKERT: Fifteen seconds.

16 As a recent candidate for State Senate, as
17 Senator Benacquisto knows, and who ran for
18 District 27, it is my view as well that
19 District 27 ought to fall apart completely. It
20 does not meet the test of compactness. Pure
21 and simple, it should fall, and Lee County
22 deserves its own seat. I said that in my
23 campaign, and I stick with that tonight.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir. Thank you
25 very much.

1 Ken Thompson? Ken Thompson is next and
2 then we have -- this individual already
3 spoke -- Cathy Michiels, and then Dena
4 G-e-r-a-g-h-t-y with the drug courts.

5 So, Ken Thompson, do we have Ken Thompson
6 here? We will pass him.

7 Cathy Michiels? Is it Michiels?
8 Ms. Michiels, we really -- I'm sorry I didn't
9 give you more notice, but thanks -- no, you are
10 doing fine. Thanks so much for being here, and
11 you are recognized, ma'am.

12 MS. MICHIELS: Thank you, and thank you
13 all for coming here and giving me this
14 opportunity to speak.

15 Pretty much everybody has said, you know,
16 a lot of what I had written and wanted to say,
17 so I am just going to reiterate a couple things
18 and point out something that hasn't been said.
19 And, again, 63 percent of Lee County voted for
20 this 5 and 6 amendments, 60 percent of Florida
21 voters. It is not 50, 51 percent, it is over
22 60. It is a great majority.

23 You need to not make this a charade that
24 it is purported to be, and the millions of
25 dollars of our taxpayer money that you are

1 spending regardless of, again, the semantics of
2 how you are going to defend it, it is our
3 taxpayer money, you are fighting for what we
4 wanted. In the meantime, you are firing
5 people, policemen, teachers, firemen, to spend
6 the money on this. Are you kidding me? No,
7 that -- it is beyond ridiculous.

8 And the other thing I would like to point
9 out is we are spending trillions, trillions of
10 dollars and our civilian population to give the
11 right to vote in Iraq and Afghanistan, and you
12 are going to sit here and go back to
13 Tallahassee and take our rights away.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Ma'am, we are -- could we
15 keep it to Florida redistricting?

16 MS. MICHIELS: I get that, but my point
17 is --

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Because we don't control
19 Afghanistan --

20 MS. MICHIELS: I understand.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: -- so bring it back down
22 to us.

23 MS. MICHIELS: Okay. But you get the
24 point. We are fighting for our rights, for our
25 right to have fair districts here, and our

1 taxpayer money should not be used to
2 disingenuously take away our rights. And we
3 are onto you, we smell what you are cooking,
4 and we will be back with more petitions if you
5 try and take our rights away.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: And, ma'am --

7 MS. MICHIELS: Mark my word.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Time. Thank you so much.

9 MS. MICHIELS: Thank you.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Appreciate your being
11 here. The louder you talk, the more applause
12 you get, now you keep that in mind.

13 And, ma'am, could you please let us know
14 -- sh, sh, sh, hey, in the back, be nice now to
15 this lady. Tell us how to pronounce your name,
16 ma'am.

17 MS. GERAGHTY: Geraghty.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Geraghty. And,
19 Ms. Geraghty, would you pull the microphone
20 close to you so we can get every word?

21 MS. GERAGHTY: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. Thank
22 you very much.

23 Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to
24 the legislative delegation that is present. We
25 appreciate your work, and we know the time and

1 effort that you have put in.

2 I am a native Floridian, I am rather proud
3 of that, and I have lived in Lee County in the
4 city of Ft. Myers for 42 years. We have
5 enjoyed a great deal of growth in this area,
6 and while there has been a great deal of talk
7 about the cross-state districts not being
8 totally representative of the people, I believe
9 it is through the efforts of this cross
10 districts and the other representation that we
11 have had from our wonderful delegation that has
12 taken us from a sleepy little Florida community
13 into contiguous, diverse, productive
14 communities that can hold hands and go forward
15 in progress. Thank you.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much,
17 Ms. Geraghty.

18 And I apologize, Damon -- I believe it is
19 Sheldon or Shellon -- Shelor. And is there --
20 there is. And following his testimony, we will
21 hear from Lucille -- and now, Lucille lives at
22 104, I think, Ortona Street in Lehigh Acres,
23 but, Lucille, I apologize, I am sure it is my
24 eyes, but if it is Moffatt or something like
25 that. And then following Lucille, Kenneth

1 Taylor.

2 Thank you very much, sir, and you are
3 recognized and we're delighted to have your
4 testimony.

5 MR. SHELOR: Thank you very much. A lot
6 of people slaughter my name, so that is okay, I
7 am used to it.

8 But, once again, thank all of you all for
9 coming out here to our community. This is -- a
10 comment was made, this is probably the most
11 power we have seen out east of I-75, and I
12 believe that is true. I am a 36, 37-year
13 resident of Lehigh Acres, seen a lot of
14 changes. When I moved here, there was less
15 than 10,000 people and no traffic lights and no
16 McDonald's or fast food places. So we have
17 seen lots of change. Southwest Florida has
18 seen a lot of change. We have seen a lot of
19 growth.

20 The point I want to make, and I am not
21 going to reiterate a lot of things that were
22 made here tonight, points that were made here
23 tonight, but essentially you can look at Lee
24 County, look at a lot of the unincorporated
25 areas of Lee County, which we have a lot in

1 common east of I-75, and it creates a very
2 nice, compact, contiguous House district. I
3 think you need to seriously consider that. And
4 I think that is the main thing that you are
5 hearing tonight is to not have -- and I won't
6 use the word "gerrymandering," but I just did,
7 but stretched out, odd-shaped, snake, curly Qs
8 for districts. We need to have good contact
9 with our Representatives. This is a
10 representative community, and it is important
11 not only for the people, but also their
12 Representatives to be in an area, know the area
13 and have contact with the people they
14 represent.

15 And so, again, I thank you. I will be
16 brief, hopefully I will get that piece of pie
17 for being brief, and thank you for coming out
18 tonight.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Just sign Representative
20 Legg's name to the slip, you'll have a piece of
21 pie. Thank you very much.

22 And now my deep apologies, Lucille.
23 What's your last name, ma'am?

24 MS. MOFFATT: Moffatt.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Moffatt, I got it right.

1 MS. MOFFATT: Moffatt, yes, M-o-f-f-a-t-t.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Okay. Well, you are
3 recognized, and we are delighted to have you
4 here tonight.

5 MS. MOFFATT: Yes. Well, good evening,
6 everyone. We are happy in Lehigh Acres to have
7 you here. It is a long time that we need to
8 see something like this happening in Lehigh. I
9 am an old Wall Street girl, and after I
10 retired, I came to Lehigh, such a beautiful
11 place, and we try our very best to have it as a
12 very nice community.

13 We listen every year to all the
14 legislators coming in and speaking to vote for
15 them, which we all get together, because we
16 need improvement in Lehigh Acres, but the
17 moment we do so, first, some of them, when we
18 vote, we don't know them, and it is worse when
19 they get through, we are left in the dark.

20 Right now in Lehigh Acres, although we are
21 under one umbrella, we have a lot of Caribbean
22 folks living here. We have the Spanish people
23 living here. And what I want to know, when we
24 regroup, who does it benefit? Does it benefit
25 Lehigh Acres? Does it benefit the legislators?

1 Many of us are laypeople. We do not understand
2 about this sharing up of the county -- or of
3 the districts, but we want to know -- one thing
4 we want to know, that Lehigh Acres -- sometimes
5 we can't even see it on the map, even when the
6 weather report is going out, our name is not
7 there, and that is the truth. So we want to be
8 on the map. And we understand the reason why
9 we are not getting things is because we have no
10 power. But, believe me, we are going to get
11 power now, because when the Representatives
12 come, they promise us Jesus. Only Jesus they
13 don't promise us. Everything in the world.
14 But, believe me, if we don't get what we want,
15 we are going to give them Father, Son and holy
16 ghost. So --

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, before you take up a
18 collection, if you could wrap up, your time is
19 limited.

20 MS. MOFFATT: We will have to go to the
21 legislators for the collection, because we are
22 all broke.

23 SENATOR GAETZ: At every -- Ms. Moffatt,
24 at every single hearing, somebody has the best
25 line, and tonight, by acclamation, you get the

1 prize, and that -- that, Ms. Moffatt, is pie a
2 la Mode on Representative Legg at Perkins.
3 Thank you for your testimony.

4 And now Kenneth Taylor, Mr. Taylor, and
5 following Mr. Taylor, Woody Hanson and then
6 Joseph Whalen.

7 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, sir. I speak for
8 two constituents tonight, first for the armed
9 forces veterans of southwest Florida. I am a
10 retired Navy officer with 23 years service to
11 my country, and I would like to state very
12 emphatically that the veterans of southwest
13 Florida, of which there are thousands, one of
14 the most populous areas in the state for
15 retired veterans, we are very keen on
16 Amendments 5 and 6 and protecting our rights.
17 As you know, thousands -- hundreds of thousands
18 of Americans have died to protect those rights,
19 and I ask you to consider the fact that we are
20 talking about basic democracy here. We are
21 talking grass roots level ability of the public
22 to influence our legislation to be fairly
23 represented, which we certainly have not been.
24 The barbell thing, everybody has talked
25 about it enough, when I retired down here, I

1 was appalled to see that that was actual fact,
2 and I cannot in any conscience figure how the
3 State could have let that happen. That is
4 absolutely outrageous and unconscionable and
5 does not represent Lee County at all.

6 Lee County has over 680,000 people. We
7 are growing rapidly. You have heard that. We
8 have a lot to be thankful for. We deserve a
9 U.S. Congressman in Lee County. We deserve to
10 have better representation in the House. It is
11 ludicrous to have five Representatives dividing
12 up this county. That means no Representative
13 has a majority part of the county that he is
14 concerned about. We need better
15 representation. It is absolutely insane to
16 have five House members in -- that touch on Lee
17 County, some of them just barely.

18 I also want to speak quickly, I am
19 Vice-Chairman of the Democratic Party of Lee
20 County. My counterpart spoke, so I thought I
21 should say the same. Over 70 percent of the
22 Democrats in -- the 106,000 Democrats in Lee
23 County voted for Amendments 5 and 6. We are
24 passionate about it, as one of the other
25 Democrats said. We worked very, very hard,

1 thousands and thousands of hours for these
2 amendments. We expect the Legislature to do
3 the right thing, to follow the will of the
4 people, to not play games with us, because as
5 many speakers have said, we are certainly
6 watching.

7 And, finally, I want to say one thing: I
8 learned something tonight that I didn't know
9 and I should have known being Vice-Chairman.
10 That \$30 million of our public funds have been
11 appropriated by the State Legislature to defeat
12 the will of the people. That is an outrage,
13 okay. It is our money. Thank you.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. And,
15 Mr. Taylor, first of all, thank you for your
16 service to our country. Everybody here
17 appreciates that. And, secondly, I hope you
18 can stay until the end, because every once in a
19 while, something gets in the bloodstream that
20 is not quite true, and I think we will have a
21 chance to at least provide some factual
22 information, and then that way, everyone can
23 make judgments about those facts. Thank you,
24 sir, and thanks again for your service.

25 Woody Hanson. Mr. Hanson, followed by

1 Joseph Whalen, followed by Linda Carter.

2 MR. HANSON: Good evening, my name is
3 Woody Hanson, for the record, and thank you for
4 being here, and I think most importantly, I
5 thank everybody for being here and making us
6 feel part of a community that cares.

7 My family got here quite a while ago. My
8 mama's side got here in 1866 and my dad's side
9 got here in 1884. I used to think that was
10 important, but what really is important is that
11 we are here tonight.

12 And what I really want to speak to is an
13 issue that I believe that is near and dear to
14 each and every one of us, and that is water. I
15 grew up on the Caloosahatchee River, and I've
16 watched that river just go to hell. And
17 there's a lot of straws in the ground in Lehigh
18 Acres, and there's a lot of straws in the
19 ground in Cape Coral that are going to be real
20 concerned about the quality of their water.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: And, sir, I would love to
22 chat with you after the hearing about water
23 quality, but if we could keep it to
24 redistricting or bring it back to
25 redistricting.

1 MR. HANSON: I cannot thank you enough,
2 because that takes me right there.

3 SENATOR GAETZ: Great.

4 MR. HANSON: The river, if you did not
5 know, runs east and west, and that is why I am
6 here for a cross-state representation, because
7 of that geometry, and I cannot thank you,
8 Senator, for bringing that point more clear --

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

10 MR. HANSON: -- than what you just did.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Great. Thank you very
12 much, Mr. Hanson.

13 Joseph Whalen, followed by Linda Carter,
14 and followed by Thomas -- I think it is
15 Bruzzesi, and I apologize, sir, if I have your
16 name wrong.

17 Mr. Whalen, you are recognized. We are
18 delighted to have you here tonight.

19 MR. WHALEN: Thank you, Senator Gaetz.
20 Also, thank you, Senator Benacquisto,
21 Representative Caldwell, my partner, Lehigh
22 Acres resident. I am the current President/CEO
23 of the Lehigh Acres Chamber of Commerce. That
24 having been said, I am not speaking to you
25 tonight as the President/CEO of Lehigh Acres

1 Chamber of Commerce, most notably because that
2 will no longer be my title in about 30 days and
3 four hours and -- not that I am counting,
4 because I am moving on to bigger and better
5 things.

6 But, anyway, I am here to speak for my
7 family. And I know all of you -- I would
8 assume all have family. I try as much as
9 possible to, whenever I speak with you
10 personally one-on-one or to you as a group, to
11 do your best. I know it is very, very
12 difficult in Tallahassee to do what you have to
13 do, what you have been elected to do. This
14 obviously is one of those instances. I
15 sincerely appreciate the fact that you are
16 bringing this to the people, the redistricting,
17 and I think it is a very admirable effort, and
18 I certainly hope that it is going to shine the
19 light upon the people that it is intended to
20 do. In fact, I have heard Representative
21 Caldwell speak on redistricting two times now,
22 and he is an aficionado on redistricting and
23 the history of it, and I am not just giving him
24 props and love, I am just saying it really is
25 amazing what he does.

1 But getting back to my original point, I
2 am the current executive for the Lehigh Acres
3 Chamber of Commerce, but more importantly than
4 that, I am a husband to Jennifer. Jennifer
5 teaches fifth grade at Lehigh Elementary. My
6 daughter just started kindergarten at Lehigh
7 Elementary. My son is going to be three on
8 September 17th, which I just found out is
9 actually Constitution Day. Did you guys know
10 that? That is actually when they signed the --
11 yeah. So my son was born on Constitution Day,
12 okay, enough about that. I will get to the
13 point about my family.

14 I strongly believe that this community,
15 this county, needs our own representation. I
16 am a strong believer in the closer you have
17 your representation to home, the better you are
18 represented. Obviously, we have heard about
19 Senate District 27, and I am a firm believer
20 that we need to bring it all over here on the
21 west coast.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you.

23 MR. WHALEN: Thank you.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

25 MR. WHALEN: Appreciate your time. Thank

1 you.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: And next, Linda Carter.

3 Ms. Carter, thank you for coming tonight. You
4 could have been anywhere else, but you came to
5 hang out with us, and we are grateful for your
6 testimony.

7 MS. CARTER: Yes, I am Linda Carter, and
8 one of the things that I want to bring to you
9 that is a national problem, as we looked at
10 disaster preparedness, we have -- this county
11 has five Representatives. Lehigh Acres is 143
12 square miles, the size of Orlando. With five
13 different people representing Lee County, if we
14 get hit with a natural disaster like they got
15 hit up north with Irene and the rest of them,
16 are we going to get all five of them to agree
17 on what we need in Lehigh? We need a unified,
18 consolidated disaster preparedness plan and all
19 of you working together to protect this
20 community of 143 square miles in case we have a
21 natural disaster. If we don't do it now, we
22 cannot wait until Katrina and -- or Andrew and
23 everything in the past. We need to prepare now
24 and look to the future for our children, their
25 children and do it now. Thank you.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much.

2 And our final speaker this evening, and I
3 apologize that I don't -- I am not able to
4 divine his name. I am sure it is my eyesight.
5 Thomas J. -- is it Bruzzesi?

6 MR. BRUZZESI: Very good pronunciation, by
7 the way.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: All right. You are
9 recognized, sir, for two minutes.

10 MR. BRUZZESI: How are you doing, folks?
11 I appreciate having the opportunity to speak in
12 front of you. I've listened to everybody
13 tonight, and before I wanted to get up here and
14 speak, I wanted to listen to everybody.

15 This what you all are doing here is a very
16 good thing tonight. A government is supposed
17 to be of listeners, not lecturers, okay, of
18 citizens, not elitists, and of change and not
19 stand still. By you giving everybody the
20 opportunity to get up here and speak like
21 myself tonight, this is a great display of
22 that, and I really appreciate that.

23 But I want to say that when we talk about
24 redistricting here, in each and every one of
25 these districts, folks, we have a huge, huge

1 problem, okay, we have a huge problem of
2 unemployment. You are all elected officials.
3 As you know, I have put on there, I am a 2012
4 Republican candidate. I am stepping up for the
5 American people to put people back to work.
6 You have an entire federal government can't
7 create one job.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Well, sir, we need to
9 bring it back to redistricting in Florida.

10 MR. BRUZZESI: I will. Inside these
11 districts, folks, we have a lot of people
12 unemployed, and every one of you officials need
13 to step up, bring this message to Washington
14 and say, "Hey, we got to get people back to
15 work," and that is what needs to happen. Okay.
16 So I'm am asking you all tonight, each and
17 every one of you in your district, okay, to get
18 out there, go back to Washington and say, "Hey,
19 we got a big problem here, we need to change
20 it." If you can't -- if you can't do it, ask
21 me and I will tell you how.

22 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, sir.

23 MR. BRUZZESI: Thank you very much.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you for your
25 testimony.

1 Ladies and gentlemen, we have had 64
2 individuals come forward and provide their
3 input tonight, and I don't know about other
4 members, but I have made nine pages of notes,
5 and we are also going to have a written
6 transcript and a video transcript of everything
7 that all of you said. But we have reached the
8 part of our hearing tonight where you have
9 asked a number of specific questions, we are
10 going to give members an opportunity to make
11 any comments they wish to make, and I will turn
12 to Representative Legg on behalf of the House
13 for any comments he might wish to make, and
14 then I have made a few notes on questions that
15 I will try to make sure we get covered.

16 So let me start first with members of the
17 House of Representatives who are here who would
18 like to offer any comments or answer any
19 questions. Members of the House? Wow, enjoy
20 the moment. It is not going to last.

21 Representative Caldwell.

22 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Just quickly, I
23 wanted to give all my colleagues a chance if
24 they wanted to, but thank you all very much for
25 coming out here this evening and sharing your

1 thoughts and your concerns, for keeping this a
2 very civil evening, and I know that the body
3 here will leave very impressed with the civic
4 engagement that we have here in this community
5 and appreciate everything that you have brought
6 here this evening. Thank you very much.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
8 Representative. Any other members of the House
9 wish to offer any comments?

10 If not, members of the Senate who are on
11 the Senate Reapportionment Committee, any
12 comments from members of the Senate?

13 Senator Storms.

14 SENATOR STORMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
15 appreciate your leadership, and I appreciate
16 folks being as kind as you -- we've only had
17 one little incident of veins popping out of
18 people's necks and foreheads, and so that was
19 really good, I appreciate that.

20 I did want to address this sort of
21 overarching message sometimes that I have
22 heard, and that is that this is a charade and
23 that we are all, I don't know, engaging in
24 something. And I just have to say that I
25 have -- I am a registered Republican for those

1 of you who don't know, so -- and I was
2 appointed to this committee. I've done my due
3 diligence. I thought that I worked very hard
4 in trying to listen and trying to go back to my
5 district. I had staff come down and train me
6 how to do District Builder, and I am training
7 my own office and I got my own office staff on
8 how to do that, but for people -- you know, I
9 just want to say to you that for this Senator,
10 and I think that everybody on the Committee
11 agrees that we're spending our own time to come
12 and do this. For instance, yesterday I was in
13 the pediatrician's office with my two kids at
14 three o'clock, we had an appointment. At 5:09,
15 I was still in my pediatrician's office and I
16 hadn't been seen yet. So I had to call my
17 husband and say, "Come relieve me in the
18 pediatrician's office," so I could get down to
19 the next meeting in Sarasota that I needed to
20 get to. When I finished that meeting at nine
21 o'clock at night, I had to drive back to
22 Ellington to get my clothes, because I didn't
23 take them to the pediatrician's office. My
24 aide met me there. And so then I drove to
25 Naples. And I don't tell you this so that you

1 can feel sorry or bad about it, but that is a
2 lot to go through for a charade that nobody
3 knows much about, you know. I mean, usually if
4 you are engaging in a charade, you do it in
5 front of an audience, but I was by myself
6 driving down I-75 to get to Naples in the
7 morning and then to drive over here to Lehigh
8 Acres.

9 So I am saying to you, I don't know about
10 any massive part of a charade or a conspiracy,
11 but as far as the members of this committee are
12 concerned, we are taking this seriously. We
13 appreciate the right to vote. Some of us went
14 to jail for civil rights on this committee, and
15 they have a long history in battling for
16 people's right to vote. So everybody here is
17 taking that seriously, myself included, and I
18 just thought that that was appropriate to say
19 that for the record.

20 So thank you for your service here tonight
21 in holding us accountable, and thank you for
22 those of you who disagree with the districts,
23 saying that in a civil manner, too. I, for
24 one, sincerely appreciate that.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,

1 Senator Storms.

2 Other members of the Senate? Senator
3 Benacquisto.

4 SENATOR BENACQUISTO: I just want to say
5 in closing for us as members of this
6 delegation, thank you so much for coming out
7 this evening and for sharing your heartfelt
8 concerns about your community and what you want
9 to see happen in the future. The pride in
10 Lehigh Acres is entirely evident in your
11 comments, and for those commenting on Lee
12 County as a whole, we hear that pride as well
13 and we take it to heart. So thank you for your
14 participation.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.

16 I would like to turn to Representative
17 Legg, our Speaker Designate of the Florida
18 House. Representative Weatherford typically is
19 here and co-Chairs meetings. He has done
20 yeoman's service and been at hearing after
21 hearing, and tonight he had to go home for a
22 family issue, to be with his young family, so
23 Representative Legg is representing the House
24 of Representatives tonight.

25 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: Thank very much,

1 Senator Gaetz. I just want to say on a
2 personal note, thank you very much. This was a
3 very informative meeting. As someone that
4 comes from north Tampa, Pasco County, I know
5 very little about this part of the state, and I
6 know the Senator has nine pages of notes, he
7 must have took a little -- few more notes than
8 me, I have about seven pages of notes. But it
9 is something that we just don't get in
10 Tallahassee. We don't get the details and we
11 don't get the logistics and the nuances of the
12 districts of what you put here today, and I
13 know it helps me as we go into and we start to
14 put these maps together in a couple of weeks
15 when we go to committee weeks. Without a
16 doubt, it was instrumental to inform me, and I
17 know many of our House colleagues absolutely
18 who are not from this part of the state needed
19 this information.

20 You know, as the Senator said earlier, and
21 he is probably going to go over a couple of
22 questions, I just wanted to highlight a couple
23 of issues or a couple of topics that were
24 stated that may have been off the mark just a
25 little bit and provide a little bit of clarity

1 and a little bit of information as sometimes
2 our friends in the press may not get everything
3 exactly right and it kind of snowballs from
4 that point.

5 There was a couple of statements about a
6 20 to 30 million dollar slush fund that is used
7 to -- for lawsuits to fights amendments. That
8 is simply not accurate. The Florida House --
9 and Senator Gaetz would know this better than
10 anyone else. The Florida House has
11 \$30 million, but it is set aside for reserves
12 for building maintenance, for computers, for
13 all sorts of House infrastructure. If there
14 was \$30 million set aside, I am confident that
15 the Senate would have taken it from us and put
16 it in other categories during the budgeting
17 process. So there is no \$30 million dedicated
18 to some sort of lawsuit out there.

19 Now, what -- you don't have to take my
20 word for it. I heard some individuals out
21 there say, "Well, give us a list, give us a
22 breakdown." Well, I will give you the
23 breakdown. If you would like, you can pull it
24 up for yourself so you can look and verify and
25 pull all the facts up. If you go to

1 www.transparencyflorida.gov, all of Florida
2 House's expenses are on that website. So you
3 can pull it up for yourself, you can look at
4 it, you can see it, you can double-check it,
5 you can see where the money is being spent and
6 how it is being appropriated.

7 And I just want to say something for
8 myself, and I am sure some of my fellow
9 colleagues would agree with this, is that
10 regardless of what happens in the court system,
11 regardless of what happens, when I was elected,
12 I put my hand on the Bible and I was sworn to
13 uphold the Constitution of the United States
14 and the Constitution of the State of Florida
15 and whatever is in that. That is Amendment 5
16 and Amendment 6, and that is what I am going to
17 do and that is what we are going to do in this
18 process. We are going to do it to the best of
19 our ability.

20 Now, there's folks in here that I am sure
21 got a little upset and get angry saying you've
22 got to do it exactly. If you look at that, it
23 is a complex issue. We are going to do a good
24 faith effort and try our darnedest to do
25 everything possible to uphold 5 and 6, because

1 I believe in this country, I believe in the
2 Constitution, the voters passed that, we swore
3 we would uphold it, and that is exactly what
4 the House and I am sure that the Senate is
5 going to do when we go into session.

6 So with that, Mr. Speaker, Mr. President,
7 you did an amazing job, especially on this
8 tour, and I am sure you have other things to
9 kind of highlight.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
11 Representative Legg.

12 I made a list of specific questions or
13 data points that came up so that as that great
14 Democratic Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan
15 said, "Everyone is entitled to their opinion,
16 but not everyone is entitled to their own set
17 of facts." So in that spirit, the gentleman
18 from AARP who started our evening off, and did
19 so well, talked about a timeline. Let me
20 mention a couple of facts that relate to the
21 timeline that might give you some more
22 information.

23 First, the census information upon which
24 we are legally obliged to base redistricting
25 comes from the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

1 Florida was not the last state to get our
2 census data from the federal government, but we
3 were one of the last states. Other states get
4 their census bureau data before Florida. Now,
5 why is that? Because there are a number of
6 states that have their elections on
7 odd-numbered years. Louisiana was mentioned
8 tonight. Louisiana has its elections on
9 odd-numbered years, so they get their census
10 data first. The census data doesn't come all
11 at once to every state. It comes in groupings.

12 Secondly having to do with the timeline,
13 the state of Illinois was mentioned. Well, we
14 could have done it like Illinois did it. They
15 are done. The way they did it -- they are a
16 one-party state. The way they did it was they
17 had a committee of legislators who literally
18 went in a back room, who developed a set of
19 maps, who came to the floor of the Legislature
20 without any public hearings, and the maps were
21 voted on, the Legislature left town. We could
22 have done that, and there are those who might
23 have wanted to do it that way. It used to be
24 done that way in Florida. But our Senate
25 President and our House Speaker said that we

1 would do it the hard way, which was to cut
2 after we had measured, and that meant going
3 first to the people of Florida and asking for
4 criticism, for input, for suggestions, and we
5 have received all kinds of comments about
6 process, but we have also received hundreds of
7 specific suggestions of the kind we got
8 tonight. Representative Legg is right. We
9 couldn't have heard the information that was so
10 local and so specific to Lee County and Lehigh
11 Acres and this area sitting in an echo chamber
12 in Tallahassee only listening to politicians.
13 We had to get that information from you,
14 because you live here, you work here, your
15 economic units are here, your schools are here,
16 and you made it very clear what you wanted.

17 We have accelerated the process as much as
18 constitutionally we are able to do so.
19 However, any legislator at any time can present
20 a map for discussion, any citizen can, any
21 special interest group can. We have now over
22 -- I think we have 51 maps now. Many of them
23 are outside for you to look at. All of them
24 are on the Internet for you to look at. And at
25 every single meeting, we invite Democrats or

1 Republicans to provide us with any additional
2 information they have.

3 I Chair the Senate Reapportionment
4 Committee. Here is what we are going to do at
5 our first meeting, which is on September 22nd.
6 We are going to call to order, we are going to
7 take roll, do a little housekeeping details,
8 and then we are going to try to right a wrong
9 that was done ten years ago. The Democratic
10 Leader of the Senate, Senator Nan Rich, was in
11 the Legislature as a House member ten years
12 ago, and ten years ago she was told as a
13 Democrat, "We don't even want to look at your
14 maps. We don't need to look at your maps."
15 She wasn't allowed to present one. Nobody
16 apparently cared about her proposals as a
17 member of the minority. We can't unwind
18 history, but we can make sure that we don't
19 make the same mistake. So the very first thing
20 we will do in our meeting on the 22nd of
21 September is to turn to the minority party and
22 give them the first chance to provide any maps
23 or any input, and then we will go to options
24 that come out of our hearings and come out of
25 the input that we have received from all of

1 you, options that may be articulated by
2 Democrats or Republicans. But the first turn
3 at bat will come for those who were turned away
4 and told they would not be welcome ten years
5 ago, and that is the members of the minority
6 party in this state.

7 Now, let me mention a couple of other
8 things, and that is there was an individual who
9 said that his major concern was a dilution of
10 minority seats, and is there a map, he said,
11 that has been developed that would prove that
12 there is no dilution of minority seats. He
13 puts his finger on a key issue here that seem
14 -- Amendments 5 and 6 aren't a bumper sticker
15 issue. It is, as Representative Legg said, an
16 issue where there is some values that some
17 people might think have tension between them or
18 competition between them.

19 The notion of ensuring that there is no
20 regression of minority districts, no reduction
21 in minority districts, as is required by the
22 Federal Voting Rights Act may in some people's
23 minds, in some people's minds, be at some odds
24 with having compact districts. So there is a
25 tension there.

1 The district -- the congressional district
2 in this state that is used as the poster child
3 for gerrymandering is the Third Congressional
4 District. It is the salamander district. It
5 was ordered by the federal courts in order to
6 preserve minority rights. Wasn't developed by
7 the Legislature, it was ordered by the federal
8 courts. So there is going to be tension there
9 that we are going to have to resolve. And that
10 individual who testified and asked about
11 that -- about that tension and asking for
12 assurance that minority districts would be
13 protected has put his finger on probably one of
14 the biggest issues we are going to have to
15 resolve.

16 Then there were seven different references
17 tonight from seven different testifiers using
18 the term "community of interest," a community
19 that is together economically, together
20 culturally, together geographically. It could
21 be a coastal district, in some cases there was
22 a reference to that, or an inland district.
23 Well, Representative Weatherford and I and
24 others tried to get the term "communities of
25 interest" included in the Constitution when

1 Amendments 5 and 6 were being debated. The
2 Supreme Court wouldn't let us do it. And so
3 what we have to tell you tonight as a factual
4 matter, not to argue, but as a factual matter
5 is the term "communities of interest" is not in
6 Amendments 5 and 6. So, again, there is
7 tremendous value in the testimony we heard
8 about communities of interest, but that in some
9 people's minds may be at some odds with some of
10 the requirements for compact districts or
11 districts that may not necessarily be a
12 community of interest. If you develop lines
13 for districts along county lines or city
14 borders, that could divide communities of
15 interest, we have heard that testimony. So I
16 just ask you to appreciate that tension and ask
17 you to give us the kind of guidance you gave us
18 tonight, because those will be serious debates.
19 Not everybody will be happy as that gets
20 resolved. But communities of interest is
21 important, it is valid, but we lost the fight
22 to get it into the constitutional language.

23 And then time after time after time
24 tonight, we heard the importance of Lehigh as a
25 community, and believe me, that -- we got that

1 one loud and clear, loud and clear. But we
2 couldn't have gotten it just sitting in
3 Tallahassee. All of you wouldn't have come to
4 Tallahassee. All of you wouldn't have had the
5 time, you might not have been able to put gas
6 in the car to get there. So the fact that we
7 got this information so many ways from people
8 who live and work here is something that is
9 special, that made this well worth my time
10 coming all the way from northwest Florida.

11 Then there was an individual who said,
12 "Well, the average voter can't draw complete
13 state maps." Well, factually, that is not
14 true. There is a 13-year-old, he and his
15 sister drew 120 House districts and they
16 presented them, and they look pretty good.
17 Now, he was a precocious 13-year-old, but he
18 was 13. And there are people from all over the
19 state, from different races, different
20 backgrounds, different groups, who have made
21 proposals. But it is not a requirement that
22 you draw a statewide map. What we are
23 interested in is what you gave us tonight, and
24 that is tell us about your community, show us
25 where you think the lines ought to be drawn

1 here.

2 Now, if you want to draw a map that goes
3 all the way to Pensacola, have at it, but you
4 don't need to. You only need to give us your
5 advice and guidance about the area in which you
6 live. And lots of people have done that. So
7 it is just not true that the average voter
8 can't draw maps.

