EX. 10
NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON REDISTRICTING

TRANSCRIPT OF THE PROCEEDINGS
PUBLIC HEARING - RALEIGH SITE

In Raleigh, North Carolina
Tuesday, August 22, 2017
Reported by Robbie W. Worley

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REP. LEWIS: The public hearing on redistricting is called to order. I'd like to begin by welcoming all of you that are here. Like to ask your indulgence. We do have remote sites that are hooked up. I've been asked by the technical staff to please ask our members to be as quiet as they can. It aids in the other locations being able to hear what's being said and aids us in being able to hear what's being said at the other locations. I'd like to recognize the House and Senate Sergeant at Arms that we have located throughout the state and thank them for their help in making today a success.

In a moment, I'm going to recognize the Sergeant at Arms and the members that are present at Raleigh. We're then going to go to each remote site as a test and ask the presiding chair at each remote site to please introduce the members and Sergeant at Arms that are at your site as well. So with that in Raleigh, for the House Sergeant at Arms we have Garland Shepheard, Reggie Sills, Marvin Lee, Terry McCraw and Thomas Terry. For the Senate, we have Larry Hancock, Charles Marsalis and Becky Myrick. I'd also would point out that our court reporter is here, Robbie Worley of Raleigh,
and we appreciate her continued dedicated service.

Again, I welcome everyone to this public hearing on redistricting.

I am Representative David Lewis, the Senior Chairman of the House Select Committee on Redistricting. With me today are Chairman Senator Ralph Hise of the Senate Redistricting Committee and also Chairman Representative Nelson Dollar of the House Committee. With me in Raleigh are Representatives Jackson, Dixon, Farmer-Butterfield, Garrison, Gill, Grange, Davis, Howard, Hunter, Hurley, Mchaux, Malone, Willingham Way and also Senators Blue, Lee, Newton, Harrington, Gunn and McKissick.

At the Raleigh site, did I miss any member of the committee? The Chair would also point out there are several members who are here who are not members of the committee. We certainly welcome them and thank them for their attendance.

We're going to go now to Beaufort Community College -- to Beaufort Community College. I'd like for the Chair to introduce himself and the members that are there with him at this time.

SEN. BROWN: Thank you. Hi, my name's Harry Brown. I'm in the Senate. I represent
District 6, which is Onslow and Jones County. Mike Speciale in the House. Mike -- sorry, now I have to get it right. Mike -- Mike, you represent the Beaufort and --

REP. SPECIALE: Craven County.

SEN. BROWN: -- Craven and Pamlico County. Then Norm Sanderson, who's in the Senate, he represents District 3 -- 2, which is Carteret, Craven and Pamlico County. Our Sergeant at Arms on the House side is Bill Bass, Jim Moran and Jim Hamilton from the Senate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you, Senator Brown. Next, we'd like to go to Halifax Community College. Would the chairman at Halifax Community College recognize themselves and their members and their support staff, please?

REP. J. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm Representative John Bell. Oh, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Representative John Bell, Halifax Community College. With us today is Sergeant at Arms from the House, Bill More and Doug Harris, Sergeant at Arms from the Senate, Tom Burroughs and Frances Patterson. We also have in attendance Representative Bobbie Richardson and staff from Senator Angela Bryant's office. Thank you, Mr.
Chairman.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you, Representative Bell. We'd now like to test and introduce our Fayetteville site. Fayetteville Community College -- Fayetteville Technical Community College, I guess it would be. If the chairman there could introduce themselves and members.

REP. SZOKA: All right, Mr. Chairman, I'm here. This is Representative John Szoka. My co-chair is Senator Brent Jackson. Other representatives here --

REP. LEWIS: Representative Szoka, if you could hold just a minute. We're having trouble with Fayetteville. Let's try it again.

REP. SZOKA: Is this better?

REP. LEWIS: Yes, sir.

REP. SZOKA: All right. Thank you, Mr. Chair. My name is Representative John Szoka. The co-chair here is Senator Brent Jackson. Representatives in attendance are Representative Billy Richardson, Representative Floyd, Representative Lucas and Representative Pierce. Our House Sergeant at Arms are Jonas Cherry and David Leighton and our Senate Sergeant at Arms are Giles Jeffreys and Terry Edmondson. Thank you.
REP. LEWIS: Thank you. I'm going to go now to the Guilford County Community College, our site at Guilford County. If the chairman there could identify themselves and their members.

REP. STEVENS: Hi. We can't hear you yet. Can you hear me yet?

REP. LEWIS: Yes, ma'am. We can hear you.

REP. STEVENS: Representative Sarah Stevens. I'm chairing this committee along with Senator Trudy Wade. Our Sergeant at Arms from the House side are Warren Hawkins and Malachi McCullough. And we have Hal Roach from the Senate. In addition, we have two other members present. We have Representative Evelyn Terry and Senator Gladys Robinson. Did I leave anyone out? Yes, we're good.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you, ma'am. We'll now go to Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte. If the presiding chairman could sign in and introduce himself and -- or herself and the members that are present.

REP. TORBETT: Good evening, Chairman Lewis. John Torbett, member of North Carolina House District 8. With us tonight is Senator
Waddell, Representative Dulin, Secretary --
Secretary -- Senator Bishop, Representative Cunningham, Representative Carney, Representative Bell and Representative Pittman. Our Sergeant at Arms from the House side, Joe Crook, Russell Salisbury. For the Senate, Linda Matthews and Billy Fritscher. We're ready to go.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you, Representative Torbett. And Caldwell Community College. If we could sign in to Caldwell Community College.

SEN. DANIEL: Thank you. I'm Senator Warren Daniel. With me from the list of the delegations tonight are Representative Jonathan Jordan from Watauga County, Representative Hugh Blackwell from Burke County and Representative Destin Hall from Caldwell County. Sergeants at Arms, if you would raise your hands. Here from the House, is Bill Riley, Barry Moore, Terry Barnhardt and John Enloe. And we also have Officer Kane from the General Assembly Police in Raleigh.

REP. LEWIS: Very good. We welcome you all. Ladies and gentlemen, today's hearing is an effort on the part of the two committees to hear public comments on the proposed 2017 House and Senate plans to comply with the court's order in
Covington versus the State of North Carolina.

Besides this location here Raleigh in Room 643 of the Legislative Office Buildings, we have identified and recognized six satellite locations. They are Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, Fayetteville Technical Community College in Fayetteville, Caldwell Community College in Hudson, Guilford Technical Community College in Jamestown, the Halifax Community College in Weldon and Beaufort Community College in Washington.

I'd like to remind members of the public that we are also accepting comment online at the General Assembly website and via physical e-mail as well as anyone. We are accepting comment in those forms if there is someone who would like to offer input but was not able to be here today. Members of the committee do have and will have ability to review and view the submitted written comments.

Now that the introductions and the sound checks are out of the way, I'd like to thank the members of the public for being here today and for participating in the democratic process.

As you may be aware, the General Assembly has a deadline of September 1st for approving new districts. The committee released maps over the
weekend for review. Those maps are online. I'm also told that there are hard copies at each site. Our hearing tonight is so that we can hear from you and your input on the districts themselves. You should have noticed an opportunity to sign up with the Sergeant at Arms as you walked in the room.

The Chair will also pause and point out that there are members of the public that are in Room 544, which is also in the Legislative Office Building, who are able to hear what is being said in here. Many of those have signed up to speak, and we will certainly have staff coordinating back and forth to welcome them into this room when it's their turn to speak.

Each speaker, when recognized, will have three minutes to speak. The Sergeant at Arms will have a yellow card that he will flash when your three minutes are nearing a close. He will -- he or she will hold up a red card when your time has expired. You may comment on whatever aspects of the map you would like to. This is a free country, and this is an open hearing.

It is helpful if your comments focus on the maps that have been presented or alternative ideas you have for complying with the court order.
I want to emphasize that the committee has adopted criteria after its first meeting and that criteria has been public for weeks now. Those criteria are equal population, congruity, abiding by the mandatory county groupings, trying to keep towns, cities and precincts whole where possible, incumbency protection, consideration of election data, and drawing districts without regards to race or ethnicity.

What we'd like to hear from the public, specifically, is how to better meet our goals in complying with those criteria. Addressing comments towards a specific House or Senate district and referencing a specific criteria that could be better met would help this committee and its work. Reading off prepared talking points or sending form e-mails is also an accepted way to go on record. However, when those comments stray from the objective of the day, which is to comply with the court order to redraw the maps, they may not be the most constructive help. You are, of course, free to do so anyway. With that -- do we have the printed copies?

FEMALE SPEAKER: We're working on that.

REP. LEWIS: Do we have Raleigh?
FEMALE SPEAKER: Yes.

REP. LEWIS: So with that, we're going to move now to what? Did you want to say anything, Senator Hise?

SEN. HISE: Briefly.

REP. LEWIS: I'd like to recognize Senator Hise, the Chairman of the Senate Redistricting Committee, for some comments.

SEN. HISE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a moment to clear up any confusion. We do have -- one of the interest groups in the state has been sending out information today that there were public hearings today and tomorrow, and listed sites for tomorrow hearing. Today is the only hearings for this committee, only public hearings for this committee. Therein, I just wanted to make sure to clear up that confusion.

REP. LEWIS: All we're going to do in an effort to try to facilitate moving around and getting as many people to speak in as timely a fashion as possible, we're going to start in Raleigh. And then we're going to go to Jamestown and then to Caldwell, based on the list I have. In Raleigh -- and the Chair will apologize if there are names that are mispronounced. The Chair would
ask, when you speak, if you would please pronounce your name, so that the court reporter could record it. The Chair is going to call three names at a time in Raleigh, and then move to the next location where we will take two at that location.

So the first three in Raleigh -- the Chair, again, apologizes for any mispronunciations -- Tawana Revels or Nevels, I apologize for the handwriting -- Eva F. Lee and Julie Tomkovic, if you would please approach the microphone in the rear. You see our Sergeant at Arms is standing there. He will help you speak.

We can turn the camera now from the Chair to the public. And to prepare, in Jamestown, the first two are Janice Siebert and Allen Megginson. So if the Chairman there could prepare for that. But again, Tawana Revels or Nevels, I apologize if I misspoken the name, we welcome you. And you have -- if you would, please state your name, and then you have three minutes.

MS. LEE: My name is Eva F. Lee. Ladies and gentlemen of the Joint Committee and everyone at all the satellite locations and on live stream, I come to you today as a mom. I'm a Raleigh resident, who was, on March 21st of this year, hit
head on while parked in the carpool lane at West Millbrook Middle School on Strickland, a school that has been passed over for rebuilding many times. A school where my son's art teacher has a budget of roughly $300 for 150 students and 180 school days. A school with a building that occasionally smells like swamp gas when it is hot. The carpool lane would be moved off Strickland if the school was rebuilt.

The North Carolina General Assembly controls our state. I am greatly disheartened, even embarrassed, by the label that North Carolina is no longer a democracy. Politicians should not select their voters. You used the same consultant whose work was well-known and ruled unconstitutional. How is this different? This committee is reflective of the supermajority created by the gerrymandering. It feels like a sham. I think it is time in clear view of Charlottesville to call this process what it is; it feels like computerized apartheid. We do not want to be remembered as the folks who did their best Jim Crow impersonation to disenfranchise minorities, and continue to disenfranchise with judicial gerrymandering. Do not give the label of
racists to your children.

This committee, or rather the supermajority in control, needs to listen to the hearts and souls of the generations who fought for liberty and justice for all and not be remembered as the epitome of evil. Don't act like Nazis. I'm Jewish; I can say that. Stop gerrymandering now. Let me be clear; gerrymandering is white supremacy. We deserve reparations for the last seven years of litigation. Give us automatic voter registration at age 18 as a reparation. We deserve reparations for the past seven years. Thank you.

REP. LEWIS: As the next speaker is coming up, we will welcome you. The Chair would -- the Chair would again remind the people, the members and the people that are present to please be quiet so that the comments can be heard. Would you please state your name? And you have three minutes.

MS. TOMKOVIC: Hi, my name is Julie Tomkovic, and I wish these maps were a little bit more detailed so I could address them specifically. But my comments are going to be about the value of balanced and competitive districts. If competition is good for business and for consumers, then it
should be equally good for government and for citizens. Gerrymandered districts hurt North Carolina citizens of all political stripes, because they stack the decks so heavily in favor of one party or another. But there is no true competition of ideas, values and candidates in the general election. This pushes the more competition to primaries, where candidates are encouraged to become more and more extreme in order to interest a smaller pool of voters.

As we all know, extremists can certainly win elections. They just don't govern well. For example, a small group of extremists can -- can hijack a legislature and make them vote for ridiculous things, like if we can use what bathroom, as well as serious things, like who can sue for discrimination and who cannot. I vote for balanced, competitive districts, that -- to produce the best government. And I hope that you will also vote for balanced, competitive districts as well.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you. Thank you. Is Tawana Revels or Nevels here? Not seeing that person, the Chair would like to enter for the record. The Chair was handed public comment on redistricting core messages to share. This is
produced and handed out by Democracy North Carolina. The Chair wants to make this a part of the permanent record of this committee. And copies will be provided to all of the members. Now, going to go to the Jamestown site.

REP. STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can you hear us?

REP. LEWIS: We can.

REP. STEVENS: Okay. It's Representative Stevens. I just wanted to let you know that we had three more legislative members to join us. Senator Lowe, I believe he stepped out already again for a moment. We have Representative Pricey Harrison, and Representative Cecil Brockman. Wanted to let you know that we are ready for our other speakers. Take the floor.

MS. SIEBERT: Thanks. I'm Janice Siebert, a mother in Guilford County since 2006. What's the cost of gerrymandering? The cost is so many of us are lacking representation on the ballot. My representative and senator do not listen to me, because they don't have to. They listen only to those who vote for them and to their big money donors. They do not represent my positions, my vote does not count in my district,
because it is structured to keep the current party in power.

What is the cost of gerrymandering? The cost of laws passed that benefit so few. Laws that hurt our state in the long run. Laws that damage our environment. Laws that limit public educations. Laws that limit full access to the polls. Laws that transfer control of local government to the people to Raleigh. Laws that limit access to healthcare for thousands of North Carolinians. They’ve passed these laws, because they can. Because they have gerrymandered the same districts, they guarantee their power in Raleigh.

What is the cost of gerrymandering? The cost of defending the unconstitutional districts and the unconstitutional laws that the General Assembly has passed. It is our tax dollars that pay the attorneys, our tax dollars that could be better spent on something else. That should be spent on anything else that would benefit the people in North Carolina. We do not see that the current process and the current maps hold any promise to be any different from the past. We are tired of paying for gerrymandering.

MR. BEGGINS: Good day. My name is Alan
Megginson. I live in Winston-Salem and I'd first like to thank you for holding these hearings regarding the creation of fair, bipartisan election maps for our state, and for all of the citizens that have come out today to voice their concerns. Thank you as well. My biggest fear, quite frankly, is that the comments made here today from across the state will fall on deaf ears, and the citizens of this great state would once again go unheard.

I'm here today because the issue of fair voting maps is one that concerns me as a citizen. This issue concerns me not for my own individualized impact, but for the thousands of North Carolina citizens whose voices are muted through rigged and unfair elections. I look at these proposed -- proposed maps, and I see little to no changes of the way they rigged their system for one side. I see no bipartisan effort to create fair maps that hear the voices of each and every citizen in this state. Instead, I see districts like my own that are whittled out with small slivers of the community set aside for the minority party, as if this somehow creates the illusion that these maps are fair.

