(Reporter’s note: Proceedings in this matter began at 6:01 p.m.)

REP. LEWIS: Members, we’re going to call the House Redistricting Committee back to order. The first order of business is the calling of the roll to establish the members that are present. The Clerk is recognized for the purpose of calling the roll.

CLERK: Representative Lewis.
REP. LEWIS: Present.
CLERK: Representative Jones.
REP. JONES: Here.
CLERK: Representative Brawley.
REP. BRAWLEY: Present.
CLERK: Representative Cotham.
REP. COTHAM: Here.
CLERK: Representative Davis.
REP. DAVIS: Here.
CLERK: Representative Farmer-Butterfield.
REP. FARMER-BUTTERFIELD: Present.
REP. JACOB: Here.
REP. JORDAN: Present.
REP. MCGRADY: Here.
REP. MICHAXU: Here.
REP. MOORE: Here.
REP. STAM: Here.
REP. STAM: Here.
REP. STEVENS: Here.
REP. STEVENS: Here.
REP. DIXON: Here.
REP. HARDISTER: Mr. Chair.
REP. LEWIS: Representative Hardister, for what purpose do you request recognition?
REP. HARDISTER: I just walked in. I wanted to let you know I’m here.
REP. LEWIS: Representative Hardister as here.
REP. LEWIS: The Clerk will record Members, we’re going to begin with a little bit of housekeeping as we await the bill to arrive. The committee will meet again tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. to receive public comment on the Senate bill that passed over to us. We will receive public comment from 9:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. The committee will then begin to discuss and debate the bill that passed over from the Senate today which, of course, is the 2016 contingent Congressional maps. So to the extent that you can be here or listen in to the public comment, the Chair would encourage you to do so.
REP. STEVENS: Mr. Chair.
REP. LEWIS: Representative Stevens, state your purpose.
REP. STEVENS: Thank you. Mr. Chair, just for an inquiry. Do we want to tell the committee that there was a slight modification in that plan through the Senate? The switching of a couple of precincts. I didn’t know if you wanted to make that clear.
REP. LEWIS: Sure, thank you, Representative.
The Chair will inform the body that the original bill that was filed was amended in the Senate this morning. The amendment consisted entirely of changing two and a half precincts in Guilford County. When the original plan was drawn, it was not the Chair’s intent — the Chairs of the committee’s intent to place the residences of Representative Adams and Representative Walker in the same district. That was inadvertently done, however, and two precincts were changed to correct that. Members will receive — when you receive your map and your stat pack tomorrow, it will reflect that this is the amended plan that came from the Senate.
Thank you for the chance to explain that, Representative.
Members, for your planning purposes, we’re simply awaiting the bill to arrive from the print shop. It should be just a moment.
Representative Moore, for what purpose does the gentleman seek recognition?
REP. R. MOORE: I just wanted — I heard that while I was out, you did roll call. I just wanted to reflect that I am here.
REP. LEWIS: The Clerk will record that Representative Moore is present. That would be Moore of Mecklenburg.
REP. R. MOORE: Absolutely.
REP. LEWIS: Members, the Chair directs that the Proposed Committee Substitute for House Bill 2 be distributed to the committee. The Chair would also direct that any other members that are here that would like a copy of the Proposed Committee Substitute one be
provided, and to the extent available, one be provided to the public that may be present as well.

Members, do members have copies of the Proposed Committee Substitute for House Bill 2? Is there any objection to the Proposed Committee Substitute for House Bill 2 being properly before the committee?

Seeing none, so ordered.

Representative Jones, you are recognized along with Representative Hardister at your discretion to present the Proposed Committee Substitute to House Bill 2.

REP. JONES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ladies and gentlemen of the committee, let me just begin as I know you’re just getting the bill before you and trying to read it, but I just want to thank our staff first and foremost. They have done quite a heroic effort to put this together. I think the more we have gotten into this, we have seen just the complications that you might not expect that would be associated with this, but I just want to say that, for the record, we just have a tremendously competent and dedicated staff that has worked very hard and put in long hours. And I also wanted to thank the input that we had from the Board of Elections, Kim Strach, and the leadership team there.

A lot of people worked very hard to put this together.