9 Question: Will there be other
10 opportunities for input later as more maps are
11 drawn? Yes, there will be. First,
12 Representative Weatherford, Speaker Designate,
13 and I intend to ask members of our committees,
14 and we intend to ask the Speaker and the
15 President of the Senate to ask all legislators
16 to hold town hall meetings or tele-town halls
17 once we get a little further into the process
18 and either we have more maps or less maps or we
19 boil it down to some options so that we can
20 have another round of input from you.

21 Now, obviously, we couldn't take both
22 committees around for 26 more hearings, or we
23 would then really violate what our friends of
24 the League of Women Voters don't want us to
25 violate, and that is the timeline. But I think

1 what we can do is provide other ways for input
2 by town hall meetings, tele-town hall meetings,
3 and we are considering videoconferencing and
4 other ways that we can make sure that there is
5 input opportunities further into the process.

6 Another question that was raised, we don't
7 want cross-state districts, and we had people
8 who clapped for that, and we had people who
9 told us the reasons why that is a bad idea.
10 Then the very next person stood up and said on
11 behalf of at least one part of the business
12 community, we want a cross-state district.
13 Now, obviously we are not going to be able to
14 make both parties happy there. One way or the
15 other, there's going to have to be lines drawn,
16 and at that point, there may be somebody who is
17 slightly dissatisfied. But I will tell you
18 this: There is nobody on this panel who drew
19 the districts that they are in. I am in a
20 Senate district that was drawn by people who
21 are long gone from public office, and any work
22 that I do, term limits are going to bounce me
23 out, I will be long gone before the next
24 redistricting. So there is no pride of
25 authorship here, and we are as interested in

1 resolving some of these geometric anomalies as
2 you are, maybe more so. But we won't be able
3 to make both sides happy in keeping a
4 cross-state district and not keeping one. That
5 will be hard to win that argument and get
6 everybody happy.

7 There were several people who said, and
8 with great eloquence and great passion, 5 and 6
9 got 63 percent of the vote and they need to be
10 followed. Representative Legg spoke on behalf
11 of the House. Let me speak on behalf of the
12 Senate.

13 I take the same oath that House members
14 take, and all of the Senators take that oath,
15 too. Personally, I voted against Amendments 5
16 and 6 because they should have included the
17 term "communities of interest" or "commonality"
18 so that we could have taken into account some
19 of the values that were expressed tonight. I
20 thought it was deficient in not including
21 communities of interest. So I went in the
22 voting booth and I cast a secret ballot, which
23 is now not so secret, against Amendments 5 and
24 6. But the minute that they became law and I
25 was appointed to this committee, then my oath

1 to preserve, protect and defend the
2 Constitution of the United States and of the
3 State of Florida trumps any political opinion I
4 might have. The Senate will fully and
5 completely implement Amendments 5 and 6. The
6 question is not if. The question, as we have
7 talked about some of these issues where there
8 is tension between people of good will taking
9 different sides, both believing that they
10 support Amendments 5 and 6, the question is not
11 if, the question is how we do this in the most
12 just and equitable fashion possible.

13 The representative for the realtors said
14 that more representatives provide more
15 strength. Other people said no, no, no, no,
16 no, fewer representatives who have more focus
17 provide more strength. Again, both arguments
18 are valid arguments and sincere. We are not
19 going to be able to make both sides happy. So
20 bear that in mind. That is going to be
21 something we are going to be debating about,
22 and we need your further input.

23 Then from the City of Ft. Myers, there was
24 a representative who said keep Senate District
25 27 as it is now configured, because it provides

1 a community of common interest. As I have
2 mentioned, communities of common interest are
3 not in the Constitution. We are going to have
4 to -- we are going to have to balance those
5 values.

6 Ms. Skupny pointed out that there were
7 conflicts inherent in Amendments 5 and 6 with
8 the Federal Voting Rights Act. Now, we hope
9 that is not true. We presented Amendments 5
10 and 6 for a pre-clearance, the House and Senate
11 did, not the Governor, the House and Senate
12 presented 5 and 6 for pre-clearance to the
13 Federal Justice Department, and we made the
14 argument that we believe that there is a
15 balance that can be struck between the Voting
16 Rights Act and Amendments 5 and 6. There are
17 some people who think there is an inherent
18 conflict, but this is going to be a serious
19 issue, but we believe that there is a balance.
20 It won't make everybody happy, but we believe
21 there is a balance and we can fulfill 5 and 6
22 without violating the Voting Rights Act.

23 There were a couple of folks who said, oh,
24 well, this is going to end up at the courts
25 anyway. And it will, because the law says

1 after we do our work, we have to take our work
2 product to the Florida Supreme Court, and then
3 there will be all sorts of people who will
4 intervene and they will say, "yes, but," or
5 "no, doggone it," in their intervening in the
6 Florida Supreme Court. Then it has to go to
7 the federal level, either to the federal
8 judiciary or the Federal Justice Department.
9 So it will -- it will by law wind up in court.

10 But I have to tell you this, again, as a
11 fact, it is not a good fact, I don't like this
12 fact: Representatives of special interest
13 groups, members of special interest groups,
14 have already testified in these hearings,
15 before the first vote is taken, before the
16 first district is decided upon, they have
17 already told us they are taking all of this to
18 court. And you as the taxpayers, I am a
19 taxpayer, sadly, we are going to wind up paying
20 for it. So I think going to court is
21 inevitable, but we are going to try to work
22 very hard to make sure that as we go to the
23 Supreme Court of Florida and to the federal
24 level, that we can say, "Look, we went across
25 the state of Florida. The districts we

1 developed were not developed based on
2 Tallahassee talk, but based upon specific
3 testimony that came from hearings like this."
4 We are going to quote you, you are going to see
5 your own words, because that is the best way to
6 armor ourselves up and say that whatever we
7 take would have less of a chance of being
8 challenged, although the court challenges, I
9 think, are inherent.

10 Then another individual asked -- from the
11 League asked is June of 2012 soon enough for
12 qualification for the 2012 election cycle.
13 Well, June better be, because for the last
14 seven election cycles, qualification has
15 occurred in either June or July. So
16 qualification date is probably not going to
17 change. There is nothing in the law, there is
18 nothing in any plan I have seen to change the
19 qualification date.

20 Then a representative of the League,
21 Dr. Fish, Mr. Dr. Fish, said, quote, "It is not
22 the League's job to draw lines." That is true.
23 It is the Legislature's job to draw lines and
24 propose those lines to the courts. The
25 question is, what comes before the Legislature

1 proposes to the courts? Well, in 2002, it was
2 the League of Women Voters who devised the
3 first set of maps. And interestingly, in
4 Georgia, there the League of Women Voters this
5 week not only prepared and publicized their own
6 redistricting maps, but the League of Women
7 Voters of Georgia this week organized a map
8 fair at the Georgia State Capitol to encourage
9 members of the public to present alternative
10 maps. Quote, "Our goal throughout the whole
11 process is to ensure that citizens have a
12 voice," said the President of the League of
13 Women Voters of Georgia, quote, "and what
14 better way to do this than bringing people and
15 people's maps down to the Capitol." So even
16 within the League of Women Voters, there's not
17 entire agreement on this. In Georgia, the best
18 thing in the world was for League members to
19 encourage others to draw maps and engage in the
20 process. In Florida, not so much this time,
21 but it was exactly the right thing to do the
22 last time. So you can see that even people of
23 good will have sometimes some difficulty in
24 agreeing with themselves even within the same
25 organization.

1 Then there was another comment from
2 somebody who said you ought to seek help from
3 groups in other states, and they mentioned
4 Virginia, the Carolinas, Texas and I think
5 another one. We want to let you know first
6 that we have met with representatives from
7 those other states and others to share ideas
8 about the redistricting process and how to move
9 it forward. In fact, the State of Florida is
10 providing assistance to other states now in the
11 development of the kind of websites that we are
12 using in Florida, websites which are at the
13 cutting edge and are unprecedented anywhere in
14 the United States. So we are sharing
15 information back and forth, and that was an
16 excellent suggestion.

17 There was another comment made by a League
18 representative who said, "Shorten the deadline
19 so that you are not voting in June." As far as
20 I know, there is -- there is no requirement
21 that the Legislature vote in June. Instead, we
22 have moved the legislative session up two
23 months, we have moved committee weeks up two
24 months, we began to have these hearings five
25 months before the session would start, and

1 Representative Weatherford and I plan to do
2 everything we can not to cut off debate, not to
3 tell people they can't have another idea, but
4 to try to move the process as responsibly as we
5 can. There is no effort or intention to drag
6 it out to the last day. If everybody uses --
7 everybody in this process, the Legislature, the
8 Attorney General, the Florida Supreme Court and
9 the Federal Justice Department, if everybody
10 uses all the time that they legally can, we
11 could be in a two-minute drill at the end. The
12 point is we should use only that time that we
13 necessarily have to use. So thanks for making
14 that point to us. Join us in making that point
15 to the Attorney General of Florida, the Florida
16 Supreme Court and the Justice Department, not
17 to hurry it up, but to only use the time they
18 need for review so that we can get these maps
19 out.

20 And then an individual who had been a
21 Senate candidate made an excellent point. He
22 said, "If you use Republican and Democrat
23 registration data, and if you use incumbents'
24 addresses in preparing these maps, you will
25 have lost faith with the people." Let me tell

1 you, in the Senate software, we are not using
2 any political registration data. We are using
3 all kinds of descriptors provided by the Bureau
4 of the Census. But we made the decision that
5 we will not show ourselves or anybody else how
6 many Republicans or Democrats are in a proposed
7 district. Instead, we want to use the criteria
8 that are in Amendments 5 and 6 and are in the
9 Federal Voting Rights Act and in the federal
10 court cases, not how many Democrats or
11 Republicans are there. That ought to be beside
12 the point.

13 And both Chairman Weatherford, Speaker
14 Weatherford, and I have given instructions to
15 our professional staff. We don't want to see a
16 single map that shows the address of a single
17 incumbent. I don't know and don't want to know
18 where the members of the Florida Senate,
19 Democrat or Republican, live. It won't show up
20 on the map. And I would suspect before it is
21 over you are going to have members of Congress
22 and members of the Senate and members of the
23 House of Representatives who will wake up and
24 discover that districts have been drawn to be
25 equitable and sensible and lawful, and they are

1 not in them. But we are not here to protect
2 incumbents' addresses. We are here to have
3 lawful, equitable, sensible districts.

4 Then -- two more comments. I don't want
5 this to become a hostage situation. Two more
6 comments. Someone talked about strangely
7 shaped districts. That is an extremely
8 generous term for what some of these districts
9 look like. Let me reassure you again that we
10 didn't draw the districts we are in. It was
11 drawn by other people, and in some cases, drawn
12 by the courts. More than one person tonight
13 stated his concern or her concern about
14 districts that cross several counties,
15 including those that run nearly coast to coast.
16 We appreciate the input, but here is a fact for
17 you: Let's take House District 112, for
18 example. For the last ten years, House
19 District 112 has gone from Collier County all
20 the way across the state to Miami-Dade and
21 Broward Counties. Here is the dirty little
22 secret. The Legislature didn't draw that
23 district. The Legislature drew a different
24 district that did not go coast to coast. A
25 federal court ordered that District 112 include

1 Hispanic communities in Collier County, because
2 Collier County is subject to review of Section
3 5 of the Federal Voting Rights Act, and a
4 federal court drew that district.

5 So the point is simply that sometimes the
6 strangely shaped districts come from, if you
7 will pardon the expression, court-ordered
8 gerrymandering. And so we have to be very
9 careful as we draw these districts that we
10 don't run afoul of court orders or obvious
11 court decisions, but we've also got to cut the
12 rattails off some of these districts, I will
13 tell you. I live in Congressional District 2,
14 my wife, Vicki, sitting over there and I, and
15 we are in a little tiny rattail. Four or five
16 blocks of our community are in a congressional
17 district where until recently the congressman
18 lived a couple, three hundred miles away. And
19 it was done solely, in my view, for political
20 purposes back in 2002. So I understand it, I
21 am -- I am insulted by it myself in my own
22 congressional district, and many of us feel
23 this way and we are going to do everything we
24 can to fix it.

25 Last comment. I was so pleased, I was

1 personally pleased to discover that someone
2 said that a community 60 years old is young. I
3 am personally delighted to have 60 described as
4 young.

5 Thank you very much and thanks for your
6 attention tonight. And with that,
7 Representative Legg moves we rise.

8 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
9 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 165 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 5th day of December, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2011
8:00 A.M.
NAPLES DAILY NEWS COMMUNITY ROOM
NAPLES, FLORIDA

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: Good morning.
3 Thank you all for being here this morning. My
4 name is Will Weatherford, and I have the honor
5 of chairing this meeting today with my
6 co-Chairman, Senator Gaetz, and the Joint
7 Senate/House Redistricting hearing is called to
8 order.

9 We are pleased to be joined by several
10 members of the Florida House and Senate today.
11 In a moment, I am going to ask each and every
12 one of them to introduce themselves to you so
13 that you have an understanding of who you are
14 talking to. We have people from all over the
15 state and everywhere from the Panhandle down to
16 the Florida Keys, and we want to give them an
17 opportunity to introduce themselves to you.

18 We want to give a special thanks to the
19 *Naples Daily News* for allowing us to use this
20 wonderful facility, and we also want to thank
21 you all for being here. It is a great turnout
22 already, and I am sure people will continue to
23 spill in, but we are glad to hear your comments
24 and your recommendations that will help us
25 shape the congressional, Senate and House

1 Districts for the next decade.

2 Again, my name is Will Weatherford, and
3 our sole purpose here today is to hear from the
4 public about how you believe the legal
5 standards governing redistricting should be
6 applied in your community so that you are
7 represented in Washington and Tallahassee
8 fairly, equitably and sensibly.

9 Our procedures today are very important,
10 but they are also simple, and so it is very
11 important that you sign in so we can create a
12 public -- an accurate public record of all the
13 attendees and speakers, and if you opt to join
14 our e-mail list, we can also keep you informed
15 about the redistricting process in the months
16 ahead. If you have not signed in, please raise
17 your hand, and a staff member will give you an
18 attendance card. So if we've got a couple of
19 hands up, just keep them up for a moment. And
20 if you wish to speak today and you have not
21 filed out an attendance card, also raise your
22 right hand or left hand, depending on which
23 side you want to come from, and raise your hand
24 and we will get a card for you and we will make
25 sure that you get your public testimony heard.

1 It is the same attendance card to check in or
2 to speak.

3 So before we begin, I am going to ask
4 Senator Gaetz -- we do this at every hearing,
5 and I think it is important and it kind of sets
6 the tone for the hearing, but I am going to ask
7 my co-Chairman, Senator Gaetz, to give us a
8 little bit of a perspective about some of the
9 history in redistricting, a little bit about
10 the legal standards that we have to follow and
11 a little bit about what we hope to get out of
12 the public testimony from you today. We have
13 had many hearings around the state of Florida.
14 We are happy to be in Collier County, it is a
15 beautiful part of the state, and we are excited
16 about today's hearing. And so with that, I am
17 going to turn it over to my co-Chairman,
18 Senator Don Gaetz.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, Mr.
20 Speaker.

21 Every ten years, the Legislature is
22 required by our State Constitution to
23 redistrict the state based on increases,
24 decreases or movements of population within the
25 state. Because Florida has grown more than

1 many other states in the last ten years, we
2 picked up two new members of the U.S. House of
3 Representatives. So we go from 25 to 27
4 members of the U.S. House. New York lost two,
5 Florida picked up two. Part of the job of this
6 process is to locate where those two new
7 congressional districts would be.

8 Because some parts of our state have
9 increased or decreased disproportionately in
10 population, many Senate and House districts
11 will change. In fact, Chairman Weatherford and
12 I believe that all of them will change, either
13 adding or losing population or moving their
14 borders.

15 When redistricting is completed,
16 congressional districts must be equal, and they
17 must contain 696,345 people. That is a hard
18 number. The 40 Senate districts in the state
19 must also be nearly equal at 470,000 people.
20 There can be a little bit of variation there.
21 And our 120 House districts must also be nearly
22 equal at about 156,700 people. There are
23 displays that you saw when you came in today
24 showing the current boundaries of districts in
25 this area and the number of persons who have to

1 be added to or subtracted from current
2 districts in order to achieve equal
3 representation.

4 But equality of representation, while
5 important, is not the only legal requirement
6 that redistricting plans have to meet. The
7 laws and the important court cases governing
8 redistricting are explained in detail on the
9 House and Senate websites, and we hope you will
10 go to those websites. The websites are
11 explained on the "Redistricting 2012" brochures
12 that were available to you when you came in,
13 and we would certainly make them available to
14 you as you leave today if you would like to
15 pick them up. That brochure summarizes the
16 federal and state laws, and outlines topics
17 that we really need your advice on and your
18 input on at today's hearing. If you didn't get
19 a copy when you came in, as I said, pick up a
20 copy when you leave.

21 The websites -- the House and Senate
22 websites are packed with information about
23 redistricting in Florida, including an
24 explanation of the laws and important court
25 cases governing redistricting. The two

1 websites, the Senate and House website, are
2 complementary, they are updated frequently, and
3 it is a great way to stay current on plans that
4 are presented and yet have an opportunity to
5 see the schedule, see how the redistricting
6 process is moving forward.

7 The websites also deliver to your
8 fingertips all of the demographic data that
9 will be used in drawing districts and the same
10 computer programs that legislators and
11 professional staff will use. That way, if you
12 want to, if you want to, any member of the
13 public can participate in building a plan for
14 your neighborhood or your community or your
15 part of Florida, or for the whole state if
16 you'd like, and you can also see all of the
17 maps that have been submitted so that you can
18 determine how they might affect your area. And
19 a large number of maps have already been
20 submitted.

21 Before, during and after this hearing,
22 House and Senate staff will be available to
23 show anybody the simple steps to getting
24 on-line, to building districts and moving lines
25 around if you want to do that, and if you want

1 to submit a plan, House and Senate staff can
2 show you how to do that. Don't be afraid of
3 that process. It is pretty simple. I am
4 techno stupid. It took them about 15 minutes
5 to show me how to use the software, the same
6 computer programs, the same software that
7 professional staff and the courts and also
8 legislators are using.

9 Recommendations from citizens and groups
10 of citizens will be made publicly available
11 immediately as soon as we see them. In fact,
12 as of this morning, 50 public submissions of
13 partial or completed maps and many -- over a
14 hundred other written descriptions for maps are
15 available on the Web, and many of them are
16 available in the lobby as you came in. So the
17 maps are there, and we would love to have you
18 look at the maps and then in your testimony
19 today say "the map that" -- and you can use the
20 name of the individual or group that has
21 submitted it, "that map works for us" or
22 "doesn't work for us, here is why, here is how,
23 here is how it ought to be changed." We have
24 received, in fact, a new map this morning
25 already from a Naples resident. And after our

1 final hearing in Clewiston, I am sure that
2 those numbers will increase. The submission of
3 proposed maps, the submission of your ideas
4 that makes sense for your community is the
5 single most effective form of public
6 participation in the redistricting process.

7 Now, the redistricting schedule under
8 which we are operating is imposed by the State
9 Constitution. That is important. There has
10 been a little bit of -- I wouldn't say
11 misinformation, but a little bit of confusion
12 about the timeline and the process. The
13 Constitution of Florida does not permit the
14 Legislature to act on state legislative maps
15 before the second year after the census; in
16 other words, 2012. Now, we have accelerated
17 the process as much as we are legally able to
18 do this year. We have moved up the 2012
19 session from March, when it would usually
20 start, until January, we have begun our
21 statewide hearings five months in advance of
22 the 2012 session, and we have moved up our
23 committee meetings from December to September
24 so that plans can be considered immediately in
25 September and there can be voting in committees

1 as soon as any committee wants to go forward.

2 I might mention that one of the things we
3 have learned in this process is that ten years
4 ago, the person who is now the Democratic
5 Leader of the Senate, Senator Nan Rich, she was
6 in the House of Representatives ten years ago,
7 and she was not even permitted to present a
8 map, she said, ten years ago, which was
9 absolutely unfair and it was wrong. And so the
10 commitment that I have made as Chairman of the
11 Senate Reapportionment Committee is that at our
12 first meeting in September, right after we call
13 the meeting to order, we are going to give
14 Senator Rich the chance as Democratic Leader
15 that she did not have ten years ago that she
16 should have had to take the floor first and
17 present any maps that she wants to present
18 alongside the other maps that are already
19 available and that might be available by that
20 time.

21 Now, it's been suggested that the
22 Legislature ought to draw maps first and then
23 say to the public, "Here they are if you have
24 any comments." We believe that that puts the
25 answer ahead of the question. We think there

1 ought to be no preconceptions created by
2 politicians, but, rather, public testimony
3 should be free and unrestricted. In fact, a
4 principal author of Florida's new redistricting
5 standards and Ellen Freidin, the Chairperson
6 for Fair Districts, both have provided
7 information, Ellen Freidin testified before a
8 joint committee of the Senate and the House
9 saying that there is no way that maps should be
10 drawn until public comment is heard first. And
11 we certainly agree with her.

12 In Georgia, the League of Women Voters not
13 only prepared and publicized its own
14 redistricting maps, but it organized a map fair
15 at the Georgia State Capitol to encourage
16 members of the public to present their own
17 alternative maps. Quote, "Our goal throughout
18 the whole process is to ensure that citizens
19 have a voice," said the President of the League
20 of Women Voters of Georgia, quote, "and what
21 better way to do this than bringing people and
22 maps to the Capitol." And we would certainly
23 agree with Ellen Freidin from Fair Districts
24 and the President of the Georgia League of
25 Women Voters that it is very, very important to

1 listen first, to have the public present their
2 ideas and have an open process throughout.

3 Our intent is to use the recommendations
4 made at these 26 public hearings and through
5 our Internet sites and through the testimony
6 that you provide in meetings in Tallahassee and
7 any input you provide your own legislators as
8 the basis for developing one or more options
9 for district maps. And it was suggested at a
10 recent hearing by one of the testifiers that a
11 county had gone through its own redistricting
12 and had established six options, and then based
13 on those six options, put those out so that
14 everyone saw them before the first vote was
15 taken. And Speaker Weatherford and I think
16 there is some value to that. So probably what
17 will happen is that based on all the
18 information we are getting from these hearings,
19 we will put out several options drawn from the
20 testimony in these hearings, and then those
21 options will be publicly available, you will
22 see them, and before any vote is taken, we will
23 have public testimony and any vote will be
24 taken -- will be taken in public. In other
25 words, what we are saying is, if you look at

1 the maps outside of this room submitted by
2 people across the state, if you look at what
3 the League of Women Voters has done so well in
4 Georgia, if you look at the advice given by the
5 Chair of the Fair Districts campaign, then the
6 maps submitted by people across the state of
7 Florida ought to and will form the basis for
8 the legislative process going forward. So if
9 you want to know where we will begin our
10 deliberations, if you want to know where are
11 the maps, it is the maps that we receive from
12 the public and the maps that are generated
13 through the legislative process that we will be
14 using as the basis for our recommendations to
15 the full Legislature. Throughout the process,
16 we will also solicit additional public comment
17 so that proposed maps can mature with the
18 public involved, all before the Legislature
19 approves any final maps.

20 And then the Legislature doesn't get to
21 finally decide what the lines or the maps or
22 the districts ought to look like. That is
23 subject to judicial review. It is a
24 requirement of law that any -- any proposals
25 that come out of the Legislature then have to

1 be submitted to the courts at the state level
2 and it has to be submitted for judicial review
3 at the federal level before there can be a
4 final map or maps.

5 Because our purpose today is to hear from
6 you, as soon as I conclude, Mr. Speaker, all
7 the time between now and 11:00 a.m. will be
8 used to ensure that as many members of the
9 public as possible can share their testimony
10 and be listened to respectfully.

11 If after our citizens here have an
12 opportunity to have their say, if there is time
13 remaining before adjournment, and we hope there
14 might be, then any member of the Committee,
15 Republican, Democrat, House member, Senator,
16 may make any statement, answer any question,
17 offer any observation, and, of course, any
18 Democrat or Republican member of the Committee,
19 if they feel so moved, can present any map at
20 any time for consideration.

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

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
25 very much. Thank you very much, Senator Gaetz,

1 and before we move into the public testimony,
2 we are just going to take about two minutes to
3 go around the room here very briefly for the
4 members to get the opportunity to introduce
5 them to you, and for you to know exactly who
6 you are talking to. I think we've got
7 everybody here, so I will start right here with
8 our friend from southwest Florida,
9 Representative Aubuchon.

10 REPRESENTATIVE AUBUCHON: Thank you,
11 Mr. Speaker, and I am just -- I represent
12 District 74 just to the north, and I am a proud
13 member of the southwest Florida delegation.

14 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: Good morning,
15 everybody. Kathleen Passidomo, District 76,
16 which is Naples, Marco Island, Everglades City.
17 I am so thrilled to be home after spending the
18 entire summer on the road, to be back with my
19 friends and family here in Naples. I would
20 like to point out, our favorite former
21 Representative is sitting over there in the
22 corner. Dudley Goodlette, do you want to just
23 raise your hand? Thank you for coming.

24 REPRESENTATIVE NUNEZ: Good morning. My
25 name is Jeanette Nuñez, and I am proud to

1 represent House District 112, which consists of
2 portions of Collier, Broward and Dade County.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Good morning. I
4 am Trudi Williams. I represent District 75,
5 and that is the northern portions of Collier
6 County and southern parts of Lee County. Thank
7 you for coming.

8 REPRESENTATIVE LEGG: John Legg, I
9 represent Pasco County.

10 REPRESENTATIVE PRECOURT: Steve Precourt,
11 west side of Orlando, portions of Orange, Lake
12 and Osceola Counties.

13 REPRESENTATIVE CORCORAN: Richard
14 Corcoran, I represent Pasco County and Pinellas
15 County. I just want to say at the onset, too,
16 that I will probably stand on the side a lot.
17 It is not because I am not completely
18 captivated and tired, it is because I have five
19 children and my third daughter, who is eight,
20 she said she wanted to go horseback riding, so
21 Dad thought it would be good to take them all
22 horseback riding and, well, now, after a
23 bruised tailbone, I spend a lot of time
24 standing. I'd also like to thank the *Naples*
25 *News* for the hardest chair so far.

1 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Good morning.
2 My name is Daphne Campbell, District 108 from
3 Miami-Dade County.

4 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good morning, my
5 name is Hazelle Rogers. I am from Broward
6 County, representing 1.8 million residents. My
7 District is 94. This is my 23rd hearing. It
8 is good to be here this morning. I hail -- my
9 cities are Lauderhill, Lauderdale Lakes,
10 Margate, Tamarac, Oakland Park, Plantation,
11 Sunrise, and, of course, my home city is
12 Lauderdale Lakes.

13 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thank you. I am
14 Dennis Baxley, serving in the Florida House
15 from District 24, Ocala, Marion County. Good
16 to be with you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good morning,
18 State Representative Mack Bernard, District 84,
19 West Palm Beach, Florida.

20 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good morning,
21 Chuck Chestnut, State Representative, House
22 District 23, a portion of Alachua County and a
23 portion of Marion County.

24 REPRESENTATIVE CLARKE-REED: Good morning,
25 State Representative Gwyndolen Clarke-Reed,

1 representing the northeast part of Broward
2 County, starting in Deerfield Beach, Oakland
3 Park, Pompano Beach, Wilton Manors, North
4 Lauderdale, a little bit of Tamarac and a part
5 of Ft. Lauderdale. Glad to be here.

6 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good morning, John
7 Patrick Julien representing House District 104,
8 which is in Miami-Dade County. It is a
9 pleasure to be here.

10 SENATOR LATVALA: Thank you. I am Jack
11 Latvala. I represent the 16th Senatorial
12 District, Pinellas and Hillsborough, and I
13 apologize to you for being in my shirt sleeves,
14 but I had a little wardrobe malfunction and I
15 am a long way from home.

16 SENATOR NEGRON: Joe Negron, I am Senate
17 District 28, southeast Florida.

18 REPRESENTATIVE NEHR: State Representative
19 Peter Nehr. I represent District 48 in
20 Pinellas County.

21 REPRESENTATIVE JONES: Good morning, Mia
22 Jones, State Representative, Jacksonville,
23 Florida.

24 SENATOR DETERT: Good morning. I am State
25 Senator Nancy Detert from Sarasota. I

1 represent parts of Charlotte County, Sarasota
2 and Manatee, and it is great to be here.

3 SENATOR JOYNER: Good morning. My name is
4 Arthenia Joyner. I am State Senator from
5 Hillsborough, Pinellas and Manatee. That is
6 Tampa, St. Pete and Bradenton.

7 SENATOR BENACQUISTO: Good morning,
8 everyone. My name is Lizbeth Benacquisto.
9 Thank you all for being here this morning. I
10 am proud to represent Senate District 27, which
11 covers wonderful communities in Lee County,
12 Glades County, Hendry County, Charlotte County
13 and Palm Beach County.

14 SENATOR RICHTER: Good morning. I am
15 Garrett Richter, and I would like to thank you
16 all for joining us today. This is my district,
17 and I join Kathleen Passidomo when we welcome
18 our wonderful colleagues in both the House and
19 the Senate. And to Phil Lewis, thank you, to
20 the Naples daily newspaper, for making this
21 facility available for our public meeting, and
22 this is what it is all about is to hear from
23 you, and I just want to thank you all very,
24 very much for getting up and showing your
25 interest in our government. Thank you all.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: And my Senate district is
2 in coastal northwest Florida from Pensacola to
3 east of Panama City.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right. I
5 think we got everybody. Thank you all.

6 We are planning on adjourning at
7 11:00 a.m., so we're going to spend the next --
8 from now until 11:00 hearing public testimony.
9 Because we have probably close to 50 folks who
10 have already signed up to speak, we are going
11 to try to limit comments to about three
12 minutes. We run on a point system, and those
13 points are given based on brevity, so those of
14 you who are creative in finding ways to deliver
15 messages quickly, we give bonus points. But,
16 no, we want to hear from you, we want to listen
17 to you, we want to give you the opportunity and
18 the respect that you deserve to have your
19 comments heard, you will get that, and we just
20 ask that you also show the same respect and
21 courtesy to the Committee. So thank you all
22 for being here.

23 I am going to probably read out three or
24 four names at a time. We also have a
25 spill-over room, and so as this room continues

1 to fill up, there may be folks in the
2 spill-over room. We want to give them enough
3 time to come over and have an opportunity to
4 speak.

5 So our first up is the Collier County
6 Supervisor of Elections, Ms. Jennifer Edwards.
7 Ms. Edwards, thank you for being here and thank
8 you for the service here in Collier County.
9 And after Ms. Edwards, we are going to have
10 Michael Reagen and then William Poteet,
11 followed by Chuck Mohlke.

12 MS. EDWARDS: Good morning.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Good morning.

14 MS. EDWARDS: I am Jennifer Edwards, and
15 welcome to Collier County and a special hello
16 to our delegation members.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Edwards,
18 I may need you to get a little closer to the
19 microphones.

20 MS. EDWARDS: Okay. Is this better?

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: That is
22 perfect.

23 MS. EDWARDS: Great. Well, as you know, I
24 am an election administrator, and in doing so,
25 I join my colleagues across the state in urging

1 you in helping us to provide great service to
2 our voters. You change election law, and
3 administrators like me implement those changes.
4 In addition to following the state and federal
5 election laws, election administrators and our
6 great staff have a passion to provide an
7 excellent service to our voters.

8 I want to share with you, and the screen
9 is behind you, the three requests that you can
10 grant that will assist election administrators
11 and our staff to provide continued outstanding
12 service to voters.

13 Number one, please respect voter
14 tabulation districts, or VTDs, to the extent
15 possible. Number two, avoid irregular
16 boundaries to the extent possible. These have
17 a tendency to split neighborhoods. And number
18 three, please adopt maps early in the
19 legislative session to avoid election and voter
20 confusion in 2012.

21 We have a few examples to share with you
22 to show you some of the irregular boundaries in
23 Collier County. Here is Congressional District
24 25, and next we have Senate District 39. You
25 can see this demonstrates irregular boundaries

1 in our communities. And next we have House
2 112, and then we have a representation here of
3 Golden Gate City. This shows a split in
4 representing House 101, as well as 112. And
5 Golden Gate City is also a census-designated
6 place, so here is a community that is split
7 down the middle.

8 The final slide, we have taken the liberty
9 of using, of course, your timeline and
10 depicting it in a colorful way, pink at the
11 top -- doesn't look like pink this morning, but
12 it is pink, and it is the length of your
13 session. Yellow is the number of days that you
14 have allotted for the review by the Attorney
15 General's Office, and blue is the number of
16 days for the review by the Florida Supreme
17 Court, and orange is the 60 days for the U.S.
18 Justice review. And as you can see, with our
19 -- with our primary being scheduled
20 August 14th, qualifying is the first week of
21 June, which is that green line near the bottom,
22 and if it takes U.S. Justice the full 60 days,
23 we won't get their approval until a week after
24 qualifying. And, in addition, election
25 administrators under federal law are required

1 to mail the military and overseas ballots 45
2 days before the election, which is June 30th.