There are many solutions to this issue
that would result in fair elections in this state.
I've heard suggestions of different districting by
ZIP codes. I've heard of districting by county.
Population setting the number of representatives
and senators. In fact, most of the suggestions I
have heard have been far more plausible and fair
than what you have presented to the citizens as
your fix. I use that pun intentionally as all you
have done with these maps is continue to fix the
system

Clearly these maps represent the level of
concern our Assembly members have for their
constituents. This is not myth, this is fact.
Across the state, our citizens are dealing with
issues for solutions that either get been dismissed
or being ignored, simply because it doesn't fit the
agenda. This needs to stop. If you want to be an
assembly member and represent the people of this
state in a manner that is beneficial for all
citizens, if you cannot or will not do so, then
expunge and get out of the way to allow someone
else to create fair election maps so that you might
be released of your burdens.

In closing, our state's motto is esse
quam videri, to be rather than to seem. However,
the current state of affairs in the General Assembly, perhaps along with new maps, we adopt new order. [Inaudible] democracy laws. Thank you.

REP. LEWIS: We're now going to move to the Caldwell site, and then followed by the Washington site. I think it may actually go smoother if we do three from each site. So if the Chairman can hear me, we're going to do three from each site. We're going to go to Caldwell. We're going to do Todd Scott, Debra Moore, and Pastor Keith or Keit. And then we're going to Washington, and we're going to do Raynor James, Hal James and Carl Mischka. So we'll go to the Caldwell site next.

MR. SCOTT: Good afternoon. My name is Todd Scott. I'm the first vice-president of Statesville NAACP branch. In August of 2016, a three-judge panel ruled that 28 of 170 North Carolina House and Senate districts were drawn in the second rate and weakened the power of the African-American voters. They were illegal racial gerrymanders. The public and lawmakers appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, but it agreed with the panel.

On August the 1st, 2017, that panel gave
legislators a new deadline. Present new district, redraw district maps to the judges by September 1st for the use of 2018 legislative elections. This is all a sham. All these maps we got is a sham. This is like going to school on the first day of school and your teacher tell you, we having the end of the year test today, end of discussion.

Legislative leaders continue to stall and avoid fixing their unconstitutional maps. Federal judges have rebuked them for not taking it seriously. [Inaudible] of correcting their legal matters, the public lawmakers say they are serious, but they have hired the same consultant, Thomas Hofeller, who drew the current legal maps. He is nationally known for rigging maps to help his Republican clients. Declared that he would -- that they will not consider the race of the voters, as if that would stop them from drawing bias maps. In fact, that approach ignored the directive of the courts to say, well, the black voters have a fairer chance to elect candidates of their choice in their districts.

They have declared they want to see the past election outcomes and the ability of their party to win elections in the district. They admit
they redraw the districts for partisan advantage. They have refused to review -- reveal the new map Hofeller has already drawn, which would give North Carolinians time to provide informed input through a public hearing. We should have been in a bigger area than we are today, but who found out about this? They didn't want everybody to know about it. How can the public trust legislators elected from illegal districts to draw fair maps, especially when they use the same mapmaker and highly partisan voters.

North Carolina lawmakers have used unlawful gerrymandering to win elections in 2012, 2014, and 2016. Then in the past, [unintelligible] illegitimate General Assembly. The legal maps are protecting legislators from being held accountable by voters. About 90 percent of us think legislators now have seats with no or little vote partisan competition. General Senate -- General Assembly leaders have spent $4.8 million of taxpayers' monies to defend their maps in court. And they got beat every time. I would like to leave this to all the legislators, Matthew 25:40; "The king will reply, truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and
sisters of mine, you did it for me." You did it to me.

MS. MOORE: Hi. My name is Debra Moore. I'm with the Statesville branch of the NAACP. North Carolinians demand -- demand reform. North Carolinians are tired of gerrymandering and politicians --

MALE SPEAKER: Can we get a mic for the speaker? This is ridiculous. Get her a mic so we can hear her.

MS. MOORE: A new poll shows that four out of five voters, so 80 percent, say that it is not fair for politicians to draw their own districts. That includes 85 percent of the democracy -- Democrats, 74 percent of the Republicans, 80 percent of the independents as well as 70 percent of [inaudible] --

REP. LEWIS: Ms. Moore?

MS. MOORE: -- and 80 percent of African Americans.

REP. LEWIS: Ms. Moore?

MS. MOORE: [Inaudible.]

REP. LEWIS: Ms. Moore. We're going to add -- we're going to add a minute to your time. If you could, please speak a little bit closer to
the mic and perhaps a little bit slower. There's a delay.

MS. MOORE: The redistricting practice must be open. Avoid racial and constant -- gerrymandering allows [inaudible] pick their own political representatives, not the other way around. We should research practices in other states that adopt principles that encourage deep community involvement. Fair redistricting should follow these basic principles. [Inaudible] is the key. Map drawers must ensure that it is possible for black voters to elect their own candidate of choice as declared by voting acts rights. One person, one vote must be equal population and obey all the laws.

Map drawers must create compact districts without [inaudible]. Districts must be -- not be stacked and joined into one -- and joined into one block of current lawmakers. Voting district or voters of the data [inaudible]. Respect communities of interest. Map drawers must avoid dividing the community's assembly [inaudible] effort and local government districts. Respect boundaries. Maps must show effort to keep counties whole. Before it is approved, a map must equal and
override basics. We need the children to recognize that important message of fairness.

SEN. DANIEL: We do not bring equipment with us. This equipment is provided for us. I apologize for any inconvenience. This is the best that we have at this point.

REP. LEWIS: If we're not able to get order at the Caldwell site, we're going to move to another site. We're going to move to the Washington site -- Washington site. The Chair regrets that a person lost their opportunity to speak because of the actions of the folks there. We're moving to the Washington site.

MR. KEITH: I'll be very brief about this.

REP. LEWIS: We're moving to the Washington site.

MR. KEITH: How many city limits were [inaudible] --

REP. LEWIS: We don't seem to have any control in Raleigh, either.

MR. KEITH: Now, anytime you divide a city limit, you're going to have two different state senators representing you. The city is collecting taxes. The state's collecting taxes and
the county's collecting taxes. Any time you set
[inaudible], the city [inaudible], you've done the
same exact thing as moving an unwanted relative
into your house to share it with them because
you're going to have to come to a consensus on all
these different issues.

That's basically all I got to say. But
anytime you divide a city limit or encroach on a
city limit to meet your quota, that's where the
problem comes in. But it is not fair for residents
to live in a municipality anywhere and have you
voting for this district on one side and this
district on the other and pay taxes to that city
and that county. If all these could be -- all
these municipalities need to be under one city's
district. That's all I've got to say, and thank
you very much.

REP. LEWIS: Is it possible to go to the
Washington site now? (Pause.) Is this the
Washington site? The Chairman there could please
recognize Raynor James, Hal James and Carl -- Carl
Mischka.

CHAIRMAN BROWN: Raynor James and Hal
James and Carl --

CHAIRMAN M SCHKA: Mischka.
MS. JAMES: I'm Raynor James. Ladies and gentlemen of the legislature, I come from a different perspective, but no [inaudible] approval. I, too, although I'm a constitutional conservative, speak in this?

SEN. BROWN: You may. You're fine. You're fine.

MS. JAMES: Although I'm a constitutional conservative, I, too, dislike having communities divided, if it's a city or county, whatever. I think that we should be able to try harder to keep them contiguous. There is another concern I have that is much stronger than that. Yes, Republicans do have control. The Republican platform is very, very well aligned with my platform; however, there is only a small percentage of people in the legislature, ladies and gentlemen, who truly adhere to that platform.

Some of those are being put into districts that are not hospitable to them and that is an absolute tragedy. Larry Pittman, Cabarrus County, is one of those examples. Cabarrus County will have three different districts in it. We will be with another conservative Republican. There is someone who's less conservative right next door.
One of the conservatives will go. This is not good.

There are Republicans all around the state that are writing resolutions that they will not support Republicans just because they have an R after their name if that Republican does not record his support for the Republican platform. Please don't make the mistake you appear to be headed for. Please take corrective action and make this right.

MR. JAMES: I'm Hal James. I live at 305 [unintelligible] in Craven County. I belong to the Coastal Carolina Taxpayers Association, an organization that advocates minimum government and maximum freedom, the preservation of free enterprise in the United States Constitution. We have two champions of, air quote, the General Assembly. The districts are reorganized by these new district maps in such a way as to separate them from their base supporters. They're stacked -- they're hooked as District 1 surrender the [inaudible]. Districts 82 and maybe a part of 83, unless your [inaudible] both of these gentlemen have been very supportive of our cause.

I selected five bills that had been considered by the present legislature to help
determine the support of our cause by members of the General Assembly. They are, one, the [inaudible] bill, House Bill 746, two, the national [inaudible] North Carolina [inaudible] constitutional regulation of concealed weapons, HB145, the actually get rid of common core bill, HB417, the bill to exempt ocular surgery from the certificate of need bill or HB344, and the marine fisheries regulation bill, the HB867. That wasn't a random selection. At the beginning of the session those were the -- the issues that we wanted addressed by this assembly. Due to Pittman has not been able to vote on any of these bills, but he's tried hard.

Representative Pittman has been a primary sponsor on three of the four bills and the fifth bill, marine fisheries regulation, he do not want passed. Representative Pittman has strongly supported our position. Please reject these proposed district maps until these deficiencies are corrected. Thank you.

MR. M. SCHKA: My name is Carl Mschka. I'm the chairman of the Third District GOP and a past chairman of Craven County GOP. I'd like to defer my time to my vice-chair. Is that possible?
He's on your list to a point that we'll never get to and -- and he has some very constructive redistricting comments to make.

REP. LEWIS: What's the name, Mr. Mischka?

MR. MISCHKA: [Inaudible.]

MR. JAMES: Oh, I think we will get to him eventually. We're going to go through this whole list so --

MR. MISCHKA: If you're going to do that, thank you.

REP. LEWIS: We're going to now go to the Charlotte site and the first three speakers, Jacob Hunt, Sarah Fellman and Henry Martinat. Go to the Charlotte site and recognize those three speakers, please.

MR. HUNT: Good afternoon. My name is Jacob Hunt. I'm a resident of Huntersville, North Carolina. I must admit that I am not adept at the complex demographics of our state to know whether the new districts are gerrymandered or not. Perhaps -- perhaps if it fixes the racial gerrymandering, well, then, if so, that is a victory indeed, but seeing that it was made primarily by one political party, I'm still
skeptical of its innovation.

So I'm here to call upon the General Assembly of North Carolina to end political gerrymandering, which undermines our democracy. After the election in 2016, Governor Cooper narrowly won by just 0.2 percent. Now, in a politically blind system, this would naturally be coupled with a near 50-50 split among the parties in the General Assembly. Yet Republicans hold a two-thirds majority in both chambers. Clearly something is awry.

I recognize that political gerrymandering is not illegal, but that does not mean it's right. The process greatly diminishes the voice of the people and undermines our will.

I am generally annoyed when the government is compared to a business, because they serve two wholly different purposes. However, there are some similarities. When a business has an inferior or unpopular product, the consumers can reject it. It's now up to the business to improve the product, give the consumers what they want or face the effects of the free market. When voting districts are designed by the legislatures, they do not have to face the consequences of unpopular
policy. This, of course, leads them to pursue policy that serves not the collective good, but rather the good of the few.

I understand that when the Democrats controlled the General Assembly they too drew districts along politically favorable lines, but how many times must we repeat the same mistakes? How hyper-partisan must we become before this cycle is finally broken?

So again, on the general -- I call upon the General Assembly to uphold democracy and allow voters to choose their policymakers, not allow policymakers to choose their voters. Thank you.

MS. FELLMAN: Good afternoon. My name is Sarah Fellman. I'm from Charlotte. I'm a proud 2014 graduate of Providence High. Go Panthers.

And I'm here today to talk about racial and partisan gerrymandering. As we all know, the courts declared many of our legislative districts unconstitutional racial gerrymandered. Now you, members of the Joint Redistricting Committee, are tasked with remediying this violation of the Constitution.

But what do good districts look like?
First of all, good districts must follow the court
directive to consider race to ensure that minority voters have a fair chance to elect candidates of their choice. In the court case the State actually argued that it considered race in the 2011 redistricting process to comply with the Voting Rights Act that mandates that minority voters should have this opportunity. However, the State could not prove that it used race for such benevolent reasons, and instead the Court ruled that the use of race unconstitutionally violated minority voters' rights.

Fortunately this is your opportunity to make amends and truly empower minority voices. So how are you doing? Well, the other day Representative Lewis tweeted that race was not considered in the drawing of the new proposed maps, but not considering race is not enough. The Court was very clear that race should be considered in the drawing of legislative maps, but that it should be used to empower minority voters, not silence their voices by shoving them into as few districts as possible. But empowering minority voters to have the opportunity to elect candidates goes beyond a just consideration of race. In a state like North Carolina where race -- where voting is
racially polarized and where, as you are well aware, upwards of 90 percent of black voters consistently support Democrats, only a legislative map drawn without partisan bias can be an appropriate remedy to an unconstitutional racial gerrymander.

But instead, as Representative Lewis has admitted and as newly-released voting data show, these maps were drawn with an aim to cement the Republican majority in Raleigh, even if Democrats overwhelmingly win the popular vote. The problem is that in North Carolina partisanship is racism. Partisan bias in districting prevents minority voters and those that agree with them from having their voices heard in Raleigh in proportion to their vote share. Concentrating Democrats, often synonymous with minorities, into a small number of districts is wrong whether it's for Republicans' advantage, whites' advantage or both. And with that, I urge you, members of the redistricting committee, to do the right thing by creating new maps that ensure that minority voices are heard in Raleigh and that let voters choose their politicians without stacking the deck against one political party before a single ballot is cast.
REP. LEWIS: I believe we had one more in Charlotte.

MR. MARTINAT: If you look on your map and look at the Southwest up to Pineville, around -- down to Pineville up to Huntersville, Cornelius, that's my district. My name's Henry Martinat, and I'm a taxpayer in Mecklenburg County. I pay a dagnone lot of taxes and I'm a property owner. And I have to drive up 77 all the time and it's really -- takes about an hour and a half to two hours to get to get to down here to go all the way up there. Now, that district represents Pineville, Charlotte, Davidson, Huntersville --

REP. LEWIS: Mr. Martinat, if you could possibly speak into the microphone so the rest of us could hear you.

MR. MARTINAT: I'm sorry. Davidson, Huntersville, Cornelius, Pineville and Charlotte, okay? So how does this -- how does this one senator represent all of these distinct municipalities, you know, faithfully and effectively?

It's my -- it's my -- I'm saying that any senator, Democrat or Republican, can't effectively represent the way -- this district the
way it's drawn. So it's -- it's going to be a problem for whoever has to represent this particular district, and I think it should be redrawn. That's all I have to say.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you. We're going to now move to the Fayetteville location, and after Fayetteville we'll go to Weldon. In Fayetteville, Bobbie R. Shaffer, Jerry Reinoehl and Minister -- apologize, Eronomy, I believe, is the last name. So Representative Szoka or Senator Jackson.

MS. SHAFFER: My name is Bobbie Shaffer. I'm -- and I am a citizen -- I'm a citizen of the United States, and I wasn't planning on coming here today. I been -- I watch the political arena on TV, on the paper -- in the paper and stuff, but today when I saw this map of existing North Carolina senate district, it reminded me of when my little kids were small and they were coloring and I would look and I'd say, you're coloring out of the line. Looked like whoever drew this map was certainly coloring out of the line and -- and the proposed district is not a whole lot better.