Perhaps, I know we’re all just looking at this. It’s hot off the press it’s coming to us. Perhaps we can walk through it together here. You see House Bill 2 is a bill to be entitled An Act to Revise Procedures for the Conduct of the 2016 Primary Election to Comply with the Court Order in Harris vs. McCrory.

Section 1(a) establishes that we have a 2016 U.S. House of Representatives primary election.

Section 1(b) establishes the date of that election would be Tuesday, June 7, 2016.

Section 1(c) establishes the filing period for this special election. It would open at 12:00 noon on Wednesday, March 16. And just to be clear, as I’m sure you see, that would be after, of course, the March 15 primary, but the next day. And would continue through 12:00 noon on Friday, March the 25th.

Eligibility to file, Section 1(d). You have to be affiliated with the party that you’re running under for at least 75 days. A person registered as “Unaffiliated” would be ineligible to file as a candidate in a party primary election.

Section 1(e). You cannot run for two separate offices at the same time. That is current state law.

The way this would work is if you are already running for an office, whether that be the state legislature or another office in the state, and you are the nominee after the March 15 primary, you could file to run in the congressional primary. But as of that election on June 7, if you are the winner of that primary and you are the nominee of your party, you cannot run in the general election in two separate offices. You would have to withdraw from one. And this establishes that you would have to do that within -- no later than one week after the certification of both the primary election results.

Section 1(f) provides for return on filing fees. So anyone who has previously filed for Congress already, as you know we are already in that election, this is establishing a new congressional election. So anyone that filed and paid the filing fee would be entitled to a return on their filing fee.

Then going to Section 2 and 2(a), and it would mean for the primaries this year, there would be no second primary. We contemplated different options there. We felt like that that would by far be the simplest manner, to simply not have a second primary. It is going to be a reduced time in able to carry out this election. So just to be clear, there would be no second primary for the March 15 primary, and there would also be no second primary for the congressional primary on June 7.

Section 2(b), I would have to refer to staff. I’m not sure what -- what we’re repealing there.

Mr. Chair, could I ask staff to explain Section 2(b)?

REP. LEWIS: The Chair would like to ask either Ms. Churchill or Ms. Tornow if they would address Section 2(b). Simply explain what is being repealed.

MS. TORNOW: Sure. Kelly Tornow with Legislative Analysis. So Section 2(b) repeals Section 2(d) of Session Law 2015-258. That is the Presidential Primary Bill, and it refers to second primaries in that session law. So it’s repealing those references to second primaries.

REP. LEWIS: Okay. Please proceed, Representative Jones.

REP. JONES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Section 2(c) says that any election authorized by statute that is set for the date of the second primary would be placed on the ballot at the times of this special congressional primary election. And so any other election that needed to take place, I believe, a judicial vacancy, for instance, would take place at the same time.

Section 3 has to do with the nomination of electors to the Electoral College. This is, of course,
the presidential election. One presidential elector would be nominated from each congressional district as these districts existed on January 1, 2015, and two from the state at-large. As you know, we get 15. We have 13 congressional districts, and then we have the two at-large. And what that basically says is that the current congressional district map would remain in place for political parties that would be nominating their electors for president. It would be very, very difficult, if not practically impossible, for the state parties at this point to completely reorganize all of their districts in compliance with the new congressional districts. So for the purpose of electing presidential electors, the current maps would be used for that.

And then we get to Section 4.(a) I’m reading this for the first time along with you, so let’s see what this says.

Mr. Chair, I think I’m going to ask if the staff would clearly explain. They can probably explain this better than I can.

REP. LEWIS: Which section, Representative Jones?

REP. JONES: Section 4. Let’s let them explain Section 4. The staff is recognized.

MS. TORNOW: Kelly Tornow with Legislative Analysis, again. So Section 4 allows the State Board of Elections to issue temporary orders to implement the requirements of this act. It is the same authority that the General Assembly gave the State Board of Elections in 2015 for the presidential primary. It just allows them to be able to implement in case, you know, we forgot anything or there are administrative rules that they need to be able to manipulate in order to make this work.

REP. JONES: Okay. Thank you. Mr. Chair, if I may continue.

REP. LEWIS: Please.

REP. JONES: Section 5 clarifies that any ballots that are cast on the March 15th ballot, those ballots have already been printed, so there are going to be congressional races on those ballots. Obviously, those are null and void. This would be a new election. So this says that the State Board of Elections will not certify any ballots that are cast for Congress on the March 15 election and that those results would remain confidential.