3 I know that the time it will take the
4 other agencies to review your district
5 timeframes is totally out of your control.
6 However, this timeline emphasizes the
7 importance of my earlier stated third request:
8 Please adopt maps early in the legislative
9 session to avoid election and voter confusion
10 in 2012, to aid election administrators and our
11 staff across the state in being prepared and
12 providing good service to all of our voters.
13 And on behalf of the voters of Collier County,
14 thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
16 Ms. Edwards. Ms. Edwards, I will just say we
17 have heard from a lot of supervisors, but that
18 was the most detailed and probably informative
19 presentation I have seen thus far, and in a
20 very quick manner. Thank you very much.

21 Next up which have Mr. Michael Reagen with
22 the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce,
23 followed by William Poteet and Chuck Mohlke.

24 Mr. Reagen, you are recognized, sir.

25 MR. REAGEN: Thank you very much,

1 Mr. Chairman. Good morning. Everything I say
2 this morning is on behalf of the Chamber of
3 Commerce, the Collier building industry, Naples
4 Board of Realtors and the Economic Development
5 Council of Collier County, and everything that
6 we say this morning has been put together with
7 the close collaboration of the Supervisor of
8 Elections' offices. I've got four maps and one
9 graph, and I've got five and a half minutes to
10 share them with you.

11 Number one, map number one, looking at the
12 southern area of our state, we see the issue as
13 it stands today. Several districts criss-cross
14 the entire east-west expanse of the state.
15 Legislators in these districts are put in the
16 position of representing several diverse
17 population. The current maps, frankly, seem to
18 hold limited regard for compactness, political
19 subdivisions and communities.

20 Map number two, here we take a closer look
21 at the southern section of our state. Collier
22 County is currently divided among five
23 legislative districts. District 75 holds a
24 portion of Collier's northwest corner.

25 District 77 holds a small portion of Collier

1 County north of Main Street and Immokalee and
2 extends north to Highlands. District 101 holds
3 a large section of Collier County, extends
4 across the state into Broward County. District
5 112, similar eastward expansion to District
6 101, runs clear across the state to Dade County
7 and the city of Durrell. And District 76 is
8 the only district that lies completely within
9 Collier County and represents the largest
10 portion of the western coastal community.

11 As we look to create a solution to this
12 challenge, the following three things are
13 terribly important: One, new boundaries should
14 keep Collier County districts intact locally to
15 the greatest extent possible; number two, new
16 boundaries should ensure the proposed districts
17 clearly are compliant with the standards of the
18 Voting Rights Act; third, new boundaries should
19 permit Collier County voters to elect
20 Representatives of their choice to the greater
21 extent possible.

22 The third map we have is a proposed
23 solution. It divides Collier County among
24 three legislative districts, as opposed to
25 five, allowing communities of interest to

1 remain better intact. The new district lines
2 are also better attuned to existing political
3 subdivisions. District 75 in the north
4 acquires an additional section of Collier, then
5 extends into Lee County. District 101 contains
6 a large portion of Collier County with a
7 western section of Dade County. District 76
8 compacts land-wise in the west, but remains the
9 only district held entirely within Collier
10 County.

11 Our fourth map shows representatives of
12 the same solution, but highlights which
13 sections in each county that lie with the
14 specified legislative districts. All of the
15 proposed district lines are respectful of
16 Collier County communities of interest, as
17 reflected in the Voter Tabulation Districts --
18 precincts, if you will -- submitted to the
19 Census Bureau by our Supervisor of Elections.

20 Graph. This solution achieves an equal
21 population for criteria of redistricting as
22 well. As you know, the ideal total population
23 per district is 156,678 people. Districts 75,
24 101 and 112 must lose populations. Districts
25 76 and 77 must gain populations.

1 The population counts for the three
2 districts that we are suggesting would be as
3 follows: District 75 would have 156,992
4 people, and would represent 38.4 of the
5 district's total population. District 76, 56,
6 82 with 100 percent of the population of
7 Collier County. District 101 would have
8 155,126 people, with Collier residents
9 representing 67.4 percent of the district's
10 total population. And Districts 77 and 112
11 would no longer hold sections of Collier
12 County.

13 Mr. Chairman, thank you, sir.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much. You beat me to the punch. That was
16 very detailed. Thank you very much, and thank
17 you for what the Chamber does here in Collier
18 County. We appreciate that, sir. Very good
19 information.

20 Next up we have Mr. Poteet, followed by
21 Chuck Mohlke, and then I believe it is Liza
22 McClenaghan, or McLendon, I apologize if I am
23 mispronouncing that, but I think you know who
24 -- did I lose my mike there? Do we have a
25 malfunction? Okay. And we are back. Okay.

1 All right. We've got Mr. Poteet --
2 Mr. Poteet, followed by Chuck Mohlke and then
3 Liza.

4 Mr. Poteet, you are recognized, sir.

5 MR. POTEET: Good morning. I thank you
6 for the opportunity to speak before you, and I
7 am here on behalf of myself and no other
8 organizations, I want to make that clear.

9 I agree with Mr. Reagen on a number of
10 points that he had. I don't have a map. I
11 don't have a magic number of the number of
12 Representatives, but I do know more is better.
13 We currently have five State Representatives
14 that cover Collier County, two Senators, and
15 with that we get more coverage and more voice
16 in Tallahassee.

17 If you reduce the number, we are going to
18 have less voice, we'll have less people on the
19 committee structure, which is vitally important
20 for getting any of the bills through, and so,
21 you know, we are not going to be -- we are a
22 small county, so we need more voice. And when
23 we get people like Chairman Grimsley who covers
24 just a little piece of Immokalee, but also
25 represents the interests of Collier County and

1 is here on a regular basis, that is a very good
2 thing for our community.

3 And so I just say when you take into
4 consideration and you look at the east-west
5 districts, a lot of people would like to cut
6 them out. I have talked to Representative
7 Nuñez and Representative Hudson, and both of
8 them like traveling and visiting us on a
9 regular basis and do a fine job and they give
10 us representation, a voice in our legislation
11 and also a voice in the other representative --
12 or other county districts, so they know what
13 Collier County wants. And so more is better.
14 Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
16 very much. We appreciate those comments.

17 Next up we have Chuck Mohlke, and then we
18 have Liza and then Shari Monetta.

19 Mr. Mohlke, thank you, sir.

20 MR. MOHLKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
21 Thank you, Senator Gaetz.

22 I appear here for three purposes. One, to
23 support unreservedly the comments of our
24 Supervisor of Elections, and hope that the
25 Committee will support the ideas presented to

1 you by Mr. Michael Reagen.

2 Second, I want to compliment Senator Gaetz
3 on his opening remarks and on the recent
4 reported comments that he made in several of
5 the newspapers that indicate the great
6 flexibility of you, Senator, and the other
7 members of the panel in respect to how you are
8 going to proceed to inform the public about
9 your final decisions regarding redistricting.

10 And, third, this expedited procedure that
11 you are on I think is in the public's interest.
12 We are so pleased that you have such a
13 representative panel here today to hear these
14 remarks, and we thank you very much for your
15 participation and for your -- we welcome you on
16 behalf of Collier County. Thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
18 very much.

19 Next up we have Liza, and, Liza, I am
20 going to ask you to say your last name just so
21 we get it on the record the right way.

22 MS. McCLENAGHAN: Good morning, Liza
23 McClenaghan.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: McClenaghan.
25 I'm sorry that I didn't say that right. And

1 after Ms. Liza, we have Shari Monetta and then
2 Michael Lyster, followed by Chris Straton. You
3 are recognized.

4 MS. McCLENAGHAN: Good morning, Chairman,
5 members of the redistricting committees. I
6 would like to begin with some praise for the
7 present, move quickly to the future and then
8 review some lessons learned from past
9 redistricting.

10 Congratulations to you and your staff on
11 the creation of My District Builder. With this
12 software, the Legislature has created a
13 superior geographical information system for
14 the public use to provide our own submissions,
15 as well as to review proposals of the
16 legislative committees and other organizations.
17 In 2001, the Florida Legislature deployed
18 FREDS. That was an envy of many states. With
19 this track record, you know how to create the
20 tools needed to accomplish your task in an
21 unimpeded fashion.

22 Many states have already completed their
23 redistricting, and at least two states have
24 completed the review with the U.S. Department
25 of Justice for pre-clearance under Section 5.

1 The responsibilities and timeline of the
2 Legislature to reapportion and redistrict the
3 legislative seats and redistrict the
4 congressional seats following the release of
5 decennial census needs to be clarified and
6 expedited. Even as the current redistricting
7 process is unfolding, it has become obvious
8 that the voters may not know the districts in
9 which they will be eligible to cast their
10 ballots, and candidates may not know which
11 districts they will contest by June 2012 for
12 the August 2012 primary.

13 Submitted for your consideration is
14 proposal to amend the Florida Constitution to
15 begin the reapportionment/redistricting process
16 the year of the decennial census release and
17 complete it by the end of the year. Voters and
18 candidates can then be prepared for the
19 election season in the second year following
20 the census, along with the Division of
21 Elections and the Supervisors of Elections. I
22 have submitted this language to your staff.

23 Article III, Section 16, and Article X,
24 Section 8, require only minimal language
25 changes. If necessary, you should consider a

1 special redistricting session so that the
2 Legislature's budget process is not impacted.
3 The cost every ten years would be not as great
4 compared to the upheaval caused by this
5 extended process. All current steps would
6 remain in Section 16, but the Florida
7 institutions' portion must be completed by
8 December 31st of the year following the
9 decennial census. In Article X, if necessary,
10 the effective date of the census can be moved
11 forward. While the issue of redistricting is
12 still on our minds, please bring these
13 amendments to the ballot.

14 Another key component of the redistricting
15 process is the creation of the Voter Tabulation
16 Districts, or VTDs. The U.S. Census timeline
17 has a submission of these precinct-like units
18 early in the decennial census process.

19 I ask that you involve the public in the
20 review at the county level to assist in
21 identifying communities of interest and any
22 changes in any political subdivisions. This
23 will make your task easier and allow for the
24 public input at a critical time in the process.

25 Ten years ago, the Democratic party and

1 Republican parties of Collier County came
2 before a similar body and asked that you not
3 draw districts across the Peninsula from east
4 to west. I make that request again today.
5 There is little that eastern Collier County
6 shares with western Broward and Miami-Dade for
7 legislative and congressional representation.

8 Here is a quick review of what we learned
9 in 2002. Please respect minority districts.
10 In 2002, your districts plowed right through
11 the census-designated places of Immokalee and
12 Golden Gate, which our Supervisor of Elections
13 shared with you in a map earlier. Please
14 respect political subdivisions. In a midnight
15 drawing exercise, you divided the city of
16 Everglades City in two when you found State
17 Road 29.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Liza, I
19 know we are about three and a half minutes in.
20 I would like to try to get to put a bow on it,
21 if you could, and then we will also take your
22 statement in whole and make sure it is part of
23 the record.

24 MS. McCLENAGHAN: Sure. I have submitted
25 it, thank you.

1 Please respect communities of interest as
2 shown in Senate 37 and 39, and then please note
3 that we had a lot of confusion, we, voters,
4 when we have split precincts.

5 Interstate 75 is a man-made obstacle, and
6 last time one committee took the east side of
7 the road and one took the west side of the road
8 and sometimes you drew it down the middle,
9 creating populations with no -- districts
10 within populations.

11 In closing, I would like to -- in closing,
12 I would like to remind the Committee that
13 Collier County is a covered jurisdiction under
14 the Voting Rights Act, and we wonder why you
15 are holding this meeting at eight o'clock in
16 the morning when the people impacted by that
17 portion are at work. Thank you for your time.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
19 very much. Thank you very much.

20 Ladies and gentlemen, I don't know who it
21 was that shouted. I will handle it with the
22 timing, and we appreciate that. We want to
23 give everybody a chance to speak, but we do --
24 we've got 50 people to speak. I don't know
25 where Vi Steffan is in this room. Vi, are you

1 here? You are the last person on my list right
2 now. I want to make sure I get you a chance to
3 speak, so if everyone would be respectful of
4 Vi, we will try to get to her as well.

5 So, Shari, you are recognized. Thank you
6 very much for being here today.

7 MS. MONETTA: Good morning, members.
8 Thank you for visiting Naples today.

9 My name is Shari Monetta. I am here as a
10 private citizen. I have lived in Collier
11 County for 15 years today. I have been
12 following your listening tour since June, and
13 am frustrated when I hear special interest
14 groups at every stop attack a process that
15 gives citizens the ability to tell their
16 legislators what we want them to do when they
17 draw the new district lines. I am talking
18 about groups like the League of Women Voters,
19 who are heavily involved in the political
20 process and who promote civic participation.
21 Getting involved with redistricting is very
22 important, yet the League has decided to
23 criticize you rather than offer any substantial
24 ideas of its own. It is funny this is
25 happening, because a decade ago, the League was

1 the first group to publicly submit a
2 redistricting plan. I am not sure what
3 accounts for this change of heart, except for
4 the fact that now Amendments 5 and 6 are part
5 of the state's Constitution.

6 The League, which supports these
7 amendments, knows the wording of these
8 amendments is so vague that it will be
9 impossible for you to fulfill their
10 requirements. That is why the League refuses
11 now to show its hand and offer any ideas on how
12 you should draw -- redraw the district
13 boundaries. I am disappointed the League and
14 their allies have taken this position, but it
15 comes as no surprise, given that Amendments 5
16 and 6 are so ambiguous.

17 I don't envy the position of this
18 Committee. It is unfortunate that these
19 amendments will result in multiple lawsuits
20 being filed against any plan you ultimately
21 pass. I urge you to work as hard as you can to
22 draw good maps. Don't listen to criticism from
23 groups who have no interest in seeing this
24 Committee succeed in its work. Thank you for
25 allowing me to speak this morning.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
2 Shari, we appreciate your comments.

3 Next up we have Michael Lyster. Following
4 Michael will be Chris Straton and then David
5 Easlick.

6 Mr. Lyster, thanks for being here, sir.
7 You are recognized.

8 MR. LYSTER: Good morning. I am Mike
9 Lyster, I am here as a private citizen. I want
10 to thank you all for taking the time to have an
11 open and transparent process via the website
12 and these hearings. As representatives of the
13 citizens, it is refreshing to see you go out
14 and listen to the opinions of the citizens
15 prior to your decision-making.

16 I am a resident of Collier County. I have
17 been a resident for 12 years. Our son,
18 daughter-in-law, grandson and granddaughter are
19 residents of Collier County. Our youngest son
20 is a resident of Miami-Dade. So I have a keen
21 interest in the future of Florida and your
22 activities.

23 The growth in the -- as you said, Senator,
24 the growth in Florida gives us two more
25 Congressmen, and Collier County has shared in

1 that growth and we would like to see you give
2 us our own representation.

3 Amendments 5 and 6 require contiguous,
4 compact districts. Good luck on that. As you
5 know, there are many municipal boundaries that
6 are not compact and contiguous, and so it is
7 going to be left to your best judgment to come
8 up with meeting Amendment 5 and 6 and
9 supporting the efforts of everybody you hear
10 from.

11 Finally, let me just echo the words of our
12 Supervisor of Elections. As a clerk in a
13 voting precinct for the last six elections, I
14 appreciate your expedited process and I wish
15 you best of luck to get that out as soon as you
16 can so that we can get our election processes
17 prepared and all the citizens notified so we
18 have an efficient and effective election.

19 Thank you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
21 very much.

22 Next up we have Chris Straton.

23 Ms. Straton. And then following Ms. Straton,
24 David Easlick and Jacob Winge, I believe, or
25 Winge, yes, I believe is what it is, and then

1 Joyce Fletcher.

2 You are recognized. Thank you.

3 MS. STRATON: Thank you. Good morning.

4 My name is Chris Straton, and I, too, am here
5 as a private citizen.

6 What I have in my hand are the five maps
7 that the county commission boundaries have been
8 drawn up and shared with the public. The
9 public has an opportunity to react to those in
10 a timely fashion. Even now when we anticipate
11 the Board of County Commissioners will be
12 approving these maps and deciding which map to
13 accept on September 13th, candidates who have
14 already announced for the Board of County
15 Commission seats are very concerned that this
16 decision be made quickly, because it will
17 affect who their constituents will be, who will
18 be voting for them.

19 The timeline that Mr. Gaetz explained
20 early did not state that the Committee would
21 work to come up with maps immediately. He did
22 not tell us when you would be having the maps
23 presented to the legislators to vote on. It is
24 critical that the people that want to run for
25 office be informed quickly so that they have

1 the opportunity to campaign effectively.

2 The Supervisor of Elections talked about
3 the concern of not having voter confusion and
4 wanting you to move quickly. We agree with
5 that, but the other side of the coin is the
6 voters are entitled to know who is going to be
7 possibly running for office.

8 Failure to move up the schedule to early
9 in your session is nothing more than making it
10 easier for the incumbents, and we all know that
11 when Amendments 5 and 6 were passed, the
12 electorate in Florida said we want compact,
13 contiguous and districts that do not -- excuse
14 me, I have to check my words -- do not favor
15 any party or incumbent, and failure to have
16 these -- your maps drawn up and approved
17 quickly in the legislative session is nothing
18 more than favoring the incumbents. Thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
20 Ms. Straton. I hope you can stick around also,
21 Ms. Straton, because I believe that Senator
22 Gaetz and the members of the Committee at the
23 end will have an opportunity to address some of
24 the questions in regard to the timeline and the
25 maps. And sometimes things get out into the

1 bloodstream about the direction or the timeline
2 that we have had, and I think we can clarify a
3 lot of the questions that you had. So if you
4 can, please stick around to the very end.

5 And after that, next up, we've got
6 Mr. David Easlick --

7 MS. STRATON: Excuse me, I think that is
8 important that everybody be informed of, and
9 not just at the end of the session.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
11 very much.

12 Next up we've got David Easlick.
13 Mr. Easlick, thank you for being here, sir,
14 followed by Jacob Winge and then Joyce
15 Fletcher.

16 You are recognized, sir.

17 MR. EASLICK: Good morning, committee
18 members. I am glad to see you here in Naples.
19 I am David Easlick, and I have been here about
20 ten years. My parents came down in 1972, and
21 it took me a while to find them.

22 But my main concern is it is basically,
23 guys, KISS, keep it simple, stupid, because
24 this is going to be a horrible mess. I am a
25 member of the Michigan State Bar Association

1 for 35 years, and I know the legal fraternity
2 is going to be out there just tearing this
3 thing apart. Amendments 5 and 6 created a
4 terrible disaster, and I think that the -- you
5 know, the faster you can get this thing done,
6 the simpler you can get this thing done.
7 Jennifer is going to have an impossible job,
8 but she has given you some good help there, and
9 I think you ought to take a good look at it,
10 and Mr. Reagen from the Chamber of Commerce is
11 good, and, you know, if we don't do any
12 gerrymandering, if we look at this thing
13 compactly and get it done. Thank you.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much, sir.

16 Next up we have Jacob Winge, followed by
17 Joyce Fletcher with the League of Women Voters,
18 and then Cosme Perez.

19 Jacob is -- it says he is with the Collier
20 Youth Political Activists. Welcome for being
21 here, sir.

22 MR. WINGE: Yes, good morning,
23 Representatives and Senators. Thank you for
24 allowing me and other members of the public to
25 speak to you in this very important process.

1 I, first of all, would like to echo the
2 words of our Supervisor of Elections and others
3 in saying to please do this process as quickly
4 as possible. There is a time when you have to
5 put politics aside and put principle and people
6 first on either side, Democrats, Republicans,
7 non-party, because if you don't do this process
8 effectively and quickly, it is going to affect
9 all sides, state, county and even city level
10 politics, as far as candidates running for a
11 variety of offices.

12 I also want to say, just coming from a
13 history perspective, I am on the Board of
14 Directors of the Collier County Museum, I don't
15 believe that you can represent both sides of
16 the State of Florida, which is culturally and
17 historically different, effectively and
18 efficiently, not good or bad, effectively and
19 efficiently. I live in Congressional District
20 25 and I live in House District 112, and it is
21 not -- I am not pointing any fingers, saying
22 good or bad job, but it is about effectively
23 and efficiently representing the people, and I
24 don't see how you can do that when both sides
25 of the state are completely different in

1 history and culture. Thank you so much.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
3 Mr. Winge.

4 Next we have Joyce Fletcher, and following
5 Joyce Fletcher is Cosme Perez, followed by
6 Estela Perez.

7 Joyce, thank you very much for being here.

8 MS. FLETCHER: Good morning. Thank you
9 all for coming to Naples and being here and
10 giving us this opportunity.

11 My name is Joyce Fletcher. I am
12 Vice-President of the League of Women Voters of
13 Collier County, and was a local coordinator to
14 help pass Amendments 5 and 6.

15 I have been requested by one of our
16 legislators to not repeat the message you have
17 heard about maps from the League of Women
18 Voters at every stop. While I will not belabor
19 this point, I must insist that you get maps out
20 to the public. Now that you have heard what
21 the public has to say, we must see what you are
22 proposing and truly have an opportunity to
23 comment, not in Tallahassee or by e-mail, but
24 all over the state and face to face.

25 We know the Constitution mandates that you

1 complete the State Legislature redistricting in
2 2012, and we believe there should be no reason
3 that you could not have maps, true public
4 comment and be ready to vote the first week of
5 session in January.

6 Here in Collier County, we have been
7 forced to live with our county being divided
8 into five State House districts since 2002.
9 How can Collier and its history and -- truly be
10 represented in such a design? The 2010 census
11 reported 321,520 citizens in Collier County.
12 This would entitle us to just over two
13 Representatives. Please look at how to keep
14 the most of Collier County in two districts, no
15 more districts reaching from the Atlantic to
16 the Gulf.

17 While we do not have enough citizens to
18 have a Senator to represent just Collier
19 County, we do need to continue to have a one --
20 to have most of the county in one Senate
21 district, perhaps with southern Lee County.

22 I, too, Representative Weatherford, had
23 trouble with My District Builder, but, you
24 know, the Constitution requires that you draw
25 the maps, not the citizens. Besides, we don't

1 have all the input that you have gleaned from
2 the meetings you have held all over the state.
3 Please do draw the maps now and distribute them
4 through every media possible. Give us time and
5 face-to-face ways to comment so you can be
6 ready to vote on the maps in early January.
7 Thank you.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
9 very much.

10 Next up we have Cosme Perez and Estela
11 Perez. Now, I am guessing perhaps that Mrs.
12 Perez is your wife?

13 MR. PEREZ: Yes, I think she is declining.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Are you sure
15 you don't want her to go first? I don't want
16 to get you in trouble back home, so --

17 MR. PEREZ: Only because she is declining.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay, okay,
19 all right. Good to see you, Ms. Perez. Mr.
20 Perez, you are recognized to speak. Thanks for
21 being here, sir.

22 MR. PEREZ: Thank you very much for
23 letting me -- thank you for being here. First,
24 my name is Cosme Perez, and I came here -- I am
25 going to read it, because I came here with my

1 wife to this county in 2002, and ten years
2 later, we are retiring now here. We have two
3 kids that are grown up, raised up in Miami and
4 they are okay. First we wanted to sell the
5 house in Miami and then come to Naples for our
6 dream house and retire here. We participated
7 in many community events without regards of
8 ethnic or racial concern, but noticed that
9 there was a leadership gap in the Hispanics.

10 In 2003, we participated -- we joined a
11 fraternity, and this fraternity conduct a
12 Columbus Day parade in Golden Gate City. We
13 helped organize this parade to bring to
14 Hispanics to participate for the first time.
15 That is a big group here in this county. This
16 resulted in the church that produced this
17 parade activated a scheduled mass in Spanish
18 with a Spanish priest that we still have now in
19 two churches. So the Hispanic groups here are
20 50 percent -- 57 percent increase, and Collier
21 County has its share about that. And there is
22 no -- I know that this may not be what about
23 the map, but listen to this. We have held --
24 even Jennifer with the elections campaign,
25 trying to work on the polls, but the Hispanics

1 don't vote, don't vote. There is a very low
2 turnout of Hispanic votes in this county, and
3 it is because probably the sign of this areas
4 and the concern they have, you know, who is
5 representing them.

6 As a part of the Hispanic -- I was part of
7 the Hispanic -- I was a member of the Hispanic
8 Advisory Board of Collier County Commission for
9 six years, and no one recommendation was ever
10 submitted to the Board by this Commission, by
11 this Board. And it is important, because the
12 issues discussed there month after month, the
13 Hispanics and the public didn't come to this
14 public session to listen to what we were
15 discussing.

16 Now, we can talk about dividing the
17 Florida map into 120 -- 200 congressional
18 districts.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Perez, I
20 am going to have to ask you to help me wrap it
21 up a little bit.

22 MR. PEREZ: Yes. But we need leader of
23 Hispanic background to help get the Hispanic
24 vote out. And I want you to consider those
25 areas. There is no Hispanics here -- there are

1 Hispanics here, but not fifty -- 25 percent as
2 should be, and I think that they should have
3 this type -- this type of conference available
4 to them, too, so they can understand the system
5 so they can vote and be concerned. Right now,
6 they are not concerned.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
8 very much, Mr. Perez. I do think it is
9 important to point out that Collier County is a
10 Section 5 county. What that means is that it
11 is federally protected by the Department of
12 Justice, and that any changes to the districts
13 have to be cleared by the Department of Justice
14 for that very reason. And so I thank you for
15 your comments, sir.

16 I apologize, because Ms. Perez was not
17 speaking, I kind of fell behind here, so I am
18 going to announce somebody's name that probably
19 was not prepared, but Annisa Karim. Ms. Karim,
20 I'm sorry I didn't give you more time to
21 prepare. Following Ms. Karim, we've got Jim
22 Burke, and after Mr. Burke, we have Patricia
23 Forkman and then Neville Williams.

24 Thank you very much for being here.

25 MS. KARIM: Thank you very much. My name

1 is a Annisa Karim. I am the President of the
2 Collier County Democratic Club, but today I am
3 here as an individual speaking on my own
4 behalf.

5 I want to thank you for coming to Collier
6 County. I would say beautiful Collier County,
7 it is kind of overcast today, but usually --

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: It is not
9 just because the Legislature is in town, too.
10 I just wanted to point that out for the record.

11 MS. KARIM: I thought it was because the
12 legislators are in town -- no.

13 I want to thank you for coming here, and
14 although these are comments you may have heard
15 across the state over and over, I think it is
16 important to make them again, because these are
17 the voices of the citizens.

18 This is the first time that I have
19 actually been paying attention and involved in
20 a redistricting process. And, of course, you
21 know that we are doing this concurrently. In,
22 you know, Collier County we are redrawing our
23 Board of County Commissioner districts and our
24 school board districts and, of course, we are
25 going through this redistricting process with

1 you, and it is very different.

2 Our Supervisor of Elections, I have to
3 congratulate her, I have to give her a big
4 thumbs-up, because her and her staff have done
5 an amazing job. They have given us five
6 different maps on which to comment. Not only
7 that, but they have actually given us the
8 opportunity on more than one occasion to
9 comment on these maps. We are able to make
10 substantive comments. Not only do we want
11 these maps to be fair to the citizens, but we
12 want to be able to look at a map and say, "You
13 know, I think District 4 is not right here. I
14 think District 1 here, you know, does not
15 respect community boundaries." And so we are
16 able to, as citizens, give substantive
17 comments. And that is really what I was hoping
18 for from the Legislature.

19 Given that we do not have maps, I do urge
20 you to adopt early in your session a map, maybe
21 by early January, so that we, as voters, one,
22 may have the opportunity to maybe know who
23 might be representing us, and, two, may, as
24 voters, know maybe where our district
25 boundaries are.

1 This is not a political -- this is
2 actually a non-partisan process. It doesn't
3 matter whether you are Democrat or Republican.
4 This is going to affect the state and all of
5 the decisions made within the state in the next
6 ten years.

7 So I urge you -- thank you for coming to
8 Collier County. Thank you for hearing us.
9 Please give us maps that we can make
10 substantive comments on and stop spending
11 taxpayer money on fighting Amendments 5 and 6
12 that the Collier County -- or, rather, the
13 state voters overwhelmingly approved. So thank
14 you very much. Have a great day.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
16 very much. Great testimony.

17 Next up we have Jim Burke, Commissioner
18 from the North Naples Fire District, followed
19 by Patricia Forkman, Neville Williams and then
20 Charles Willits.

21 Commissioner, good to see you.

22 COMMISSIONER BURKE: Thank you. First of
23 all, panel, thanks for the opportunity to
24 speak, and secondly, I want to commend you on
25 the job you are doing in bringing this out to

1 the public. I do not envy the job you have in
2 front of you.

3 But I am not here with maps or demographic
4 breakouts. I am more concerned with the
5 language you are dealing with. As an example,
6 the district has to be compact. Well, I am
7 sure everybody in this room has a feeling about
8 what compact is. Let me give you mine. I grew
9 up in a Catholic parish of 15,000 people. We
10 could all walk to Mass on Sunday. That is
11 compact. Be careful with that.

12 The other one is political boundaries.
13 What does that mean? City, county commission,
14 fire districts, of course, and things like
15 that. That is a delicate issue.

16 But the third piece of language you are
17 dealing with that I really like is -- I am
18 having a senior moment -- practicable. Wow,
19 that is a good one. I can't figure that one
20 out. But my concern is you've got to deal with
21 it, thank God not me, but you are dealing with
22 it, be careful with it, get yourself some
23 definitions. Let's not end up in court with
24 every one of these. So thanks for the time.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you

1 very much, Commissioner. It is good to see
2 you.

3 Next up we have Patricia Forkman. Ms.
4 Forkman, thank you very much for being here,
5 followed by Neville Williams, Charles Willits,
6 and Steven Hemping.

7 MS. FORKAN: Thank you. My name is
8 Patricia Forkan.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I'm sorry
10 about that.

11 MS. FORKAN: That is fine. We moved here
12 a year ago from Maryland. We were quite used
13 to having a close relationship with our member
14 of Congress. Imagine our surprise when we went
15 to vote and learned that our member of Congress
16 was living in Miami.

17 We are living in the Lely Resort area. It
18 has been -- how shall I say kindly --
19 gerrymandered, and we understand that it is a
20 situation having to do with the voters' rights.

21 So one of the suggestions that I have and
22 a number of us that live in Lely that would
23 like to be brought back into the Naples family
24 is -- Representative Passidomo's district
25 includes us and Senator Richter's district

1 includes us. So we would like you to look at
2 those particular situations. There is one
3 Hispanic group that -- a small group that is
4 part -- that is south of where we live that
5 apparently has caused justice to go in and
6 scoop out many more of us than are part of the
7 Hispanic voting block. So that is the primary
8 thing that I am here to talk about and hope
9 that you will consider.

10 The other thing that I am quite interested
11 in, but I don't know really how you would look
12 at this, I worked in Washington, DC, for a
13 number of years, and I have to compliment you.
14 I have never been to a hearing in Washington
15 where there were this many people on the
16 committee who are here and staying. Normally
17 most of you would have left by now. So it is
18 really kind of great to see --

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Those are all
20 members of the Sergeant's office that won't let
21 us leave, so we are good.

22 MS. FORKAN: I came down here with a
23 strong belief that we should protect the
24 Everglades. And when I look at how one member
25 of Congress has, at least in this area, the

1 whole of the Everglades, it would be
2 interesting to look at, when you are doing the
3 congressional district, to look at whether we
4 could get two Congressmen who could represent
5 Florida more vigorously, let's say, for the
6 Everglades. So that was the other thing I
7 wanted to bring up, that one person is
8 enough -- is not enough, really, as long as you
9 can possibly get it out to like say Route 29 or
10 something like that where there is more of an
11 interest on the members' part that would be
12 representing this as congressional district.
13 Thank you very much.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much, Ms. Forkan. We appreciate that.
16 Very good, substantive advice, and we will take
17 it to heart.

18 Next up we have Neville Williams, followed
19 by Charles Willits, Steven Hemping and then
20 Norine Hemping.

21 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, thank you for coming
22 and for listening. And I just want to endorse
23 what my wife just said, because I can't say it
24 better. So I waive most of my time, other than
25 to say --

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You are one
2 smart man, sir.

3 MR. WILLIAMS: But I don't think that the
4 Representative of District 25, U.S. Congress,
5 really wants all those alligators in his
6 district just so he can have a small piece of
7 voting block over here. And I feel -- I really
8 want to go on record as a protest that we feel
9 unrepresented. As my wife said, we could --
10 our Congressman was Chris Van Hollen, we could
11 see him anytime we wanted. I have no idea how
12 to get ahold of the Congressman over in Miami.
13 It does seem strange and really needs to be
14 addressed. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Very good
16 point. Thank you, sir.

17 Next we have Charles Willits.
18 Mr. Willits, thank you for being here, sir, and
19 I hope I said that last name right.

