

Exhibit F

Senate Committee on Reapportionment and House Select Committee
Testimony of Beverlye Colson Neal

My name is Beverlye Colson Neal. Because my time is limited, I have brought with me written comments that expand upon what I will share with you now. I have been a resident of Congressional District 5, formerly Congressional District 3 most of my life. I was born and grew up in Duval County. I have lived in Orlando and Orange County for 14 years. I am here today to testify to the importance of keeping Congressional District 5 running down to Orlando.

My family was always involved in the NAACP and political activism. I have worked in a number of political campaigns. **Over the years, I have served in various roles with the national NAACP and the Florida State Conference of the NAACP. I was the Florida Voter Empowerment Coordinator for the NAACP National Voter Fund, and I was the Executive Director for the Florida Conference from 2003-2009. I am the 1st Vice President of the Orange County Branch of the NAACP, the largest branch in the state.** In that role I oversee the Political Action Committee, Legal Redress, Youth Work, Criminal/Juvenile Justice Committee and Membership Committee. Our branch is active in voter registration and "Get Out the Vote" efforts in Orange County. We are also focused on the restoration of rights for convicted felons.

I have worked all over the state on nonpartisan issues. The NAACP has always consistently been a part of the redistricting process in this state. We have proposed plans and lobbied for the adoption of fair legislative and congressional districts. The State Conference supported the constitutional amendments passed in 2010.

I remember what it was like when nothing tangible was done for the African-American community by our former Congressional Representative, Charlie Bennett. I know the frustrations of Black voters who are unable to elect candidates to public office, who share or are sensitive to the issues of our community; other impediments make it almost impossible to impact these elections. On the other hand, the combination of communities that are linked in congressional district 5 makes it possible for these same people to elect one of their own to Congress. We do not endorse candidates for public office, but we actively encourage minority voter participation in our communities. We feel that the voting rights of African American voters should be protected as provided in Amendment 6, but the Amendments have no effect if we cannot maintain districts in which African-American voters have the opportunity to elect candidates.

I testified as a witness for the NAACP in the *Romo v. Detzner* trial. I talked about my experience in elections in this state. I also talked about the benefits of being able to elect a candidate of choice in congressional District 5. The historically black colleges and universities in Jacksonville, Daytona...even Florida A & M were in deplorable condition. Edward Waters College was not accredited, so students transferred to some other accredited college to complete their degrees. The infrastructure of Jacksonville, Orlando, and other parts of the district has improved. Now minorities get contracts with the government. Economic opportunities have improved. Sun Rail train service has been important to

transportation in our area. There has been improvement in criminal justice reform which boosts the morale and spirit of people in the district. Our Congresswoman intervened in the Marissa Alexander and Travon Martin cases. **These are benefits we've seen because we've been able to elect a candidate of our choice.**

The District today is not much different from the original District that was drawn by the US Supreme Court; most of the counties are the same. The 5th District is a community of interest. The communities share a common history and culture. You find the same conditions in Jacksonville, Sanford, Gainesville...all over...concerns about economics, housing, education and crime. We have a congress person who will listen, and the district offices are important in giving access to government. But most important people are encouraged to register and vote. Because of the history of discrimination against us, our people are fragile; they need encouragement. The opportunity to elect candidates to public office is a right that means a lot in terms of the development of our communities.

I want Orange County to be a part of Congressional District 5. We depend on our congress person to help out with community issues. I have channeled people to the district offices for services they need, and they got assistance. Our current Congresswoman has been involved and supportive of our county. We share the same interests as other minority voters throughout the district. In other parts of the state African-American candidates have been asked to step down because they cannot win the election, or in other words, they could not get Caucasian support running as Democrats.

I cannot support the plaintiff's proposal to create a new District 5 that runs along the Florida-Georgia border. This will leave the core of the district unrepresented in Congress. Thousands of African-American voters in north central Florida will no longer have the opportunity to elect a candidate to Congress. These voters will be placed in districts where they are outnumbered by whites. This will negatively impact voter turnout, which will already be impacted by a likely special election.

There is no guarantee that African-American voters can be organized to elect a candidate in a new configuration that runs east and west. We do know from past elections that if the core of District 5 remains in place, north to south with the current mix of communities, there is a strong likelihood that African-American voters will be able to elect their own candidate to Congress and you will see more African American participation.

You should maintain the current configuration of District 5 with changes that will be acceptable to the court. African-American voters in Orange County should be allowed to remain in District 5. We need the opportunity to elect a candidate who will represent the interests of African-American voters.

Thank you.

Senate Committee on Reapportionment and House Select Committee
Testimony of Whitfield Jenkins

My name is Whitfield Jenkins. I have lived in Marion County all my life. I am retired from the Florida Department of Corrections. I served on the Board for the Ocala Housing Authority and Boys and Girls Clubs. I now serve on the Board for Ocala/Marion County Hospice. I am a past member of the Florida Commission on Human Relations, serving 12 years under three governors. We enforced the statutes that protected Florida citizens from discrimination.