Section 6 simply says this act is effective when it becomes law, and it applies to the 2016 election cycle unless, prior to March 16, 2016, the United States Supreme Court reverses or stays the decision that has brought us all here.

So, Mr. Chair, I would gladly take any questions anyone may have.

REP. LEWIS: Representative Michaux.

REP. MICHAUX: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What did I hear about second primaries? Is there something in this bill concerning second primaries, and was it?

REP. JONES: Yes, sir, this says that there will be no second primaries for this 2016 elections, either for the March 15 election or for the special congressional primary. There would not be second primaries.

REP. MICHAUX: What about -- are you saying there’s not going to be second primaries for legislative seats and others? Is that what you’re telling me?

REP. JONES: That is correct, and I believe that is in Section 2.(a) that it points that out. That for all 2016 primary elections they would be determined by plurality, and no second primaries will be held during the 2016 election cycle.

REP. MICHAUX: Mr. Chairman, I -- there is a problem, and I wish somebody would explain it to me.

In the resolution that was passed this morning about what this special session was about, that resolution says, “All bills shall be excluded from introduction and consideration in the House other than bills adopting a new redistricting plans for the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States and bills providing for the scheduling and implementation of the congressional primary election in 2016.” It doesn’t say anything about any other elections.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you for your inquiry, Representative. The Chair will rule that this bill doing away with the second primary is necessary to comply with the scheduling of the congressional election contingent with the rules and the proclamation from the Governor. Therefore, the matter is properly before the committee.

Further inquiries? Representative Jackson, please state your purpose.

REP. JACKSON: For an inquiry of whoever can -- wishes to try to answer.

REP. LEWIS: The gentleman may state his inquiry.

REP. JACKSON: I’m asking about Section 6, and the way I read Section 6 is that the March 15 election
will continue on even for congressional as it is currently scheduled and that the United States Supreme Court would have up until that day to issue a stay. So basically, if I am reading this correctly, people currently running for Congress would need to continue to campaign and continue to expend money just in case a stay got issued prior to the primary, that those ballots that are being cast, have been cast, and would be cast on the primary election date could actually turn out to be valid and elect a congressional representative; is that correct?  

REP. LEWIS: Representative Jackson, would one of our staff want to speak to that?  

MS. TORNOW: Mr. Chair, if the stay is not issued, then that is correct. The current law would apply prior to March 16.  

REP. JACKSON: Follow-up.  

REP. LEWIS: The gentleman is recognized for a follow-up.  

REP. JACKSON: So technically, if I was a congressional candidate at this time, I would not know until March 15 whether the March 15 election counted for me or not. And I would have to continue to expend money knowing that on that date, I might be elected as my party's representative to Congress or, in fact, a stay could be issued. And I could live in the wrong congressional district; is that correct?  

REP. LEWIS: Representative Jackson, I think the gentleman points out the chaos that the Chairs have expressed concern with. I think the gentleman very accurately points out the confusion and the uncertainty that this court order has, in the opinion of the Chair, caused.  

Are there further inquiries? If not, Representative Jones is recognized for a motion.  

REP. JONES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move for approval for the Proposed Committee Substitute for House Bill 2, unfavorable to the original.  

REP. LEWIS: Representative Jones has moved that the Proposed Committee Substitute for House Bill Number 2 be given a favorable report, unfavorable report issued to the original bill. Those in favor -- 

REP. JACKSON: Mr. Chairman.  

REP. LEWIS: Pardon me. Further discussion, Representative Jackson.  

REP. JACKSON: I had submitted an amendment to the Proposed Committee Substitute. Is that in order yet or after this vote? I just want to make sure it is considered.  

REP. LEWIS: Representative Jackson, the Chair apologizes. The Chair was not aware that the gentleman had an amendment.  

Representative Jackson is recognized to send forward an amendment. Representative -- members will be distributed copies of the amendment, and then the gentleman may speak on his amendment when that has occurred.  

Do all members have copies of the amendment sent forward by Representative Jackson?  

Seeing no one is saying they do not, Representative Jackson sends forward amendment H2-ATC-[v.1]. It moves to amend the bill on page 1, line 5, through page 2, line 28. Members have copies.  