But I just have one thing to say, that God said that a house divided could not stand, and it seems like we're getting more divided as the
days go by. And it -- to me, my answer is, it's
greed. It's not wanting to help the fellow person
that's less privileged than you are. I built my
life on helping people that's less fortunate than I
am and I -- I guarantee you, you people that don't
do that is missing a blessing.

I just wanted to see the ones that drew
these maps. If you need any help I'll be glad to
help you. 'Cause I think I can do a better job and
I do have the people at heart and not my next run
to see if I'm going to be re-elected. And, you
know, that aggravates me when the politicians is
always saying, I can't do this because -- oh, no, I
can't do that because I might not get elected next
year. Well, who do you think you're up there for,
yourself? You're up there for us. You're working
for us and -- and we expect you to work for
everybody's betterment, not for just Republicans or
Democrats.

I never liked that anyway. I like to --
people to work together for the good of everybody
and I hope that y'all will do better next time.
Thank you.

MR. REINOEHL: Mr. Chairman, good
afternoon. My name is Jerry Reinoehl.
Deerpath Drive, Fayetteville, North Carolina.

I support the House redistricting plan for Cumberland County, my county of residence, for the following reasons. First, the number of split VTD’s between two or more districts in Cumberland County under the current 2011 plan will be reduced from 31 of the 77 precincts to six of the 77 precincts for the proposed plan. The plan confines the splits between only two House districts, while the current plan includes several VTD’s split between three House districts. The boundaries of House District 43, my district, is tightened up considerably to look more like an ink spot rather than ink splatter.

I believe the benefit of these changes to Cumberland County will result in the following. First, fewer ballot types may be -- reduce the cost of elections. Secondly, it will reduce opportunities for poll workers to make errors in selecting the current ballot. It should result in fewer spoiled ballots and more accurate contest results, with more voters using the correct ballot type. Next, it may provide better constituent representative with a tight voting district boundaries. And finally, it will benefit
candidates for the House of Representatives by reducing the number of precincts and perhaps enticing additional citizens to run for elections, because it would also reduce, then, the cost of campaigning -- a competitive campaign. And with the fewer number of precincts it will enable better get-out-to-vote campaigns in terms of knocking doors and doing other things. Thank you.

MINISTER ERONOMY: By the name of God, the beneficent and the merciful, the all-wise, true and living God, I give you all the greetings of As-salamu alaikum which is heard around the world. That's my introduction when I go the North Carolina state legislature for the past 35 years, with deans for Fayetteville State University to see my team which is Marvin Lucas and the Legislative Black Caucus. I have been going before Marvin Lucas went up there.

Greetings, everyone. Fayetteville has a solution for the rest of the country. We must realize who we are. The other lady before, like myself, we see Fayetteville as a shining light on the hill. Others see it differently.

Now, God says in scripture, "The devil's strategy is secretive meetings." Secretive
meetings. The secret meeting that took place last weekend, I saw Angela, from the Legislative Black Caucus, on television, and she was jumping up and down. As spokesperson for Legislative Black Caucus, where are the maps? They should have given those maps to her and the Legislative Black Caucus and rest of the Democrats especially, last Friday.

Now, here we are in Fayetteville. We have great growth and development. We have the baseball stadium's coming. We have Fort Bragg, the largest military base in the world and the second Pentagon in the world. More generals and officers than any other place in America except Washington D.C. Pentagon. Part of my work includes that.

Now, in terms of, where do we go from here, let's look the history. The Fayetteville Observer used to have monument on the front of the paper, a picture of the Market House, or the slave house. As part of my work with Clinton Harris, a lot of y'all know him around the state, we forced the Fayetteville Observer to take that picture off. That was about 20 years ago.

So, really, we're out front. Thank you. We're really out front. The other thing I was -- the other thing we want [inaudible] in, I think
it's Harnett County, come out and be seen and be heard. He's one of our good friends. We are glad that -- we are very elated to see our Legislative Black Caucus, Marvin Lucas, Garland Pierce and, yes, Billy Richardson finally showed up. We are not going to mention the other one, though.

Okay. Now, clearly understand this is the 150th of Fayetteville University's anniversary, the second oldest university in the state. We want everybody in the country to come to our celebration. My time has run out, but I want to thank you for the American experience, which is the greatest country in the world, and we are going to show the rest of the country how to follow Fayetteville. Thank you very much.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you. And we're now going to go to Weldon with Marques Thompson, William Hodge and Kim Eng Koo. And then we will be returning to Raleigh with M. Eisenberg, Tony Quartararo, Gina Cruz, in that order. So we will go to Weldon now. Or we could just stay in Fayetteville. Ladies and gentlemen, I apologize. We're doing the best we can to coordinate with the off-site switch.

MR. THOMPSON: [Inaudible] North Carolina
that many other southern states don't have. And so when we have a good process we get good results for our democracy. So in order to have good results from a democracy, we need fair maps. Fair maps -- it's key to that.

So let's look at the process that went into making these maps. We have -- the maps were drawn by someone that was known for rigging systems across the nation. This -- the process of making these maps were -- was -- said that they would discount or not consider race, which was the whole reason why the -- the maps were unconstitutional in the first place. But yet they would consider who won in the past and that would be a consideration for drawing the maps. And the last thing is that -- talking about this process of drawing these fair maps, we just got the maps just recently. I mean, we've known about this process for a while. These were just given to us Friday and today and the -- a lot of the data, we still don't have.

So it's been a bad process. And when you have bad processes, you get bad results, right? So we already had a legislature that was elected by unconstitutional districts, so that's a bad process. Well, we're trying to get that process
fixed. And in order to do that, we -- we need due processes, and so I urge this legislature to do this for democracy. We're not talking about left or right here. We -- want the best results for North Carolina. And that means the best process in our democracy. So let's go back to the drawing board, get someone that everyone can agree on as a fair arbiter and let's draw these maps so we can get this competitive advantage that only democracy gives us.

MR. HODGE: My name is William Hodge, and I'm a 35-year Halifax County native. I didn't understand the need for a statewide public hearing on voter suppression issues, especially because we didn't have the appropriate data to study before we could come make our comments. I have some general comments today, but I will agree with the last speaker, bad process.

The topic is not new. The nation's Supreme Court and our state court have ruled often about the use of racism, unacceptable parameter for establishing voter districts. The legislature has purposely dragged their feet for three state election cycles where racist -- where race was used as an illegal factor in establishing voting districts.
districts. This resulted in a Republican, veto-proof control of state government. And that's never a good situation.

Why is race an issue in 2017? In 2012, nationwide, only 16 percent of African-Americans were registered Republicans and only six percent voted for the Republican presidential candidate. This small percentage is shrinking daily, especially after the last two weeks of news from Charlottesville, Virginia. Race is an issue, especially in northeastern North Carolina.

According to the 2013 Census data, neighboring Bertie County had the highest percentage of blacks population in North Carolina, 62 percent. Halifax County's 53 percent was the fifth-highest.

Seven counties in North Carolina were above 50 percent black population, all Halifax County neighbors. Contrarily, 34 mostly western counties have black populations under 10 percent and 23 of these counties were under five percent. The Republicans used their legislative powers to diminish the majority/minority voting black population in eastern North Carolina by assigning black voters into as few voting districts as possible.
From my perspective, other critical issues have been left unattended by the General Assembly. Eastern North Carolina has a history of underfunding and unperforming public education, a majority government responsibility. This has resulted in unacceptable academic performance in public schools in eastern North Carolina. Six of the six of the bottom nine academic deficiency school districts are in Halifax and neighboring counties.

Without sufficiently-funded education, the area has been unable to recruit employees to represent textile jobs. Halifax County's seven percent June unemployment rate was the fourth highest in the state. Neighboring counties experienced five highest jobless rates. North Carolina lawmakers' recklessly gerrymandering practices has led to cost litigation and put our state in the national spotlight.

Our legislators must enact House Bill 200, which will establish a nonpartisan redistricting process. The bill has overwhelming public -- public support with both red and blue legislative support. Thank you.

DR. KOO: My name is Kim Eng Koo, and I'm
a retired neurosurgeon. I live in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, in Nash County and I’m a member of the Rocky Mount Racial Justice Group.

Last year, the redistricting plans had been judged to illegal and legal and guilty of racial gerrymandering by the highest legal structure of the land, the US Supreme Court. You are tasked to redraw new district maps for public review by September the 1st in preparation for the 2018 elections.

First, I want to point out that releasing the maps and information on the redrawn district maps so late and so last-minute on the day before public hearings is an act of disrespect to all the people of this state. We need time to study and respond to them. You’re not giving us our due. This last-minute release maneuver smacks of dishonesty and secrecy, a lack of openness, which is a disgraceful act for public officials, paid for with public dollars.

Second, when I look at the new maps, I’m amazed by the contortions and variegated shapes of many areas. It looks like a collage and a distortion of reality. It’s so twisted. It takes a lot of work and conscious thought to come up with
such a map. The persons or persons involved must have some direct purpose for coming up with such a contorted picture. And not to mention getting paid with millions of our tax money add insult to injury, indeed. It represents to me a combination of the attempt by the current party in power to hold onto their power at the expense of electoral freedom and it is all racist and divisist.

The North Carolina legislature has already acquired quite a bit of notoriety for its electoral shenanigans. Some examples we have encountered at the last elections include limited early voting times, changing voting places to be less accessible to people of color and poor people, photo ID requirement and decreasing the number of places where new and unregistered voters can sign up. The electoral freedom of poor people and people of color keeps getting narrower and more hemmed in. Now you're dictating to us where to vote with this new map. Of course, it also impacts on who is running for that district, so we have few choices, less voices and no power.

Do you not think that this will -- that we will just allow this without a fight. This country is already -- already is in uproar over the
many racist and divisive moves by the central government. Already both black and white people of conscience are standing firm and standing together to beat this reactionary tide, like the event in Charlottesville and the recent events here to remove icons of oppression.

I respectfully submit that you redraw your redistricting map to reflect the diversity of our people here and to not target minority people, people of color or poor people. It will go far to reflect decency and some moral integrity among you guys.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you. We're now going to move to the Raleigh site here, and we're going to increase the number of each speakers at each site to four before we move to the next speaker coming in, in the interest of the time that it's going. I will also take this opportunity to remind people that kind of the midpoint at 6:30 will be -- we will be closing the sign-up list. So if you have not yet signed up, you would need to do so by that time period, if you wish to speak. We'll begin with M period, Eisenberg -- is how he signed up and you're recognized for three minutes.

MR. EISENBERG: My name is Michael
Eisenberg. I live in Raleigh, North Carolina. I had no intention of speaking today.

I have been to every one of these meetings and listened to the public issue very thoughtful and intelligent suggestions on this matter. I have listened to Representative Lewis tell us time after time how he wants to listen to the public and work with Democrats and abide by the decisions of the Court. After reading the N&O this morning regarding the political data rebuild on the maps, I knew I must speak out.

Representative Lewis was either not listening or he was lying when he made the above comments. These maps are -- these maps are as bad or worse than the ones we -- that were drawn in 2011. Probably not as bad in regards to race, but I'll defer my opinion on that until I hear Reverend Barber's comments. In regards to partisanship and the spirit of public opinion and listening to the citizens, please, our 50-50 state is now more -- is now going to be more gerrymandered than before.

The Republicans showed in the meeting to decide the -- the Republicans showed in the meeting to decide the criteria that they had no interest in working with Democrats when they voted unanimously
to turn down sensible amendments they offered. You have once again showed your true colors. You do not care about the vast majority of the people in North Carolina. You don't care about their well-being, because if you did, you would -- you would be for the health of the state's environment and the health of the people, but you said no to Medicaid expansion and yes to an 18-month moratorium on new projects.

You don't care about the children or you would not be attempting to destroy the public education that served the state so well. You don't care about women because you have continuously attempted to pass laws that would take away their healthcare. You don't care about the people of color because you have passed voter-suppression laws. You don't care about the poor or you would not have eliminated the income tax credit for the working poor.

But you do care about the wealthy because you did take away -- you did eliminate the estate tax for 223 families. We do know who you care about as you continuously work to cut taxes for -- that favor the wealthy and businesses by lowering the rate to the lowest in the South. You care
about the wealthiest and the businesses as -- as you have continuously brought about deregulation.

They are the winners with the maps were drawn. The people have called for fair maps and you've turned your backs on them. Your -- your ideas are morally bankrupt and the -- and the people confirmed that by electing Roy Cooper for governor.

I was taught you don't hate the player, you hate the game. In this game, you must hate both, as the game was rigged and it's not rigged in the favor of the people. I heard a 19-year-old at one of these meetings eloquently tell you that when his age group takes over this body, that tactics like these will never take place again.

I will leave you the words of my father, who so eloquently said to me when I was a young man and had guided me through my life. One word for me and you do exactly as you please. So all I can is I hope that if you do not redraw these maps, the courts take these maps and throw them in the dustbin where they belong and appoint a special council to redraw the maps. Shame on you.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you. A few things that -- for the other sites that we believe will
help with this transition between sites. We've been asked to change the order. So after the three more speakers in Raleigh, we'll go to Central Piedmont, then to Caldwell, then Guilford Tech, then Halifax, then Beaufort, then Fayetteville Tech. We've also, when making a change been asked to reference them by the community college. So we hope that with the technical issues that we'll address them. Given that, we'll move on to our second speaker here in Raleigh. Tony Quartararo.

MR. QUARTARARO: Hi, my name is Tony Quartararo. When my family and I moved to North Carolina 11 years ago, we fell in love with a place we believed was the heart of the New South, a place of progress, where people valued education, the planet, civil rights, racial and social justice and a collaborative open exchange of thoughts for the good of all the people. Sadly, we subsequently feared that we moved to the Tar Heel version of the Hatfields and the McCoys. Why? Because of what one grandfather did to another grandfather 40 years ago, one political party felt entitled, because they can, to crush the very soul of North Carolina and return to the ways of the Old South with its implicit and if not explicit white supremacy.
In the December special session, this fear was confirmed as I watched the supermajority immorally and unethically getting even and more for their grandfathers as they used phrases such as "it's constitutional, it's legal and it's what you did before." But I never heard -- I never heard "this will help the people; this will make our state better."

I'm disgusted with both parties. North Carolina has devolved to a Lord of the Flies scenario with the supermajority picking on the weak and marginalized. I'm disgusted with gerrymandering and voter suppression that allows an illegal and immorally skewed supermajority to exist which steamrolls anyone and anything that stands in the way of their special interest supporters. Whatever happened to the idea of public service for the public good?

I am sure many of you remember the movie Karate Kid. In the competition at the end of the movie, the evil sensei tells the students to deliver an illegal strike that injures the kid. When the kid meets the bully in the finals, the sensei once again tells his student, the bully, to unethically attack the kid's damaged leg.
Ultimately, the kid wins against the bullies.

Even now, in the North Carolina legislature, there's also a sensei and his two henchmen who have created these God-forsaken, immoral and unethical maps. And the people in this room know who they are. But the people of North Carolina, especially the poor and the people of color, are like The Karate Kid. They will overcome illegal, unethical and immoral legislative behavior which continues even today, since these maps will only have Confederate racism 17 percent of the districts.

The committee's choice is simple. Do what is right, moral and ethical for all of North Carolina's people. Create full and equitable voting districts or face the inevitable turning of the tide and the historical ignominy. The choice is yours. Do not be a Tar Heel version of the disgrace who sits in the White House and always remember. All political power comes from the people.

REP. LEWIS: Gina Cruz. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. CRUZ: Hello. My name is Gina Cruz. I am the North Carolina state director for
Progressive Turnout Project. I'm also a concerned North Carolinian who lives here in Raleigh.

