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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 Negron.

8 SENATOR NEGRON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
9 Good evening, everyone, and my name is Joe
10 Negron. 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