Representative Jackson is recognized to explain his amendment.  

REP. JACKSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My amendment would simply move all our primaries, including the ballot, the bond proposal, the presidential primary, everything until June 21, 2016. Let me tell you why first I chose that day. That is the date of the last presidential primary that I could find on the list of primaries scheduled. I think it has the potential to make North Carolina very exciting. We have two races that could very well go down to the wire in the presidential race. And what would be more exciting than to have North Carolina choose who would be the Republican or the Democratic nominee for President?  

It also has a lot of other benefits. I heard the Elections Chair this morning -- or this afternoon talk about the savings and how it wouldn't be $9.5 or $10 million, but it would be a substantial cost savings. I looked at the Wake County Board of Elections website, and they advertise that as a precinct official you can make $270 an election. So if we assume we save that, we save six to eight precinct officials in every precinct in Wake County, by my rough math, that is over $300,000. Now, if we save that across the State, that becomes a pretty substantial savings.  

We are proceeding today as if we know what is going to happen in the federal courts, but the truth is we don't know this three-judge panel in Greensboro, if they're going to take two weeks or two months to approve these maps that we're getting ready to put out. And wouldn't it be terrible if it took them long enough that we had to come back here another time and schedule another primary. So I just picked the date that we could pick farthest off and get this all accomplished. I think it is the safest thing to do. I think it will
save the State money. And I think it has the potential to turn out to be a very exciting election for us, and I urge everyone's support.

REP. LEWIS: The Chair is going to recognize the bill's sponsor, Representative Jones, and then move to the members of the committee that the Chair has recognized.

Representative Jones.

REP. JONES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate Representative Jackson and his amendment. Members, I would ask that you would defeat this amendment. First of all, obviously there has already been a tremendous disruption to our congressional elections, but there's no reason to disrupt every election in North Carolina because of it. So that is a primary reason that we shouldn't do it. As far as saving the state money, I believe we heard testimony from the Director of the State Board of Elections at our redistricting meeting earlier today that that would not be the case. There has already been extensive amounts of money spent on the ballots that have already been printed and made up for March the 15th. So there is certainly no reason to disrupt all of the primary elections in North Carolina this year. And so I would ask, please, that you would defeat this amendment.

REP. LEWIS: Representative Stam, for what purpose does the gentleman seek recognition?

REP. STAM: To speak on the amendment.

REP. LEWIS: The gentleman has the floor to debate the amendment.

REP. STAM: I would ask you to defeat the amendment. I don’t know, it might save the State a little bit of money, but it will cost the hundreds of candidates bucket-loads of money who have already started their campaigns. They've worked backwards from March 15 on their spending plans. They've spent a lot of money. They've organized. Emotionally they're ready for it to be over in three weeks or whatever it is. And this would be a grave disservice to all of the candidates for Council of State, State House, county commissioners, some school boards. It just would be horrible for them. I mean, it is bad enough for our congressional candidates that this has happened, but to do it to everybody would just be a bad thing.

REP. LEWIS: Representative McGrady, for what purpose does the gentleman seek recognition?

REP. MCGRADY: To speak on the bill.

REP. LEWIS: The gentleman has the floor to debate the amendment.

REP. MCGRADY: I agree with my colleague who just spoke. I think we need to remember why we set this primary date, and that was related to the presidential primary. To now sort of look at the races and say, well let's put us last because that would be better. There is just a massive amount of money that is involved in elections it's not just local governments. I am particularly sensitive to the local governments' concern having served as a County Commissioner and recognizing that, but, you know, I guess our state slogan is "First in Flight." And for me, this would be "First in Fright." And I just would ask my colleagues to oppose it.

REP. LEWIS: Representative Stam, for what purpose does the gentleman seek recognition?

REP. HAGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It will be no surprise that I ask you to vote no on this amendment. And the reason is maybe a little different, and maybe the same as what Representative Jones said, you know. And I differ a little bit on Representative Jackson. He's saying it will save money. I think we've heard today from Ms. Strach that the money was not in the labor. It was actually in the ballot coding. The ballot coding for more people on the ballot in June will actually cost more money than you would offset and you would save by the labor piece. So I doubt very seriously this will save the state money. Actually, it may end up costing us money. So in that case, I would ask the representatives in the room to vote against the amendment.