Progressive Turnout Project has been working tirelessly to fight for fair maps for myself and my fellow North Carolinians. We deserve fair voting maps that are drawn by a nonpartisan redistricting commission. We deserve maps that are drawn without the use of any partisan voter data. We deserve maps that comply with the Voting Rights Act. We deserve maps that don't protect incumbents who won based on maps that were ruled racially gerrymandered. We deserve access to the map-drawing process.

We deserve ample time to both review the maps and plan to attend these public comment periods. Four days is not sufficient time for new maps to be reviewed. It cuts the public out of the process. Holding these meetings at 4:00 p.m. on a Tuesday afternoon is unfair to the working class families that you represent. Look at how many people are here and across the state with four days' notice. Had we had ample time, we would have filled 20 more rooms at least.

We deserve representatives who actually represent North Carolinians. This committee needs
to do better.

REP. LEWIS: Melva Fager Okun? You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. OKUN: Good evening and thank you so much for this opportunity to comment. My name is Melva Fager Okun, and I've lived in Carrboro for over 40 years. During that time, I've regularly walked these halls, speaking to senators and representatives about environmental and health protections. These include making our schools, restaurants and bars and hospitals tobacco-free, of which I am very proud. I never thought someday I'd return to ask for protection of the vote.

We desperately need new, fair and legal voting districts. I've waited a year for new maps and instead got them the day before this public hearing. That immediately tells me how much you value the public's input.

I wondered how a group with leaders from 28 illegally-drawn voting districts could possibly be charged with drawing the new maps. And I was shocked to hear that the same company that drew the illegal maps was rehired to draw the new maps. Your actions are stunning and memorable -- memorable. You are creating and solidifying your
I am currently reading a book about the fight for the right to vote by African-American leaders returning from World War II. The top leaders, such as Medgar Evers, ruled that they risk their lives in doing so and too many were murdered fighting for this right. Instead of denying the right to vote, you are engaged in something also horrific. You've worked tirelessly to make people's votes meaningless while also making it harder to vote. This is your legacy. You are the equivalent of white supremacists.

But I, and millions of North Carolinians, are paying attention. Some of us are here today to let you know we will do everything we can to stop you from your ill-intended deeds. We see this as a vital issue, the keystone to a democracy. I expect this will finally be decided by the courts. I attended the -- the judicial hearing a few weeks ago of the US District Court where this issue of the voting maps was discussed. I applaud the courts for their action.

I conclude my comments by saying I've heard the former US Attorney General Eric Holder state that North Carolina is the worst state in the
nation, the worst, regarding gerrymandering. That may be okay for the current leadership of the General Assembly and the officials from the 28 officially -- illegally-drawn voting districts, but it's not okay for the people of the state.

I am not worn down. I am not discouraged. In my work for public health protections that you all benefit from, I learned the basic truths. Where the greatest need is, the greatest -- hello? Where the greatest need is found -- where the greatest need is, the greatest cure can be found. That is my hope for you, me, your families, your grandchildren -- is that one day soon, we will have the most fair and just voting districts for the good of the whole. May it be so. Let's go.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you. We will now move for four speakers to the Central Piedmont site. After four speakers, we will move to the Caldwell Site.

MS. GARCIA: Thank you for allowing me to speak. My name is Tricia Garcia. I live in Mecklenburg County, and I lived here for 28 years. I'm in a room with a max capacity of 70 people for the largest population center of the state. This
public-forum platform is decreasing public input because of its inefficiency. Having microphones not muted at all of the sites while people are speaking, including the Chair of the whole committee's mic not muted, is very frustrating for people who want to listen and actually get input. But I do thank you for the opportunity to speak.

We appreciate the committee's work to produce maps to improve upon the current map, but there is a long way to go, as we've heard a lot of people say. Real public participation requires time. Citizens have had only three days to look at the House map and two days for the Senate and just a day for the data. This severely limits the amount of time and has denied voters the real chance to have their say.

Some of the committee's nine criteria such as more compactness and less precinct splitting were welcome improvements, while others have no place in drawing fair districts. For some criteria, the committee gave us yardsticks without numbers on them, making it impossible to measure the fairness. For example, the criteria called for splitting fewer precincts, but no data was provided
on how or when to split a precinct.

    So what about the maps? The committee
made the right choice in adopting county groupings
that conform to the North Carolina Constitution,
producing a map that improves on the current one,
even if that does not itself guarantee that the
districts also comply. We also see some progress
on compactness, with some better average scores
than previous Senate maps. The House districts are
less squiggly, but the new maps apparently don't
score any better on all of the measures. This
suggests that we are still falling short of fair
districts. The promise to split fewer precincts
came without a target, but we're glad to see that
the new maps split far fewer precincts. The House
map still splits 49, but there are a lot less than
394 split precincts in 2011.

    The committee attempted to avoid pitting
incumbents against each other. This criteria
simply has no place in a fair process. Elections
should be to protect voters' ability to have
their say, not protect incumbents. We haven't been
able to assess how the use of political
considerations in election results affected the
maps, but misuse -- I guess my time's up. Sorry.
MS. BLEIWEIS: When I run for state legislature, I'm going to mandate that every microphone be lowered a foot. That's going to be the new law.

My name is Barbara Bleiweis. I am the Fair Elections Chair for the League of Women Voters of Charlotte, Mecklenburg. The League was formed in 1920 that secured -- it was part of a movement that secured the right to vote for women. The 100th anniversary of that movement is coming soon and yet we still continue to fight for fair elections. I represent one of over 2,000 chapters of the League throughout the US and one of 18 here in North Carolina. We educate voters on election processes and issues, including gerrymandering and how it rigs elections.

Today, our fight continues to end gerrymandering and to reform the redistricting process to create fair maps. Our position on gerrymandering is well-documented and indeed, to a large extent, has been validated by the Supreme Court on June 5th, when they upheld the lower Court's ruling that the existing district maps violated the constitutional rights of North
Carolina voters. And at that time, new maps were ordered and due September 1st.

Since that time, the League has watched legislators and -- continue to manipulate the process, and we were appalled. We received notice on 17 August to have public comments on 22 August on maps that we got on 19 and 20 August, using and -- creating maps that use criteria that -- then that the net effect of it is disenfranchisement of groups of voters using partisanship as a veiled cover for race. The decision to limit time for response, as well as limiting room for seating, only underscores the fact that you might have no interest in what we have to say [inaudible].

The effort to be transparent is disingenuous. It erodes public trust in you and undermines the democratic process. These hearings lack the authenticity that we need and the accountability that we demand of elected officials.

This isn't about Republican. It's not about Democrat. It's not about retribution for what happened in the past. It is about integrity and fairness to the voters, to we the people.

The good news is, you have a chance to fix this. So on behalf of the League of Women
Voters, we ask you, find a way to make maps fair. Find a way that it will respect voter laws and ensure that all our votes will count. Thank you.

MR. READY: Are we still working? Hi, I'm Dan Ready. I'm a relative newcomer to North Carolina. Hi, I'm Dan Ready. I'm a relative newcomer to the state. I've only been here about eight years, but I have grandchildren who are going to grow up here and that brings me to this process -- this arcane process of redistricting our state.

Also, I was raised to have -- to believe that democracy is something sacred. I've never in my life, since the time I was eligible to vote, missed an election. The only time I -- my vote might not have been counted was when I was on active duty, and I don't think my absentee ballot got back on time. That's why I'm so appalled at what I've seen in the last few years to try to steal the right to vote from people, their sacred right to vote, simply because they might not vote the right way.

And this redistricting process -- I'm not naive -- I know has always been a partisan process. But there are certain lines you don't cross. There
are certain extremes you go to. And other people have spoken eloquently already to this process that we're going through now. And the excuse obviously is that we're under the gun because the Court said something has to happen by September 1st. But we're under the gun on this process because of the previous actions of the legislature. And you have a responsibility to something other than political power. And I wish you would recognize it.

However, the bottom line at this point is, I don't think there's any way to have a proper prospect -- process, excuse me, in the limited time between now and September 1st. So rather than speak to a committee of the legislature who has failed in their responsibilities and now doesn't have time to properly execute them and clearly doesn't respect this sacred thing called democracy, I'd like to speak directly to the courts involved. Please, see these maps for what they are.

I personally think one of the political branches, the legislature, should conduct this process. But the legislature, through its own actions, has made this impossible through their negligence, through their lack of taking the responsibilities to us citizens seriously. And so
I would implore the Court. See the maps for what they are. Throw them out. This is one time when I think we would all be better served, regardless of our political stripe, by the courts writing the district. This is one time we need the courts to draw the districts and take our legislature out because they have proven that they deserve to be taken out of the process this time.

Please, I hope to God the courts will throw these maps out and give us a map that is true to that sacred ideal of democracy that we should all believe in. Thank you so much.

REP. LEWIS: I have that it is three speakers, and we're doing four speakers at Central Piedmont. Next on the list in Central Piedmont I have David Taylor for the fourth speaker.

MR. TAYLOR: Good afternoon. My name is David Taylor. I'm a resident here in Charlotte. So many -- so many speakers before me have spoken so more eloquently than I'm able to, including Mr. Ready. I would remind the people assembled that the state constitution guarantees that our power is derived from the people and is instituted solely for the good of the whole. I'm sorry. If you can't hear -- our constitution
guarantees that the power is derived from the people and is instituted solely for the good of the whole, but over the last four years, most of our discourse has been about health -- about bathrooms, monuments and campus speech codes rather than about healthcare, schools, roads and jobs.

Most of this is due to the partisan nature of our politics where 80 percent of districts of this state are safely held by one party or the other with no chance for competition. This puts the hands -- the power in the hands of the most extreme members of either party and pretty much disenfranchises 75 percent of our voters because they don't participate in the primary process and don't have a legitimate choice in the general election.

Please, please, let's try to end the partisanship in our state's politics. It's destroying the state. Thank you.

REP. LEWIS: We will now move to Caldwell for four speakers. First speaker I have on the list is Cotton Johnson. If we could transfer to the Caldwell site.

MR. JOHNSON: I'm Cotton Johnson. I'm a Republican. I was the [inaudible] since 1905. I
later moved on to become the youngest state special assistant for governor in the history of the state and that record has not been broken. I've examined the districts, at least our district, and I give an opinion that our district is not gerrymandered whatsoever. Other districts may. I have not addressed them [inaudible] the Raleigh News & Observer, which is a [inaudible] that it's not favorable to the Republican Party at all. However, [inaudible] the detail or [inaudible] the process [inaudible] in talking about the districts here I said [inaudible] Burke County more than anything else. I think another thing that indicates that our district was not gerrymandered is that Senator [inaudible] Randelman and Wilkes. Senator [inaudible] have never indicated that she understands the needs of our district. During the course of her time, Caldwell is 64th per capita income. Watauga is 49th. Ashe is 60th. Allegheny is 73rd. She wants to dismiss all this and vote with the high-income districts. She also wants to talk about tax issues and middle class tax reduction which is a lie. She supported a bill in the legislature last session that resulted in [inaudible] a year to get a $19,000 tax
reduction. [Inaudible] I rest my case. That's all the time I get. I'll give it to someone else.

MS. HUFFMAN: Good evening. My name is Sarah Huffman, and I live in Hickory. I'm under -- I can be under many umbrellas and I'm not going to take up a lot of time. I was in the League of Women Voters for 38 years. I proudly served on the Board of Hickory [inaudible]. So I'm here today to make it very brief.

I want to address the General Assembly with a few facts. There's a recent poll, very recent, shows that four out of five North Carolinian voters, that is 80 percent, say there's say it's not fair for politicians to draw their own districts. The poll includes 85 percent Democrats, 74 percent Republicans and 80 percent of Independents. The redistricting process must be open over racial or partisan gerrymandering and allow voters to pick their own political representatives and not the other way around.

Now, do you -- in these new maps, you could still pick the same consultant, Thomas Hofeller who drew the current illegal maps and how on earth can you expect to come out with a new map that is representative of every voter in North
Carolina? These new maps -- now I've had a short
time, very, very short time to study them-- only
corrects about 10 percent.

What's happened to the other 90 percent?
Well, we need to redo them. The General Assembly
leaders have spent $8,000,000 of -- of taxpayers' 
money to defend their maps in court, and they keep
losing. I want to end my little speech by saying,
stop wasting our money and get a nonpartisan
committee to draw new maps. Thank you.

MS. MORETZ: I'm Mary Moretz, and I am
from Boone. That is in Watauga County for those of
you who might not know. Hearing what Russians or
other alien nations might do -- might do to cause
Americans to lose faith in our election process
pales in comparison to what we have done to
ourselves. How are we to have a legitimate
democracy, when the Constitution is willfully
manipulated to take away the principle of one
person, one vote via gerrymandering?

Both parties are guilty. I'm old so I
know it's both parties. Oh, how you must
congratulate yourselves or have a letter, maybe.
You have manipulated the system. It is only a
matter of time until the present minority party
will exchange places with the majority party and play the payback game. And perhaps with a vengeance.

Let's end that now, let's resolve to pass a North Carolina constitutional amendment that reforms the process of redistricting, so that it's fair for all citizens now and in the future. In order to accomplish such a change, what we need are legislators who are statesmen and not politicians. What we need are legislators who believe that equality and democracy are more important than party.

What we need are legislators who rise above the petty of gotcha, and rise to the challenge of integrity, honesty and fairness. What we need are legislators who reflect the moral code upon which our nation was built. And not politicians who are full of themselves for their clever exploitation. Yes, Democrats, I am giving you a tongue lashing. And, yes, Republicans I am giving you a tongue lashing, too. Don't make me have to come to Raleigh.

You call me an unconstitutional liar when I talk government to my high school students. I told them that, indeed, America is the shining the
city on the hill that models for all nations and all peoples. That our democracy harbors all people of all races, colors, and creeds through its practice of one person, one vote. You have made a mockery of our ideals.

I'm calling on you now to repent and clean up your act. I'd like to suggest a [inaudible] for redistricting. One, in accordance with the Constitution of the United States, each district shall have populations, equal populations. Two, the creation of each district shall protect the rights -- the ethnic voting rights in accordance of Shaw versus Reno. Three, districts shall be compact. Four, districts shall follow established political boundaries such as cities and counties. Thank you, the overwriting concept of promoting one person, one vote should and must be our mission. Thank you.

REP. LEWIS: Waiting for the fourth speaker, Caldwell. I have --

MS. WENGERD: [Inaudible] Hi, my name is Carolyn Wengerd. My name is Carolyn Wengerd. I'm a student of mathematics. I'm also a teacher of mathematics. Okay. And when I came in today I got handed these pretty maps. Somebody had to use
eight crayons to color them. Now, if you know anything about mathematics it should not take eight crayons, it should take far fewer. And there's no data behind this. I -- I look at these and see the big picture, but without data they're meaningless.

Now, one person I heard say, that some they came out today, that's nice. I was looking for a [inaudible]; I couldn't find any. But I really would wish you guys would come into the 21st century. There's software out there, unbiased software. We don't need a biased consultant, Republican or Democrat. Software does this no matter what your state, no matter what county you're in. Finish your games [inaudible]. Thank you.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you. I will remind all sites that these outbursts of applause will not be tolerated and are unhelpful when transitioning between sites and only serve to slow down the process. We are now going to move onto the Guilford Tech site, for four speakers.

REP. STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Representative Stevens, here again. We've had one more representative join to us. Representative [inaudible] joins this facility, I wanted to
announce that. We are prepared with our four speakers. We have Michael Owens, Derick Smith, Betsy Price and Chanelle James. We are ready.

MR. OWENS: I'd like to start by thanking the General Assembly for holding this forum. I don't envy the work you have ahead of you. My name is Michael Owens. I am honored to serve as the vice-chair for the Forsyth County Republican Party.