20 MR. WILLITS: You sure did, thank you.

21 I am a native Floridian and a resident of
22 Collier County for 18 years. I am speaking on
23 my own behalf, and my only interest in coming
24 today is to comment on the irregular boundaries
25 that have been mentioned already, Golden Gate

1 City, the area around Lely. And had I known
2 that our Supervisor of Elections had presented
3 the wonderful slide show saying the exact same
4 thing, I wouldn't need to come here today. So
5 I yield the rest of my time.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: All right,
7 smart man. Thank you very much. As I said, we
8 are giving bonus points out for brevity, sir.
9 You are leading the charge there, Mr. Willits,
10 so thank you very much.

11 Now, Steven, I see that you are planning
12 on going before your wife. Now, is that a
13 smart decision on your part? I just -- I want
14 to give you every opportunity --

15 MR. HEMPING: That decision was made
16 outside.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay. All
18 right. Okay, you got to ask first.
19 Mr. Hemping, good to see you, sir, and you are
20 recognized.

21 MR. HEMPING: Good to be here this
22 morning. I am really representing myself as a
23 citizen of Collier County and Florida, but I am
24 past Chair of the Democratic party, so most
25 people probably know that here already. But I

1 appreciate you being here, and I would like to
2 get at the issue, and it is the unspoken word,
3 the gerrymandering issue. I mean, we are all
4 dealing with that here. Both major political
5 parties deal with this across the United
6 States. But here in Florida, it is an issue
7 that we have to take up, and voters of Florida
8 are really fed up with gerrymandering, you
9 know. The reason the Amendments 5 and 6 passed
10 with 63 percent majority really represented the
11 citizenry saying, hey, it is time for us to do
12 the job and make sure that all Floridians are
13 represented, not just one political party who
14 happens to be in control at this point. So
15 voters want fair, compact, contiguous district
16 lines drawn, we have already heard that, but
17 that is the goal.

18 If you could bear with me, I would like to
19 have some statistics brought forward to this
20 meeting this morning showing how negative
21 gerrymandering really is to the citizenry of
22 the state of Florida. We have -- 41 percent of
23 our registered voters in Florida happen to be
24 Democrat, 36 percent are registered Republicans
25 and the rest are NPAs or other, which is

1 23 percent.

2 If you look at our existing congressional
3 makeup, we actually have 19 Republicans,
4 whereas we probably should have ten if you look
5 at the pure statistics, and we only have six
6 Democrats in Congress. This is a perfect
7 example of how to do gerrymandering, okay, and
8 how one political party has over the last 20
9 years taken control of the state, unfairly for
10 really the majority of the populous in Florida.
11 So I suggest that this is an issue that needs
12 to be taken up. I know it is a challenge, I am
13 not saying it isn't, and I know you've got
14 pressures, but we have pressures, too, and we
15 are voters and we would like to be represented
16 like everyone else.

17 If I could just keep going a little bit,
18 if you look at the State House and State
19 Senate, in the State Senate, we have 40 seats.
20 There are 28 Republicans, which is a 70 percent
21 majority, and 12 Democrats. When 41 percent of
22 the voting population is Democrat, I can't
23 understand why there's only 12 Democrats
24 elected. I do know why, because we have been
25 gerrymandered here for a long time.

1 So just looking purely at the numbers, you
2 can see that we really don't have a represented
3 democracy, and I would like to commend you on
4 your effort here, but I would also like to
5 challenge you to really look at gerrymandering
6 in a big way.

7 If I have another minute?

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You don't
9 have another minute, but you've got about a
10 sentence and a half.

11 MR. HEMPING: Okay, all right. Let me
12 just say one thing about our community here,
13 and it's been brought up before. We have
14 Representative Passidomo here, who really is
15 the only one of our nine represent -- people
16 that represent us in State House, Congress and
17 State Senate, and we really need more people
18 focused on Collier County. We really don't
19 want Miamians supporting us, they don't know
20 our needs. And we don't really want people
21 in --

22 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
23 Mr. Hemping.

24 MR. HEMPING: Okay. Thank you for --

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Whatever you

1 missed, I am sure that Ms. Hemping is going to
2 get. So thank you very much.

3 Dr. Hemping, thank you very much for being
4 here, and I feel sorry for your husband that he
5 went before you. I know you are going to take
6 it out on him later.

7 DR. HEMPING: Don't feel sorry for him.
8 In 2011, we are a team and we are co-equals.

9 MR. HEMPING: Good.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Amen.

11 DR. HEMPING: My name is Dr. Norine
12 Roberts Hemping. I am a first-generation
13 American. Both my parents came to this country
14 with their parents seeking the American dream.
15 My parents had little of this world's material
16 goods, but they gave me something more
17 precious, the values which have made us a great
18 nation: Belief in the common good, respect for
19 one another, love of learning, participation in
20 a representative government. My parents are
21 buried a couple hundred miles north of here in
22 Clearwater, Florida, where they lived for 30
23 years of their retirement.

24 My uncles, though immigrant kids, all
25 served in the U.S. Army, Navy and Air Force in

1 World War II. One of the greatest strengths of
2 this, the greatest generation, was their
3 unselfish willingness to work together. They
4 put aside their differences to achieve uncommon
5 goals from victory against Hitler to building
6 highways, providing housing for returning
7 veterans, to supporting quality public
8 education for all.

9 As a nation and state, we are again facing
10 immense challenges. Millions of Americans are
11 anxious, worried and angry. As state
12 legislators, will you take your responsibility
13 seriously and work to strengthen our political
14 process by ending the unjust practice of
15 gerrymandering? Or will you choose to take us
16 further down the path to despair by destroying
17 what is left of our representative democracy?
18 The Boston Tea Party was never about cutting
19 and avoiding taxes. It was always and only
20 about the tyranny of being taxed while being
21 denied representation.

22 You are public servants. What do those
23 two words mean to you? Are you using the power
24 and influence of the office you hold to blindly
25 serve one ideology, one political party? Will

1 you make choices pleasing only to your base?
2 Will you make decisions which serve only to
3 further enrich the millionaires and
4 billionaires and hope for enough crumbs from
5 their corporate tables --

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Doctor, we
7 would like to keep the comments focused on
8 redistricting, if we could.

9 DR. HEMPING: -- to buy your reelection?
10 Or do you believe that being in public office
11 is a sacred trust with all the people that you
12 must honor and never break? Will you rise
13 above divisive partisan politics and meet your
14 obligation to present fairly drawn
15 redistricting reapportionment maps to the
16 people of Florida in a timely fashion, or will
17 you behind closed doors collude with cynical,
18 mean-spirited partisans to draw gerrymandered
19 district maps that destroy any last hope of the
20 people for representative democracy, thus
21 further disenfranchising millions of us
22 Floridians?

23 Will you find the courage to use
24 taxpayers' dollars to pay impartial IT
25 professionals to draw up district maps which

1 are fair, compact and contiguous, or will you
2 keep spending more millions of taxpayers'
3 dollars in misguided efforts to undermine the
4 express will of nearly two-thirds of Florida
5 voters by fighting Fair Districts Now?

6 When one party gains a super majority in
7 the State Legislature, you are at risk to act
8 like the schoolyard bully just because your
9 numbers are bigger. Like schoolyard bullies,
10 you can hurt others just because you can.
11 Gerrymandering is --

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Dr. Hemping,
13 I am going to have to ask you to try to help us
14 wrap it up here.

15 DR. HEMPING: Sure. I urge you to turn
16 away from the extremist ideologies. I urge you
17 to listen to your better angels. Give us fair
18 reapportionment maps. This is the best and
19 only way to restore the people's faith and
20 competence in the Democratic party. You do not
21 have 160 choices, you have but two. Number
22 one, either you lift high the lamp that gives
23 us --

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. Hemping,
25 we are about a minute over. I would really

1 like to ask you to help us wrap it up.

2 DR. HEMPING: -- fair districts, or number
3 two, slam shut the golden door in our faces by
4 gerrymandering again. Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
6 And for those -- for those who -- if we run
7 over, what we will do is if you've got a
8 written statement, we will take that. It will
9 go into the record. It will be just as
10 valuable and utilized as if you had a chance to
11 speak it out right here into the microphone.
12 So we will give -- everything that you want to
13 say will go on the record and will be a part of
14 the process. We just want to give everybody an
15 opportunity to speak.

16 Ellie Cantor is next. Ms. Cantor, I don't
17 know if I gave you enough of a heads-up. I
18 apologize for that. That is my fault. She is
19 with the Collier County Democratic Executive
20 Committee.

21 Following Ms. Cantor, we have Randal Long.
22 Following Randal Long, we have Joe Russo and
23 then James Kelly.

24 Ms. Cantor, I'm sorry about that.

25 MS. CANTOR: That is quite all right.

1 Very good, I need it. Thank you, and I am glad
2 to be here.

3 I am urging you to adopt a timeline for
4 redistricting that makes sense for Florida.
5 Failure to approve the maps in early January of
6 2012 will assuredly delay final approval of new
7 districts until close to election day. Vote on
8 the final plans on the floor by no later than
9 the end of the first week of session, if you
10 can do this by Friday, January 13th. The
11 schedule -- and I won't go into the schedule
12 for presenting this to the courts. However,
13 the Legislature does send the plans to the U.S.
14 Department of Justice, who has 60 days to
15 review, and if they take all that time, the
16 districts will be finalized June 18th. The
17 problem with that is obvious and been stated
18 before today. We need you to revise your plan.
19 While this may be presented by June 18th,
20 candidates, however, must register to run by
21 June 8th. And so, again, it is an issue of not
22 knowing what their district is, nor
23 constituents being well-informed of who their
24 Representatives are.

25 I had an opportunity to serve on the New

1 York State Senate Redistricting Committee as a
2 member of senior staff up in Albany, New York,
3 and so I really did learn firsthand what
4 reapportionment means, though our mechanics
5 were somewhat different a few years ago. I
6 have lived in Florida now for 20 years, but
7 while I know that 63 percent of the people
8 voted for Amendments 5 and 6, our Fair
9 Districts amendments, which says districts must
10 be contiguous unless otherwise required, must
11 be compact, as equal in population as feasible,
12 and where feasible, must make use of existing
13 city, county and geographical boundaries, but
14 what we all know and I learned firsthand by
15 experience is that the party that is in power
16 is the one that draws the lines and they have
17 the final say. And so, as you know, you have
18 this responsibility, and what I am asking
19 primarily at this point is to honor a schedule
20 that will allow for fair districts. Thank you.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
22 very much. Thank you for your comments.

23 Next we have Randal Long, Mr. Long.
24 Following Mr. Long is going to be Joseph Russo,
25 followed by James Kelly and then Jeff

1 Dentinger.

2 MR. LONG: Good morning, panel. I am
3 Randy Long. I am a citizen of Collier County,
4 have been here for 13 and a half years. I was
5 born and raised in Coral Gables, so I know both
6 sides of the state. I have worked in central
7 Florida and I have worked in Palm Beach area,
8 and Broward, and so I have a pretty good sense
9 of the state.

10 As Mr. Willits said, I think that you have
11 received a mandate. You have received a clear
12 picture of what the desire -- I would just ask
13 you to be bipartisan, to be as a group that
14 cares for the entire state, no matter what your
15 particular ideology is, and please represent
16 Florida in the very best sense. I was so
17 embarrassed with our Congress and our President
18 in the whole process that we just experienced
19 this summer. Our country needs to stand up,
20 and Florida is the fourth-largest state, we
21 need to be the leaders in this country. And
22 please do the right thing for us and for our
23 country. Be the leaders. Thank you.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you for
25 those words of inspiration. We appreciate

1 that.

2 Joseph Russo? Is Mr. Russo here? Good to
3 see you, Joseph. Followed by James Kelly, Jeff
4 Dentinger and James McDonald.

5 MR. RUSSO: Good morning, Representatives
6 and Senators. I know you are all thinking, who
7 is this kid here that is probably the youngest
8 person to speak today. My name is Joseph
9 Russo. I am a student at Florida Gulf Coast
10 University where Professor Bergerson here, one
11 of the smartest men that I probably know, is
12 one of my teachers over there and --

13 A VOICE: Suck up, suck up.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: There are no
15 easy As in his class, I can tell by looking at
16 him.

17 MR. RUSSO: I got to try, come on.

18 Anyhow, I am here today to speak to you as
19 somebody that has been politically active since
20 eight years old when my dad took me out
21 canvassing in his city council election. I
22 have been very involved in the political
23 atmosphere of this state. But I am here mainly
24 to talk about the southwest Florida region and
25 its respects to gaining another congressional

1 seat.

2 With over 20 percent growth in the past
3 ten years, it is quite obvious that southwest
4 Florida, being one of the fastest growing and
5 one of the most prestigious areas in our state,
6 could very well deserve and outright needs
7 another congressional district. If we look
8 right now, we have Collier and southern Lee,
9 and that district that we have, 14 and 13. If
10 we can look at the maps, we can clearly see
11 that there is another opportunity to put a
12 congressional district right between the two.
13 Personally, I would propose Collier and
14 southern Lee be linked up in the current
15 district we have here, and then Manatee and
16 Sarasota County keep their other district up
17 there, and we plop District 27, the new seat
18 that we have gained, right in between in
19 northern Lee and in Charlotte County. And in
20 that, we can also group that district with the
21 interior and the rural counties of Hendry,
22 Glades and all the others.

23 But I want to again thank you very much
24 for having this transparent process and
25 allowing me to come speak here today. I know

1 it is a great opportunity for myself to address
2 all of you, and thank you very much for being
3 our representatives and for doing this process
4 very, very well. Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
6 very much, Mr. Russo, and good luck in your
7 political future. I think everybody --
8 everyone on this Committee, we know young
9 talent when we see it, so good luck to you,
10 buddy.

11 Next up we've got James Kelly, and
12 following Mr. Kelly, Jeff Dentinger and then
13 James McDonald.

14 Good to see you, sir.

15 MR. KELLY: Thank you very much. I am a
16 member of the Southwest 9/12 Project, and also
17 a citizen of the country, although my -- I have
18 a party and I have affiliations and I have
19 interests, I am just a citizen speaking about
20 citizens being represented. So I want to thank
21 you for being here. I have been in the county
22 for a few years. I really appreciate your
23 taking the time. I had a printer malfunction,
24 so I am reading from an iPhone. I apologize
25 for that.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: God bless
2 technology.

3 MR. KELLY: I am embarrassed to say it was
4 a backup.

5 Anyway, this morning I speak about my
6 feelings towards Amendments 5 and 6. As I read
7 these amendments, I realized that they are
8 actually very open to interpretation because of
9 so many terms that are not well-defined, and
10 that gives me great pause. I don't understand
11 how the words "practicable," "feasible," can be
12 interpreted, for instance, meaning -- when
13 their meaning varies so much from person to
14 person. How can you draw maps that will use
15 lines that seem practical and feasible as our
16 18 million Floridians who might define those in
17 their own way?

18 Another one that's been mentioned already
19 is "compact." I think words like "compact" are
20 also fairly relative and they are not
21 specifically defined in the amendments. My
22 question is, is there one standard for
23 compactness that you all as Representatives and
24 Senators will use when drawing your new lines?
25 What is the standard? I think it is important

1 that you have a specific standard.

2 Finally, the amendments stated that you
3 need to follow existing political boundaries.
4 They don't specify what those boundaries are.
5 Are they city boundaries, are they existing
6 state -- lines in State House, State Senate,
7 congressional districts? Or are they
8 census-designated places like Naples Park and
9 Lely?

10 My point in raising these questions is
11 that the open-endedness of these amendments
12 will most likely mean that tax dollars will be
13 spent on endless lawsuits over whatever maps
14 are drawn. I don't want -- I don't want that,
15 and I don't want judges to draw the maps. I
16 want you to draw the maps. While this process
17 may be -- while this process may be a sincere
18 attempt to get the maps drawn without the court
19 system, I haven't heard a clear explanation --
20 hopefully, I will -- of what you are doing to
21 prevent that. Is there a clear objective
22 standard that you are aiming that, if achieved,
23 will show overwhelming evidence that the
24 Legislature has met the standard required by
25 both state and federal law?

1 A couple of comments that I would like to
2 make is there's two young gentlemen that stood
3 up today who were the youngest speakers, and
4 they make the most sense because they speak
5 common sense. And I think that is something
6 that we can all grab ahold of as left and
7 right, whatever party we have, you know, that's
8 the way it is. I think as citizens of the
9 U.S., that is what makes us great. However,
10 elections do have consequences, and that is for
11 the majority and the minority. I lived in
12 Texas when the minority moved to Oklahoma to
13 avoid this process. I'd like a show of hands
14 from the minority who say they won't do that.
15 No, I'm sorry, I am just trying to make light.

16 Anyway -- and I would also like to echo
17 one more comment --

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: It is a long
19 ride to Georgia from here.

20 MR. KELLY: Did I say Georgia? I mean
21 Texas anyway. Oh, no, you're right, it is
22 Oklahoma, Georgia. Okay. I am from Georgia,
23 you threw me off.

24 Anyway, the last thing I would like to say
25 is there's a person that has been mentioned on

1 both sides of the issue, and that is our
2 Supervisor of Elections, outstanding. She is
3 -- I think she would be a great asset to you
4 guys in your deliberations. So thank you for
5 being here and thank you for --

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
7 sir, thanks for your comments.

8 Next we have Jeff Dentinger. Mr.
9 Dentinger, I hope I said your last name right
10 there, sir. Thanks for being here. And then
11 we have James McDonald and then Ms. Linda
12 McDonald, and if I was James McDonald, I would
13 at least offer Ms. Linda the opportunity to go
14 first, and then Mary Kniaz, I believe. I hope
15 I said that right.

16 You are recognized, sir.

17 MR. DENTINGER: Hi, legislative members.
18 My name is Jeff Dentinger, and I have two
19 suggestions for priorities on redistricting.
20 One is military. We are in a financial crisis.
21 To protect our state sovereignty, we need
22 independence. To supply our fuel needs for the
23 military and our people, I suggest making an
24 environment for corporate refining of oil. Any
25 area willing to build a refinery should be --

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Sir, these
2 are -- I hope -- is this going to be focused on
3 redistricting? Okay, good.

4 MR. DENTINGER: -- northwest Florida.

5 Two, education. This year, budget
6 appropriations for education come down to a
7 midnight meeting in the Capitol. Resulting
8 education funding for graduate studies was
9 increased, and undergraduate studies was
10 decreased.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr.
12 Dentinger, I don't like to ever interrupt
13 anybody speaking, but this hearing is about
14 redistricting and not about -- there's a lot of
15 town hall meetings and opportunities to talk
16 about education and oil and everything else.
17 We would like to --

18 MR. DENTINGER: If you could come down --
19 if it comes down to making a decision about a
20 district, if you could lean towards public
21 schools, I would appreciate it. If you could
22 have a little bit of mandering towards public
23 schools, that would be fine, just no
24 gerrymandering. Thank you.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Okay. Thank

1 you very much, sir. We appreciate that.

2 Next up we have Mr. James McDonald.

3 MR. McDONALD: I yield to the Chair's
4 wisdom and send my wife.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You are a
6 smart man, Mr. McDonald.

7 MS. McDONALD: You know, I used to be
8 tall.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Ms. McDonald,
10 it is great to see you. Thank you for being
11 here, and your husband is one smart man.

12 MR. McDONALD: Yes, he is.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You are
14 recognized to speak.

15 MS. McDONALD: Thank you. My name is
16 Linda McDonald. I am here representing mostly
17 myself. Wait, you can't have that. We have to
18 know who you are. However, I am also the Chair
19 of Collier TIGER, which is Together in
20 Government and Education Reform, and represents
21 the teachers and non-instructional personnel in
22 the public school here in Collier County.

23 First of all, the teachers weren't too
24 thrilled about the timing of this, but since I
25 retired last year after 40 years, I am here.

1 So my big concern is we all know Democrats
2 and Republicans throughout our history have
3 done gerrymandering. The people of Florida
4 just voted and said stop. All of us said stop.
5 So that is what we need to do, we need to have
6 fair and -- oh, my goodness, I don't envy you
7 this job, because I looked at that and I
8 thought, oh, it is -- you know, it is not an
9 easy job. So nobody in their right mind is
10 going to expect it to be perfect for everyone.
11 Please, what we are asking is that you do it as
12 fairly as you can.

13 Now, I happen to personally know a
14 Republican on this group that I know is a fair
15 man, because I grew up -- helped his kids grow
16 up in our church. Yes, that would be the
17 Senator, Mr. Richter, who does still live here
18 as far as I know. Did you move? Thank you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Now, did you
20 say fair? Isn't he a banker? I am just
21 kidding, I am just kidding. We love Senator
22 Richter.

23 MS. McDONALD: He is a banker, he is a
24 banker, but he is really a good man. So this I
25 know personally, not politically, I don't know,

1 but, yeah, I pretty much do. He is a good
2 human being and he will be fair.

3 All I am asking is that the rest of you
4 please remember that we're not asking you to be
5 perfect. We are asking you to give it your
6 best shot, to not think, oh, wait, if I go in
7 there, I will get more Republican votes, or if
8 I go in there, I will get more Democratic
9 votes. Whatever side you are on, please -- I
10 live in District 101. The people in Broward
11 really don't have all the same, yeah, problems
12 or concerns that I have here. So I would like
13 to not have 101 include half of the coast, and
14 a lot of people have said that.

15 And I also just have to say how incredibly
16 wonderful Jennifer Edwards is and the work she
17 has done for this community. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
19 And, Ms. McDonald, we have to agree with you
20 that Senator Richter is a good man, and much
21 like Mr. McDonald, the reason he is a good man
22 is because he married way up, so he is a
23 good --

24 MR. McDONALD: Thank you, I appreciate
25 that.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You are
2 welcome, sir. You are recognized.

3 MR. McDONALD: I appreciate that. I came
4 with 12 pages of notes today, and I am down to
5 this. So everything that I felt I needed to
6 say today has been said, except I want to echo
7 the welcome and appreciation to all of you for
8 being here. It is very impressive that you
9 would travel across the state, down the state,
10 up Airport Road, to be here today and to hear
11 what we have to say. I may not have voted for
12 many of you, but I respect the offices that you
13 hold and I accept the will of the people who
14 elected you to office, feeling that you were
15 the best candidates to represent all of us, not
16 just Republicans who may have put you in office
17 or Democrats who may have put you in office,
18 but all of us. I accept that and I respect you
19 for being in that position.

20 And I ask today that you respect the voice
21 of the people who supported Amendments 5 and 6,
22 that said, you know, 200 years of
23 gerrymandering, we're tired of it, let's go
24 ahead and clean it up and do it right. So I
25 ask you to do that. Thank you very much.

1 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
2 very much, sir. We appreciate those comments.

3 Next up we have Mary --

4 MS. KNIAZ: Kniaz.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: -- Kniaz.
6 Thank you very much. I'm sorry, I was
7 struggling with that.

8 After Ms. Kniaz, we have Lydia Galton.
9 Following Ms. Galton, we have Douglas Wilson
10 and then Doug Fee.

11 You are recognized, ma'am.

12 MS. KNIAZ: Hi. My name is Mary Kniaz. I
13 am a new Florida resident. I currently live in
14 Lely Resort, plan to stay there the rest of my
15 life. I was really surprised, as were my
16 neighbors who spoke here earlier today, to
17 discover that I was represented by a
18 Congressman whose office is on the other side
19 of the district, and whose district extends way
20 over to Miami. I moved to Naples because I
21 thought Naples was wonderful, and I don't think
22 it has a lot in common with Miami.

23 Lely Resort is comprised entirely in
24 precinct 155. Right next door to us is
25 precinct 157, which I think is a majority

1 Hispanic community, and that is the reason that
2 Lely has been cut off and put all the way over
3 with Miami in a congressional district. We are
4 represented by Kathleen Passidomo and by
5 Senator Richter, and actually there are two
6 senatorial districts in Lely Resort, I believe,
7 divided by Wildflower Drive.

8 I am here to ask that Lely Resort be
9 placed in one congressional district, in the
10 congressional district that covers the rest of
11 Naples with whom we have a common newspaper,
12 common beaches, common banks, common businesses
13 and just a common sense of community. We have
14 nothing whatever in common with Hialeah or
15 Miami. So I would ask that if you feel that
16 you need to put precinct 157 in with what is
17 considered to be a community of interest,
18 perhaps a Hispanic community of interest,
19 although I don't quite get that, because
20 precinct 157, I believe, is majority Mexican
21 Hispanic, whereas Miami is Cuban Hispanic, and
22 it is kind of like saying Brazil and Portugal
23 should elect the same Representatives, that
24 they have more in common than they do with
25 their immediate neighbors, but if you feel that

1 it is necessary to cut out that one
2 neighborhood and put it with -- as it is now I
3 think in Representative Nuñez' District, go
4 ahead and do that, but Lely Resort belongs in
5 Naples, and I would ask that you put it in a
6 Naples congressional district. Thanks.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
8 very much.

9 Next we have Ms. Lydia Galton with the
10 League of Women Voters of Collier County,
11 followed by Douglas Wilson, Doug Fee and then
12 Scott Duval.

13 MS. GALTON: Good morning, legislators. I
14 just want to assure you that I am not here to
15 criticize your committee. I just -- as the
16 President of the League of Women Voters of
17 Collier County, I want to make some suggestions
18 to you to make the process better.

19 The timeline that you have currently
20 published is really unrealistic. As our
21 Supervisor of Elections has already pointed
22 out, she will be unable to mail absentee
23 ballots by September 21, because the courts
24 could still be hearing redistricting
25 challenges. Your timeline gives candidates for

1 office insufficient time to qualify by
2 June 8th. The districts could still be in the
3 courts, and the challengers won't even know
4 whether they live in the districts, so how in
5 the world could they run?

6 Very importantly, your timeline gives the
7 electorate very little time for review. You
8 have to -- your maps won't be unveiled, as you
9 currently plan it, till late in January, and we
10 will have very little time to comment on it.

11 You are charged by the Constitution to
12 create these maps, and you are charged by
13 Amendments 5 and 6 to create them in accordance
14 with the rules of those amendments. So I urge
15 you, please, file all your maps by October 3rd.
16 Make them available to the electorate so that
17 we can comment on them, whether you do this
18 electronically or any other way, but make them
19 available to us. Hold the floor vote on the
20 legislative districts on January 13th. As you
21 very well know, the congressional districts
22 could be drawn today and voted on tomorrow if
23 you wanted to.

24 On election day 2012, the Department of
25 Justice could still be reviewing totally drawn

1 districts. If so, can you assure me that our
2 votes will count? Will we let the United
3 States Supreme Court decide another
4 presidential election because of the sloppiness
5 of Florida's legislators? Let's not be fodder
6 for Saturday Night Live. Thank you.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
8 very much. And, Ms. Galton, I hope -- I know
9 you probably plan on sticking to the end. I
10 think you bring up some great points, and I
11 know that Senator Gaetz is taking copious
12 notes, he's probably got seven pages of notes
13 already, and he will address some of the very
14 questions you asked, so thank you.

15 MS. GALTON: Thank you very much.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, ma'am,
17 thank you.

18 Next up we have Doug Wilson with the ACLU,
19 thank you very much for being here, Mr. Wilson,
20 followed by Doug Fee, Scott Duval and then
21 Peter Simmons.

22 MR. WILSON: Good morning. It is a
23 pleasure to be here.

24 I would like to say at the outset that I
25 listened carefully to Senator Gaetz' opening

1 remarks, and I was very gratified by what I
2 heard. Others have expressed and you all have
3 received a letter from several leading
4 organizations of the Fair District coalition
5 which expressed concern about the timeline.
6 Senator Gaetz said in considerable detail that
7 it was his commitment to ensure that the
8 timeline would be moved as far back towards the
9 present as possible in order to respond to
10 those concerns. And, Senator, if you are able
11 to deliver on that, you will have earned our
12 gratitude and our respect, and I thank you for
13 that.

14 The -- of course, Amendments 5 and 6 were
15 about gerrymandering, and Steve Hemping has
16 spoken eloquently and with statistics about the
17 evils of that. And what he didn't say was that
18 the way that it works is that gerrymandering
19 seeks to spread out the votes of the majority
20 over a lot of districts and concentrate the
21 minority in a few districts, and that is how,
22 in a state with a five to four preponderance of
23 one party over the other, it is the minority in
24 registration which has two-thirds of the
25 electoral districts. Well, there is the Tea

1 Party influence in the last election, yeah, the
2 majority did a great job of selling in some
3 districts that they might not otherwise have
4 won. But this is an evil that is against our
5 democracy. It is an evil that has been
6 practiced by both parties, this is not a
7 partisan thing. And it is something that will
8 be remedied by observing and following in good
9 faith Amendments 5 and 6.

10 In that regard, I want to mention
11 something else. These amendments are not new
12 and strange and radical. I was at the Collier
13 County redistricting hearing just Monday night
14 on our own local county redistricting process.
15 Amendments 5 and 6 don't cover county
16 redistricting, but the criteria the County
17 staff displayed were almost verbatim with
18 Amendments 5 and 6. And what they explained
19 was that these concepts are common in every
20 jurisdiction in the country -- almost every --
21 that has seemed to eliminate gerrymandering.
22 These are not something radical that you are
23 going to have to really cope with. There is a
24 large body of experience in the country in how
25 to implement that, and all we ask is that you

1 proceed to do that in good faith, and in
2 that -- in so doing, you will fulfill the
3 promise that democracy gives us all, and that
4 is that the majority does rule and that the
5 public has fair input into that process.

6 Now, as an ACLU person, we will be
7 watching, and the districts -- the maps that
8 you draw will be -- and I want to say this to
9 you, I completely support the idea of multiple
10 maps. Our County staff had five of them, they
11 were discussed at length, they presented
12 various options, and the fact that you present
13 multiple maps will indicate a good faith
14 attempt to look at different solutions in
15 applying these criteria. That itself will be
16 evidence of your good faith. And the --

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Help me --
18 help me wrap it up, sir. I don't want to
19 interrupt you, but --

20 MR. WILSON: All right. I have delivered
21 my message the best I can, and I thank you for
22 your attention.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
24 very much.

25 Okay. Next we have Mr. Doug Fee. Is Doug

1 here? Thank you, sir, thank you, and you are
2 just trying to steal those bonus points, right,
3 to be the quickest. We know what you are
4 doing, great job. No, thank you very much for
5 being here, Mr. Fee, we appreciate it.

6 And after Mr. Fee, we've got Scott Duval.
7 Mr. Duval, thanks for being here. Peter
8 Simmons is after Scott, and then Roger Brown
9 and Ms. Sandra Brown, and we will let them
10 figure out which order they want to come in.

11 MR. DUVAL: Good morning. My name is
12 Scott Duval. I am a resident of Collier
13 County, but I am also here as a member of the
14 Bonita Springs Area Chamber of Commerce
15 Government Affairs Committee, and I can't make
16 the meeting tonight in Lehigh Acres, so I am
17 here to offer my preemptive approval of the
18 maps that are going to be submitted this
19 evening by the City of Bonita Springs.

20 One of our main issues is the bifurcation
21 of the city of Bonita Springs. This happens
22 with just the odd boundaries that are present
23 in Collier County as well, the very odd
24 boundary of House District 112, House District
25 75, and then the Florida Senate District 27 and

1 37 are the districts that bifurcate the city of
2 Bonita Springs. So we just ask for you to use
3 wisdom in coming up with fair and logical
4 boundaries, using political subdivisions or
5 geographic boundaries, not man-made boundaries
6 like I-75.

7 So thank you very much for your time.
8 Really appreciate all of your efforts, and God
9 bless your efforts.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
11 very much, Mr. Duval.

12 Next we have Mr. Peter Simmons with the
13 Simmons Group, and then Roger Brown, Ms. Sandra
14 Brown, and then we've got former
15 Representative, Mr. Dudley Goodlette.

16 MR. SIMMONS: Good morning. My comments
17 are brief as well. Peter Simmons from Bonita
18 Springs, and I would concur with the last
19 comments just made here to keep Bonita Springs
20 intact, and also, what a nice problem that
21 Florida has, we are actually gaining
22 representation in the United States Congress.
23 Many of the communities up north and states up
24 north and other places don't have that luxury.
25 They are trying to figure out how to draw

1 districts with less representation, so I
2 applaud all of your efforts.

3 We -- what won't change are the state
4 districts, that number will not change, but in
5 the congressional representation, I also urge
6 expanded representation for southwest Florida.
7 Applaud your efforts, I know you have been
8 around the state, and I would applaud everybody
9 that is here and involved to realize this is
10 not the end of the process, this is the
11 beginning of the process, it will continue in
12 Tallahassee and please keep up the good fight.
13 Thank you very much.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
15 We have Mr. Roger Brown.

16 MR. BROWN: (Inaudible) support it.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
18 He said supports Ms. Edwards' presentation in
19 the beginning. You are another proud member of
20 the Jennifer Edwards fan club, which I am
21 noticing is quite large here in Collier County,
22 so -- great job.

23 Now, Ms. Sandra Brown, are you also a card
24 carrying member of the club? Would you like to
25 speak? Great, her comments has been covered,

1 very nice. Thank you very much.

