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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 caravanned 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