I'd also like to take a moment in time to thank the General Assembly for the work they've done in the last few years. They repaid roughly $3 billion to the federal government a year ahead of schedule. With increase in teacher pay more than once and then established a rainy-day fund with hundreds of millions of dollars, to be used in the event of an emergency or natural disaster. They've done all of this while lowering personal and business income taxes for building North Carolina to one of the best states in the country to do business.

In regards to the maps, whatever the outcome of this process, there's going to be a lawsuit. You can take race into account, there is going to be a lawsuit. You cannot take race into account, there is going to be a lawsuit. I know it
and you know it.

              To accentuate that, there is someone in
the room with me today, who assumed for sake of the
voter ID, I doubt it's a coincidence that they are
here today. I wonder if those -- those
organizations were included at all in this process.
If not, why not? If for no other reason than to
have them at least partially accountable for the
outcome. And I'll leave with this so those in the
minority party who have talked so much about
gerrymandering. I wonder if you considered your
district's gerrymander when you were, in fact, the
majority party for well over a century. Thank you.

REP. STEVENS: Here, here, go ahead.

MR. SMITH: Good afternoon, North
Carolina. My name is Derick Smith. I am the
political actions chair for the Greensboro Chapter
of the NAACP. I'm also the political action chair
for the state congress of Chapters of the NAACP.
And I stand here with my president, Rev. Cardes
Brown, from the Greensboro Chapter of the NAACP.

And I want to get right off the bat to
this whole deal about Mr. Thomas Hofeller. Let's
think about these cases that we've had to deal
with, here in North Carolina. The list is long;
Dickson versus Rucho, City of Greensboro versus Guilford County Board of Elections, Senator Wade. We've had to deal with the Harris-Cooper case. The -- the list is -- is quite long and of course the famous Covington case with Supreme Court. Ruled nine to zero, even with Clarence Thomas on board, ruling these are unconstitutionally constituted districts. Yet somehow, in their infinite wisdom this General Assembly believes that it must continue to pay Thomas Hofeller to continue to do this to the taxpayers of the state of North Carolina.

So the message that they are sending is, either they like what he's doing and they're -- or they're just are rewarding incompetence. I believe they like what he's doing, because they can maintain power to keep the system all locked up in the legal process, while they maintain power. So, number one, Thomas Hofeller got to go.

Number two, let's talk about race. One of the criteria that the General Assembly believes that it needs to show [inaudible] is that it needs to take race completely off the table. As though there is no equal protection clause, as though there is no Voting Rights Act Section 2. 'Cause
they got in trouble with race by packing black votes into specific districts to maintain their power illegally. Now they just want to do away with it. Don't even consider race, as though the Voting Rights Act doesn't apply. We're not going to let them do it.

And the third thing I want to talk about is don't let this General Assembly hoodwink you into believing that incumbency is about incumbents. First of all, it is, in the fact that's what they are trying to protect, which is not in the interest of anybody in the state of North Carolina. It's only in the interest of people who are incumbents. But here's the issue, the incumbency that there's -- that they're protecting is illegal. It's been illegal since all these courts have ruled that's illegal. So what they are trying to protect --

REP. LEWIS: One minute, okay. Time is up.

MR. SMITH: Oh, time is up. But you know what they are trying to protect. Don't let them do it, North Carolina.

REP. STEVENS: Betsy Price and then Chanelle James.
MS. PRICE: Hello, my name is Betsy Price. I stand here tired. I'm tired of it being [inaudible] or seeing it on the news, a new law passed that I disagree with. I'm tired of a legislature of Raleigh that passes laws that discriminate. And I'm tired of them passing them in the middle of the night. And I'm tired of a legislature that fights our governor and Attorney General at every turn. These, I believe, are the results of gerrymandering.

And I'm also confused. Confused that the Republicans in Raleigh chose the same guy to redraw the maps that were drawn wrong the first time. And confused that they used my tax money to do it, $50,000. And I'm also confused why the ruling party gets to choose to redraw the maps. That rule needs to go.

So I propose to the good people of North Carolina that we appoint an independent council, chosen by the people to draw these maps. Use ZIP codes to draw them, so that people that live together, work together and play together, can choose who they to represent them.

Gerrymanders sounds a lot like jerry-rigged to me. First it was lizards, then
snakes, I wonder what creature lurks out there this time. So I say no to the new maps, draw them and make them fair.

MS. JAMES: Hello, my name is Chanelle Beverly James, and I am a citizen of Greensboro. I'm also a Plaintiff in the Covington case, that federal lawsuit in which three-judge court invalidated 28 states -- state House and state districts as unconstitutional racial, gender -- gerrymanders.

I'm here today to discuss my concerns about the criteria this committee is using to draw its proposed maps. First, your criteria is flawed because three of the committee's criteria use the 2011 plans as a starting point for measuring success. But these plans have been ruled unconstitutional racial gerrymanders. The proper benchmark to use would be the last constitutional plans, those that came before 2011 plans. Instead, the committee is officially tying its current maps to the unconstitutional maps, perhaps its criteria on compactness, split precinct and incumbency protection.

On election data, the committee's decision to allow drawing maps based on political
consideration is simply a repeat of the process
that followed to ensure partisan advantages when
you re-draw -- re-drew congressional districts in
2016. This use of political power is improper.
Data on incumbents' addresses and past election
terms should be used only to ensure that the
districts do not unruly favor any party or
individual, while complying with federal laws not
to ensure partisan outcomes. We believe this
improper use of political data likely exposes the
legislature for liability for partisan
gerrymandering, just as with the [inaudible] plans.

Second, with respect to compactness, it
seems funny to us, even having had the maps for
such a small amount of time, that the legislature
has -- prioritizing incumbency protection over the
facts. The North Carolina Supreme Court has
explained that compliance with the state
constitutional whole county provision requires that
districts must be compact. Incumbency protection,
while perhaps an acceptable consideration, if
applied evenly to incumbents of both parties,
should not supersede requirements of the state
constitution. That's your failure to establish
criteria that are openly [inaudible] state
constitutional criteria, above other criteria is [inaudible] problematic.

Finally, this committee's decision to altogether equal or race is a problem and it defies the directional support. The use of race in redistricting is not an all-or-nothing approach. Issues of race are a nuance and not just in redistricting. The law reflects is explained at length by the Covington Court and is reiterated by this committee on some of your members, although they were ignored. This Court has instructed the General Assembly that a one-size-fits-all racial classification violates the Constitution and hurts voters like me.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you. Having had four speakers, we'll move to the Halifax Community College site that's coming in and for four speakers.

REP. J. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We had Speaker Number 4, Janet Hoy, and Speaker Number 5, Richard Siat, withdraw their names. We'll start with Speaker Number 6, Edith Braginton, and then move to Speakers Number 7, 8 and 9.

MS. BRAGINTON: Thank you. My name is, Edith Braginton, and I live in Halifax. This is
the first time that I have ever felt moved to come to any kind of a meeting like this. And it is because I feel the maps, the gerrymandered maps, are so bad. It is very important that people speak up when they see these things.

I think the maps should be free from partisan politics, first of all. I think that they should comply with the Civil Rights Act. I think that the maps should be fair. Gerrymandering hurts all of us. We have to get rid of it now. I understand that politicians currently in power would like to stay in power. I understand that politicians want to win. You don't have to be scared. All you have to do is represent all of us. You can win if you represent all of us.

Gerrymandering equals voter suppression. Don't do that.

REP. J. BELL: Mr. Chairman, we also had, for the record, Senator Smith-Ingram join us.

MS. CLAYTON: I'm Eva Clayton, the former member of Congress. I speak today because I want to be on record so I'll be clear that the right to vote is the most precious right we have as an American. And indeed, redistricting is one way to deny that. I, for one, know the value of
redistricting was part of the challenge that indeed created the two congressional districts in North Carolina. This is no more than a sham. If the process is flawed, the product is flawed. And to the extent that this hearing is being called at the last minute, very limited information, to the extent we use the same system that created the illegal system in the very beginning. The audacity to think that the system would be so naive to think that you could do this to Americans.

We are just coming from the whole celebration of the accident of Charlottesville. Indeed, we understand what it is to be American or not to be American pushing on statutes. Well, the statute that created the civil rights law is essential to being in America, so North Carolinian delegates or members of the Senate, General Assembly or the House, to the extent that you say that all Americans, indeed, should be free, all Americans are equal -- to the extent that you say that and believe that, this redistricting plan has, indeed, to be redrawn. Thank you.

MS. ROSS-HOLMES: Good afternoon. My name is Carolyn Ross-Holmes, and I'm a resident of
Weldon. My message to all of the legislators assembled: candidates must be electing by all of the diverse groups that are located in jurisdictions. Gerrymandering is not necessary when candidates campaign and learn the people for which you represent in all shades and beliefs abide by the law.

I agree with many of the comments made earlier by my fellow citizens in this room. It's all about the process, such as paying attention to the crowd in your respective rooms to gain insight of those assembled here and noticing what they agree to or not. So in the spirit of ensuring our vote is not suppressed neither shall our show of support for comments made that I think would be helpful in your report of public feelings using -- by using sign language. I think that's what we've been reduced to do. This is another example of how one must seek and gain understanding of the people you are elected to serve. Thank you.

MR. HERTZENRATER: I don't know how the -- how the rooms are set up in other places here. My name is Warren Hertzenrater. I'm the pastor of Jackson Baptist Church. I don't know how the other rooms are set up in other places; it
appears that people are talking to a crowd of people. Here we speak to a camera, a wall and three guys in suits. And I've certainly spoken to three guys in suits before when we have low attendance on a Sunday, but I prefer to speak to a crowd, and there's a crowd here. So I'm going to turn around and get a timer going so hopefully I won't go over the three minutes.

I -- I wonder, I'm not asking for a vote, but how well we're able to hear what's going on in other places. I've struggled to hear the comments going on and -- and it seems to me that people who have prepared things to say are being disrespected by the fact that their words get jumbled and -- and -- and messed up so that people across the state, in what's supposed to a public hearing are not able to be heard. It would appear that in the process of creating these districts we have found another way to suppress people's voices.

There's lots of ways to silent people's voices. One is to deny them the vote, which we have done this in this state. We have a long history of doing that, even after suffrage, even after the Voting Rights Act; even after 2017 we still find ways to do it. Another way to silence
people is to place them in districts by drawing lines around and through counties and through neighborhoods. Another way to do it is to threaten people with expulsion as they choose to express their appreciation for a speaker as the person before me has just said.

Another way which seems trivial by comparison is to use technology and equipment that is inadequate to the task of spreading a public hearing across the public, across the state. And I realize it's a tiny thing. I'm no expert at doing this kind of thing but I've been involved in webcasts before, and this is probably the worst one I've ever seen. It -- it -- I just -- you know, I think there's glass fiber going all over the state between community colleges. I can't understand why it works this way.

Why, if this is so important, are there such inadequate resources are brought into play to accomplish, or to fail to accomplish? The technology makes voices sound like Mr. Ed and Fred Munster and Mickey Mouse stuck down in a well. And that's disrespectful and it disregards the importance of what's going on here. It seems like it's just another little tiny thing, just like
another little tiny vote, just like another little percentage difference that it makes when you move a congressional line. But all these just things make things unjust.

A man I know named Tex Sample once told -- talked with us about the problem he had with his two sons who had a hard time sharing the task of mowing the lawn. The old one would always take the easy part, leaving the hard part for the younger one. Tex drew a map of the room and he -- or a map of the yard and he said -- the older one -- said to the older one divide the yard up any way you want and said to the younger one, you pick which side you want to mow. I wish we could do voting that way.

REP. LEWIS: That will then move us on to Beaufort Community College -- four speakers.

MR. WICKERSHAM My name is Dave Wickersham. I live at 838 Sunshine Drive in Arapahoe, North Carolina. I am the chairman of the Republican Party of Pamlico County. My comments today specifically address Pamlico County.

On February the 8th, 1872, the General Assembly of North Carolina ratified, quote, "an act to lay off and establish a new county by the name
of Pamlico," end quote. This new county was made up of land from the existing counties of Craven and Beaufort and we have formed a close relationship with them over the last 145 years.

A computer line drawn on a map does not recognize the people, the lives or their daily activities. We are an inland county, we are not a coastal county. We are not connected in any way to the other counties in this proposed redistricting. Pamlico County is not contiguous with Dare, Hyde or Carteret counties. The only connection is a long drive through Beaufort County via Washington or a tedious ferry ride. On the other hand, Craven and Carteret County are accessible by a four-lane highway or a very short, convenient, 20-minute ferry ride.

We do banking, air travel, car buying, shopping and enjoy dining and entertainment in our neighboring counties. Our retired military are constantly commuting back and forth to Cherry Point. Our children take bus trips to the North Carolina Aquarium and other points of interest in our neighboring counties. The closest hospital and other much-needed medical services are only 25 miles away. There is a significant flow of people
between our three counties.

Our inland coastal location on the Neuse and Pamlico rivers have resulted in very special state regulations that Dare, Hyde and Currituck don't have. Of course they have their own set of burdensome regulations to deal with. To be blunt, our modest population of 13,000 means the much larger counties to our north will mean that we simply will be lost in the shuffle. It is hard to imagine anyone elected in this proposed new district would spend much time with us or, more importantly, represent our needs and concerns in the legislature. I implore you to reconsider this alignment and leave Pamlico County with neighbors with whom we work, live, recreate and worship as a community of shared interests. Please examine again not only your responsibility to comply with a court order, but your human responsibility of doing the right thing instead of just taking yet another political expedient action.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.
I can only hope and pray my words are heard.
Please let us stay as we are with our neighbors and shared communities in Craven, Beaufort and Carteret. Because in the case of Pamlico County,
as far as the redistricting goes, it is not fair, it is not contiguous, it is not more compact and it is not respectful of community and shared interests. Thank you.

REP. J. BELL: Ray Leary.

MR. LEARY: Thank you. Good evening, my name is Ray Leary. I reside in Chocowinity, North Carolina, and I'm here representing the Citizens of Better Government of Beaufort County. We do not understand why this committee has chosen to include Beaufort County in a North Carolina senatorial district that has no commonality with coastal communities. Beaufort County has approximately 80 statute miles of estuary and waters, and Beaufort County is connected by this association and historically to the coastal counties of Hyde and Dare counties. We --

MALE SPEAKER: Can't hear -- no broadcast -- all we can hear [inaudible] -- turn it up.

MR. LEARY: Well, it says it's on. I'll just talk louder. We have nothing in common with Vance, Northampton and Warren counties. We do not know why anyone would suggest this plan. It makes no sense. If there is a plausible explanation for
this gerrymandering, we would certainly like to hear why that is from this committee. We do not need this, we do not want this, and we do not deserve to be shut out in Raleigh. It is -- is it not sufficiently corrupt that Beaufort County has to endure limited voting for county representatives? And now this new Senate district map was conjured up to deprive us of representation in the North Carolina Senate.

The redistricting committee has been provided with an acceptable modification to the new maps by the Beaufort County Republican Party Executive committee. The Beaufort County Citizens for Better Government supports this revision and respectfully requests you correct this rather egregious redistricting plan. Such a change will actually better comply with the published criteria for redistricting than the current proposed map does. Thank you for allowing the citizens to provide you with these recommendations and we sincerely hope you will honor not only our request, but others who have proposed this same modification. Thank you very much.

MR. SEIGHMAN: My name is Gerald Seighman. I'm a Beaufort County resident, and I
did not intend to come to this meeting, but the more I thought about it, the more upset I am. Holding a meeting at 4 o'clock is not a public meeting because in Beaufort County we're a Tier 1 community. And a lot of the people that are working, they cannot afford to take off the half-day and lose those wages to come make comments, so I thought I would just come. If you look at Beaufort County, fishing, crabbing, shrimping, that's what we do. We're a coastal community.