2 Now we would like to turn it over to
3 former Representative Dudley Goodlette. Mr.
4 Goodlette is, in my opinion -- and this is just
5 my opinion, I won't speak for the whole
6 Committee, but when I think of former statesmen
7 in the Legislature, I think of Dudley
8 Goodlette. He was a great leader for the State
9 of Florida, so thank you.

10 MR. GOODLETTE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
11 Thank you for reducing the size of the mike
12 here too. I will be short.

13 First of all, let me say welcome to many
14 of you -- many of you I have had the pleasure
15 of working with or working for when I was in
16 the Speaker's office, and I applaud you for
17 your public service. I also want to just sort
18 of focus for a couple of minutes on what -- on
19 the important constitutional issues that you
20 are about in this redistricting and
21 reapportionment process.

22 Obviously, reapportionment springs from
23 our founding fathers. I would urge you to read
24 Federalist Paper No. 58, written by James
25 Madison in February of 1788, 223 years ago, and

1 he spoke and underscored the importance of the
2 census and the periodic review and
3 reapportioning districts to ensure
4 representation in this representative democracy
5 that we are so proud of.

6 I would also in that vein like to
7 congratulate your staffs. I think that the
8 letter that you -- that was sent to the
9 Department of Justice on March the 29th of this
10 year outlining some of the issues that need to
11 be dealt with, particularly for counties like
12 Collier that are in pre-clearance counties,
13 that has been alluded to before and I won't
14 take anymore of my time to dwell on those
15 issues, but it was -- the letter from your
16 staff was very well stated, the issues were
17 very thorough, and particularly as it relates
18 to the subject of retrogression. And I know
19 Congressman Diaz-Balart addressed this group
20 and spoke about that, and I applaud his
21 thoughts, and I know that you are going to be
22 deliberate in that process.

23 And, finally, I would like to say that I
24 do applaud and I think that they're the
25 laudable goals in the passage of Amendments 5

1 and 6, and I do think that it does make the
2 challenge that you face a little bit more
3 difficult than the challenge we faced ten years
4 ago when I was sitting in -- privileged to sit
5 in one of the seats that you are occupying now.
6 But I would urge that the proponents,
7 successful as they were, 63 percent of the
8 people in Florida voted for those amendments,
9 and I think that was a strong message, I would
10 suggest that -- and hope that the proponents of
11 that -- and my good friend, Dan Gelber, their
12 counsel, would offer up to you some guidelines
13 for clarification as to what the intent of the
14 drafters of that language might have been, and
15 I think -- I think that they can do that and I
16 am confident that they will do that.

17 And, finally, I would just want to wish
18 all of you well. I know that, as just
19 indicated, this process is evolving. It will
20 conclude -- it will begin to conclude when you
21 are in the committee meetings beginning next
22 month and the legislative session that begins
23 on January the 10th. We are very fortunate to
24 have a quality representation from southwest
25 Florida, and I know because of my years in

1 Tallahassee that the representation from around
2 this state is outstanding.

3 Thanks to each one of you. Thank you very
4 much, Mr. Chairman.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
6 very much, Representative. Always good to see
7 you, and please give Mrs. Goodlette our best.

8 Next up we have -- I'm sorry, I kind of
9 blew through that because we had some folks who
10 didn't speak, I did not give you enough time
11 here, but Gregory Gargan. Gregory, are you
12 here, sir? Thank you very much for being here,
13 you are next. And following that, we have
14 Ms. Marlene Gargan. So we have Gregory and
15 Marlene, and we will let y'all decide who wants
16 to go first, and then following the Gargans, we
17 have Colleen MacAlister and then Jasper Medici.

18 Mr. Gargan.

19 MR. GARGAN: Thank you all. Thanks for
20 being here. Welcome to Collier County and
21 Naples. My name is Greg Gargan. I am a
22 resident of Naples and a six-year resident of
23 Florida.

24 I would like to start by saying I am both
25 discouraged and encouraged when I come here. I

1 was originally discouraged because I saw the
2 original or the current Florida legislative
3 district map, and after seeing that, I know why
4 the Fair Districts amendment passed by nearly a
5 two-thirds approval vote.

6 However, I am encouraged also and a little
7 spoiled -- first of all, I am encouraged by
8 your presence here. I didn't realize I would
9 be addressing the whole group. This is like a
10 joint member of -- you know, a joint session of
11 Congress I am talking to here, and I appreciate
12 that and the openness of this exchange. But I
13 am also encouraged and spoiled because of the
14 fine job done by the Collier County
15 redistricting team who drew and presented
16 options for the Collier County Commissioners'
17 districts and school board districts this past
18 week, and I only hope that those drawing the
19 state districts are as unbiased and talented.

20 Now, I realize you are here to listen, and
21 in some respects you are just the messengers.
22 So please be aware that none of my remarks are
23 directed toward any of you personally. If they
24 are perceived as negative, it is not my
25 intention. They are meant to be constructive

1 and to illustrate a point. And I apologize,
2 because I have some redundancy in my
3 presentation, but I have to go that route even
4 though some of my remarks might have been said
5 before.

6 Now, I am fairly -- I have a fairly strong
7 sense that you have a fair idea of the meaning
8 of "fair districts" in the Fair District
9 amendments, but I would like to go over a
10 couple of the elements intrinsic to those
11 amendments just on to make sure that we are on
12 the same page. As a help in communication, I
13 have also prepared some visual aides to assist
14 in overall understanding. These are
15 technically old.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: May we get
17 somebody to help out Mr. Gargan there? We've
18 got about 23 speakers to go after you, so I
19 don't want to rush you, but we have to kind of
20 stay on the timeline, so --

21 MR. GARGAN: Okay. I can just hold -- I
22 can just hold these up.

23 "Contiguous," it is a big word that in
24 this context refers to how two or more parts of
25 a district are joined together. I don't think

1 we should have a problem with that, but bear
2 with me.

3 Joining sections A and B of this district
4 makes them contiguous if they are joined like
5 this, with a fairly long common boundary. Next
6 slide. Joining sections A and B in this
7 district makes them non-contiguous, or not
8 contiguous. Fair Districts requires contiguous
9 boundaries, and the current map is why I am a
10 little upset about it and why I bring this
11 point up. We should stay with contiguous.

12 Now, I know that there are many
13 constraints, the boundaries -- besides
14 boundaries being contiguous, things like
15 boundaries must contain the exact correct
16 population count, boundaries should be natural
17 boundaries when appropriate, et cetera, et
18 cetera.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Gargan,
20 we are -- I don't want to rush you. We are
21 familiar with a lot of these terms, and I don't
22 want to interrupt you, but everybody's got to
23 get a chance to speak, and we are going to be
24 very tight to getting to the very end, so
25 please kind of get to it.

1 MR. GARGAN: Okay. Once you have drawn
2 the boundaries, I want you to step back and
3 take a look at the silhouettes of those
4 boundaries, okay, like you did when you were a
5 kid and laid in the grass, looked up at the sky
6 and saw the cloud formations, okay, you see the
7 silhouettes, that looks like George
8 Washington's profile, whatever. Well, if what
9 you have drawn, if the silhouettes look
10 anything like these, okay, a kitchen utensil --

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Gargan, I
12 think we get your point, and I hear it loud and
13 clear, I think everybody does, and what we will
14 do is we will find a way to put those out so
15 that as everyone is leaving today, they can
16 look at each and every one, but I want to give
17 your wife an opportunity to speak and the other
18 23 people behind you.

19 MR. GARGAN: Okay.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: But your
21 point is well taken, sir, I can assure you.

22 MR. GARGAN: I would recommend sticking
23 with some basics.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: With that.

25 MR. GARGAN: Yeah, where at all possible.

1 I know that is not possible.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: We get it.

3 Thank you very much.

4 MR. GARGAN: These -- these -- things like
5 these --

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Gargan, I
7 got to keep moving, sir, I'm sorry.

8 MR. GARGAN: I am coming to a close.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: You are way
10 over. You are way over by two minutes, I'm
11 sorry.

12 MR. GARGAN: Really?

13 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, you had
14 a great presentation, it was very entertaining
15 and I didn't want to interrupt it because of
16 the slides, but we've got to move forward out
17 of respect to the 23 people who have not had a
18 chance to speak yet. We've got to keep going.

19 Ms. Gargan, you are recognized. If you
20 want to finish his presentation for him, you
21 are welcome to do so.

22 MS. GARGAN: I had thought of that, but I
23 have to speak -- I am Marlene Gargan. Most
24 everybody calls me Mickey. I do have to speak
25 as a representative, the Chairperson of the

1 Collier County Democratic Party.

2 I reiterate everything Jennifer Edwards
3 said. She has got to be the -- among the top,
4 fairest, most transparent Supervisor of
5 Elections ever. She is just really helpful to
6 everybody.

7 It is important to move that timeline up.
8 It is unfair to have the maps drawn after the
9 date that the people have to declare candidacy.

10 The east-west boundary districts just do
11 not give proper representation. Again, Miami
12 and Dade County do not have the same economic
13 values, population statistics, everything, as
14 just -- it is too diverse. It needs to be --
15 we need to have a Collier County district.

16 There is also a need to -- for you to
17 encourage the state party leaders, the state
18 leaders, to not spend anymore money fighting
19 Fair Districts Florida. If trends need to be
20 more logical or more spelled out, then do that,
21 but stop spending the taxpayers' money for
22 that. And, again, do use districts 5 and 6 in
23 good faith requirements.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

25 Okay. Yes, ma'am, thank you, we are honored to

1 be here.

2 Next up we have Colleen MacAlister
3 Ms. MacAlister, who is on her way down. Next
4 after Ms. MacAlister, we have Jasper Medici,
5 John McCullough, and Francis Schwerin.

6 You are recognized.

7 MS. MacALISTER: I had waived, but since
8 you called me, I will just reiterate what has
9 been said by so many people about the timeline,
10 I think it is a concern. I consider open and
11 transparent to be open and transparent with
12 respect to the maps as well, and I would hope
13 that this Committee would figure out a way --
14 and the League seemed to indicate that on-line
15 was okay. On-line is not okay for everybody.
16 I would hope that you would invite this kind of
17 comment after you have the maps, I would hope
18 that you would have some alternatives for us to
19 look at, and even if you have to combine some
20 of these hearings so that we travel 30 minutes,
21 that is okay. I would just like your timeline
22 to include the open and transparent review and
23 discussion of the maps. Thank you.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

25 Jasper Medici. Mr. Medici, thank you for

1 being here, sir. I hope I said that name
2 right, and then John McCullough, Francis
3 Schwerin, or Schwinn, and then John Sorey, I
4 think is what it is, from the City of Naples.
5 I hope -- I am not sure I got that right. But
6 you are recognized, Mr. Medici.

7 MR. MEDICI: Okay. The name is Jasper
8 Medici.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Medici.

10 MR. MEDICI: Medici.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes, sir.

12 MR. MEDICI: Like the Medicis over in
13 Italy.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes.

15 MR. MEDICI: Okay. Thank you for coming
16 to Naples. I appreciate the opportunity to
17 talk to you. I am a resident in Collier
18 County, I have been here two years. I have
19 been coming down here for about 15 or 16 years,
20 visiting a friend of mine who I have known
21 since the third grade, about 76 years now, so
22 we are pretty good friends, and I know Collier
23 County and Naples since then.

24 I know you have heard a lot about the Fair
25 Districts amendments on your listening tour.

1 You have heard from many people who want you to
2 follow city boundaries so that communities
3 won't be split up, so that districts will be
4 compact. However, I wanted to point something
5 out to you. Have you taken a look at many of
6 the city boundaries across the state? If you
7 look at these municipal lines, you will see
8 what the problem is. They are not compact.
9 Sometimes they are barely contiguous. How will
10 you follow Amendments 5 and 6, which tell you
11 to make compact districts, that use things like
12 municipal boundaries when these boundaries
13 themselves aren't compact? Districts will look
14 bizarre if you do that, and many times will be
15 neither contiguous nor compact. I am not sure
16 you will be able to follow the Fair Districts
17 amendments under circumstances like this. This
18 is just one of the problems with the
19 amendments.

20 The amendments say you can follow existing
21 political boundaries, but doesn't specify what
22 those are. I don't know if these -- those
23 refer to a line such as census-designated
24 places or current state legislative district
25 lines, or if there are some other form of lines

1 you could choose to follow, because the
2 amendments just don't clarify what you are
3 referring to. I hope you will be able to draw
4 these maps that will benefit the state for the
5 next decade. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
7 sir. Mr. Medici, thank you very much. We
8 appreciate that.

9 Next up we have John McCullough,
10 Mr. McCullough here. After Mr. McCullough, we
11 have Francis Schwinn, Schwerin -- Schwerin, I'm
12 sorry about that, and then John Sorey, the
13 Councilman from City of Naples, and you are
14 recognized, sir, thank you.

15 MR. McCULLOUGH: John McCullough, citizen,
16 Florida native, Ocala, West Palm Beach, Collier
17 County. I have also lived across America. I
18 came through Florida's segregated schools, and
19 you have no idea how proud I am to see so many
20 people of our minorities join us up here. It
21 is a wonderful growth to see.

22 The Constitution does not mention
23 political parties or special interest. The
24 republic charges you to be responsible to the
25 people, not to the parties. I think those are

1 very important.

2 I have come through the gerrymandering of
3 the state of Florida, and it has been a total
4 insult to the intelligence of mankind to see
5 what our legislators have done to us. So
6 finally we have these amendments that have been
7 passed. Now is the time for you to prove
8 yourselves. I look at the maps that we have in
9 the back, and I still see in the major
10 population areas some very, very strange
11 configurations. Now, I think the people of the
12 state of Florida have matured enough so that we
13 can take care of our whites, our blacks, our
14 Latinos.

15 So please keep that in mind. We do not
16 need this gerrymandering. We need the shapes
17 that the people of Florida voted for. Thank
18 you.

19 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
20 very much.

21 We have Francis -- there we go --

22 MR. SCHWERIN: Frank.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Frank, okay,
24 that's true, sorry about that. I'm sorry I was
25 butchering your last name there, too, I

1 apologize.

2 MR. SCHWERIN: That is --

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Good to see
4 you, and after Frank, we've got John Sorey and
5 Tom Menaker and then Ray Lenardson. Good to
6 see you, Frank.

7 MR. SCHWERIN: I just want to thank you
8 for coming, Mr. Chairman and Senator, and also
9 Garrett and our own Representatives and
10 Representative Nuñez. I would just like to say
11 that this is an open, transparent process. I
12 want to commend you for your strong advocacy of
13 Amendments 5 and 6, and that you are going to
14 be -- not advocacy, but your pledge to adhere
15 to that -- those two amendments that were
16 overwhelmingly passed by the population.

17 I just want to give us a brief history
18 lesson. I sort of feel like this is student
19 government. And the reason I say that is we
20 can all talk like this, we have all our input,
21 but really what happens is that there is
22 judicial review and there is review by the
23 Florida Supreme Court and that then they get
24 reviewed by the Justice Department. So
25 whatever we decide in all the hours and months

1 of testimony will be compressed in very short
2 weeks. And so the Amendment 5 and 6 have had
3 the paradoxical effect of reducing public
4 input, because the judges could just -- could
5 just outline their own district, and how much
6 time are we going to have to testify or how
7 many people will testify.

8 Now a history lesson. We are one of five
9 counties. Why is that? Why in 2011 do we
10 still adhere to a 1964 Voting Rights Act? And
11 I just want to remind everyone that back then,
12 Collier County had 20,000 residents, it was
13 100 percent Democrat, we were a Confederate
14 state, we had segregated schools. We are now
15 living the -- we are now living a remedy for a
16 problem that existed under Democrat rule, under
17 the Confederacy, now 50 years later. We need
18 to change that. But since we have to adhere to
19 that, I am calling it student government.

20 So please do your best, but I understand
21 whatever you do may just be totally torn up and
22 shredded by the five or six judges that are
23 going to look at it. So thank you very much.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

25 Councilman Sorey, thank you for being

1 here, sir, and thank you for your patience.
2 After the councilman, we will have Tom Menaker,
3 Roy Lenardson and Charles Van Meter.

4 COUNCILMAN SOREY: Thank you,
5 Mr. Chairman, and thank you for being here and
6 thank you for taking your time out of your
7 schedule to go around the state and listen to
8 our citizens.

9 I am here today to speaking on myself, not
10 as a member of city council, because we haven't
11 taken a position on that yet, and one of the
12 things, Mr. Chairman, that I learned from the
13 private side is to be brief and not repeat
14 what's already been said, but just three or
15 four quick things.

16 Number one, I think it is very clear, the
17 citizens here, how they feel about certain
18 things. Amendment 5 and 6, you are going to
19 have to have the wisdom of Solomon to decide
20 how to take those nine variables and make
21 districts. I am a big fan of Jennifer Edwards
22 and what she has done as far as our voting. I
23 have served on the canvassing board, and I know
24 how dedicated we are to be sure all our
25 citizens are properly represented. A number of

1 items that we have talked about as far as the
2 way we redistrict, I support the chamber
3 process as far as trying to get all of Collier
4 County properly drawn.

5 So I thank you for being here and thank
6 you for all of our citizens and for this
7 process.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Councilman,
9 thank you, sir, and thank you for the service
10 to this community and our state.

11 Next we have Tom Menaker. Is Tom here?

12 MR. MENAKER: My concerns have been well
13 expressed, and I pass.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
15 very much. We appreciate that.

16 Next we have Roy Lenardson, Mr. Lenardson,
17 and after Mr. Lenardson, we have Charles Van
18 Meter, followed by Vi Steffan.

19 MR. LENARDSON: Thank you very much.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Vi, I'm
21 sorry. You should have told me that two hours
22 ago. I would have got it right then.

23 MR. LENARDSON: My name is Roy Lenardson,
24 and I live in eastern Collier County, actually
25 in Florida's newest community, in Ava Maria.

1 I think you have been handed a tremendous
2 problem. I agree with many of the things that
3 I heard. However, words like "compact,"
4 "feasible" and "practical" are being presented
5 as the Holy Grail. I really think they are a
6 meal ticket for lawyers and partisan
7 fundraisers, and so I am very concerned about
8 where that is going to go. I hope that -- or I
9 would defer to the folks like Jennifer Edwards
10 more than those people I just mentioned, so I
11 would encourage you to do that.

12 I had the opportunity to work on two
13 different redistricting commissions in my home
14 state where I am originally from, 1990 and
15 2000. We have all of these rules, we have a
16 bipartisan commission that votes, we have
17 all --

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Would you
19 tell us what state that is, by the way?

20 MR. LENARDSON: Maine.

21 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Maine.

22 MR. LENARDSON: And we have a tremendous
23 problem where we have two congressional
24 districts. I would just like to give you a
25 very brief history here. We have all of the

1 words that they are presenting, we have a
2 bipartisan commission, it is a two-thirds
3 majority required, and then it gets the
4 signature of the voter and then it goes to the
5 Governor. It goes to the courts every single
6 ten years, and that is to divide up two
7 congressional districts of 100 percent white
8 people. So I would encourage you to really
9 listen to what the folks have said here today
10 and not expect to be handed a Holy Grail.
11 Thank you very much.

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.
13 And what I wouldn't pay to have the geography
14 of Maine and make things a lot easier, right?
15 But I am glad I don't have their weather,
16 right? So, anyway, thank you very much for
17 being here, sir. We appreciate that.

18 Next we have -- let's see here. Make sure
19 I get this right. That was Mr. Lenardson,
20 right? Yes, sorry. Charles Van Meter.
21 Charles, thank you for being here, and then we
22 have Vi Steffan, and then following Ms.
23 Steffan, we have Luis Bernal and then Laurel
24 Paster.

25 MR. VAN METER: Good morning, I am Zac Van

1 Meter. I have been a resident of Collier
2 County for five, going on six years. I live
3 here with my wife and my baby, and I plan to
4 live here as long as the good Lord lets me.

5 Thank you for being here today to gather
6 input. You have heard a lot of criticism today
7 from various interest groups about not having
8 maps for us to comment on. I want you to know
9 that I disagree with these groups. I think
10 being a good legislator means listening to your
11 constituents, then taking the appropriate --

12 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Charles, let
13 me ask you to step a little closer to the mike,
14 too.

15 MR. VAN METER: Okay. I think being a
16 good legislator means listening to your
17 constituents and then taking the appropriate
18 course of action.

19 The supporters of Fair Districts did a
20 really great job gathering petitions, raising
21 \$9 million, getting Amendments 5 and 6 passed
22 with I think it was a 63 percent vote, if I am
23 correct there. However, I think that they have
24 only done half of the work. Now that these
25 amendments are part of our Constitution, the

1 supporters of Fair Districts should explain
2 what the language of the amendments actually
3 means by providing you with at least, and I
4 mean at least, a legal brief. They should
5 offer maps to show what a fair district
6 actually looks like, the shape of and -- or
7 whatever they are talking about. I really
8 would like to see an example of that.

9 The amendments also contain this vague,
10 fuzzy, very misconstrued language like
11 "compact," "feasible," I think one was
12 "practicable," I didn't even know that was a
13 word, which Fair Districts knew, and they knew
14 this, that they would make this basically
15 impossible to implement. Since these
16 amendments will be so difficult to implement, I
17 mean very difficult, the courts are going to
18 wind up drawing these new districts, which is
19 going to do one thing, it is going to weaken
20 the power of the Legislature, and the entire
21 purpose of Fair Districts, it is going to
22 weaken that as well.

23 Please know that many of us here in
24 Collier County appreciate your efforts and
25 don't want the courts to draw the new maps. I

1 hope this outcome doesn't come to pass, but my
2 -- and I hope you will be able to draw good
3 maps for our state. Thank you for your
4 service. I appreciate your time this morning.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
6 very much, sir. We appreciate that.

7 Vi, thank you very much for your patience,
8 and we got to you and we've got some folks
9 after you, so thank you very much.

10 MS. STEFFAN: Yes, you did, yes,
11 congratulations. Thank you for the opportunity
12 to speak before this group on this very
13 important issue, and I also want to thank every
14 single one of you for being here today.
15 Everyone here in Collier County and the state
16 of Florida appreciates your attendance here
17 before us today.

18 My name is Vi Steffan, and now sometimes I
19 will be known as V. I am from -- I am a member
20 of the League of Women Voters.

21 In 2010, 63 percent of the electorate
22 voted in favor of the Fair Districts Amendments
23 5 and 6 to our State Constitution. That is an
24 essential part and requirement of this whole
25 redistricting process. The State Legislature

1 attacked the language of Amendments 5 and 6 and
2 lost at the Supreme Court level. Having now to
3 face the mandate of the electorate to follow
4 the rational, non-political method of shaping
5 the state and federal districts, the State
6 Legislature is spending taxpayer money in suing
7 to invalidate Amendment 6 and declare it
8 unconstitutional, putting the citizens of
9 Florida in a very unique position of actually
10 suing themselves over an issue in which
11 63 percent of us approve. The citizens want
12 the Legislature to implement the Fair Districts
13 standards required by the constitutional
14 provisions passed by two-thirds of the
15 electorate last year.

16 I was pleased to hear Senator Gaetz'
17 description of the process that will be
18 undertaken, and I urge the Legislature to
19 seriously consider the recommendations offered
20 by the public. Sadly, that hasn't always been
21 the case, specifically in 2002 redistricting
22 process in which we've ended up with the
23 gerrymandered maps that we now have. But I
24 also want to urge the Legislature on behalf of
25 the Florida citizens to immediately withdraw

1 the expensive Amendment 6 lawsuit and respect
2 the will of Florida voters who want the new
3 Fair Districting standards in that amendment to
4 be applied. Thank you for your time.

5 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
6 very much. We appreciate that, Vi. And
7 although you may have a short-term nickname
8 that is new, I can assure you, Senator Gaetz,
9 people have been much more creative in
10 nicknames for the two of us over the last six
11 weeks, so we appreciate you allowing me to mess
12 up your name.

13 Next up we have Laurel Paster. Ms.
14 Paster, thank you very much for being here --
15 actually, I'm sorry, Ms. Paster, I think I may
16 have skipped someone. Luis Bernal? I had Mr.
17 Bernal first and then Ms. Paster. Mr. Bernal
18 is with the Council for Hispanic Business
19 Professionals, then Ms. Paster, followed by
20 Alexander, I believe, Grantt and Steve Hart.

21 MR. BERNAL: Good morning, Senators and
22 Representatives. Good morning, everybody. My
23 name is Luis Bernal. I am a board member of
24 the Council for Hispanic Business
25 Professionals, an organization created by the

1 Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce. I am a
2 resident of north Naples for six years now. I
3 was born in Columbia and become a citizen of
4 the United States in 2005.

5 I want to thank you -- to thank all of you
6 on the Committee for being here and for
7 listening to us citizens before drawing your
8 district maps.

9 I am here today to remind you a little bit
10 about minority representation. Collier County
11 is one of the only five counties in Florida
12 whose entire electoral system is monitored by
13 the United States Department of Justice under
14 Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act because of
15 past discrimination against Hispanics. We
16 demand change to ensure that southwest Florida
17 Hispanics have the ability to elect their
18 Representative of our choice today and for
19 years to come.

20 You may be aware that in the past ten
21 years, the Hispanic population in Collier
22 County has increased by 69 percent. Whether we
23 like that or not, that is a trend that is being
24 like that for years to come, it is being across
25 the country. And Hispanics today are

1 26 percent of the county population, the
2 largest minority in Collier. Hispanics are
3 here, not only in Miami. I used to live in
4 Broward County, my son was born there, so I
5 know Hispanics in both parts of the swamp, but
6 we are here.

7 Currently, portions of Collier County are
8 part of the -- of a district based in
9 Miami-Dade County, which evidently raises
10 strong questions to common southwest
11 Floridians. I live, as I said, for five years
12 in Broward, and moved to Naples for a number of
13 reasons that are shared today by many Hispanics
14 living now in southwest Florida.

15 Southwest Florida got its name for a
16 reason. It is not just south Florida. This
17 vertical boundary between Collier and Broward
18 Counties is like that for some reason. We are
19 living in a distant part of our state which
20 should not be regarded as an appendix of any
21 other region. The five-county area of
22 southwest Florida includes counties other than
23 Miami-Dade or Broward. It just makes sense.
24 Nonetheless, a principal position of the maps,
25 the district -- the different districts, the

1 maps show different shades that reflect very
2 little the daily concerns of southwest
3 Floridians, especially those residents like
4 myself who live here year-round.

5 With all my respect, I urge you to make
6 sure Hispanic representation is commensurate
7 with a current demographic trend across the
8 state and the country. Most importantly, I
9 invite you and all elected officials to
10 overcome prejudice and be aware of the rise
11 in -- raise in economic, cultural and political
12 influence of Hispanics in Florida and elsewhere
13 in the United States, and adjust your political
14 strategies accordingly.

15 Thank you for visiting Naples, and please
16 come more often. Thank you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you.

18 Next up, Ms. Paster, thank you for your
19 patience, ma'am, and we look forward to hearing
20 from you, and then following you will be
21 Alexander Grantt, Steve Hart and Matthew
22 Coppers.

23 MS. PASTER: Yeah, thank you so much for
24 coming. If I were you, I would be completely
25 zoned out by now, I think, after hearing so

1 many speakers and the repetition.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: We are
3 building up an endurance with all these
4 meetings around the state, so --

5 MS. PASTER: Good for you.

6 I am interested, as many of the speakers
7 have been, to see redistricting in Florida that
8 will represent all constituencies. I am also
9 concerned about the timeline that legislators
10 are planning to follow to complete the
11 redistricting. I am not going to repeat the
12 Amendments 5 and 6 and the gerrymandering
13 parts, because you've heard it all.

14 If the legislators follows their present
15 plan, though, districts will not be finalized
16 before said deadline, which will make it more
17 difficult or impossible for any challenger to
18 mount an effective campaign. I am hoping that
19 you will make the final plans by Friday,
20 January 13th, 2012, so that people who want to
21 run for office will know which district they
22 will be running in and the boundaries of that
23 district before the qualifying deadline. If
24 fair elections are to exist, the time necessary
25 for the various segments of the process, which

1 Jennifer Edwards outlined so carefully, they
2 must be acknowledged and respected. For
3 Florida to become respected as a responsible
4 and fair state once again, after our history,
5 we need to have this occur. Thank you.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
7 very much.

8 Next we have Alexander Grantt, followed by
9 Steve Hart, Matthew Coppers and Douglas Rankin.

10 MR. GRANTT: Yes, good morning, Alexander
11 Grantt. A little background: I was on the
12 original incorporation committee for the City
13 of Bonita Springs, so I did do six districts
14 for city council when I was on there. I always
15 -- I was on the local planning agency for the
16 City the first time for four years, and I was
17 on the city council for four years. From my
18 educational background, I have a Master's
19 degree from North Carolina State University,
20 that's 40 years ago, but I minored in
21 statistics in that -- for that Master's degree,
22 and even though it was for pigs and horses, et
23 cetera, but people, it is the same situation,
24 okay, just put people instead of pigs.

25 Okay. Now, we have -- in Lee County, we

1 have 635,000 permanent residents. We have
2 325,000 permanent residents in Collier County.
3 That is 960,000 people. State Senate, you have
4 480,000, roughly, in each State Senate
5 district. Take the 960,000 people in Lee and
6 Collier County, the southern portion of Collier
7 -- of all of Lee -- Collier County, southern
8 portion of Lee County, one State Senate
9 district, one State Senate district for the
10 rest of Lee County, and that takes care of two
11 State Senate districts.

12 For the House District 75 -- I am from
13 Bonita Springs. We want to have all of Bonita
14 Springs in one State House district. Simplest
15 thing to do, to put all of the city of Bonita
16 Springs, all of town of Ft. Myers Beach, all of
17 Estero Fire District, all of the San Carlos
18 Park Fire District and the South Trail Fire
19 district in one State House district. That
20 takes care of your 160,000 people for that
21 House district.

22 On the U.S. Senate -- U.S. Senate -- U.S.
23 Congress, sorry. U.S. Congress, you have -- in
24 order to have two U.S. Congressmen representing
25 southwest Florida, you need 1,400,000 people.

1 Okay. So that is 700,000 people per U.S. House
2 district. You have to have -- what I would
3 recommend is to have Collier, Lee -- all of
4 Collier County, all of Lee County, all of
5 Charlotte County, that would give you 160,000
6 people -- 1,160,000 people in those three
7 counties for two congressional seats. If you
8 include DeSoto, Glades, Hendry and Highlands
9 County, you could probably wind up with another
10 200,000 people.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Mr. Grantt,
12 this is great information, but I am going to
13 have to ask you to wrap it up.

14 MR. GRANTT: Okay. But that is how I
15 would separate this into two U.S. House
16 districts.

17 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you for
18 that counsel. That is very good -- very good
19 advice. Thank you.

20 Next up we have Steve Hart, followed by
21 Matthew Coppers and then Douglas Rankin. Hart
22 waiving? Okay. Thank you very much, sir,
23 thanks for being here. Both physically waving
24 and figuratively waiving, thank you, that is
25 good.

1 Next we have Matthew Coppers.

2 Mr. Coppers, you are here, and then finally we
3 have Douglas Rankin. After Mr. Rankin goes, we
4 are going to give members of the Committee an
5 opportunity to ask -- to offer any insight or
6 ask any -- or offer some solutions or answer
7 some questions, and then finally, Senator Gaetz
8 was on 15 pages of notes an hour ago, I don't
9 know how many he has now, but he's got a lot of
10 answers for questions that have been asked. I
11 want to give him time to address the audience
12 as well, let you hear from him.

13 So, Mr. Coppers, you are recognized to
14 speak, sir.

15 MR. COPPENS: First off, I want to
16 apologize for my horrible handwriting. It is
17 actually Matthew Coppens.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: No, it is
19 probably my eyes, don't worry.

20 MR. COPPENS: I have a lot of doctors and
21 lawyers in my family, so I get their
22 handwriting.

23 I am actually a former member of student
24 government, and I could say what is happening
25 here today is not student government. This is

1 actually Florida democracy in action, and what
2 happens here today does actually represent all
3 Floridians and for the next ten years. So the
4 person that said that before me really was
5 wrong.

6 A lot of what has been said before is what
7 I really do want to echo. I am a member of
8 the -- pardon me -- of the Greg Gargan fan
9 club. I love on how easily drawn out it was.
10 Please try to implement something similar to
11 that. I have seen it done before. Alabama
12 already has theirs drawn out. We would love to
13 see something like that here.

14 Floridians did want fair, compact and
15 contiguous districts throughout the state, and
16 the passage of Amendments 5 and 6 sent a
17 message that we no longer care for
18 gerrymandering, pretty simple. Three point one
19 million Floridians supported this -- these two
20 amendments, and that is something that I do
21 want to impress on you guys. This is something
22 that the Floridians do want, and we just ask
23 that you do implement it in a fair and timely
24 manner. Thank you.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you

1 very much, Mr. Coppens. I'm sorry I misspoke
2 on your name.

3 Last, but certainly not least, sir we have
4 Mr. Douglas Rankin.

5 MR. RANKIN: Right, and while I am a
6 Republican party official, since we have
7 approved nothing, I am here as an individual.