REP. LEWIS: Further discussion, further debate on the amendment sent forth by Representative Jackson?

Seeing none, those favoring the amendment sent forward by the gentleman from Wake will vote "aye," those opposed will vote "no."

REP. MICHAUD: Mr. Chairman.

REP. LEWIS: The Chair apologizes.

Representative Michaud, please state your purpose.

REP. MICHAUD: Is a record being made on this?

REP. LEWIS: Yes, sir. The Chair was about to announce that it will be a recorded vote.

Further discussion, further debate?

The question before the committee is the adoption of the amendment sent forward by the gentleman from Wake, Representative Jackson. Those favoring the adoption will vote "aye," those opposed will vote "no."

The clerk will call the roll.
CLERK: Representative Lewis.

REP. LEWIS: No.

CLERK: Representative Lewis, no.

Representative Jones.

REP. JONES: No.

CLERK: Representative Jones, no.

Representative Brawley.

REP. BRAWLEY: No.

CLERK: Representative Brawley, no.

Representative Cotham.

REP. COTHAM: Aye.

CLERK: Representative Cotham, aye.

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS: No.

CLERK: Representative Davis, no.

Representative Farmer-Butterfield.

REP. FARMER-BUTTERFIELD: Aye.

CLERK: Farmer-Butterfield, aye.

Representative Hager.

REP. HAGER: No.

CLERK: Representative Hager, no.

Representative Hanes.

REP. HANES: Aye.

CLERK: Hanes, aye.

Representative Hardister.

REP. HARDISTER: No.

REP. HURLEY: No.

Representative Hurley.

REP. JACKSON: Yes.

CLERK: Representative Jackson, aye.

Representative Johnson.

REP. JOHNSON: No.

CLERK: Johnson, no.

Representative Jordan.

REP. JORDAN: No.

CLERK: Representative Jordan, no.

Representative McGrady.

REP. MCGRADY: No.

CLERK: McGrady, no.

Representative Michaux.

REP. MICHAUX: Aye.

CLERK: Michaux, aye.

Representative Moore.

REP. R. MOORE: Aye.

CLERK: Moore, aye.

Representative Stam.

REP. STAM: No.

REP. COTHAM: No.

CLERK: Cotham, no.

Representative Davis.

REP. DAVIS: Yes.

CLERK: Davis, aye.

Representative Farmer-Butterfield.

REP. FARMER-BUTTERFIELD: No.

CLERK: Farmer-Butterfield, no.

Representative Hager.

REP. HAGER: Aye.

CLERK: Hager, aye.

Representative Hanes.

REP. HANES: No.

CLERK: Hanes, no.

Representative Hardister.

REP. HARDISTER: Aye.

CLERK: Hardister, aye.

Representative Hurley.

REP. HURLEY: Aye.

CLERK: Hurley, aye.

Representative Jackson.

REP. JACKSON: No.

CLERK: Jackson, no.

Representative Johnson.

REP. JOHNSON: Aye.
Representative Jordan.

REP. JORDAN: Aye.

CLERK: Jordan, aye.

Representative McGrady.

REP. MCGRADY: Aye.

CLERK: McGrady, aye.

Representative Michaux.

REP. MICHAUX: No.

CLERK: Michaux, no.

Representative Moore.

REP. R. MOORE: Nay.

CLERK: Moore, nay.

Representative Stam.

REP. STAM: Aye.

CLERK: Stam, aye.

Representative Stevens.

REP. STEVENS: Aye.

REP. LEWIS: With 12 members voting in the affirmative and 6 members in the negative, the motion is adopted. There being no further -- the bill will be reported favorably.

There being no further business before the committee, this committee does stand adjourned.

(THE PROCEEDINGS IN THIS MATTER ADJOURNED AT 6:33 P.M.)

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF WAKE
CERTIFICATE
I, Rachel L. Hammond, a Notary Public in and for the State of North Carolina duly commissioned and authorized to administer oaths and to take and certify hearings, do hereby certify that on February 18, 2016, this hearing was held before me at the time and place aforesaid, that all parties were present as represented, and that the record as set forth in the preceding 27 pages represents a true and accurate transcript of the proceedings to the best of my ability and understanding.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereto set my hand, this the 25th day of February, 2016.

____________________________
Notary Public

Rachel L. Hammond
Notary Number
201126500152