I am a past president of the Marion County branch of the NAACP. I have served as first and third Vice President of the State Conference of the NAACP. I worked to train our leadership and revitalize our branches throughout the state. I am currently the Vice Chair of the State Conference economic development committee. We are active in voter registration and minority political participation in this state. I feel that the voting rights of African American voters should be protected as provided in the Constitutional Amendments passed in 2010.

I also testified in the *Romo v. Detzner* trial. I understand the Judge's ruling in the case and support the efforts of this body to create a constitutional congressional redistricting plan.

I testified in the *Romo v. Detzner* trial about the difficulties in electing African-American candidates to public office in Marion County. No African-American has ever been elected to the county commission under the at-large system. 20-25 African-Americans have run for office, and only one or two have made it to runoffs. We are only able to elect candidates to the Ocala City Council because of the residency districts. We know the impact of racially polarized voting in our local elections. We don't have an early voting poll in our community. There are racial appeals in our elections. Black candidates do not put their pictures on campaign signs.

We have segregated housing patterns. A lawsuit was settled in 1979 against the city of Ocala because of discrimination in municipal services and employment. Our residents suffer from high illiteracy, unemployment, substandard housing and poverty.

I was a named plaintiff in the lawsuit that created the boundaries for congressional district 3. African-American voters in Marion County have benefitted from being part of the district. We are now able to elect our representative to Congress. We have common interests with the other communities in the district. All of us share a history that has only been partly remedied. We still suffer the effects of a past that did not allow us to be a part of the political process. Taking away the opportunity to elect our own candidate to congress will have a negative impact on minority voters.

I do not support any proposal to remove Marion County from District 5. Creating an alternative district that runs along the Florida-Georgia border between Jacksonville and Tallahassee will leave thousands of African-American voters no longer able to elect a candidate of their choice to congress. African-American voters that have been unified around the need to register and vote in order to be able to elect a candidate of choice will be negatively impacted.

Senate Committee on Reapportionment and House Select Committee
Testimony of Dale Landry

My name is Dale Landry. I am here today to speak on behalf of the Florida State Conference of NAACP Branches on the remedial congressional redistricting process under way here. I am the 4th Vice President of the Florida State Conference. Under the leadership of our state conference president, Adora Obi Nweze, the Florida NAACP has been very involved in the recent redistricting process and litigation in an effort to ensure that the voting rights of black voters in this state are not diminished or diluted. Because I will not have time to cover all the information that I would like to cover with you, I have brought copies of the letter the Florida NAACP sent to members of the Senate Reapportionment Committee and the House Select Committee, and submit those as my additional written testimony.

In 2010, the Florida NAACP formally and publicly supported Amendments 5 and 6 because of the minority voting protections that those amendments would enshrine in the state constitution. We certainly did not support an interpretation of the amendments that would undermine the electoral successes achieved by black voters in recent years. We have been dismayed that parties in recent litigation have adopted such an interpretation, and have vigorously argued that Congressional District 5 still serves as a much needed remedy in North Central Florida—a remedy that offers black voters a fair opportunity to participate in the political process.

We understand the ruling of Judge Lewis, and what you all are tasked with doing during this special session. We are here to convey our demand that the district remain oriented in a north-south direction, and that it continue to offer to black voters in the existing district the opportunities they have enjoyed since 1992. Judge Lewis did not rule that Congressional District 5 was unconstitutional because it went north-south—that much is clear. The legislature did the right thing in 2012 when it maintained the district's general orientation that way.

I am a resident of Leon County. I know what taking Congressional District 5 out to the west, as some people have urged, would mean. A Congressional District 5 that goes from Jacksonville to Tallahassee cannot be a replacement for a Congressional District 5 that runs from Jacksonville to Orlando. First, a dramatic change to the district like that would leave out thousands and thousands of black voters used to being in Congressional District 5. They would no longer be able to elect the candidate of their choice. This is not an acceptable or constitutional option. Second, an east-west configuration of the district would create the illusion of a black opportunity district, but it would be just that, an illusion. There are a number of prisons in northern Florida counties, and those people cannot vote. Additionally, black voter turnout in this region of the state isn't as strong or reliable as it is down south of here. Finally, during litigation, the Florida NAACP commissioned Dr. Richard Engstrom to analyze the effect of taking district in a westward direction from Jacksonville. He found that would diminish the ability of black voters to elect their candidates of choice. As such, you simply cannot trade off these districts like some have suggested. The district must be maintained in its current configuration.

The Florida NAACP strongly urges the legislature to maintain the current configuration of District 5 to the extent possible. The counties in the current district have benefitted greatly from being in the district, and voters there would be irreparably harmed if they were excluded from

the district when the legislature redraws it. When the redistricting amendments were adopted in 2010, we celebrated the fact that Florida was going to be a leader in the country by offering state constitutional protections to minority voters. The action that this body is about to take needs to adopt that spirit, and remember that black voters are not just numbers on a map. The NAACP and its members have fought long and hard to ensure that the electoral gains we have made are not lost, and we ask you to join in that fight with us.

Thank you for your time.