And I look at the map, but I see we are with Vance, Warren and Northampton. They're -- they're landlocked, they don't have any water. So if we have political representation from someone that wins the election up in those counties, they have no clue what Beaufort County does. We should be put back into the coastal community where the representation will have some knowledge of at least what we do in this county. Thank you.

MS. JONES: My name is Mary Jones, and I'm from Washington County and I don't like speaking in public. But addressing the topic of how our neighborhoods and counties have been so split up before, these new districts are more
compact than the current ones that we are now under. These districts respect our community and our shared interest with our neighbors. These districts respect the principle of contiguity with means -- which means being close or drawn together, with all parts of each district being connected. It is this way for our county; it may not be said for some of you others. But I endorse these maps. There are -- there are less split-up counties than before.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you. I will announce, it looks like we have about nine minutes if any more individuals are wishing to sign up to speak. Tonight in about nine minutes, at 6:30, the sign-up list will close. If nothing else, we'll move on to Fayetteville Tech for four speakers.

REP. SZOKA: That's Ana Blackburn, Deandrea Newsome, Lynn Hanka, Roberta Waddle -- that's four, and if they go to five, Mr. Buxton.

MS. BLACKBURN: Good evening, I'm Ana Blackburn. I'm the state's Latino liaison for the North Carolina NAACP. Democracy is once again at stake because it is being stolen by an illegitimate General Assembly. This is not just my opinion but that of the court system. The Supreme Court found
the North Carolina white supermajority rigged the election by using racist gerrymandering to win their seats. I am personally tired about hearing that the Republicans gerrymandered as well. We are talking about the here and the now. Two wrongs don't make a right.

Here we go again. With all that in mind, and after being found guilty by the Supreme Court, nine to zero, of racist gerrymandering, you would think that at least a logical person would take steps to admit and attempt to remedy the situation honestly, but no, not our North Carolina supermajority. They turned around and hired the very consultant who drew the previous racist, gerrymandered maps and, to add insult to injury, gave him a raise.

Public records show that Mr. Hofeller has received 50,000 of public funds to redraw the map once again. Yet, whenever we exercise our right to protest and rally, the rhetoric we hear from the supermajority is, the people elected us, they have spoken, stop your whining.

Well, I'm here to tell you, the people haven't spoken, because you saw to that by rigging the maps, which is exactly what you are attempting.
to once again do. The public, this public hearing, is a sham. And what a total disrespect to the people of North Carolina, the hard-working voters of this state that you will hold seven hearings, at this time when so many people cannot get here and call that you are honest leadership and trying to do the right thing by the people. It would be a bigger crisis to democracy if I would not stand up to the injustice that this General Assembly is trying to do by silence the people of North Carolina. (Comments in Spanish.) Forward together, not one step back.

MS. NEWSOME: Hello, my name is Resistance, and I'm a resident of Cumberland County. And so I have a message to Chairman Lewis and also Vice-Chairman Szoka. Stop insulting the intelligence of the residents of our great state. It is about time that you all become representative of who you represent. It has been way too long that you think that this is the best that you can do. Are you serious? I am infuriated, disrespected, upset that this is why we're here today.

And to think that -- when you look at our Cumberland County as it -- as it comes down to the
House district, that it's a conflict of interest as our vice chairman's district gets larger, if you look at the maps. The definition of insanity is to do the same thing over and over and over again and expect different results. So the members of the redistricting committee, maybe you're a little insane and it's time for you to come home.

REP. LEWIS: Representative Szoka, could you have the speaker repeat her name?

MS. NEWSOME: Resistance.

REP. SZOKA: Resistance.

MS. HANKA: My name is Lynn Hanka. I'm a --

REP. LEWIS: Representative Szoka --

MS. HANKA: -- I'm a relative newcomer to North Carolina, and I chose to stay here because I love this state. And the more that I learn about the antics of gerrymandering and voter suppression by the legislature the more horrified I am. I would remind you that a core tenet of democracy is that a healthy democracy requires a principled opposition. A healthy democracy requires a principled opposition because a plurality of perspectives is how we progress as a society and support everyone, from the most privileged to the
most vulnerable.

The legislative super-majority has lost sight of this requirement of a principled opposition, doing everything they can to stamp out any opposition. And so we have a sick democracy in our state that's infected with partisanship, disenfranchisement and cruelty to the most vulnerable people.

These new maps show intent to protect the illegal supermajority. And so the sickness that infects our democracy will continue if these maps are adopted.

For us to heal our democracy, we must have a truly open process that allows voters to choose their representatives. End the partisan and racial gerrymandering now, so that our representatives truly represent all of us. Thank you.

REP. LEWIS: Representative Szoka, could you please read the speakers' names so far?

MS. WADDLE: Good evening. I am Roberta Waddle --

REP. LEWIS: Ma'am you can hear me?

MS. WADDLE: I'm chair of the Cumberland County Democratic Party. Every legislative
district in Cumberland has been redrawn. While the
lines in the districts do appear to be more
compact, I have no data on the results of these
changes. I don't know whether these districts help
or hinder our party; they probably don't. I don't
know if redistrict will meet justice department
approval regarding racial distribution. I cannot
determine if they are fair.

I would very much like to comment on the
proposed redistricting maps presented here today.
However, the process has been so secret and the
hearings scheduled without sufficient time to
evaluate them it is very hard to do so.

The reason we are so rushed at this time
is because the legislators in charge have delayed
redrawing of the districts as long as they could,
and they have not allowed for public input. Courts
have ruled that the current maps are gerrymandered
with surgical precision. Considering that the new
maps have been drawn under the same legislative
direction and done by the same technical services,
it seems likely that we would have a very similar
outcome.

I call for an independent commission to
draw maps that allow fair representation for all.
meaning that minorities would have a fair chance to be represented in the legislature, that the parties would be proportionally represented and that there would be fair, safe districts for all. Thank you.

REP. LEWIS: Ms. Waddle, please state your name.

MS. WADDLE: I did. Oh, okay. I am Roberta Waddle. Chair of the Cumberland County Democratic Party.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you. Could you give me the previous two speakers. I -- someone's name was not what I had on the list. Could you give me the name for the previous two speakers?

REP. SZOKA: Mr. Chair, the second speaker was Deandrea Newsome of Advance Carolina and the third speaker was Lynn Halka of Cape Fear Indivisible.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you very much. We will now move on. We're going to go to -- we will increase the number of speakers on each site to five as that does seem to expedite it slightly. And there was one change, but we're coming back here to Raleigh. We will begin with Rosalie Dominik, then Bobo Ayres, then Rachel Lichte, Corey Williams and Aylett Colston.
So in that order we'll begin with Rosalie Dominik.

MS. DOMINIK: Hi, I'm Rosalie Dominik of Durham. And I think the message you've been hearing is very clear. We need an approach to redistricting that is transparent, acceptable to both parties and enduring. This is the only way to ensure a true democracy. Plus, as long -- until we have a long-term solution to drawing districts, we won't have the opportunity for our officials to spend all the time they need to spend and the -- and the funds that are available on education, health care and infrastructure development.

They'll be distracted by the redistricting problem until it's truly solved in a -- in a nonpartisan way. So the process used to draw the proposed maps, you know, lacks transparency and appears to have, once again resulted in maps that are rigged in favor in one party -- of one party. The citizens of North Carolina truly deserve better. And this is a problem you can fix. You have that power. It's -- it's one of the things that you can fix pretty easily. So I hope that you will do the right thing. Thank you.
SEN. HISE: Bobo Ayres, you're recognized for time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. AYRES: Hi, my name is Bobo Ayres. I am a fiscal conservative, a stay-at-home mom so I'm literally nobody. I'm sure you guys all have families. And if your children misbehave, you would reprimand them. And if they did it again, you would probably reprimand them again, right?

So in this case, I'm not sure why we're going back to the same guy to draw the same maps. And I'm not sure why you would expect the people to encourage it. To say, yay, you made the same mistake again. So I'm just asking you to stop wasting your time and our money on unnecessary lawsuits. Lawsuits come because an injustice has been done. Thank you for hearing me.

SEN. HISE: Thank you. We'll now move to Rachel Lichte for a time period not exceed three minutes. Is Rachel not here? Okay. Moving on, Corey Williams. Come to order. Recognizing Corey Williams for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. WILLIAMS: Hi there. If it helps you, I was Number 9. I am a mom from House District 56 and Senate District 23. And I brought my very expensive visual aids with me today. In
November of last year I had no idea what Senate district I lived in or House District.

I was at the PTA. I was volunteering, but I wasn't really watching what was going on here. The special sessions turned that around for me, and I really began to pay attention. I came down. Some of you, I recognize because I sit in your office and don't leave until you talk to me. But I wanted to know what was going on in this state. And I wanted to find the dedicated civil servants who set aside their interest and serve for $14,000 a year and do this. So clearly you care. And I've met some thoughtful, capable, dedicated, North Carolinians.

I've had lunch with you, and I respect you. I've also seen some of the most contemptible stunts, the likes of which would land these two guys in the naughty corner. This set of maps, naughty corner.

I sat in the Greensboro courtroom and listened to Mr. Starch -- I'm going to get his name wrong -- his very thin argument. They were not delaying the process for partisan reasons. They were instead dedicated to ensuring that the public comment is heard and taken under advisement. And
these people clearly care. We've heard great comments from North Carolinians around this state. I'm glad to hear that you want public comment and I'm hoping that this time Mr. Hofeller hears all of these public comments.

So we're not at the pool today. They put on their suits to come see you, so I could let you know what I think. These maps don't just fail the efficiency gap test, they fail the chuckle test. And while I realize it's still legal, it's not ethical, it's not right and it's not long for this world. We're all waiting for the Wisconsin Supreme Court decision and we're all tired of the they-did-it-first argument. I don't want them to do it, and you guys shouldn't be doing it, either.

In terms of racial gerrymandering, releasing these maps on Saturday has not given me adequate chance to really assess whether a remedy has been achieved here. But I'll tell you, as a black woman, I have listened over and over to protestations that the people -- the members of this body are not racist. All I can say to you at this moment, with no data, is that I hope that when we look hard at the work that you've done, it won't be found wanting. Because mamas will come to the
ballot box and we're going to send everybody who is -- is not providing effective remedy to the naughty corner.

There are some bill sponsors who are to be commended. We saw House Bill 200. We saw Representative Brust's computer redistricting be proposed this session. This isn't -- those are all Republicans. This isn't really an issue of partisanship. It's an issue of incumbency.

So when you go home tonight and you look at your little people, and you tuck them in and you brush your teeth and look at yourself in the mirror -- just like I'm going to do -- ask yourselves, do I feel good about this? Am I happy with these maps? Is this fair to North Carolina? Thanks.

SEN. HISE: Aylett Colston. You're recognized for a time period not to exceed three minutes.

MS. COLSTON: Hi. My name's Aylett Colston. I live here in Wake County. I'm speaking to you today as a North Carolinian and as the mother, wife, sister and daughter of North Carolinians.

At the beginning of this meeting today,
if you guys can remember back that long ago -- been here awhile already, it feels like -- you asked for the public's help in complying with the court order, and I am so happy to hear that. It's great to ask for help when you need it.

I always think it's helpful to go back and think about the basics. To remind ourselves of the basics. Why do we have voting districts to begin with? It is so that people have a representative. Someone to look out for them and the interest of their community when it comes to writing the laws and making the decisions that affect all of our everyday lives.

I've already written to you and have outlined the reasons that voting districts should be drawn with the purpose of ensuring that every person in North Carolina has a voice, and every person in North Carolina has the opportunity to elect someone to represent them. They should not be drawn for making it easier for politicians to keep their jobs.

I have heard a lot of reasons given for why the maps were drawn the way they were, both back in 2011 and also the new proposed ones. What I have not heard is anybody say they drew these
maps because they thought it was in the best interest of North Carolinians to draw them this way.

I have not heard one person involved in drawing the maps say we drew them that way because we thought that was what would ensure the best future for North Carolina. What I would really like to hear is somebody involved in -- when you're drawing the maps, is for you to say and then for you to follow through. And when you're making these decisions in drawing the maps, think about -- ask yourselves these questions, two questions. Will this help the people of North Carolina? Number two, will this improve North Carolina's future?

You guys asked for help in complying with the court order -- I only have three minutes, so if it's possible to incorporate things by reference, I'd point you to this handy dandy little guide to redistricting that your own staff did a great job on. It's in your public website. Anyone can download it. The only thing that's changed is there are now fewer protections for historically disenfranchised communities. I'd also like to mention the actual court opinion that kind of takes
you through all the law and kind of how you got here. It's not too late to do the right thing. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Thank you. Next we'll have Claudia Koonz and then Andrea George, as we had one not present. Claudia Koonz, you're recognized for a time period not to exceed three minutes.

MS. KOONZ: Thank you very much. My name is Claudia Koonz, and I'm speaking as a citizen of North Carolina who's worried about our state in a time of polarized politics. I'm also here as a historian from Duke University. I'm a historian of Germany in the 20th century. And I particularly am interested in what happens when polarized party politics takes the place of national concern.

Nonpartisan electoral maps are a first step towards restoring the trust that is the bedrock of democracy. That kind of trust is what we need here. I have to say, I have never done this before. I've never even come to a meeting like this, but I have been horrified by the amount of cynicism and apathy I feel among -- just people I run into every day. So let's step back from our situation today. What can we learn from the past? The textbooks tell us that Hitler destroyed
democracy in 1933. That's wrong.

German politicians killed off German democracies, starting in the late twenties, by putting their partisan political self-interest above the common good. Even after the Great Depression, with one-third unemployment. Action was urgent. What did politicians do? Nothing. Major bills died for want of the majority.

Five national elections in four years produced no workable coalitions, only more gridlock. Humorists laughed. They said politics looked like a barbell. All the weight at either end, but the outcome wasn't funny. The more politicians fought, the more rigid they became. A dangerous spiral set in.

Voter cynicism and politicians' partisan rigidity grew neck and neck. So what's happening here today? I think Eva Clayton said this more eloquently than I can possibly say it. But we have been waiting all summer for these maps and now, at the 11th hour -- when it is too late -- I suggest we need a fresh start. We need to ask for an incomplete. Take a -- get rid of the deadline.

Do not trust the firm that drew these maps. Pass House Bill 200. Appoint a panel of
experts -- mathematicians, demographers and
geometrists -- to redraw nonpartisan districts.
Make both sides equally unhappy.

From a historian's perspective, I close
with just this thought. Voter disgust can lead to
apathy. It can produce low turnouts and declining
pride, but disgust can also produce rage, a potent
force to be considered by every legislature
concerned with his or her reelection. Think of
where we were yesterday, all of us at 2:45 in the
afternoon. We all felt together watching an
incredible eclipse. That's the kind of feeling of
community and togetherness I hope you will help us
achieve in our political lives. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Next up is Andrea George. I
recognize for a time period not to exceed three
minutes.

MS. GEORGE: Hi, hello, my name is Andrea
George. First of all I just want to say I -- thank
you for the privilege of being in this country.
And thank you for the privilege of being able to
vote. And I just want to give a reminder that
there are places in this world where people will
walk for a week to vote. And making voting as easy
as possible for everybody is -- I can't see that as
a priority. It's a privilege. It's a privilege
that people died for and -- and we need to respect
that.