8 I have lived in Florida my entire life,
9 except for a few months. My family has been on
10 the lower west coast of Florida since 1925.
11 And I will tell you from a number of situations
12 that the west coast is not the east coast, and
13 please keep it that way. All you have to do is
14 go look at the true color Landsat photograph up
15 in St. Petersburg Aquarium, you will see our
16 coast is green, and theirs is asphalt and
17 concrete. No offense, but that is what the
18 photograph shows.

19 Historically, I-95, or before that, U.S. 1
20 migrated to the east coast and before it became
21 full and like that, and then I-75, or U.S. 41
22 before that, migrated to the west coast. They
23 are entirely different situations. I have been
24 here in Naples for 28 years. This is not the
25 east coast. We have been very lucky with some

1 good east coast representation, but I don't
2 want to rely on luck. I want to have a
3 continuous matter.

4 As far as some of the comments I heard
5 earlier, it is not your fault that the ultra
6 liberal Democratic party left so many of its
7 constituents, resulting in the voting that you
8 heard before. I grew up in Florida most of my
9 life under Democratic rule, and I will tell you
10 that you are doing a yeoman's fair, honest job
11 compared -- far and above what they did, that
12 is for sure. They invented the word
13 "gerrymandering," and I won't even discuss
14 their record on --

15 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Just try to
16 keep the comments focused on the redistricting.
17 I don't want to get too partisan here, all
18 right.

19 MR. RANKIN: -- how they treated
20 minorities. But I am very proud that the
21 Republican party is doing the right thing
22 and --

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Well, I will
24 just say this: I hear you and I appreciate
25 those comments, but I will tell you, we work

1 very closely with our Democratic colleagues
2 that are on this committee and we are all
3 working together in this.

4 MR. RANKIN: And I don't mean to be that,
5 but --

6 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: I understand,
7 I understand.

8 MR. RANKIN: -- I had to put something on
9 the record. Historically it is called a boll
10 weevil Democrat, it is a conservative Democrat,
11 their party left them and that is probably why
12 you are seeing the voting, it is not because of
13 anything you did. And -- but please keep the
14 west coast, the west coast, and I thank you
15 very much for your time.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
17 Mr. Rankin. Thank you, sir. Oh, good, we have
18 another -- we have another speaker, and it is a
19 public official, Commissioner, Commissioner Tom
20 Hanny. Commissioner, thank you very much for
21 being here, sir. Look, you are just the man
22 with impeccable timing, right, you just swoop
23 right in here at the end. And we are happy to
24 have you, and we are grateful for your service
25 to Collier County. You are recognized.

1 COMMISSIONER HANNY: Mr. Chairman, thank
2 you very much. Actually, I did fill out a
3 speaker slip long ago, along with a friend of
4 mine that wasn't recognized, but, anyway, I
5 want to welcome you to our great community.
6 Thank you for your time. I know these are a
7 lot of extra efforts that you have made to
8 serve the public, and for that, maybe we can
9 find a banker to buy you lunch or something
10 like that.

11 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Maybe we can
12 get him to give me a loan.

13 COMMISSIONER HANNY: This process and the
14 comments that you are hearing today is no
15 different than the last redistricting that we
16 had here in southwest Florida about having
17 district lines drawn up against the east coast
18 and the west coast. From what I recall in
19 working with former State Representative Mike
20 Davis, those were actually decided by the
21 courts. It wasn't decided by the legislators.
22 We do want to have representation of southwest
23 Florida. We are more like Lee County than the
24 east coast of the state of Florida, but I can
25 tell you, I have worked very close and enjoyed

1 the working relationship I have had with
2 Representative David Rivera, now Congressman
3 David Rivera, and Representative Nuñez has done
4 an outstanding job and will always represent
5 our community.

6 I do want to read something from a speaker
7 who signed up, Cheryl Couture, who is a
8 founding member of Southwest Florida 9/12.
9 Cheryl had to work this morning, and she would
10 like to take this -- to thank the legislators
11 for the hearing. She also would like to
12 express her concern for the open
13 interpretations of the Amendments 5 and 6 that,
14 like the words "practical" and "feasible," the
15 citizens have an interest in decisions
16 regarding representation that is made by --
17 decisions made by the courts, and want to thank
18 you again for giving the citizens the
19 opportunity -- for sharing their concerns. The
20 amendments were ambiguous, in my opinion, and I
21 think former Senator -- former Representative
22 Dudley Goodlette said it well is the
23 legislators can clarify that in the Florida
24 Statutes. And, again, I want to -- I want to
25 thank you for your time in our great community.

1 I do speak on -- by myself and not the Board of
2 Commissioners. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you
4 very much, Commissioner. We appreciate that,
5 and we apologize for missing you early on, but
6 it was good to have you here.

7 Ladies and gentlemen, that is all for the
8 speakers who signed up to speak. What we would
9 like to do at this moment, we've got a few
10 minutes left, is to ask for members of the
11 Committee, if they have any suggestions or
12 comments, and we will start off with House
13 members and then Senators and then we will turn
14 it over to Senator Gaetz.

15 Yes, Representative Williams for a
16 comment. If we could get the microphone to
17 her.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Having been to a
19 dozen of these or so over the past couple of
20 months, I have to say that this has been the
21 most enjoyable group we have had the pleasure
22 to listen to.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Yes.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Thank you so
25 very much for your grace and civilness. You

1 would not believe what we have endured over the
2 past several weeks, and God bless
3 Representative Weatherford and Senator Gaetz,
4 because they have been to just about every one
5 of these. So thank you, and it's been a
6 pleasure to be here and listen to you folks.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
8 Representative Williams.

9 Any other comments from members from the
10 house? We've got a quiet bunch today. How
11 about members of the Senate? Any Senators who
12 would like to speak? Give them your speech
13 last night, maybe you could --

14 SENATOR DETERT: Yes, I had to yell at my
15 own community last night, and I am from
16 Sarasota, and they are generally a lot more
17 polite and classy than they were last night.
18 So we were kind of loaded for bear this
19 morning, and everybody -- when you said
20 welcome, you acted like we are at your home.
21 We are sitting here, my Democratic and
22 Republican friends here, and just very
23 impressed with really the civility in your
24 community. So thank you for being
25 participants, because the way to make your

1 government work the way you want it to work is
2 to participate, and you did that in such a
3 lovely civil way, and I thank you.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Any other
5 members from the higher chamber that would wish
6 to speak? We have to say that as House
7 members, we have to call them the higher
8 chamber. Yes, Senator Richter, former House
9 member, I would like to point out.

10 SENATOR RICHTER: Yes, I would like to
11 echo my comments and tell each and every one of
12 you in this room how very, very proud I am to
13 represent you in Tallahassee. Thank you for
14 your input. Thank you for your good ideas. It
15 is clear to me in this meeting that there's
16 significant concern over the timeline and the
17 fair districts, and that message came through
18 rather loud and clear, and I thank you for the
19 repetitive message and the different variance
20 on that message, but thank you all very much.
21 I am very proud to represent each and every one
22 of you. Thank you.

23 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
24 Senator.

25 Okay. Now is the time we are going to

1 turn it over to my esteemed colleague, Senator
2 Gaetz, and allow him to speak on some of the
3 questions that were asked, maybe provide some
4 clarity on some things that have kind of gotten
5 into the bloodstream. And, again, I just want
6 to thank everyone for being here, for providing
7 a hearing that I think was both civil,
8 informative and very helpful to us as members
9 of this committee. So thank you all very much,
10 and I will turn it over to Senator Gaetz.

11 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
12 Mr. Speaker, and as is my want, because I am a
13 former reporter, even though we -- we make
14 electronic recordings of every word that is
15 said and there is a record that all of us can
16 go back to, I still tend to trust my own notes,
17 and I make them at every hearing, and what I
18 did today was also try to write down some of
19 the questions that were asked and some of the
20 factual points that we could just provide, not
21 get into any disagreement with anybody who
22 testified, one side or the other, but, rather,
23 when there were factual matters, try to make
24 sure we all leave here with the same data.

25 First of all, the timeline, which I think

1 was the -- a theme that many people echoed,
2 starting with Supervisor Edwards. Let me give
3 you just a couple of facts that might help you
4 understand where we are and why we are in the
5 circumstance we are.

6 First of all, we're not able to do
7 anything until we get census data from the
8 Bureau of the Census. Now, Florida was not the
9 last state to get census data, but we were one
10 of the last. The census -- Bureau of the
11 Census does not disgorge all population data to
12 all states at once. Instead, it is in tranches
13 or groups. And as I said, we weren't the last,
14 but we were one of the last, and as soon as we
15 got the data, we immediately put it on-line,
16 and then as soon as the session was over, we
17 immediately began having these hearings. But I
18 wanted you to know that the data that some of
19 the states that you have heard about, the data
20 that they received was months ahead of ours.

21 Secondly, there were a couple of folks in
22 hearings yesterday and today who mentioned
23 states that have concluded their redistricting
24 process already, and that is true. But, for
25 example, Louisiana, which was mentioned,

1 Louisiana is a state which holds its elections
2 not on even years, but on odd years, and so the
3 Bureau of the Census then responds to that by
4 giving them their census data before they give
5 their census data to those of us who do our
6 elections on even years. So that is why you
7 will see some states already finished, not
8 because there is a nefarious plot somewhere,
9 but because the Census Bureau stages its data
10 release and because some states have elections
11 earlier than others.

12 And then there are other states who do
13 things a little differently than Florida.
14 Illinois, for example, is a one-party state,
15 and they got their redistricting done in record
16 time. I think they may -- they may have set
17 the record for redistricting in this cycle. It
18 is a one-party state. They had a group of
19 legislators who literally went into a back
20 room, drew maps, came out, said, "Take it or
21 leave it," went to the floor, did a vote, they
22 were in, they were out, they were gone. There
23 were no public hearings. That is one way to do
24 it, and it has been done that way in Florida,
25 you know, years and years and years ago.

1 Speaker Weatherford and I and our
2 presiding officers chose to do something
3 different. We took a risk, and as the Speaker
4 has said from time to time, it is a
5 chicken-and-egg argument, but we took the risk
6 of listening first, and drawing after we
7 listened, but I wanted you to understand part
8 of the reason why we have the schedule we do.

9 But the schedule we have is an accelerated
10 schedule, and Supervisor Edwards' excellent
11 testimony, I would want to point out one thing,
12 and that is that, perhaps it was our fault, but
13 the timeline that she was referencing was a
14 timeline that was published, but a timeline
15 that now pertains is the one that is functional
16 after the passage of the elections legislation
17 that we passed in this session of the
18 Legislature, which does provide a more
19 accelerated timeline. And she made three
20 suggestions, and I can only speak for myself,
21 but I can tell you that the VTDs have been on
22 our minds from the very beginning in terms of a
23 building block for districts. Our committee in
24 the Senate has been observant of the VTD
25 process from the very first time that our

1 committee got together in an organizational
2 meeting.

3 She said avoid irregular boundaries where
4 possible. We sure agree with that. As I will
5 point out in a moment, there are some
6 circumstances in which the courts are deciding
7 on the irregular boundaries, not us, but to the
8 extent that we can, we will take her advice.

9 And then third, she said do everything you
10 can to move the process without delay, and that
11 is absolutely true, and that is why Speaker
12 Weatherford and I are committed to making sure
13 that we go forward with committee meetings, not
14 in December, which is the usual schedule, but
15 in September, and I have committed that at the
16 very first meeting in September, which is the
17 week of September 19th, that is the first time
18 that we can meet based on the call of our
19 presiding officers, we will immediately turn to
20 the Democratic Leader because, as I mentioned
21 in my opening comments, ten years ago she was
22 told, "No, thanks, we don't want to hear your
23 maps, don't want to even see your maps." Well,
24 I think -- you can't go back and redo what was
25 done ten years ago, but I think you can start

1 on the right foot by saying that the minority
2 has rights, and we are going to start with the
3 Democratic Leader, and then we are going to go
4 to all of the other maps that have already been
5 presented and maps that will be presented, and
6 those will all be available for discussion and
7 debate beginning with our first meeting, which
8 will be on September -- the week of
9 September 19.

10 The second thing I wanted to mention,
11 Mr. Speaker, was in response to the fine
12 testimony from the Chamber of Commerce
13 representative, who talked about the need to
14 have maps based on communities of interest.
15 Well, there was a reference made to the fact
16 that the Legislature tried to get some language
17 in the constitutional amendments and we failed.
18 That is true. Representative Weatherford and I
19 and others tried to get the term "communities
20 of interest" into the constitutional language
21 dealing with Fair Districts. The Supreme Court
22 said no. So although "communities of interest"
23 was mentioned many times today, many times in
24 all of our hearings, it is not included in the
25 constitutional language, I wish it were, and

1 so, therefore, we are going to have to try to
2 balance that very legitimate value with the
3 fact that it is just not included in the
4 constitutional language that the Fair Districts
5 folks brought to the voters and did a great job
6 in getting passed.

7 Then third, there was a comment made that
8 more representatives in Tallahassee is better.
9 Well, that is a debate and a tension we have
10 heard in this meeting and in all the other
11 meetings. Is it better to -- I happen to live
12 in Okaloosa County, which is way up in
13 northwest Florida, and we have -- we have two
14 Senate districts that bisect Okaloosa County.
15 I have parts of five counties, and my
16 counterpart, Senator Evers, has parts of those
17 same five counties. He's got the northern
18 tier, I've got the southern tier. They are
19 divided by a military reservation. And is that
20 a good idea or a bad idea for Okaloosa to have
21 two Senators? Some say, well, if you've got
22 two Senators, you've got two chances, you know.
23 You know, if Gaetz drops the ball, and he is
24 subject to doing that, at least we got Evers.
25 But on the other hand, there are people who

1 have testified today and said, "We want
2 somebody who is dedicated solely to our
3 community. We don't want them to have divided
4 interests." So I only mention that to say
5 that, well, while it is easy to say implement
6 Amendments 5 and 6, you also have to balance
7 these two very legitimate points of view that
8 we have gotten in today's hearing, and that is,
9 is it better for Collier County to have more
10 voices in Tallahassee, or is it better for
11 Collier County, for example, to have fewer
12 voices, but have those voices dedicated more
13 directly to Collier County. We are delighted
14 to have heard your input on that issue.

15 Then there was an individual who asked a
16 very good question: Why have an 8:00 a.m.
17 meeting? Well, frankly, we ended last night at
18 9:00 p.m. in Sarasota, and we will be having a
19 meeting beginning at 6:00 p.m. today in Lehigh
20 Acres. Tomorrow morning, we will be at I think
21 8:00 a.m. in Clewiston. So we have had
22 meetings in the morning, in the afternoon and
23 in the evening, and that is the only way we
24 could do it. We didn't decide to single out
25 Naples for torment and make you get up early.

1 It just worked out that way. So if anybody is
2 to blame, Senator Richter.

3 A very good question, a very good
4 question: When is the first time that maps
5 will be presented in the legislative process?
6 The answer is, the week of September 19th.

7 The next question -- now, I will say this:
8 That is not the last time. That is -- the
9 question was, when is the first time? We have
10 160 members of the Legislature representing a
11 wide spectrum of political beliefs, and,
12 obviously, as you can see, all over Florida.
13 Now, if we were to say that here is the drop
14 dead date beyond which you cannot speak, you
15 cannot offer an additional thought, you cannot
16 try to improve on what somebody has already
17 proposed, there would be Democrats and
18 Republicans standing on their desks, screaming
19 their lungs out that it would be an unfair
20 process. So what I can tell you is in the
21 Senate, we will begin in the week of
22 September 19th looking at any and all maps that
23 are presented at that time. However, I cannot
24 guarantee you that some of my Senate colleagues
25 won't come in later and say, "You know, looking

1 at what is presented and then going back and
2 reflecting on what we heard at 26 hearings,
3 I've got an improvement on that," or "I've got
4 a better idea." I can't stop that, and
5 candidly, in a representative assembly, you
6 shouldn't stop that. Representative
7 Weatherford and I don't have that kind of
8 authority, and we shouldn't have that kind of
9 authority.

10 Then we heard some very useful comments
11 from spokespersons from the League of Women
12 Voters, and they made two comments that I would
13 like to just make sure we have some facts on.
14 First, they -- the representative said the
15 Legislature should draw the maps first. Again,
16 it is a chicken-and-egg argument. Should we
17 listen first and should we then try to collate
18 the information we have gotten from people
19 around the state and say what seems to make
20 sense, or should we come in and say, "Here are
21 the maps," and then as somebody said today, we
22 would be accused of already making up our minds
23 and just trying to shove something down
24 people's throats.

25 I would only say that the League itself

1 can't decide, because in Georgia, the League of
2 Women Voters says maps should be drawn by the
3 public first. Ellen Freidin, the person who
4 led the Fair Districts campaign, testified
5 before the Senate and House and said wouldn't
6 dream of drawing maps until first there was
7 public hearing and public comment. So even
8 within the League of Women Voters, an
9 outstanding organization, there's not really a
10 unanimity of feeling about that.

11 Then there was a very useful comment made
12 by the President -- I believe this individual
13 was the President of the Democratic Club, and
14 talked about the local maps, county commission,
15 school board maps, and said that in that case
16 here, five different options were presented for
17 discussion. And Speaker Weatherford and I have
18 talked about that, and I think that is an
19 excellent suggestion. There's not going to be
20 a map that is going to be presented in the
21 Senate. I can guarantee you that with the
22 divergence of opinion that Senators have on
23 these topics, there will be several different
24 options presented so that there will be an
25 opportunity maybe to take parts of different

1 options and try to meld them together. So
2 there won't be a map, and I think it was an
3 excellent suggestion to have five options,
4 somebody else said six options, that could be
5 presented and debated.

6 Then I am really glad to learn about the
7 Lely Resort community. You see, this is the
8 kind of information we could never get in an
9 echo chamber in Tallahassee, just listening to
10 each other. If you hadn't presented that
11 testimony today, I think it came from three
12 different people who live in that community, we
13 wouldn't have that information, and the Lely --
14 the first person who spoke from Lely said
15 divide the Everglades because one person, one
16 Representative, is not enough. The very next
17 speaker took the opposite view. The only
18 reason I make that point is that there is a
19 legitimate tension between those who say that
20 an area ought to have one Representative, and
21 those who say, no, we would like to have more
22 than one voice, and we have to work on
23 balancing that. That is why your testimony was
24 so important.

25 A comment was made about irregular

1 boundaries. I think that is the politest
2 description of some of those boundaries that I
3 have heard, irregular. Two comments. First,
4 we didn't develop them. The Senate seat that I
5 ran for was drawn by other people, and so I
6 have no pride of authorship in the Senate seat
7 that I have and in the boundaries that I have
8 now. Neither does anybody else here. We want
9 to improve on them. And let me just say this:
10 Some of us are among the insulted. I happen --
11 I happen to live in a rattail of a
12 congressional district. My -- the
13 congressional district I am in, which is
14 Congressional District 2, starts way over near
15 Tallahassee and then comes over all the way to
16 my little community of Niceville, which is on
17 the Gulf Coast, and I am in a little -- a
18 little rattail of that district. So, believe
19 me, there are those of us who want to solve
20 those problems as much as we can possibly.

21 There was a very useful comment made by
22 someone who said there are more Democrats than
23 Republicans in population, yet Republicans have
24 more Representatives in the Legislature, and
25 unless you fix that, it won't be Fair

1 Districts, it will be proof of gerrymandering,
2 that testifier said. Well, here's our problem:
3 Our problem is -- I will just take the Senate
4 districts, for example. There are 40 Senate
5 districts. Twenty-eight are currently held by
6 Republicans. But eight of the districts held
7 by Republicans voted for Barack Obama
8 overwhelmingly. So now we are left with the
9 riddle. Do we have a circumstance in which
10 you've got Republican Senate districts that
11 were persuaded that President Obama had a
12 better message, a better campaign, would be a
13 better President, or do we have a whole bunch
14 of people who were inclined to vote for Barack
15 Obama, but then who looked down ballot and
16 said, "You know, doggone it, the Republican
17 candidate for State Senator seems to have a
18 better message or a better campaign or
19 resonates more with my values"? See, the fact
20 is that it may not be proof of gerrymandering.
21 It may be proof of the independence of our
22 voters. We can't force Republicans to vote for
23 Republicans, or Democrats to vote for
24 Democrats, and the fastest-growing group of
25 voters in this state are Independents and

1 non-affiliated voters, and we sure as the
2 dickens can't predict who they are going to
3 vote for.

4 So it probably won't turn out to be
5 something perfect where the exact percentage of
6 Republicans or Democrats is what is reflected
7 in the Legislature, because we have Democrats
8 voting for Republicans, and Republicans voting
9 for Democrats. So I would just ask you to keep
10 that in mind, getting a perfect arithmetic
11 balance may not be possible. This isn't the
12 old Soviet Union. You know, people have an
13 independent view of how they are going to vote.

14 And then there was someone who made a good
15 comment and said, you know, we ought to pay
16 impartial IT professionals to draw the maps.
17 Well, I am looking for the first impartial
18 person I can find in this process. I think
19 even IT professionals have opinions. But I
20 will say this: Both the House and the Senate
21 have employed IT professionals, and I don't
22 know what their party affiliations are, and I
23 don't intend to inquire, but they are
24 professionals, they are geeks, they are nerds,
25 they have green eyeshades, we keep them in

1 offices where there are literally no windows,
2 and they are the ones -- they are the ones who
3 will work the technical side of this. But the
4 Constitution says that elected representatives,
5 people that you -- that you can reach out and
6 elect or un-elect, our Constitution says we are
7 the ones who have to -- who have to actually
8 draw the lines at the end of the day and
9 propose them to the judicial branch of
10 government. So we can't -- we can't offload
11 the constitutional responsibility unless we
12 amend the Constitution.

13 Then we had a person who said that she
14 worked on the New York State redistricting
15 process, and I made a note here, she is hired
16 here. So see me later. And she said, you
17 know, we ought to vote on final plans on
18 January 13th, which is three days after the
19 Legislature goes into session. What I want to
20 know is, in New York, did you vote on your
21 reapportionment and redistricting plans three
22 days after you went into session? See, we may
23 be able to, because we have been in all these
24 hearings, really come in with your voices
25 ringing in our ears. But the vast majority of

1 the Senate and the House have not been at these
2 hearings. So when we come in and make our
3 report and offer our recommendations, those
4 individuals who you may have also spoken to in
5 town hall meetings or in their offices or run
6 into them at church or at the grocery store and
7 talked to them about your views, they are going
8 to want to have something to say, they are
9 going to want to engage in debate, and believe
10 me, in the Senate, and I know in the House,
11 too, they are going to want to ask a lot of
12 questions about -- to us about what we have
13 heard. So it would be nice to vote on
14 January 13th, but it would be, I think,
15 unlikely to be able to shut down debate three
16 days after the legislative session starts. But
17 we sure will want to vote as soon as we
18 reasonably can.

19 Then there was -- there were several
20 people who said, you know, gosh, there was a
21 mandate for Amendments 5 and 6, and they ought
22 to be adopted and they ought to be implemented,
23 and they will be, believe me. Everybody up
24 here has taken an oath to preserve and protect
25 the Constitution of the United States and of

1 the State of Florida. Those two provisions are
2 in the Constitution, whether some people like
3 them or not, and we are going to implement
4 them. But the question is not whether we are
5 going to implement them, but how they should be
6 implemented, and we have seen today some
7 tension between the definitions of
8 "compactness" or making sure that minority
9 districts don't regress. Are we going to use
10 city boundaries when city boundaries in some
11 cases look like a Rorschach blot? So there are
12 tensions as to how, but there is no debate that
13 we will implement them. But that is why these
14 hearings have been so valuable.

15 And then, Mr. Speaker, a question, is
16 there one standard for compactness? Life would
17 be simpler if there were. It is a fact that
18 Florida is the first state, maybe we won't be
19 the last, but we are the first state to have
20 all of the features included in Amendments 5
21 and 6 placed into a State Constitution. We are
22 the first state. So in a lot of ways, we are
23 going to be charting new ground, and when you
24 chart new ground in this world, you wind up,
25 sadly, sadly, charting that ground, in many

1 cases, in court. So I would predict to you, it
2 is not my hope, but it is my prediction that
3 the definitions of "compactness" will arise out
4 of case law in this state and in other states.

5 Now, we did have some mathematicians
6 testify before us, and they said the most
7 compact geometric figure is a circle, the next
8 most compact is a square, the third most
9 compact is a rectangle. Have you looked at the
10 map of Florida? We are not a square or a
11 circle or a rectangle, and so the definitions
12 of "compactness" will probably be sort of built
13 in flight and then reviewed by the courts.
14 That is probably what is going to happen.

15 Then there were three testifiers who said,
16 "How do we prevent lawsuits? How do we prevent
17 this dragging on and on and on into the courts?
18 Is there some template that we could use that
19 would give us armor against lawsuits?" No. I
20 wish there were. First, remember, we are the
21 first state to have all of these requirements
22 at one time placed on our Constitution.
23 Secondly, members of special interest groups,
24 who have every right to do so, have already
25 testified before the first vote has been taken

1 that there will be lawsuits and they intend to
2 file them. So I think that it may be the case
3 that some people intended from the beginning
4 that this matter would have to go to the
5 courts. That is their right, but -- but it
6 doesn't give us an easy answer to how to
7 prevent lawsuits.

8 But while there is -- while there is no
9 sure protection against lawsuits, I think a
10 good approach is to do what Speaker Weatherford
11 and I and our members have been doing, and that
12 is to listen first, develop a record based on
13 what people are saying. It is fine to talk
14 about the process, we have heard a lot of
15 process discussion, but it is even more
16 valuable to hear the very specific direction
17 and guidance we have gotten from so many people
18 today and around the state about neighborhoods
19 and communities, how they ought to be bounded,
20 how they ought not to be divided. That is
21 probably the best armor, if there is any armor,
22 knowing that ultimately we are probably going
23 to wind up in court, no matter what plan is
24 devised.

25 The other thing I think that you can do to

1 try to avoid unnecessary lawsuits is to make
2 sure that the minority is represented and
3 respected, and that this -- certainly we do
4 have a Republican majority in the Legislature,
5 but there are minority members, Democratic
6 members, on this Committee, and as several
7 people have mentioned, Senator Detert, we work
8 closely with our minority members, even though
9 I happen to be a Republican, and a sign, I
10 think, of good faith will be turning first to
11 our minority members and our Democratic Leader
12 at our first meeting and saying, "Ten years
13 ago, you didn't get a chance to offer your
14 maps. By golly, you are going to get your
15 chance first, along with everybody else. You
16 are not going to be discriminated against."

17 Then another member of the League raised
18 an excellent question about is the timeline
19 unrealistic. It could be. The timeline could
20 be unrealistic if everyone in the process takes
21 all the time they legally can instead of taking
22 only the time that they need. So Speaker
23 Weatherford and I and our members, our
24 presiding officers, are committed, as we have
25 shown, to moving up the session, moving up

1 committee weeks, moving up hearings, proceeding
2 as quickly as we legally can and practically
3 can. However, we would urge you to talk with
4 and communicate with the other players in the
5 process and urge them to take only the time
6 they need, the Attorney General, the Supreme
7 Court of Florida, the federal justice
8 department, let's get this job done, you know,
9 not too fast, let's measure twice and cut once,
10 this is important for the next ten years in our
11 state. But let's not let the other players in
12 the process elongate the process anymore than
13 is absolutely necessary as well. And that is
14 why we would again urge our good friends in the
15 League of Women Voters to do what they did in
16 2002, to do what their brothers and sisters are
17 doing in Georgia, and that is move from being a
18 critical but useful observer to being a
19 participant and providing direct guidance to
20 assist us in how to go forward.

21 And then the League representative said,
22 "Could this all result in a circumstance in
23 which our votes don't count in the 2012
24 precedential election?" Well, here's the good
25 news. The boundaries of Florida are not going

1 to change as a result of the redistricting
2 process. We are not going to be able to invade
3 Alabama. We are not going to lose any
4 territory to Florida. And so -- well, we might
5 invade Alabama, but -- but -- so the
6 presidential election is not going to be
7 affected, and everybody ought to be sanguine
8 about that.

9 There was a -- several comments made about
10 the east-west boundary districts and how
11 unfortunate it is that they exist and the fact
12 that they make little sense, and a number of
13 you referenced your thoughts about aligning
14 Collier County districts with communities in
15 Miami-Dade and Broward. But here it is
16 important to reiterate what others have
17 mentioned, and that is that districts in
18 Collier County, because they are a Section 5
19 county, have to be pre-cleared by federal
20 authority for compliance with the Federal
21 Voting Rights Act.

22 Now, here is how this process can go.
23 House District 112 was actually drawn based on
24 a court order in federal court ten years ago.
25 The Legislature drew the district one way, but

1 it was a federal court that ordered that
2 District 112 be drawn the way that it has been
3 drawn. So I only mention this so that you will
4 understand factually, we don't get the last
5 word. The salamander district, which is
6 Congressional District 3, the one that is the
7 poster child for gerrymandering, was not drawn
8 by the Legislature, it was drawn by the federal
9 courts. So we just need to keep that in mind.

10 Then the question was made, will we invite
11 comments after all maps have been presented?

12 Well, it could probably be difficult and cause
13 concern for those who want to move the process
14 along to go back out and have two and a half
15 months of additional hearings after the
16 Legislature has gone into session, but we are
17 considering videoconferencing, we are
18 considering other methods of making sure that
19 people who would like to have an opportunity to
20 comment on additional maps, including the 50
21 maps we already have, that they get that
22 opportunity without having to go to the expense
23 of coming to Tallahassee. Not everybody can
24 come to Tallahassee. Usually we see too many
25 lobbyists, too many people with \$1,000 suits

1 and \$300 shoes, and not as many people of the
2 kind that we are seeing in today's meeting.

3 And then the comment that was made by Vi,
4 or as we now call her, V. She asked about the
5 lawsuit against Amendment 6, and here is where
6 Vi has done us a real service. She made it
7 clear she was talking about the lawsuit against
8 Amendment 6. Here is where the bloodstream has
9 gotten -- has gotten really poisonous. There
10 is no lawsuit having to do with Amendment 5.
11 There is no lawsuit that's yet been filed by
12 anybody having to do with legislative
13 redistricting. The only lawsuit, as Vi
14 indicated, that has been filed was filed by a
15 Democratic Congresswoman and a Republican
16 Congressman having to do with the congressional
17 redistricting process.

18 Now, it is true that there is a lawsuit,
19 it is true that there's all kinds of discussion
20 about it and people are involved in it.
21 Doesn't have anything to do with any of our
22 districts. But here is what Speaker
23 Weatherford has said at every single hearing.
24 He said we are not going to be distracted by
25 that lawsuit. Our job is to implement 5 and 6.

1 Our job is to be consistent with the federal
2 court cases and the other legal requirements
3 that we have, and unless a court tells us
4 differently, we are going to go forward and
5 implement Amendments 5 and 6 and the other
6 legal requirements that we have. The question
7 is not whether, but as I pointed out before,
8 the question is how. And you have given us --
9 you have given us testimony that in some cases
10 disagrees with other testimony as to how, but
11 you have given us very thoughtful insights that
12 we can use to try to balance those competing
13 and very legitimate values.

14 This has been the most valuable public
15 hearing we have held anywhere in the state of
16 Florida, and it has been because of you. Thank
17 you very much.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERFORD: Thank you,
19 Chairman Gaetz, and thank you all for being
20 here today, and with that, Senator Gaetz moves
21 that we rise.

22 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
23 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 163 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 5th day of December, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014

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REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2011

8:00 A.M.

CLEWISTON, FLORIDA

HENDRY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Transcribed by:

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Court Reporter

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

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Good morning, ladies and
3 gentlemen. Thank you very much from being
4 here, and we would ask if you are here for the
5 hearing on redistricting and reapportionment
6 that you take your seats. If you are a member
7 of the Committee, please find a spot.

8 The Joint Senate House Redistricting
9 hearing is called to order. We are pleased to
10 be joined today by several members of the
11 Florida House of Representatives and the
12 Florida Senate, who serve on those chambers'
13 respective redistricting committees, and in a
14 moment we are going to ask them to indicate who
15 they are and whether they serve in the House or
16 the Senate and the area of the state they come
17 from just so you will know who you are sharing
18 your opinions with.

19 We want to thank the Hendry County
20 Department of Health for allowing us to use
21 this facility. This is not my first time here.
22 I was here about a year ago where we met with
23 folks from this county to talk about primary
24 care issues, and many of the things that were
25 said in this room turned out to influence

1 healthcare legislation that we passed this past
2 year in the Florida Legislature.

3 We particularly want to thank those who
4 have come here to share their comments and
5 their recommendations to help share
6 Congressional, Senate and House Districts for
7 the next decade.

8 I am Don Gaetz. I am a member of the
9 Florida Senate. My District runs from
10 Pensacola to east of Panama City. I serve the
11 five coastal counties of northwest Florida's
12 Gulf Coast, and I will be chairing today's
13 hearing which is also being webcast statewide
14 by the Florida Channel over the Internet, and
15 here is what that means.

16 It means that you are on television. So
17 before you stand up to testify, check your
18 makeup, check your hair, straighten your tie,
19 because there are typically thousands of people
20 across Florida who are following each one of
21 these hearings on the webcast.

22 Our focus today is to hear from the public
23 about how you believe the legal standards
24 governing redistricting should be applied in
25 your community.

1 The question is not if those standards
2 will be applied. The question is not if
3 Amendments 5 and 6 will be followed. The
4 question is how, and as we have learned in each
5 one of the hearings from testimony, there are
6 differences of opinion among people in
7 communities, people of goodwill as to some of
8 the fine points of how the Federal standards
9 ought to be applied or State standards ought to
10 be applied. So we are interested in your views
11 on that question.

12 Our procedures today are simple but
13 important. It is important that you sign in so
14 that we create an accurate public record. We
15 have a little form for you to sign. This just
16 shows that you are here, but it is the same
17 form if you want to speak.

18 So if you have not signed in or if you
19 just want to observe or if you want to speak,
20 please raise your hand. We will get you one of
21 these forms and make sure that you have an
22 opportunity to share your views with the
23 members of the House and the Senate this
24 morning.

25 Why don't we at this point take a moment

1 so that you will know who you are talking with
2 this morning, and let's pass the microphone and
3 let's start if we can with Representative
4 Denise Grimsley.

5 We are in Grimsley world here and want to
6 thank you very much for allowing us to be in
7 your part of Florida.

8 REPRESENTATIVE GRIMSLEY: Thank you,
9 Mr. Chairman, and good morning, and members,
10 welcome to District 77, one of the sweetest
11 towns in America. We appreciate you being
12 here, and for you of the community, thank you
13 very much for coming out today. I see
14 Commissioner Toller out there as well.

15 I have talked to a lot of I and I know it
16 was early, but I really appreciate you guys
17 coming out to offer your testimony today and
18 welcome, members welcome.

19 You are in a great town, stop and spend a
20 little money over here and get to know some of
21 the residents.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PASSIDOMO: I am Kathleen
23 Passidomo, House District 76, which is Collier
24 County. I represent the City of Naples, the
25 City of Marco Island and Everglades City and I

1 am so thrilled to be here. Thank you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE ROGERS: Good morning, I am
3 Hazelle Rogers from Broward County, a large
4 base. It is approximately 1.8 million
5 residents, the most diverse county in the State
6 of Florida. I represent District 94, eight
7 cities, Lauderdale Lakes, Margate,
8 Oakland Park, Tamarac, Plantation, Sunrise and
9 it is good to be here to listen to what you
10 have to say. Thank you.

11 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Good morning, my
12 name is Daphne Campbell, District 108, which
13 includes four cities, North Miami, Miami
14 Shores, (inaudible) Biscayne Park. Welcome.

15 REPRESENTATIVE ALBRITTON: Good morning.
16 My name is Ben Albritton, I serve in the
17 Florida House. I represent south Polk, Hardee
18 and northwestern Highlands counties.

19 REPRESENTATIVE JULIEN: Good morning, my
20 name is John Patrick Julien, representing House
21 District 104, which is in Miami Dade County.

22 House District 104 represents the cities
23 of North Miami Beach, North Miami, Miami
24 Gardens, Opa Locka, Miami and unincorporated
25 Miami-Dade. It is a pleasure to be here.

1 SENATOR NEGRON: Good morning, I represent
2 District 28 in the Florida Senate. That is the
3 Treasure Coast and northern Palm Beach County,
4 a little bit of western Palm Beach County and
5 Okeechobee.

6 A VOICE: Do you have a name?

7 SENATOR NEGRON: Joe Negron.

8 REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD: Good morning, my
9 name is Mack Bernard. Since we are in the
10 sweetest county in the -- in Florida I
11 represent the sweetest cities in Florida, which
12 includes the cities of Belle Glade, Pahokee and
13 South Bay, and also it is good to be in Taylor
14 country, and I want to welcome everyone who is
15 here because I represent the districts right
16 down the street.

17 REPRESENTATIVE CALDWELL: Good morning, my
18 name is Matt Caldwell. I represent District
19 73, which is just a little west of us, Lehigh
20 Acres, Ft. Myers, down into rural Corkscrew.

21 SENATOR JOYNER: Good morning, I am
22 Arthenia Joyner, I represent Senate District
23 18. That is Hillsborough, Pinellas and
24 Manatee, St. Petersburg and Bradenton and I am
25 happy to be here this morning.

1 REPRESENTATIVE KIAR: Hello, everybody.
2 My name is Martin Kiar. I represent District
3 97 in the Florida House, which is located
4 solely within Broward County. Thank you all so
5 much for coming out today to share your input
6 with us.

7 REPRESENTATIVE REED: Good morning, I am
8 State Representative Gwyndolen Clarke- Reed. I
9 represent House seat 92 in Broward County,
10 representing seven cities, and this is my 26th
11 hearing.

12 So I have had the distinct honor of
13 traveling with Senator Gaetz all the way.
14 Welcome this morning. Looking forward to
15 hearing from you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE THURSTON: Good morning, I
17 am Perry Thurston and I represent House
18 District 93, and it is a pleasure to be in your
19 area this morning.

20 REPRESENTATIVE JONES: Good morning, I am
21 State Representative Mia Jones, representing
22 Jacksonville, District 14.

23 REPRESENTATIVE CHESTNUT: Good morning.
24 My name is Chuck Chestnut, House District 23.
25 That is a portion of Alachua County and a

1 portion of Marion County. Glad to be here.

2 REPRESENTATIVE TRUJILLO: Good morning, my
3 Nam is Carlos Trujillo. I represent Florida
4 House District 116 which is southwest Miami
5 Dade County.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAMS: Good morning, I
7 am Trudi Williams, House member from District
8 75, which is Lee and Collier, parts of Collier
9 County. Glad to be here.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Joining me in chairing
11 today's hearing is the former Speaker Pro Temp
12 of the Florida House of Representatives, and
13 now back serving his community, Representative
14 Dennis Baxley, and Representative Baxley and I
15 will be working together today.

16 You may see me having to leave a little
17 bit early to catch my transportation all of the
18 way back to the central time zone in northwest
19 Florida, but I can assure you that if I do miss
20 any testimony that I will look at the video
21 record of the testimony so that I hear every
22 single word that every single person here
23 testifies with.

24 And before we go any further I would like
25 to ask Speaker Baxley if he would explain how

1 today's hearing fits into our redistricting
2 process and into the schedule.

3 Mr. Speaker.

4 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thank you,
5 Chairman Gaetz. Every ten years the
6 Legislature is required by our Constitution to
7 redistrict the state based on increases,
8 decreases and movements of the population.

9 Because Florida has grown more than other
10 states in the last ten years we will move up
11 from 25 to 27 members of the U.S. House of
12 Representatives.

13 Because some parts of our state have
14 increased or decreased disproportionately in
15 population, many State and House Districts will
16 change, either adding or losing population.

17 When redistricting is completed,
18 Congressional Districts must be equal in
19 population and contain 696,345 people. The 40
20 Senate Districts must be nearly equal at about
21 470,000 people and our 120 House Districts must
22 all be nearly equal to about 156,700.

23 We have displays at the front of the room
24 in the entrance foyer showing the current
25 boundaries of districts in this area of the

1 state and the number of persons which must be
2 added to or subtracted from current districts
3 to achieve this equal representation.

4 The quality of representation isn't the
5 only legal requirement redistricting plans must
6 meet.

7 The laws and important court cases
8 governing redistricting are explained in detail
9 on the House and Senate websites. Those
10 websites are listed on the Redistricting 2012
11 brochure that was available to you when you
12 came in or you can pick one up as you leave.

13 Our Redistricting 2012 brochure summarizes
14 the Federal and State laws and it outlines the
15 topics we hope to discuss here at today's
16 hearing.

17 If you did not get a copy when you came
18 in, they are available on the tables outside
19 this meeting room in the foyer. Our staff will
20 be happy to get you a copy of the brochure if
21 you need it.

22 The brochure also lists the House and
23 Senate websites. These websites are packed
24 with information about redistricting in
25 Florida, including explanation of laws and

1 important court cases governing redistricting.

2 The two websites are complimentary and are
3 updated frequently. Visit both and check back
4 often. It is a great way to stay current about
5 how your new Congressional State Senate and
6 State House Districts are taking shape.

7 The websites also deliver to your
8 fingertips all of the demographic information
9 that is used in drawing districts and the exact
10 same computer programs that Legislators and
11 professional staff will be using.

12 You, the public, can participate in
13 building plans or seeing maps submitted by
14 Legislators or citizens. Before, during and
15 after this hearing Senate and House
16 professional staff are here available to show
17 anyone the simple steps to getting online,
18 building districts and submitting a plan now or
19 in the weeks to come.

20 Recommendations from citizens and groups
21 of citizens will be made publicly available on
22 this website. In fact, as of this morning, 51
23 public submissions of partial or complete maps
24 and new ideas for maps are available on that
25 website.

1 After this week I am sure those numbers
2 will increase and you can follow the process.
3 The submission of proposed maps that makes
4 sense for your community is the single most
5 effective form of public participation in this
6 redistricting process.

7 The redistricting schedule under which we
8 are operating is imposed by the State
9 Constitution. The Constitution does not permit
10 the Legislature to act on State legislative
11 maps before the second year after the census,
12 in other words, not before 2012.

13 We accelerated this process as much as
14 possible by moving up the 2012 legislative
15 session from March to January, and I don't
16 think that has ever been done before, and by
17 beginning our statewide hearings five months in
18 advance of the 2012 session.

19 It has been suggested that the Legislature
20 should draw maps first and then ask the public
21 for comment. We believe that that puts the
22 answer ahead of the question.

23 There should be no preconceptions created
24 by politicians, but rather public testimony
25 should be free and unrestricted. In fact, a

1 principle author of Florida's New Redistricting
2 Standards and the chair person for Fair
3 Districts Campaign are on record in agreeing
4 with us the notion that new maps should not be
5 drawn until after the public has had an
6 opportunity to comment on this process.

7 Our intent is to use the recommendations
8 made at these 26 public hearings and through
9 our internet sites as the basis for developing
10 one or more options for District maps.

11 We discuss those options in open public
12 meetings before any votes are taken in any
13 committee.

14 In other words, what we are literally
15 saying is if you look at those maps to our
16 right, your left, the ones actually submitted
17 to the Legislature by Florida residents, we are
18 literally starting the legislative process with
19 those maps and other suggestions from the
20 public.

21 So if you want to know where we will begin
22 our deliberations, it is with those public
23 submissions, testimony from these meetings and
24 other public input.

25 Throughout the process we will solicit

1 additional public comment so that proposed maps
2 can mature with the public involved, all before
3 the Legislature approves the final maps.

4 Whatever the Legislature passes then is
5 submitted for judicial review to ensure that
6 the final plans meet every legal requirement.

7 Because our purpose today is to hear from
8 you, all of the time between now and the close
9 of this meeting at 11:00 will be used to ensure
10 that every member of the public who is here and
11 wishes to speak will have time to present
12 testimony, be listened to respectfully without
13 interruption or argument.

14 If after every citizen has had his or her
15 say there is time remaining before our
16 scheduled adjournment, then any member of the
17 committee may make any statement or offer any
18 observation and, of course, any member of the
19 Legislature may today or at any time propose a
20 map or plan and we will make it available to
21 the public.

22 Mr. Chairman, I hope this description of
23 our schedule and process helps set the stage
24 for a very successful hearing.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,

1 Representative Baxley. We, the good news is we
2 have a goodly number of people who have already
3 signed up to speak, and if this hearing is like
4 other hearings, during the hearing there will
5 be people coming in or people who are in the
6 audience now who hadn't planned to speak, but
7 the spirit will move them and they will decide
8 they would like to speak, and if so, we want to
9 hear from you.

10 So what we have done in each one of our
11 hearings is to be fair to the people who are at
12 the back end and haven't signed up to speak yet
13 or who may be coming in a little bit late in
14 the hearing, on their way now and the people
15 who are at the end of those who have already
16 signed up, we try to have a little time limit
17 out of respect for those people who are going
18 to come later, your friends and neighbors who
19 also want to testify.

20 So what I am going to do is call out three
21 names at a time so you know that you are on
22 deck. If I call you out, be ready if you can
23 so that you can be ready to come forward,
24 because we don't want to miss a single word of
25 what you might want to share with us.

1 And we are going to hold to a time limit
2 of about three minutes. If you run two or
3 three or four seconds over, I am not going to
4 get upset, but if you sort of kind of roll on
5 like a preacher we used to have at my church,
6 we may -- we may point out to you that there
7 are others behind you who would like to speak.

8 Our first speaker is Joshua Deese and then
9 Brian Whitehall and then Clayton Williams.

10 So Joshua Deese with the Hendry County
11 Young Democrats, you are up. We are delighted
12 to have you begin our hearing this morning and
13 the floor is yours, sir.

14 MR. DEESE: Thank you. Good morning,
15 everyone. My name is Joshua Deese, I am a
16 senior at Clewiston High School and a pre-law
17 student at Edison State College. I am here
18 representing the Hendry County Young Democrats.

19 SENATOR GAETZ: And if I could just ask
20 you, the microphone is sort of off center
21 there. If you wouldn't mind speaking as
22 directly as you can into the mike.

23 MR. DEESE: Sure.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thanks, Joshua.

25 MR. DEESE: Okay. So I thank you for

1 allowing me this opportunity to voice my
2 opinion.

3 With Congressman Thomas Rooney, I along
4 with many other people in this community feel
5 that he has neglected us in his constituency.

6 He hardly comes here and he has made it
7 quite clear that we are -- that he is slightly
8 interested in representing our constituency.

9 I among the others feel that he represents
10 his sole community in Palm Beach, Wellington
11 and Stuart, which are more upscaled
12 communities.

13 There are people here in Clewiston, Moore
14 Haven and Labelle, they do not contain a large
15 population of people with a high socioeconomic
16 status.

17 It has been my understanding that
18 Representative Hastings has wanted to draw into
19 our constituency. It would be easier for him
20 to do so, apart from us being represented with
21 Congressman Rooney, as the line divides
22 straight through Clewiston and Belle Glade.

23 This would not only boost Representative
24 Hastings' population to a more ideal standard
25 to whether he would like to boost his

1 population up, but it would also give both
2 racial minorities and minorities of lower
3 socioeconomic statuses a better feel to be
4 represented by their constitu -- in their
5 constituency.

6 So I -- I hope that you would take into
7 consideration to allow Congressman Hastings to
8 be joined into our District. I yield the rest
9 of my time. Thank you.

10 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much, and
11 thanks so much for coming here today and for
12 your leadership as a high school student. I
13 mean, hey, as a State Senator you would be
14 highly articulate.

15 As a high school student you are doing
16 really great. Let's give this guy a round of
17 applause.

18 And next if we could hear from Brian
19 Whitehall and following Mr. Whitehall, Clayton
20 Williams and then Mayor Paul Puletti from the
21 City of Labelle.

22 Mr. Whitehall, thank you for coming, and
23 you are recognized.

24 MR. WHITEHALL: Thank you. Brian
25 Whitehall, City Administrator from your

1 neighbors to the north, Okeechobee, and we
2 bring greetings today.

3 I am representing not only the City but
4 the County, as we have no other representation
5 here.

6 I am like the prior person, I think we are
7 well represented from Senator Joe Negron and
8 our other Representatives and Senators.

9 We have kind of a unique situation in
10 Okeechobee inasmuch as we have an influence
11 from the Treasure Coast area, but we also have
12 our roots predicated in agriculture and central
13 Florida values.

14 And so the uniqueness presents a dilemma I
15 think for redistricting inasmuch as we would
16 prefer to have representation from the Treasure
17 Coast and central Florida.

18 Our current districts are set up perfectly
19 in our estimation, and I think as I said, our
20 Representatives and Senators do a great job
21 representing us. So it is short and sweet
22 message that I wanted to deliver today, that is
23 it.

24 And I also want to, if it is possible, to
25 present you with a resolution from the City of

1 Okeechobee that articulates that.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Please do, please do.

3 Thank you very, very much.

4 Now, Clayton Williams, we are delighted to
5 have him here, representing the City of
6 Okeechobee, and then following Mr. Williams,
7 Mayor Puletti and then if Janet Taylor from the
8 Hendry County Commission will be on deck.

9 Mr. Williams, the floor is yours and we
10 are looking forward to your testimony.

11 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
12 and members of the Committee. Clayton
13 Williams, City Council, Okeechobee. We enjoy
14 our representation that we have from Senator
15 Negron, Senator Alexander and Mike Horner and
16 Dr. Berman.

17 Like the City Manager just said, we are
18 kind of unique. We are part Treasure Coast
19 part, center part of the state. I personally
20 serve on the Central Florida Regional Planning
21 Council and we enjoy this representation and we
22 appreciate your consideration.

23 I just want to say also, nothing against
24 the sweetest town in the country, but we have
25 low calorie speckled perch. We are the home of

1 the speckled perch in Okeechobee.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: I see where this hearing
3 is headed.

4 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, so -- so come to
5 Okeechobee some time and we will feed you some
6 speckled perch.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Sounds like --

8 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you for coming.
9 Thank you very much. Appreciate it. And now,
10 Mr. Mayor, if you are here we would be
11 delighted to hear from you, followed by
12 Commissioner Taylor, and then I think it is Mel
13 Karau. Mel Karau, I apologize.

14 Mr. Mayor, thanks for your service to the
15 city and the community and you are recognized,
16 sir.

17 MR. PULETTI: And thank you for the
18 opportunity to be here. What I would like to
19 speak on is our legislative, our Florida
20 legislative lines.

21 There are three main issues that the City
22 of Labelle is concerned with. One is that
23 Hendry County remain whole in whichever
24 District we end up in.

25 Secondly we prefer State House District 77

1 to retain its characteristics of representing
2 the central portion of the state.

3 And the third issue that the residents of
4 Labelle and the city government of Labelle is
5 concerned with is, we would prefer our Senate
6 District, we are currently in Senate District
7 39 and it is very hard for us to find
8 commonality.

9 I represent a city of 4,800 people who
10 share with Miami-Dade County, and we would
11 prefer to be not included with Miami-Dade
12 County, but be included in a Senate District
13 that represents the interior portions of the
14 state.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
16 Mayor.

17 MR. PULETTI: Thank you.

18 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir.

19 MS. TAYLOR: Good morning.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much for
21 allowing us to be here, and if everybody who is
22 new to this area, I visited here before, but if
23 you turn around you will see the Janet B.
24 Taylor name and picture on the back of this
25 room, and Commissioner, thank you for letting

1 us come to your house today. You are
2 recognized.

3 MS. TAYLOR: We are more than glad to have
4 you and you have to forgive my voice. I had
5 surgery, but we really welcome you to Hendry
6 County and we have been pleased with our
7 representation that we have had.

8 But, you know, Hendry County is one of the
9 five pre-clearance counties by the Department
10 of Justice for election laws and we are hoping
11 when you are doing the redistricting that you
12 will remember that, and some of what the young
13 Democrat said is quite true.

14 We are now split with two Representatives
15 from Congress for our little small town and I
16 don't know that it is an advantage or a
17 disadvantage for us to have two
18 Representatives, but when you are doing your
19 redistricting maps we hope that you would take
20 into consideration that we do want to remain
21 whole, whole as a community and the
22 representation from Congressman Hastings I
23 think that would do us well.

24 Again, we thank you for coming and just
25 please remember that we want to stay whole here

1 in our county.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very, very much,
3 Commissioner, and Mel Karau is next and
4 following Mr. Karau, Robert Rense, and then
5 Terry Koopman.

6 Mr. Karau, thank you for being here, sir,
7 and the floor is yours.

8 MR. KARAU: Thank you for allowing me to
9 be here today. I am Chairman of the Republican
10 Party in Hendry County and I will echo much
11 what our Mayor said, Paul Puletti.

12 We would like to remain whole as a county
13 and we don't feel that we are getting the
14 representation from the east coast that we
15 deserve and we are quite happy with the
16 representation of our Representative Grimsley
17 and Tom Rooney. They represent us well.

18 And if we could stay within the central
19 part of Florida, I think that represents our
20 county best as opposed to splitting it up with
21 the east coast.

22 And I would just like to add that Labelle
23 is the home of the famous armadillo race that
24 is put on by Rotary.

25 SENATOR GAETZ: We are going to hear more

1 about this. I know that. Thank you,
2 Mr. Chairman.

3 Next, Robert Rense, Mr. Rense, and
4 following Mr. Rense, Terry Koopman and then if
5 Donna Storter, Glades County Commissioner, will
6 be ready to speak as well.

7 Mr. Rense, we are very pleased, you could
8 have been someplace else this morning. You
9 came to spend time with us and we are grateful.

10 MR. RENSE: And thank you for coming too,
11 Mr. Chairman, Representatives. My name is
12 Robert Rense, and I am the President of the
13 Glades Area Minestorial Association which
14 consists of the western Palm Beach County,
15 Okeechobee and Hendry county.

16 And I am just coming to say that the most
17 important thing to us is that we have the
18 districts drawn up so that you have one voice
19 and one vote, and that the power vote of those
20 who are minorities of those are not diminished
21 by redrawing the districts in such a way that
22 they do not have an impact.

23 We also are concerned about making sure
24 that when you draw those districts, that you
25 consider communities of interest, that those

1 who have common interest are together in those
2 districts so that they can be represented very
3 well.

4 But again we look forward to seeing what
5 your districts will end up looking like and
6 give our support when it is drawn in such a way
7 that all citizens have an equal right or equal
8 voice in the voting process. Thank you.

9 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, great words,
10 sir. We really appreciate that. And next,
11 Terri Koopman, Ms. Koopman and then
12 Commissioner Storter and then Teresa Jenkins,
13 if you could be ready.

14 Ms. Koopman, thank you for taking time
15 from your day and we look forward to your
16 testimony.

17 MS. KOOPMAN: Good morning, my name is
18 Terri Koopman, I live in beautiful Lake placid
19 and part of District 77.

20 I am here this morning to talk about the
21 fact that I want my county to be altogether.

22 Representative Albritton you are a really
23 nice man, but he has this little hunk of
24 Highlands County and we want Highlands County
25 to be of a piece. So please, the people in

1 Avon Park really want to be part of the rest of
2 us.

3 The other thing is, the voters of this
4 state overwhelmingly approved Amendments 5 and
5 6, and I would ask in the strongest possible
6 terms for you to withdraw your lawsuit in a
7 time when you are spending money that our
8 schools need your money.

9 It is our money, and as far as the
10 Congressional Districts are concerned, I am
11 sorry, I live in Highlands County and it is a
12 rural area, it is a beautiful rural area. We
13 have nothing in common with the high rise
14 condos in Palm Beach or the people on the Gulf
15 Coast either.

16 So please, put us with people that have
17 more of our interest, with Glades County, with
18 Desoto county, with Hardee County. Keep us
19 together with people of similar interest,
20 because essentially our rural interests are not
21 well represented by someone who has way more
22 constituents on the coast.

23 The other thing is, thank you so much for
24 coming and for listening to us. My husband
25 gave his life to defend our rights for liberty,

1 and I want representative government.

2 I want to be able to vote for those people
3 who will represent me well and not have
4 Representatives choose who the voters are.

5 Thank you.

6 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, and, ma'am,
7 thank you for the service and sacrifice of your
8 husband.

9 Next we will have Commissioner Storter, we
10 appreciate you being here, Commissioner, then
11 Teresa Jenkins and then Martha Hoover from the
12 League of Women Voters.

13 Commissioner, you are recognized and we
14 are delighted you are here.

15 COMMISSIONER STORTER: Thank you. I am
16 delighted to be here. I recognize Mr. Negron,
17 Mr. Caldwell and Ms. Grimsley, Senator
18 Benacquisto is not here. Oh, she just came in.
19 I didn't see you come in, Liz, thank you.

20 I am one of five County Commissioners in
21 Glades County. It is probably the fourth
22 smallest in the state. I had a lot of problems
23 finding user friendly census data, but we are
24 physically constrained, you know what that
25 means. We are (inaudible), which is a real

1 area of critical economic concern and yet
2 Glades County has no debt. We do have certain
3 issues though.

4 Senator Benacquisto's District, if you
5 look at it on a map, it looks like a salamander
6 squated on the map.

7 We are not happy with that.
8 Twenty-three percent of the voters in Glades
9 County live in my District, so obviously we are
10 going to have to make some District changes
11 from the Commission level.

12 It includes Old Town and north Labelle,
13 but 72 percent of my voters have a Hendry
14 County zip code. At the other geographical end
15 of Glades County is Buckhead Ridge where
16 26 percent of the Glades County voters reside
17 and all of them have an Okeechobee County zip
18 code.

19 There are other out of county zip codes in
20 Glades County, residences for Clewiston mailing
21 addresses, and Venice, and that is Hendry and
22 Highlands County.

23 A total of 47 percent of the voters
24 registered in Glades County have an out of
25 county zip code. So it is probably safe to

1 assume that the total household population
2 follows those same ratios.

3 So basing legislative representation on
4 addresses could result in very unfair
5 representation with Glades County, so please
6 consider that.

7 We have felt very well represented by our
8 Congressman Rooney and especially by
9 Representative Denise Grimsley, but we are
10 divided by those Senate Districts and we would
11 like to have that whole.

12 Also we are a part of other Heartland,
13 Florida consertions, cooperatives. We identify
14 better as the previous speaker spoke, with the
15 interior rural counties such as Hardee, Desoto,
16 Okeechobee and Highlands and even Hendry
17 County. We do not want to be divided.

18 You have heard that again and again I want
19 to thank you for this, for not drawing those
20 maps until you did hear from us. Thank you.

21 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
22 Commissioner, and Commissioner, before you
23 leave, the problem, the anomaly you have
24 described about the voting addresses, would you
25 be sure you talk with either Alex Kelly or John

1 Guthrie from our staff to make sure we have a
2 complete understanding of the -- of that issue,
3 how many people are involved and where they
4 are, so that we do not neglect that issue.

5 Thank you very much, Commissioner.

6 Next we will hear from Teresa Jenkins and
7 then Martha Hoover from the League of Women
8 Voters and then Jean Finks from the League of
9 Women Voters.

10 Ms. Jenkins, thank you for coming. The
11 floor is yours.

12 MS. JENKINS: Well, good morning, and
13 thank you, Mr. Chairman, Representatives. I
14 thank you for the opportunity to speak.

15 I also represent the League of Women
16 Voters. We are from Charlotte County, so we
17 were on the road at the crack of dawn this
18 morning to come here to speak about this
19 important issue.

20 The League has a couple of concerns, one
21 of which is the Legislature's published
22 timeline for drawing the District maps.

23 What the League believes is that we feel
24 that these, the timelines are unfair to our
25 Florida voters, to our Supervisors of

1 Elections, as well as to potential candidates.

2 The published timeline seems to wait to
3 finalize the District maps until the end of
4 session which is March 2012, and then the
5 courts, of course, the Justice Department have
6 their time to review the passage of the maps
7 and then review them.

8 And under the present timeline it seems
9 highly unlikely that the districts will be
10 approved before June 8, which is the deadline
11 for candidates to file their papers to run for
12 office.

13 So as it is, Florida districts may not be
14 finalized until August. So we understand that
15 the legislature's own lawyer has been quoted as
16 saying take the timeline will cause massive
17 voter confusion and we believe that as well.

18 We are concerned about our Supervisors of
19 Elections. They need to have sufficient time
20 to prepare for the elections and we are
21 concerned about challengers.

22 We are concerned about new candidates who
23 need to have sufficient time to mount an
24 effective campaign.

25 And so while the Legislature will hold

1 interim committee meetings from September
2 through December, perhaps that time could be
3 used to draw district maps. Then allow the
4 public to comment and then prepare the final
5 plans to submit to the full House and Senate
6 before the Legislature convenes.

7 The uncertainty as to what a district is
8 going to look like helps incumbents. It
9 doesn't help challengers, and these incumbents
10 are already known to the voters.

11 So these efforts to protect incumbents
12 perhaps, seem to undermine our fair competitive
13 elections, and some citizens have come
14 demanding that the timeline be accelerated, and
15 in response we understand that you intend to
16 bring the maps to the floor for a vote in
17 January, but still we don't believe this is
18 acceptable.

19 So what we are asking is for a published
20 accelerated timeline to adopt a rule requiring
21 all maps to be filed by October 3rd of 2011.
22 Adopt a rule requiring all committee action on
23 redistricting plans be completed by the end of
24 2011, and adopt a rule requiring that all plans
25 be voted on during the first week of 2012

1 session.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: I am sorry. I apologize.

3 MS. JENKINS: Thank you for your time.

4 SENATOR GAETZ: Yes, and Ms. Jenkins, I
5 hope since you came so far that you will have a
6 chance to stay until the end of the hearing.
7 Senator Negron and Representative Baxley will
8 give you some information I think that may
9 provide some reassurance.

10 I think it may be possible that the League
11 is operating off of an a old schedule that you
12 are troubled by. So I hope you can hang out
13 until the end of the hearing.

14 MS. JENKINS: That would be wonderful.
15 Thank you so much.

16 SENATOR GAETZ: All right, sure, thank you
17 so much, Ms. Jenkins.

18 And next we will hear from Martha Hoover,
19 representing the League, and then from Jean
20 Finks, representing the League and then from
21 Joseph, I am sorry, we already heard from
22 Joseph. You were there twice you were so good.

23 Then we are going to hear from Ashley
24 Tripp with the LORE Alliance.

25 And so Ms. Hoover, you are recognized and

1 think you for being here.

2 MS. HOOVER: Well, thank you. My name is
3 Martha Hoover and I live in Port Charlotte, and
4 I do represent the Charlotte County League of
5 Women Voters.

6 We are concerned about three specific
7 issues relative to redistricting reform.

8 First, the timeline for drawing district
9 maps is unfair to Florida voters. The plan to
10 wait to finalize district maps until at least
11 the end of the session results in Florida's
12 maps not being finalized until August of 2012.

13 The primary election is August 14th. Your
14 own lawyer rightfully says that this will cause
15 massive voter confusion and Election
16 Supervisors will have insufficient time to
17 prepare for elections.

18 Challengers and new candidates will have
19 little or no time to mount their campaigns and
20 voters will be voting for candidates they do
21 not know.

22 We therefore ask the Legislators to debate
23 and pass maps during the first week of session,
24 holding interim committee meetings from
25 September through December.

1 Commit to prepare and file district maps
2 by October the 3rd, 2011. Adopt a rule
3 requiring all committee action on redistricting
4 plans be completed by the end of 2011, and
5 requiring that all plans be voted on during the
6 first week of 2012 session. The current
7 timeline is simply an incumbent protection
8 plan.

9 Our second concern relates to spending
10 taxpayer money to oppose fair districts. Over
11 \$1 million of taxpayer money is already spent
12 hiring lawyers to fight the will of the Florida
13 voters, with another 30 million set aside for
14 future court battles.

15 The Florida House is using taxpayer money
16 to attack and invalidate a provision of our
17 State Constitution that was supported by
18 63 percent of Florida voters.

19 All of this money is being spent while
20 teachers are being laid off and social services
21 are being cut.

22 We ask the Florida House to immediately
23 withdraw from the lawsuit and respect the will
24 of the 63 percent of Florida voters who want
25 the new redistricting standards applied.

1 Our last point is where are the maps
2 provided by the Legislature? We had hoped that
3 you would provide sample maps for public
4 comment during these hearings. With 26
5 hearings we have not seen a single map from the
6 Legislature.

7 We demand that the Legislators commit to
8 holding another round of public hearings with
9 real maps that we can see which the citizens
10 can comment on.

11 So I thank you for your time and on behalf
12 of the Charlotte County League of Women Voters,
13 thank you very much.

14 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
15 ma'am, and I hope for the same reasons -- I am
16 sorry, I am not quite sure how to make this
17 work.

18 I hope you will have a chance to stay
19 until the end of the hearing because again I
20 think it may be possible that the scripts were
21 written before some events occurred that may
22 give you some reassurance.

23 MS. HOOVER: I hope so.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much, ma'am.

25 Next, Jean Finks from the League of Women

1 Voters.

2 MS. FINKS: Good morning, and thank you
3 for the opportunity to speak, Mr. Chairman. I
4 am from Charlotte County now, but I used to
5 live in Volusia County in Deland, and also in
6 Tallahassee. So I see some of my
7 Representatives, former Representatives here.

8 Mr. Chairman, thank you for telling us
9 that it is not if, but how, but my question to
10 you is, how much.

11 In the name of transparency can you tell
12 us how much all of these hearings have cost us,
13 the taxpayers, and we don't have a map to show
14 for it? We don't think the Legislature should
15 be spending our money needlessly.

16 Although there have been good comments at
17 this hearing and I am sure you are hearing them
18 from some of the others, we could have done
19 that by e-mail.