Secondly, I've heard a lot about
division. As I've sat here most of what I've heard
about is division. I've heard [inaudible] but one
speaker earlier comment about the devil's tactics.
The devil's tactics are division. And we keep
dividing ourselves by race and color and creed,
division gives [inaudible] to division. We will
never come together.

Secondly, I'm pleased, personally, to see
a map that's brought about without racial
considerations with more racial data. I am
thrilled because that's where we want to be.
That's where our future, I hope, will be one day.
And as far as I understand, it follows the Voting
Rights Acts.

The communities are contiguous for the
most part. I heard maybe one -- one coastal
community complaining about that, but for the most
part the precincts and the -- and the -- the --
the -- the districts are contiguous. And -- and
that's important. People living together sharing
common leaders, maybe we will unite instead of
divide. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Thank you. Members of the committee as well as members of the public, we're going to need to suspend for a few minutes to give our -- ask questions about our court reporter and give her a few moments to catch her breath, as we may say, in this process. So our committee will suspend.

(Recess.)

REP. LEWIS: Come back to order, please. Come back to order, please. Ladies and gentlemen, the public -- going to announce to you that on the current signups we have here at the central location in Raleigh, we have a total of 221 speakers left to speak. That would require, at the pace we are moving, approximately 11 hours. That is in excess of what a court reporter would be able to deal with in making the transcripts. Fortunately, in case of technology issues, we took each site in the state and it is prepared to record on its own as an individual hearing.

There are actually two recordings at each site, one for the House and one for the Senate, which can be delivered to court reporters to create a transcript. And that is what we are going to do.
The seven sites now will operate independently of each other. And we will move through and be able to get through the public comment in a much more time-efficient manner.

That being said, I know that the other sites that are out there that can still hear me. We've also had some technical issues transitioning back and forth. If you have any issues or others, please feel free to contact us. We still have tech support and others available, but the Sergeant at Arms that are adept on how to operate the recording equipment to make sure that we have the multiple recordings for each of the public hearing sites.

We will then be able to have multiple court reporters compile one record that would be available for the members of the committee as we move forward in this process.

We will then continue here in Raleigh with the list of speakers that we have. Next up on the list, I have -- I'll go through the list I have in front of me, William Smith, Gloria Faley. I have an Octavia Rainey, but it has been removed.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: No.

REP. LEWIS: Okay. Octavia Rainey, then Susan, handwriting is always interesting. McClana
and Linda Duda.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS:** McClanahan.

McClanahan.

**REP. LEWIS:** Okay. Begin with William Smith. We will be called -- William Smith will be recognized for a time period not to exceed three minutes. Is William Smith here?

(Pause in proceedings; audio from remote feed plays.)

**REP. LEWIS:** If we could silence the audio at the other sites.

(Pause in proceedings; audio from remote feed plays.)

**SEN. HISE:** We'll call again for a William Smith. Seeing no William Smith, we'll move to Gloria Faley.

**MS. FALEY:** My name is Gloria Faley. I live in Orange County. I was born and raised in North Carolina. As a matter of fact my teenage job was topping tobacco, for those of you that can remember those days. So I've been here a long time.

I am horrified at this process. I am-- I got here at 1 o'clock. The rules were to make sure that you got your name on the list. If you
got your name by the list you were going down one by one. That's not happened. I've also noted of all the folks that are here exactly what party -- what party is not here very much. That party that has actually left since these proceedings have started. It tells me something about the process. Your decision is already made. It's a sham.

Let's talk a little bit more about the process, shall we? The law -- lines were drawn, Tom Hofeller. He's a California software guy. He's one by -- according to Atlantic Monthly, one of the members of the league of dangerous mapmakers. A California native that has never lived in North Carolina. He doesn't even know about people like me, a North Carolinian. Why was not an independent group -- nonpartisan, of North Carolina voters, appointed by you and the legislature and the governor? Why? Again, it's a sham.

Now, let's talk about the voters for a minute. The maps themselves for a minute. The voters in Robeson proposed district, which covers most of Greensboro, supports -- supported Clinton over Trump 78 percent to 19 percent. In Wade proposed district Trump received 52 percent of the
vote to 44 percent for Clinton.

It looks like that if three of the Guilford County four senators would be Republicans, two of them live in other districts. This is beyond racial profiling. This is making sure that Guilford County, which is heavily Democrat, gets cut out of the process. In fact, the public hearing only had 20 to 30 seats. How little do you care about Guilford County?

The maps should be free of partisan politics, ignoring voting registration data and past election results. They must also ignore incumbent addresses, avoid intentionally double-bunking incumbents in order to focus on getting one of them out of office. These maps were be -- drawn behind closed doors and voters have not been given sufficient time to review any of the proposed maps before the public hearing. I want to be clear. I'm almost done. The push for the fair districts is not about getting more Democrats elected. It is about --

SEN. HISE: Speaker's time has expired.

MS. FALEY: You know, I will --

REP. LEWIS: Octavia Rainey, you're recognized for a time period --
Ms. Faley: People are frustrated enough
that this will --

Rep. Lewis: Octavia Rainey, you're
recognized for a time period not to exceed three
minutes.

Ms. Rainey: Good afternoon. My name is
Octavia Rainey, and I would like to thank you for
the opportunity to speak today. I'm here because I
am very concerned that I'm a firm believer in
anything you do that there should be transparency,
fairness and equity in any process. That is how we
engage. And we listen to other people's opinion
whether we want to hear them or not. But listening
to differences of opinion only make you a better
and a stronger person that will also enable you to
make better decisions.

I have concerns that leaders offered
inadequate time to review and -- and analyze the
proposed maps. I have strong concerns about the
time in which the maps was released at one time and
then the data at another time. And this was for
the House and the Senate.

It truly concerned me that when the data
was released at two different, separate times, it
was hard to analyze what was actually going on,
what was being presented before us. And it also gave an air, a feel, of something was wrong with this process. And this General Assembly should not be about that. This General Assembly should be about transparency. We all know what happened to the last map. We know the last map was wrong. The Court said that the last map was wrong.

My concern is why will we go to the same individual to help us draw another map and use that as a benchmark? That is completely wrong. We should begin to look at bringing in an independent body to help us draw the maps. We should all want fair maps. We should all want to increase everyone's right to vote, but we should always want to make sure that everyone, regardless of race, creed, color or national origin, would have an opportunity to run for office, not a gerrymandering running for office. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Susan McClanahan, you're recognized for a time period not to exceed three minutes.

MR. SMITH: My name is William Smith.

SEN. HISE: Susan McClanahan, you're recognized for a time period not to exceed three minutes.
MS. MCCLANAHAN: Thank you for this time. My name is Susan B. McClanahan. I am from Orange County. I’m speaking as a North Carolina citizen, voter and taxpayer. When you entered the North Carolina General Assembly, you placed your left hand on the Bible and raised your right hand in the air to swear to an oath to support the Constitution of the United States.

One year ago, a federal three-judge panel ruled that you had violated that oath by using illegal, illegitimate, unconstitutional, racially-discriminatory voting maps in three different North Carolina elections. Republican lawmakers appealed to the US Supreme Court. On August 1, 2017, all nine members of the US Supreme Court unanimously agreed that your maps were unconstitutional, yet you have continued to use those illegal maps as the basis for these new maps for 2018. Plus you have used the very same consultant, Thomas Hofeller, who drew those illegal maps.

In your repeatedly failed attempts to litigate and defend these illegal and racially discriminatory maps, you have wasted millions of taxpayer dollars. You have continued to drag your
feet, to delay and obstruct the process by which voting maps are drawn. You have excluded other lawmakers and North Carolina citizens from the process. You have been secretive and have waited until the last minute to disclose the new proposed maps and the data that was used to draw them.

Because of your repeated racially-discriminatory actions, the people of North Carolina have no confidence that you will live up to your oath to create constitutional and nondiscriminatory voting maps. Put simply, you have shown that you cannot be trusted with this very important task. Before you once again violate your solemn oath and before you waste further taxpayer dollars, I urge you to reject these maps and allow an independent, nonpartisan commission to draw fair, legal, nondiscriminatory and constitutional maps so that neither party will be guilty of violating their oath when future voting maps are prepared. Thank you.

SEN. HI SE: Linda Duda?

REP. LEW S: She didn’t show.

SEN. HI SE: All right. Linda Duda? Not here. We’ll return now to William Smith, who was not here when previously called.
MR. SMITH: Thank you very much for allowing me to speak. I was out of the room I did not know that there was a time to come back in. Hello, my name is William Smith, a concerned citizen living here in Raleigh. Our founding fathers establish — established our democracy such with the First Amendment. Our nation would be built on the ability of all to express their ideas and that the best ideas would prevail. Here we are now, again, with the free market of ideas that is our democracy being ground under the heel of big government interference.

The government has no business telling me and mine and my community who should represent us. I don't want my tax dollars wasted on propping up this system of political welfare. A system that is creating a generation of politicians who have lost the ability to stand on their own and be successful because they have become dependent on the state to keep their elected offices. The spirit of political entrepreneurship should be allowed to thrive without any government regulations that place limits on how much value a person's vote has.

The free market of ideas should not be weighed down by such burdensome government
regulations. I do not wish to be your enemy. I would very much prefer that we all stand united to conserve and protect our great democracy. Thank you, and God bless the United States.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you. The next speakers I have on the list in order: Gary George, Siva Shaperio, Lloyd Chambliss, Larry Reid, and at best we can attempt to decipher is Jean Prinisor. Any of those individuals present? As they may be in the other room, we will call in a moment.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: It's my understanding where the people in the other room will be advised to come up here. I don't know that that's been done yet. Someone's going back.

REP. LEWIS: That's okay. It's entire list numbered 14 to 18, so we'll continue to move through the list. Are you one of those individuals?

MR. GEORGE: I was the first one you called. Gary George.

SEN. HISE: Gary George, you're recognized for a time period not to exceed three minutes.

MR. GEORGE: Thank you, sir. The first thing I'd like to say is I'm from Raleigh, North
Carolina. And I've only been here about five years, but I really like North Carolina and I -- I feel like an established North Carolinian. I served in the military and worked for the military for 42 years. So I learned something from that and that's be brief, be bright and be gone and I'll try to do exactly that.

Thank you for your service. I hear a lot of people throwing innuendos and statements and -- and things that you -- $14,000 a year is a small civil-service stipend. And each and every one of you deserve our thank yous. Whether we agree with what you're doing or not, you're here working for us, and I appreciate that. That's the first thing I wanted to say.

The second thing I wanted to say was, my wife stood up here and said, "Let's not be so divisive." And I've got to go along with that. And the third thing -- a friend of mine wrote a book. It's called The Hebrew Guy Who Has No Names. And in it he talks about two Jewish men getting together and discussing the subject and having three opinions. Now, this is not anti-Semitic. What he's saying is they have strong feelings and they're discussing those strong
feelings, but they're going to come together. Look in the Scripture and find out what God says and do that. That's the third opinion. That's the one that counts and that's what I'd like to see more of in -- in this -- in this group.

I looked at that map and I think it -- an honest attempt was made at -- at the rules of -- of the law. Whether or not it satisfies what the -- the Court said, whether or not it satisfies what people feel has been injustice in the past, I can't honestly say. But I'm asking y'all to work at unity. Don't be so divisive. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Thank you. I'll also announce that as many individuals have left, the overflow room in 544 is now closed. There's no one waiting there. Siva Shaperio? No one responding. Lloyd Chambliss? No one responding. Larry Reid? No one responding, and Jean Prinisor, I'm going to guess. No one responding. One, two -- Ontario Parny or possibly Octario? Okay. Max Poteat; P-O-T-E-A-T? Tyler Swanson? Sorry, are you Max?

MR. POTEAT: Yes, sir.

REP. LEWIS: Okay. Max Poteat, you're recognized for a time period not to exceed three minutes.
MR. POTEAT: Good evening. My name is Max Poteat, and I'm currently a rising sophomore from Orange County. I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity for public comment. I would like to offer my opinion that the new maps are such a clear example of partisan gerrymandering that even young people like me can see.

You spent millions of North Carolinian -- North Carolinian taxpayer dollars defending your maps in the racial gerrymandering case. And now there's a partisan gerrymandering case pending. I really hope that you don't plan to spend millions of NC tax dollars trying to defend these maps, too. I understand that the Democrats played an equal role, when they were empowered, with having unfair maps.

It's time they give the constituents that you represent, the people who elected you, a fair, democratic election and representation. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and the members of the Committee.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you. Next, Tyler Swanson, with the NC -- N -- NAACP?

MR. SWANSON: Good evening. Thank you for this opportunity to address this Committee. Again, my name is Tyler Swanson. I want to, for
the record, put out an official North Carolina NAACP statement in regards to these maps. I want to address this with y'all.

As we all know, the right to vote is not a game. It's a sacred right that is warranted of blood and sweat and tears of many of our ancestors. This General Assembly did not stop adopting unjust and unlawful criteria when it was disingenuous in applying this criteria to adopt it.

The same body -- which is an illegal body, by the way, said it would not consider race at all when it -- in its proposed maps. And the proposed maps appear to contain districts that are very similar to the illegal ones that was drawn in 2011. And continues to stack black and brown voters into non-compacted districts.

For example, from our preliminary -- excuse me -- analysis, House District 21 continues -- as it did in the illegal 2011 plans -- to sprawl into Sampson County and Wayne Counties to maximize the black votes, populations in the district and limit the power of those black voters who vote -- who votes would have a greater impact on the very drawn -- in a fairly drawn district,
excuse me.

That's same for this district's -- that's true for North Carolina District 19. Which is nearly entirely located in Hoke County except for the piece that I'm-- except -- I'm sorry, excuse me. I can't see my own handwriting here. Yes, let me just re-say that again. This is true for Senate District 19 which is entirely located in Hoke County. Which the illegal 2011 plan disfigures the district borders by reaching into Cumberland County to grab black voters, who would otherwise be casting their ballots in the Senate District 20.

What we want and what the people want are fair maps. Maps that really represent the people. Maps that give people a people's voice and opportunity. And what you all have done by hiring the same individual -- thank you sir, the same individual who's drawn these illegal maps, you all are continuing the same process. And as one of our fellow North Carolinians said, insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, expecting to get the same results.

Well, we're here to let you all know that these maps are -- do not represent the people. These maps are unjust and the people of North
North Carolina deserves a government that is of, for and by the people. And one thing since this body is constituted by the North Carolina Constitution, let me just remind you all that all political power derives from the people. I'm going to say that one more time. All political power derives from the people. And please allow the people to have a voice. Thank you.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you. Jane Pinsky, North Carolina Coalition for Lobbying and Government Reform. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. PINSKY: Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to speak. I have some prepared remarks and I'm happy -- oh, I'm sorry. I'm Jane Pinsky, and I'm with the North Carolina Coalition for Lobbying and Government Reform. And I will be happy to give you copies of my remarks for the Committee members.

Before I start those remarks, I have a brief story to tell. As many of you know, I've been working on this issue for ten years. And a lot of people, including some of my family members, think I'm crazy. And they say why do you keep doing this? Well, the answer is very simple. My
paternal grandfather snuck out of a penal colony in Siberia in the late 19th century; hitchhiked, walked and rode trains across Russia. Got to his hometown and was told that the Cossacks were looking for him and he couldn't stay there.

He came to the United States as a young man under 20 and made his way, raised four children and 12 grandchildren. And one of the things he always told us was that he made that trek across Russia because he was fighting for his voice in his government. And he couldn't have that in Russia, but he came to the United States. And he reminded every one of us that it was our responsibility to speak up and to have a voice. Gerrymandering takes away that voice.