20 The Legislature shouldn't be spending
21 money on opposing fair districts and the
22 lawsuit that is presently pending is another
23 waste of our tax dollars.

24 We are on both sides of that lawsuit and
25 we are spending money on both sides. All that

1 money could be set aside as our people have
2 said, for more schools, more arts in the
3 schools, more science in the schools. We think
4 this is a poor waste of our tax dollars.

5 It is very clear that you are asking to
6 protect your own incumbencies and you are
7 trying to fight new people who might have new
8 ideas.

9 The Legislature should be working to
10 uphold the constitutional provisions that two
11 thirds of us have already approved. So we ask
12 the House to immediately withdraw from the
13 lawsuit and respect the will of the people in
14 letting fair districting go forward in a more
15 expeditious and hopefully not as tax --
16 unworthy a process. Thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
18 ma'am, for being here this morning.

19 And next, Ashley Tripp, if Ms. Tripp is
20 here, followed by Joseph Spratt, then Kevin
21 McCarthy.

22 Ms. Tripp, thank you for taking the time
23 to be with us and the floor is yours.

24 MS. TRIPP: Good morning. Thank you for
25 the opportunity to speak. I appreciate the

1 opportunity. I think it is important that we
2 do have this opportunity to share with you our
3 thoughts.

4 Again, I am with the Lake Okeechobee
5 Regional Economic Alliance of Palm Beach
6 County.

7 We are really working hard to improve the
8 economy in that region, but one thing that we
9 have in common all the way around the lake is
10 that we have Lake Okeechobee at the center and
11 the heart of our industries.

12 I would like to propose that when you look
13 at your redistricting that you encompass Lake
14 Okeechobee in the Senator, the Florida Senate
15 as well as the Florida House congressional maps
16 and the congressional maps because of our
17 common interest.

18 I have heard several times from many of
19 the different speakers this morning was
20 commonalities, commonalities, and then as our
21 agriculture industry, our tourism industry as
22 well as Lake Okeechobee and we need greater
23 representation, strong, stronger representation
24 in this whole region of south Florida and
25 central Florida.

1 We are the Belle Glade, Pahokee and South
2 Bay is part of the Freddie district, the
3 Florida rule heartland and it is great, we fit
4 into that because of our lifestyles yet it
5 often works against us because we are in a
6 metropolitan county and metropolitan
7 districting.

8 So we would just like for you to consider
9 when you do the redistricting to consider the
10 commonalities that the communities around Lake
11 Okeechobee and all of the different counties
12 around there have in place.

13 So I thank you for your time, and anything
14 I can ever do for you, please let me know.

15 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you very
16 much for that very useful testimony. Joseph
17 Spratt is next, following Mr. Spratt, Kevin
18 McCarthy and then Dr. Deborah Misotti, if I
19 have that name pronounced correctly.

20 Mr. Spratt, thank you very much, and you
21 are recognized, sir. We are glad to have you.

22 MR. SPRATT: Mr. Chairman and members.
23 First let me welcome you to Hendry County, and
24 thank you very much for coming here to listen
25 to our request and our concerns.

1 Our House District has worked well for 30
2 plus years. We have been blessed to have very
3 well-qualified and dedicated Representatives,
4 at least for the last 16 years, okay, okay,
5 for the last eight. Thank you, Representative
6 Grimsley.

7 This is because it has been comprised of
8 like communities, the like interests and we
9 have had Representatives that have walked the
10 walk, talked the talk. They are part of our
11 communities that understand our people, their
12 jobs and their industries, their problems and
13 the solutions thereto.

14 We are a rural agricultural based district
15 comprised of hard working, caring, God fearing
16 and conservative people. Our Senate district
17 on the other hand has always been attached to
18 the coast one way or another, and they have
19 very different problems, ideas and solutions.

20 We are kind of like a flea on the dog's
21 back. Mainly, just a nuisance, sometimes
22 getting a scratch. In fact, today our Senate
23 District runs from where you sit to Key West.

24 Senator Bullard, and I served in the House
25 with Senator Bullard and she is a good friend,

1 represents us well. However, I do not believe
2 that you can fairly represent a district with
3 such diversity that is over seven hours from
4 one end to the other.

5 We have nothing in common with the
6 majority of the constituents in this district
7 and we feel we need a more level playing ground
8 when it comes to our State Senate District.

9 I have invested most of my adult life in
10 representing and fighting for the people in
11 this county, as well as this district on rural
12 and agricultural issues.

13 First as a City Commissioner, then a
14 County Commissioner, and as a Senate
15 Representative. These people are the very core
16 of our society, working every day, providing
17 jobs, producing food and fiber and thus
18 contributing to the economic stability of this
19 state no matter what the circumstances.

20 I strongly urge you to seriously consider
21 drawing a House District much as it has been
22 for the past 30 years, and that our Senate
23 District be drawn to one of like communities
24 with like interest and like problems looking
25 for like solutions.

1 Let's preserve Florida's Heartland with
2 proper representation and not draw us to
3 coastal communities where our voices will not
4 be heard.

5 Again, thank you for being here and
6 listening to us, you have a daunting task. May
7 God speed.

8 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you. Thank you,
9 Representative, for your great service to this
10 community.

11 Next we will hear from Kevin McCarthy,
12 then Dr. Deborah Misotti, and then Margaret
13 Shaw, please.

14 Mr. McCarthy, thank you for being here,
15 and we welcome your testimony.

16 MR. MCCARTHY: Thank you, and I want to
17 thank you for being here and coming out and
18 listening to the people, particularly here in
19 the Glades.

20 I have been a private business owner for
21 24 years, spent six years on the City
22 Commission in Clewiston and eight years on the
23 County Commission, and from a congressional
24 standpoint I think we have been very fortunate.
25 I think we are well represented by Congressman

1 Rooney and we are well represented by
2 Congressman Hastings, but I think that
3 primarily is because he was born out in the
4 Glades and he has a real appreciation and I am
5 very grateful for his representation of our
6 area.

7 I am a little afraid of what might happen
8 if we have a new election with somebody else
9 representing that has the same problem as our
10 Senate District. Our Senate District does not
11 get represented in this area.

12 A lot of times in our legislative
13 delegation meetings our Senator doesn't show
14 up. We have Senator Benacquisto here, before
15 her, Senator Aronberg who doesn't have a single
16 voter in Hendry County. They cut across the
17 lake, they are at our legislative delegation
18 meetings.

19 I think it is very important that we have
20 a Senate that represents our area, represents
21 the center part of the state, the rural areas.
22 Ashley Tripp made mention of the Freddie
23 region, also in the reset region they get
24 pulled next the tri cities in Palm Beach County
25 and we go up into the center of the state and

1 it makes a lot of sense.

2 We have a lot in common but our Senate
3 District does not represent us and does not
4 represent us well. So I would ask you that
5 when you start drawing those lines that you,
6 you remember that, and draw us a Senate
7 District that makes sense.

8 Our House of Representatives seat has been
9 great and Joe went back 16 years, but I think
10 we go back long before that with Burt Harris,
11 we have been well represented for a long time.

12 I have been in Tallahassee every year for
13 the past 24 years, spent six trips up to D. C.
14 and it is very welcoming when you walk in and
15 you make those appointments and you go see your
16 Representative as opposed to when you make your
17 appointments and you see a staff member and you
18 see the staff members because they don't think
19 we are important.

20 You see the Representatives because they
21 know who we are and they want to represent us.
22 So I think it is important, it is important for
23 the people that are here.

24 Once again, thank you for coming out and
25 seeing the people. I think it is so much

1 better than an e-mail. So thank you so much.

2 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, sir. We
3 appreciate your comments.

4 Dr. Misotti, did I have that name
5 pronounced correctly, ma'am?

6 DR. MISOTTI: Yes, yes, you did.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you so much for
8 being here and the floor is yours, ma'am.

9 DR. MISOTTI: Okay, I would like to say
10 that I have lived in this area for almost nine
11 years now, and the one thing that I have
12 noticed is the great divisiveness in the area
13 simply because there is not the proper
14 representation for the demeanor and the
15 economic stature of the people in this area.

16 I would like to reiterate exactly what
17 Mayor Paul Puletti said. We need
18 representation for the entire county with the
19 same Representative. I strongly, strongly
20 recommend that we follow the District 77.

21 Denise Grimsley, our Representative, has
22 been wonderful. She has stepped into local
23 situations. She was easy to speak with. I --
24 my lifestyle is very different from most
25 people's. I run an educational primate

1 sanctuary.

2 I have people come in from all over the
3 world to study the apes and monkeys that I work
4 with. We ran into a very difficult situation
5 with the State Senate when they were going to
6 incorporate into the Everglades clean up bill a
7 \$10,000 bond that was going to be required for
8 a sanctuary and because we were a 501-C3, that
9 was very difficult for us.

10 I attempted to contact my State Senator 11
11 times, never received one return phone call.
12 When I finally reached one of her actual staff
13 members and spoke to them, she said that the
14 Senator didn't have time for such small issues,
15 which I really did not appreciate.

16 I went to Representative Grimsley. She
17 put me in touch with Senator, former Senator
18 Dave Aronberg, and though he was not my
19 Senator, he went to the Senator, Senate floor
20 to speak on behalf of our sanctuary, and I
21 greatly appreciated that.

22 And the reason he did that is because he
23 understood the people in this area, he
24 understood the impact that various things have
25 on this area, and when you are redistricting I

1 would greatly appreciate it if you could keep
2 Hendry County whole and you could give us
3 representation for the people who actually live
4 here and not those in Miami-Dade County who
5 have a complete socioeconomic difference from
6 us. Thank you.

7 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you, Doctor, very
8 much. I was going to say, we would provide
9 everybody with Representative Grimsley's cell
10 phone number, but it sounds like you already
11 have it.

12 Our next speaker is Margaret Shaw.
13 Ms. Shaw, if you are here, and then following
14 Ms. Shaw, Janice Grove. Margaret Shaw?

15 Thank you for taking time to be here today
16 and we are very grateful for your testimony,
17 ma'am.

18 MS. SHAW: Yes, I am here representing
19 myself as a citizen. I belong to three
20 political organizations, and I do want to say
21 that I am proud to say that Denise Grimsley is
22 my rep and will hopefully be Senator.

23 And I do empathize this -- let's see, with
24 Joe Spratt and the Commissioner that spoke
25 about how the city like Okeechobee is divided,

1 this is divided. Avon Park used to be divided
2 down Main Street.

3 We had Joe on this side and Adam Putnam on
4 this side. And so these things happen and that
5 was in a delegate District. I am proud to say
6 that Highlands County carried Joe Negron over
7 the top when he ran for Representative.

8 So we do have little pieces and parts of
9 our county that belong to other districts that
10 we are not voting as a whole, so I don't know
11 how to fix that.

12 I look at maps and I don't know how to fix
13 it, but we are -- it is necessary that we do
14 combine and put a lot of emphasis on what is
15 the rural economy and the tourism and
16 everything.

17 And I do think that some of the testimony
18 I have heard here today is amazing and I just
19 want to thank you for the opportunity that we
20 get our two cents' worth in that we would like
21 to see the Senate Districts and things that are
22 hurting these other people thought out real
23 well, but don't go over board and don't lose
24 Ms. Grimsley and Paul Rooney as their districts
25 are now proposed. Thank you very much.

1 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much,
2 ma'am, for being here this morning. We are
3 very grateful to you.

4 Now Janice Grove, please, Ms. Grove. We
5 are very, very pleased to -- that you took time
6 to be with us today, and we are all anxious to
7 hear your testimony, ma'am. You have the
8 floor.

9 MS. GROVES: Well, I am just speaking for
10 myself. I live out in the sticks. I leave on
11 a dead end dirt road. No neighbors can see my
12 house and I can't see any of my neighbors'
13 houses and I love it.

14 There are 16 deer that come through my
15 area on a regular basis that we see them and we
16 even had between fawns this year, so we are
17 delighted, not too happy about the hogs and the
18 armadillos, but that is all right, we can't do
19 much about that. We get what we got.

20 I have been very, very pleased. I am a
21 native Miamian and we escaped to the real
22 Florida in 1979, gratefully, and have been
23 very, very happy with the representation that
24 we have had.

25 Both on the State and the Federal level,

1 we can always contact the people we need to
2 contact and they listen to us. I gave up on
3 e-mails some time ago.

4 It is so impersonal and people can't get
5 the nuances of what you are really saying and
6 the tone of your voice when you send an e-mail.
7 It is just there in print and so I am so very
8 grateful that you all do come out and listen to
9 us, because that is important.

10 I am politically active. I try to support
11 the Constitution and vote for the people I
12 think will do the best jobs. We have certainly
13 been blessed with Denise Grimsley and we do
14 want her to be our Senator, definitely.

15 Please see that those districts that we
16 stay there so we can get her elected, because
17 she does, not just work for us, but she works
18 for the State of Florida and for the goodness
19 of the people.

20 SENATOR GAETZ: Would you please come down
21 now?

22 MS. GROVES: I really, really think that
23 yes, we are primarily rural areas, and, yes, we
24 do have some areas that are larger. Sebring is
25 a larger area of population that some of you do

1 not have, but we are still not gigantic.

2 We are not Palm Beach and we are not Tampa
3 and we do think we are people that care about
4 what is going on in our area, and that is what
5 we need.

6 Our county is divided. We do have a small
7 area up in Avon Park that is in a different
8 Representative District. If that can be
9 changed I think that would probably be good,
10 and we do thank you for being here and letting
11 the little people actually have something to
12 say.

13 I have never been elected to anything and
14 nor do I care to be, thank you very much, but I
15 do care and I will get up and say what I think.
16 Thank you.

17 SENATOR GAETZ: And you said it well.
18 Thank you very much, ma'am. And now we have
19 someone who came all of the way from Orlando to
20 be with us, Stephen Garrett.

21 Mr. Garrett, thanks for the long drive and
22 we look forward to your thoughts.

23 MR. GARRETT: Good morning, and welcome, I
24 thank you for the welcome. Ladies and
25 gentlemen of our Legislature, I have only lived

1 in Florida for about three years, but in that
2 time my Congressional District has been
3 represented by three different persons of two
4 different political parties.

5 However, I don't consider this a bad
6 thing. I did attend two earlier hearings in
7 this series without commenting. I heard many
8 concerns that redistricting respect and honor
9 our Federal Civil Rights laws and that respect
10 and honor the wishes of the voters for compact
11 districts. I would like to echo those
12 concerns.

13 I also heard concerns that these bills
14 were in conflict. I urge you to recognize that
15 this is a false dichotomy, meaning both goals
16 may be more challenging than treating them
17 either/or, but meeting both goals is assurable
18 possible.

19 But beyond that I challenge you to honor
20 the diversity within your districts that you
21 draw, not diversity of age or race or any
22 demographic, but rather the diversity of ideas.

23 Our nation is in desperate need of
24 intelligent considerate civic debate and the
25 surest way to squelch that is to craft

1 districts in which the outcome of the general
2 election is a foregone conclusion.

3 Uncompetitive districts deface the value
4 of each and incremental vote and renders it
5 virtually meaningless. Competitive districts
6 raise up the value of the incremental vote and
7 encourages participation.

8 Uncompetitive districts teach our children
9 that those in power can act to protect their
10 own interest at the expense of the peoples.

11 Competitive districts place the people's
12 interest first, encourage our children and all
13 citizens to reflect on what truly constitutes
14 their interest.

15 Uncompetitive District breed distrust,
16 cynicism and apathy. Competitive districts
17 enliven debate, engage voters and bring
18 accountability to the floor.

19 Many may say these are foreign ideals but
20 they will choose and strive to create districts
21 to protect your own security in office.

22 My friends, subsequently can reflect
23 another false dichotomy. I suggest that
24 securing an office is completely compatible
25 with competitive districts.

1 I submit to you the true job security for
2 a public servant rests on consistent delivery
3 of exemplary public service, and that this is
4 what makes it possible for her or him to
5 consistently win vibrant, competitive
6 electoral elections.

7 Ladies and gentlemen, your own willingness
8 to craft competitive electoral districts would
9 be the fairest possible evidence of your own
10 suspicion that you are running for office. It
11 would indicate that you would not, you think
12 would not, you think you would not win a tough
13 well contested election in a competitive
14 district.

15 I feel that you may instead to choose to
16 craft districts which, if you will forgive me
17 saying so, in a jack-ass or respectively
18 pachyderm could vote.

19 Show your belief in your own worthiness
20 and show your belief in your constituents who's
21 government this is. Craft districts which are
22 respectful, honorable, legal, compact and
23 competitive.

24 SENATOR GAETZ: Thank you very much.

25 Thank you, sir. This concludes the individuals

1 who had signed up to speak or who, during the
2 course of the hearing, felt the spirit moved
3 them to speak.

4 We appreciate all of the information we
5 have received. Let me just say before I yield
6 the chair to Senator Negron because I said that
7 I wanted to stay for everybody who wanted to
8 speak but I have to dash now to get my
9 transportation back to the central time zone.

10 Let me say that the kind of information
11 that you provided today is the kind that would
12 be very difficult to get if all we did was just
13 check our e-mail.

14 The information we have gotten from these
15 hearings about specific neighborhoods and
16 communities and how those communities should or
17 should not be boundaried or divided is the kind
18 of thing we can't get from an echo chamber in
19 Tallahassee and we can't get, I don't think
20 just by checking the mail.

21 You got to get it by talking to people,
22 listening to people who live in the
23 neighborhoods and who live in the communities
24 and you have given us that information.

25 This has been extraordinarily helpful to

1 me as somebody who lives far, far away to get
2 firsthand the input that tells me how you feel
3 these districts ought to be drawn.

4 With that, Representative Baxley, I will
5 yield the Senate chair to Senator Negron and
6 thank you all for being here today.

7 Senator Negron and Representative Baxley
8 and the other members of the Committees will
9 now have a chance to react, offer any thoughts
10 they have, answer any questions and to sum up.
11 Senator Negron.

12 SENATOR NEGRON: Okay, we are now at the
13 portion of the meeting I will now offer any
14 House members an opportunity to make any
15 comments or ask any questions or respond in any
16 way to the comments that we have heard.

17 REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Thank you,
18 Mr. Chair, and I want to thank the citizens for
19 coming out today.

20 There are two things that I think we can
21 agree on, Mr. Chair, and that is the testimony
22 from our citizens.

23 When we hear and do what they say,
24 democracy works best when we do what our
25 citizens ask us to do.

1 The other thing I wanted to do, and I
2 think we can agree on, Mr. Chair, is the fact
3 that with this being our last meeting, I just
4 want to commend our staff, I want to commend
5 the Sergeant's office for their work.

6 I mean, we know that this is a difficult
7 process. We have gone to 26 different
8 locations and they have done an outstanding job
9 of making sure we had the information, they
10 were here and I would like to do something
11 special for them and let them know that we
12 really appreciate the work that they have done.

13 I also wanted to thank the Florida
14 Channel, they have been here, they have been
15 streaming, they haven't missed a beat for the
16 most part in making sure that this information
17 is published out into the public.

18 So with that I know, Mr. Chair, this is
19 our last meeting, but I wanted to make sure
20 that those good folks are recognized for their
21 outstanding work. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22 A VOICE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and again,
23 being the humble gentleman that I am I let
24 Representative Taylor from Volusia County go
25 first, but he basically said exactly what I

1 wanted to say.

2 Being one that attended each and every
3 single one of the meetings, and I tend to like
4 to get to places early, because if you are not
5 early, you are late, that is my belief, and
6 being one that tends to leave places a little
7 bit later because I like to talk to
8 individuals, I, too, want to commend the staff
9 of the great State of Florida, because what we
10 have seen is dedication exemplified and
11 executed in a perfect and flawless manner.

12 The Sergeant's office and everybody else,
13 the Florida Channel, I have talked to you all
14 because you get here before us, and you leave
15 after us, and it truly is an honor to be able
16 to say that I am a co-worker of yours.

17 And I look forward to the rest of this
18 process in making sure that ever comment that
19 we have heard throughout these hearings that we
20 go back and we do the will of the people.
21 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 SENATOR NEGRON: Thank you very much. Any
23 other members of the House wish to speak? We
24 will pass the microphone.

25 A VOICE: Thank you very much for coming

1 out this morning. I know it is early and for
2 those of us who have been to all 26 hearings,
3 as I have been, it has truly been an honor to
4 hear from the public and to hear what you have
5 to say about this process.

6 I -- this is my first time going through
7 redistricting here in the State of Florida, but
8 as an elected official in New York when I lived
9 there I went through redistricting where they
10 had my living room in one District and my
11 kitchen in another.

12 So I understand what redistricting is all
13 about, and I will intently look over the
14 information that I have taken down and what I
15 have received so that I will make sure that we
16 get the best maps out for everyone. Thank you.

17 SENATOR NEGRON: Okay, are there any other
18 House members that wish to make any comments?
19 And I think before we turn to, let's see if
20 there is any members of the Senate that wish to
21 comment.

22 We had one other member of the public who
23 has traveled to be here today and we certainly
24 want to hear his testimony and input, and that
25 is Joe Thomas. Is Mr. Thomas here?

1 If he is still here we will open public
2 testimony back up to have an opportunity for
3 him to speak if he still wishes to speak.

4 A VOICE: I think he left.

5 SENATOR NEGRON: Okay, we wanted to, we
6 wanted to -- I would rather err on the side of
7 caution. I think he may have had some vehicle
8 issues, but if we have a member of the public
9 that says they want to speak I want to make
10 sure that we give them that opportunity.

11 So now we will turn it over, are there any
12 members of the Florida Senate that wish to make
13 any comments or speak?

14 A VOICE: Well, the only person that we
15 left out, the only people we left out are the
16 interpreters, and let me just tell you, their
17 fingers have been flying.

18 They have been some very fired up people
19 and they have had to say some things that maybe
20 they would not like to interpret, or maybe they
21 would, because some of them were calling us
22 names. So maybe they were like, oh, this is
23 great, anyway, thanks for coming.

24 SENATOR NEGRON: Okay, are there any other
25 members of the Senate that wish to comment? If

1 not, I am going to turn over the floor to
2 Representative Baxley who is the House co-chair
3 to make some closing comments and answer any
4 questions if he wishes to, and then I will wrap
5 up.

6 REPRESENTATIVE BAXLEY: Thank you,
7 Chairman. Just so I might pick up any Mojo
8 left in the room, the high regard for Chairman
9 Grimsley, I wanted to share a factoid.

10 Many years ago when I was a small child,
11 my father who was my pastor, conducted the
12 wedding ceremony for her parents. So I get
13 part of the credit for my family for her being
14 here.

15 So she was kind enough to invite me back,
16 my father had passed away and let me be there
17 as a part of their 50th wedding anniversary.

18 I share that because I just want to touch
19 base with you that these are real people
20 devoting their real lives to try to make a
21 difference just like you are doing today by
22 spending time here for your community, and on
23 that note, today is my 39th wedding
24 anniversary. So thank you for letting us out
25 early so I can go home and celebrate that great

1 victory with my wife, five children and seven
2 grandchildren.

3 So that is just a personal aside that I
4 just want to thank all of the attendees. Each
5 of you bring unique perspectives that provide
6 information to us about Hendry County,
7 Okeechobee, Glades, Highlands and the other
8 nearby counties.

9 We could not be successful in this process
10 without your explanation of how it is that you
11 would implement these State and Federal
12 redistricting laws, and to that end and in
13 response to the points that were raised this
14 morning about the Legislature's expenditures,
15 in particular, the cost of having these
16 meetings, you can visit our site.

17 We truly offer transparency. It is
18 www.floridatransparency.gov, www.florida
19 transparency.gov and you can examine every
20 dollar of your tax money that the Legislature
21 spends, including the investment in these
22 hearings.

23 I really think that the investment in
24 doing these meetings is well worth it, because
25 it reminds us that this is your government. We

1 don't have seats in the Legislature.

2 They are your seats, particularly with
3 term limits. We go and sit in them for you to
4 represent you there as Senators and House
5 members, and so it is an honor to come before
6 you.

7 I would also like to share as a returning
8 member, I left the Legislature with term limits
9 and came back. I am probably one of the few
10 people in this room that actually has been
11 through this process as a member of a
12 redistricting committee.

13 I probably shouldn't say that given the
14 appearance of the map, but I was a freshman
15 then.

16 So Joe and Senator Joyner were there, and
17 of course, they have gone on to the Senate and
18 so I don't remember any time in our history
19 that as far as the timeline that we moved the
20 Legislature's meeting up.

21 That was a record event, and so I think we
22 have done a lot of things to try to create
23 adequate time for this process to be effective,
24 and the League of Women Voters did file maps
25 last cycle, the last time we did this.

1 They didn't file them until January. We
2 still got done on time, and incumbents, they
3 don't know where their districts are yet
4 either. We don't even know what we are running
5 for yet.

6 So we are all in this together, but I
7 thank you for the time that you have invested
8 and I certainly want to reiterate that I think
9 it is well worth the cost to hear from you, the
10 people, and with that I will turn it over to
11 you, Senator Negron.

12 SENATOR NEGRON: Thank you, thank you,
13 Chairman Baxley, for those comments, and I just
14 want to offer up a couple of observations in
15 response to some of the comments that were
16 made, and again, there are not right opinions
17 or wrong opinions on how we ought to do this.

18 They are just different points of view,
19 and in response to one of the comments from the
20 Charlotte County League representative talking
21 about, you know, where are the maps, where are
22 the real maps.

23 Well, I would argue that these are real
24 maps. These are maps that are drawn by the
25 citizens of the state of Florida, and in one of

1 our hearings earlier in the week we had a
2 13-year-old boy who, along with his sister,
3 drew a map of all 120 House Districts, and I am
4 sure many members of the Committee, I have
5 looked at the map, this was something that a
6 lot of thought was put into and it is something
7 that we will take into consideration.

8 So we consider the over 54 or partial maps
9 that have been submitted, those are real maps
10 and we do take them into consideration.

11 Also with this issue about, you know, we
12 should have had maps now. I would argue that
13 if we came here with maps I don't know, here is
14 what my response would be.

15 I happen to be a lawyer. When I go to
16 court I would like the Judge to hear the
17 evidence before she or he makes a ruling, and
18 so to me if we came in with maps already drawn
19 I think citizens would have the right to scream
20 to high heaven and say, let me understand this
21 process.

22 You did the work product and now you are
23 coming to listen to us, this is a charade. I
24 think the opposite argument would be made. I
25 think it is much more preferable for us to

1 listen to testimony from the public and then do
2 our work.

3 And I want to just follow up briefly on
4 what Chairman Baxley said about the information
5 that we have received.

6 Last night we were in Lehigh Acres. I
7 have heard of Lehigh Acres. I have seen it on
8 a map. I have not spent a significant amount
9 of time there. I got there early, had dinner
10 there, talked to some people. Apparently there
11 was an issue with one of your banks yesterday.
12 One of your banks was surrounded with police
13 tape and officers. I think there had been a
14 little incident there, but I didn't know Lehigh
15 Acres well, but after we spent time there, we
16 listened to people, there were specific things
17 that we would never know but for having been
18 there.

19 And I am just going to give one example
20 from the hearing today of something. I grew up
21 in West Palm Beach and we came to Belle Glade
22 and Clewiston it and Pahokee, so I know this
23 area, I was here a year ago with the healthcare
24 tour that we did, but Commissioner Storter had
25 the comment about the percentage of people

1 registered to vote here, but their addresses in
2 another location.

3 I don't mind admitting it, I did not know
4 that. I was not aware of that, and that is
5 something that we need to take into
6 consideration to make sure that when did we do
7 the reapportionment that we take that into
8 consideration.

9 So I think the fact that we are here, I
10 think the most important thing Legislators can
11 do is listen, and I think there are things that
12 we have learned today that are very valuable.

13 With regard to the timeline, it is our
14 goal to make sure that this process is done in
15 an orderly manner. There is no intent to wait
16 until the last minute to create confusion, but
17 I will say this.

18 The legislative process has rules that are
19 designed to protect the majority and the
20 minority parties, because those parties change
21 from time to time, and members have rights to,
22 there are members that aren't on the
23 Reapportionment Committee that are going to be
24 hearing this for the first time in September
25 when we have our first hearing in the Senate

1 and I think the House has a hearing scheduled
2 also for September or October.

3 So members have a right to look at the
4 maps, to file amendments, to say we don't like
5 the way this is done, we don't think this is
6 best for our community, and when the
7 Legislature convenes in regular session in
8 January, the League has talked about passing it
9 out the first week.

10 Well, it is up to the presiding officers
11 to set the schedule, but if you are a House
12 member or a Senator that has not spent the last
13 several months talking to voters and getting
14 this information, don't those House members and
15 Senators have a right to put their proposals
16 out, to debate them, to argue their points of
17 view.

18 So I think that we will do everything we
19 can to conclude the process in an orderly way,
20 but there are certain procedures that are set
21 up not to delay, but to protect all of us and
22 make sure there is meaningful input.

23 And I know all of you know this, but just
24 a quick reminder, that we are only one part of
25 the process. Once this is approved by the

1 Legislature, the Attorney General has a period
2 of time to review, and then the maps go to the
3 Florida Supreme Court, and then into the
4 Federal system to have the Attorney General's
5 Office look at the maps, especially for those
6 counties that are a part of previous court
7 orders.

8 So there are a number of participants in
9 the process, but it is our intent to have this
10 done in plenty of time so that there is a
11 seamless transition into our electoral
12 process.

13 And then I just want to mention one other
14 thing just as maybe a point of interest to
15 those of you who took the time to come this
16 morning. We really appreciate it. There has
17 been some talk and discussion, I think Senator
18 Gaetz initially brought it up, and I know
19 Chairman Weatherford indicated that he was
20 going to consider it, that maybe for the next
21 time we do this in ten years, that perhaps we
22 want to amend our Constitution or give you, the
23 voters, the opportunity to potentially amend
24 our Constitution to, if we did it this cycle,
25 to do this in 2011, so it is completely done by

1 the end of 2011 so that we are not quote,
2 unquote, cutting it so close, but you have our
3 assurances that we are going to do everything
4 we can within the rules.

5 We can't vote on the plan until 2012.
6 That is in our Constitution, but maybe we want
7 to give the voters an opportunity to say, how
8 about we do it a little earlier than our
9 current rules provide. So that is one of the
10 things that, that we are going to look at and
11 possibly consider for the future.

12 Again, I want to thank everyone for your
13 time, for your interest, I have taken three
14 pages of notes. I have a file that I keep all
15 of my notes, from Lehigh Acres last night, from
16 being in Naples, as we have gone all over the
17 state, to Key West, to Miami.

18 Every community is different, and just to
19 show you the kind of issues that have to be
20 worked out, we have heard in communities where
21 there is a line down the middle, for instance,
22 let's say Okeechobee, because that is in my
23 Senate District.

24 Okeechobee, half of Okeechobee I represent
25 and half is J. D. Alexander. Well, there are

1 some folks who say, that is pretty good,
2 because J. D. Alexander is the Chairman of the
3 Appropriations Committee, frequently ranked as
4 the number one or number two, at least in the
5 top three ranked Senators in the State of
6 Florida, so that is good, and then we have, you
7 know, a rookie coming along trying to carry his
8 part of the load, too.

9 So it is actually good for us to have two
10 people, but then we heard today from some
11 citizens that they would rather be represented
12 by one person.

13 They feel like it is better to have focus
14 rather than numbers. It is not that one side
15 is right or wrong. They were just differing
16 opinions of people with Good Will.

17 So those are the things we are going to
18 work through and I noticed that there seemed to
19 be some strong opinions particularly in the
20 State Senate District that being tied into a
21 District that goes all the way to South
22 Florida, that doesn't appear that the majority
23 of the people here today don't want that.

24 So that carries a lot of weight with me
25 when we look at the maps, because that is what

1 we are go -- those are the factors that, that
2 we are going to use.

3 So we really, really appreciate the time
4 that you took to be here today. Any other
5 House or Senate members?

6 I think Representative Grimsley should put
7 on a workshop for all of us, because I have
8 been to quite a few of these hearings and she
9 has gotten more shout outs and more compliments
10 than anybody.

11 So we are all doing the best we can, but
12 we can learn from you. So we will applaud your
13 service to this community and we appreciate
14 everything that you do and even those of us who
15 live closer to the east coast of Florida, where
16 I live in Stuart, believe me, we know about
17 this part of Florida.

18 A lot of my constituents don't. They
19 think that Florida is just Orlando, theme
20 parks, gated communities and golf courses. I
21 actually know that this is Florida. This is
22 the original Florida, and that meat does not
23 show up at Publix wrapped in saran wrap, that
24 someone actually has to have cattle and grow
25 food for us to eat, and we appreciate this part

1 of Florida.

2 We care about this part of Florida. We
3 think it is just as important as every other
4 part of Florida and that is one of the reasons
5 we chose to come to Clewiston.

6 So with that, Representative Baxley moves
7 we rise.

8 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
9 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 76 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 5th day of December, 2011.

CLARA C. ROTRUCK

Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

Commission Expires:

November 13, 2014