The Coalition which I represent is made up of groups spanning the political and ideological spectrum including the John Locke Foundation and Common Cause. Two groups that don't often even come into the same room

Since its creation in 2005, the Coalition has pushed for nonpartisan redistricting in our state. We strongly believe that the people of North Carolina are best served when voters get to choose their elected officials, not when elected
officials choose their voters. Redistricting must be free of partisan influence. And in this case that is incumbent protection.

Former representative Ric Killian, who is a Republican from Mecklenburg County, says North Carolina and every other state should adopt a nonpartisan redistricting plan to ensure citizens can choose their elected officials rather than elected officials choosing their constituents.

People across North Carolina agree; 80 percent of North Carolinians think we should have a change. More than 250 local elected officials agree. There are present and former members of the North Carolina General Assembly who agree. Many other Republican leaders, including municipal mayor Mark Stohlman, who helped his town adopt a nonpartisan process for their -- drawing their town council thinks -- their town -- town council districts also agree.

Mayor Stohlman says when the town of Morrisville carried out a special redistricting earlier this year, we considered only major geographic boundaries and getting each district population count as close as possible. That made the difference and made it easy for Morrisville.
We urge you to adopt their criteria and to move forward. Thank you.


MR. LONGMAN: Hello and good evening. The reason that I'm here -- well, my name is Alan Longman. I'm from the Progressive Democratic Caucus of Harnett County. The reason I am here is that many things today, a long day, which you brought up many, many points. Mainly racism is a concern; segregation is a concern. And non-representation of many groups is a concern everyone has had.

The reason is that if you really, really want the people to judge you at -- at your job. In companies where managers, our people, our boss judges us. And we expect to cater to them and be judged by them. When we are sitting here not representing everybody and we're not representing what's -- what's right and what -- what we believe in and what the people are representative. We are afraid of what the people are going to say about us. So we cut them out. We end their
representation. We become centered on one or two beliefs.

Gerrymandering has been a problem. It's not just a party problem. It's not a GOP problem. It's -- it has been a democratic problem. As far back as you go, you have gerrymandering. The problem isn't -- has to do with human nature and the fact that it's a conflict of interest for the legislature to be making the laws. Otherwise you'd have at least one year which you did not have it. There isn't.

So you have to remove the human element out of it. There are programs -- software programs, that are known and never used, that would remove the human element out of it. And therefore you would have very accountable -- you could use the same data, people could check it from all over academia. And you could sit there and say this was done right, properly, and could answer to the people in full representation according to the law. Right now you don't have that.

To go out there and build your own software and have certain limits and conditions put into it isn't -- isn't where it's at. Don't reinvent the wheel. The software is already there.
What I'm looking forward to is that everybody has problems with extremists in their -- in their politics and when you have gerrymandering, they dominate what the programs are for that -- for that party. And nobody likes doing or being forced to do what they don't believe in.

That leaves good people within each party unable to do their job, or the reason why they came there to be a politician in the first place was to better things. They're not able to do that with gerrymandering. We can end gerrymandering by sitting here and putting the software programs that are already in there instead of reinventing the wheel. And end this ridiculousness and be leaders in North Carolina, setting the pace for the nation.

It's not right, now that we're doing the software program it's the future of what it's going to be for us from here on out. And that's what we should be looking for, not to keeping one party in, but to end this problem for good. Thank you.

REP. LEWIS: Dianna Wynn. After that, I have Paula Jennings and Bonnie Wright. Dianna Wynn, you are recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.
MS. WYNN: Good evening. My name is Dianna Wynn and I'm an unaffiliated voter in Wake County. I spoke before you less than three weeks ago regarding recommended criteria for redistricting and today I'll be brief. I appreciate that this committee adopted some elements of the criteria I recommended. However, I ask you to recall the numerous members of the public who spoke passionately earlier this month. I, along with the overwhelming majority of those speaking, called for politically neutral criteria. We want voting maps that do not consider incumbents' addresses or residents' voting histories and party affiliations. The majority of those speaking at this hearing today and earlier this month request politically neutral criteria. And polling shows that a majority of North Carolinians support a nonpartisan approach to redistricting.

We certainly did not ask for an incumbent protection plan. You asked for public input, and the voters spoke. But it's as if our politicians are wearing noise-cancelling headphones and willfully ignoring the voters. It is my sincere hope that our legislators will stop engaging in
redistricting designed to protect themselves and will truly listen to the voters. Thank you for the opportunity to again speak before you here today.

REP. LEWIS: Paula Jennings. You are recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. JENNINGS: Hello. My name is Paula Jennings. I'm from Cary, North Carolina. I spoke at the last hearing advocating for transparency and for fair districts so that my vote and every vote counts in North Carolina. You did allow me to speak, but unfortunately, I don't think you really heard me. I'm a grandmother. I have grandchildren that come to my home, and we have rules at my home. One of them is you have to put your listening ears on, and, believe me, we've had a few time-outs when that did not happen.

I am saddened today that my vote and other votes do not count the same. I am saddened today that the patriots in my family, who taught me when I was knee-high to a grasshopper some rules, which I would like to reiterate today. One was to be honest. One was to have integrity. The other was to treat others as you would like to be treated. Have I always done those things? No. Have you? No.
But I was also taught that when I do wrong, when I make a mistake, I own up to it. That I ask for forgiveness and ask to do it right, to give me another chance. I'm asking today that you acknowledge your mistake in this partisan gerrymandering process and that you make it right. That is the right thing to do. Thank you.


MS. MILLER: Hello. My name is Suzanne Miller, and thank you for taking the time to listen to my concerns. I came here today representing two separate things. First off, I am a resident of Apex, North Carolina, here in Wake County. And in looking at the way that the maps were drawn, it slices up Apex in four, five different directions. And the saddest part of it, taking the party politics out of it, is that there's nobody totally representing the needs of Apex, North Carolina, at this point, the way that the maps are drawn.

And that, of course, is a huge concern to
me as a resident of North Carolina, with a daughter in a public elementary school in Apex, North Carolina, to not feel as though there is somebody representing our city.

I also come to you as an educator. I am a teacher in Chapel Hill, and we actually did a unit not too long ago on the Voting Rights Act. And we looked at the Voting Acts Right then and now. And we actually studied gerrymandering and voter suppression quite a bit, but it was an argumentative unit where students got to see both sides. They had to address one side and also address the counter argument.

And the interesting thing was, overwhelmingly, my students -- and that's across all races, genders -- all of them advocated for fair maps. You know, they learned about Rosanell Eaton, they learned about Fenning Himner [phonetic], they learned about, you know, so much history about gerrymandering. And all of them consistently wrote arguments that promoted the idea of fair maps. And I ask that you consider that, when and if you decide to reexamine the maps.

And if it does not happen, I would like to hope that Wisconsin does something right and
gets us independent councils in every state in the
United States. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Lee Rafalow? Lee Rafalow?
Okay. Sarah Brady Wagner? Sarah Brady Wagner?
Okay. Becky Wnders? You're recognized for a time
not to exceed three minutes.

MS. WNDERS: Good evening. My name is
Becky Wnders, and I live in Durham Precinct 35.3,
Parkwood Fire Station, House District 30 and Senate
District 20. Both have declared by -- have been
declared by the Court to be illegally drawn, and my
precinct has been split up many ways. So I have
been personally damaged by the unfair partisan
redistricting in 2011.

Though I have been happy enough with the
quality of my legislators and may -- may even have
voted for some of them if they had opposition, my
vote had zero impact on the election because I had
no choice about who to vote for. The 2011 process,
which was dominated by the Republican majority,
also benefitted my Democratic incumbent legislators
while disenfranchising me and the other citizens.

And I have little hope that the -- that
the maps that will be produced through this current
redistricting process will be more fair because
they've been drawn by the same mapmaker under the leadership of the same committee chairs that the 2011 maps were -- that were done. They have drawn -- been drawn without consideration of whether African American voters have a fair chance to elect candidates of their choice as the Voting Rights Act requires.

They have been drawn to protect incumbents and for partisan advantage. And legislative leaders have stalled until the last minute, failing to allow enough time for the public to have informed input on the maps and data for the Committee to incorporate -- maps and data -- or -- or for the Committee to incorporate public comments into the final maps. With respect to the Committee, I believe that our best chance for this redistricting to be fair is for the Court to reject these maps and have maps drawn by an independent individual or group.

Now, I call on -- on the Committee and the General Assembly to do better in a redistricting that will take place after the 2020 census. The people of North Carolina are tired of gerrymandering. It is not fair for politicians to draw their own districts. We need an independent
commission to do it in a transparent participatory process. If that requires a constitutional amendment, please put it on the 2018 ballot. And thank you for the opportunity to speak.

SEN. HISE: W. David Austin. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MR. AUSTIN: Hi. My name is Dave Austin. I'm a Durham resident. A lot of my attention over the past legislative session was focused in other places, specifically farm worker health and safety. But I thought I remembered, in looking at or trying to remember headlines, that there seemed to be a lot of promise in this particular issue of how we could vote more fairly. Because it seemed like -- I thought I remembered -- that nonpartisan district creation had a lot of benefits that were described in the press and even a lot of support.

So I had hopes that this legislative redistricting commission would acknowledge those benefits. And it seemed like it might do that. But the analysis in The News and Observer this morning sort of dashed those hopes, documenting so many non-competitive races, both in the House and in the Senate. So I thought to myself well, maybe I was just misremembering and those headlines were
somehow in my imagination. So I went back and tried to find out where I'd gotten that impression.

Who supports nonpartisan voting districts in North Carolina? Well, there was a poll that says 59 percent of North Carolina voters do so, with just 15 percent opposed. Who supports nonpartisan voting districts? A nonpartisan panel of 10 retired North Carolina judges and justices, including two former Supreme Court justices. Who supports nonpartisan voting districts? Two of North Carolina's most prominent Republicans: former Governor Jim Martin and Charlotte's former mayor, Richard Vinroot. Who supports nonpartisan voting districts? 240 civic leaders across North Carolina, who had signed a petition calling on the legislature. A dozen towns and cities across the state. More than 100 North Carolina business leaders. A bipartisan group of North Carolina legislators through their House Bill 200. 68 percent of North Carolina independent voters in 13 states.

If I was a legislator, I would have said maybe this is not a bad position. We can wait and be number 49 or 50 of those states that implement this idea whose time has come or we can, once
again, be leaders in the South. The opportunity is still there and I hope you'll take it.


MS. ROBOTTI: Hi, everybody. My name is Anne Robotti. I am a North Carolina resident for the past four years. My husband did his -- served his country at Camp Lejeune here. And I have two children attending North Carolina's fine universities and two other children attending its fine public schools. Having said that, I have five children and a full-time job and a part-time job, and the machinations that I had to go through to get here at 4 o'clock on a Wednesday afternoon and stay until 8 o'clock would defy description.

I feel that truly open public comment -- do you need me to pause while you read whatever you're reading?

REP. LEWIS: No, ma'am. I was trying to take notes on what you were saying. You're more than welcome --

MS. ROBOTTI: Okay.
REP. LEWIS: -- to continue. I would point out that sign-up was open 'til 6:30.

MS. ROBOTTI: Thank you. I feel that truly open public comment should take place over the course of several days, different time periods. I feel there should be at least one weekend day. And I feel that there should be time during the day, also during the week and nights -- evenings.

So why am I here? I'm here to say that if you need to gerrymander your district to get reelected, then you have lost the hearts and the minds of your constituents. And I'm here because I'm just not jaded enough to think that that doesn't matter. I think that it should matter and I think that to some of you that it does matter. And I want to encourage you to keep fighting for the fair districts that people of North Carolina deserve.

A lot of you that are still here I recognize as Democrats. And I also want to say to you that as a life-long Democrat, I am so tired. And I had actually never heard the word gerrymandering until I moved to North Carolina. But do not make me come back here in 2020 and remind you all that I will not tolerate this from
anyone. Thank you very much. Have a nice evening.

SEN. HISE: Thank you. Amy Cox, FLIP NC.

You have three minutes.

MS. COX: Amy Cox from Durham. And less

than 36 hours ago, the data for these maps were

finally released; the maps themselves, just two
days earlier. The goal was clear, for the people

of North Carolina to have as little time as

possible to understand what you've done before our

only opportunity for public comment. But what

you've done is clear. You shamelessly used the
court order requiring you to redraw the illegally,

racially-gerrymandered districts to shore up

Republican-held districts and further limit

competition.

Of the 16 most competitive

Republican-held House districts, 11 have been

slanted more heavily for Republicans while only two

were drawn more favorably for Democrats based on

2016 Presidential election results. This is a

flagrant attempt to benefit from the order to

redraw illegal, racially-biased maps and a blatant

disregard for the spirit of the order and the

people of North Carolina.

Many of the redrawn districts lie well
beyond the areas affected by racially-gerrymandered districts. These maps used the most recent election results and data on demographic changes to try to preserve as many Republican-held districts as possible.

The proposed House map moves districts lines as far away as Alleghany County and Burke County near Boone, over 100 miles from the nearest racially-gerrymandered district ordered to be redrawn near Guilford County. The lack of respect for democracy and the will of the people of North Carolina is appalling. You've shown what happens to democracy in this state with these maps in your hands. It's time for the court to take them out of your hands and order independent redistricting. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Julian Pridgen;
P-R-I-D-G-E-N. You have a time period not to exceed three minutes.

MR. PRIDGEN: Good evening. My name is Reverend Julian Pridgen, and I am a plaintiff in Covington versus North Carolina, the federal lawsuit in which a three judge court invalidated 28 state House and Senate districts as unconstitutional racial gerrymanders. First, your
delay in release of the data supporting your proposed maps has undermined our ability to prepare meaningful input for this public hearing. It is clear to us that you continue to not take this remedial process seriously and that you have no intention of enacting fair and legal maps.

Second, we do not believe these maps remedy the racial gerrymandering the court found. For example, in Cumberland County, the proposed Senate districts do the same things as those in the 2011 plans. Black voters are packed into Senate District 21 by use of a non-compact district arm that reaches into Cumberland County. Similarly, State District 28 and House District 57, both in Guilford County, are greater than 50 percent black in voting age population and failed to remedy the racial gerrymanders the federal court hailed were unconstitutional. There are other examples.

Thirdly, what we have identified in the little time available for us to analyze your maps is that your configurations of House Districts in Wake and Mecklenburg County violate the state constitutional prohibition on mid-decade redistricting. House Districts 36, 37, 40 and 41 in Wake County were not declared unconstitutional
and do not touch a district that was ruled unconstitutional. The same is true for House District 105 in Mecklenburg County. As such, Article 2, Sections 3 and 5, do not allow you to redraw those districts until after the next decennial census.

We have drawn various -- I'm sorry, variations, rather -- or versions, rather -- of the House districts in Wake and Mecklenburg County that correct the unconstitutional racial gerrymanders identified by the court: House 33, 38 -- House Districts 33, 38, 99, 102 and 107 -- and do not change districts that have been or are unaffected by these constitutional flaws. Thus, our Wake and Mecklenburg County configurations comply with both the state and federal Constitution. I have brought paper copies of both county maps and our attorneys will be happy to supply you with any additional data on these maps you -- if you would like it.

We urge you to take seriously the need to draw redistricting maps that will comply with state and federal constitutions and will be fair to voters of North Carolina. Thank you for your time.

SEN. HISE: Gerald Givens, Jr., the Raleigh-Apex NAACP. You have a -- you have a time
period not to exceed three minutes.

MR. GIVENS: In 2003, I served in the 332nd -- [inaudible]?

FEMALE SPEAKER: What is your name?

MR. GIVENS: My name? Gerald Givens, Jr., first vice-president, Raleigh-Apex NAACP. In 2003, I served in the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, Tallil Air Base, Iraq, providing combat support to approximately 26,000 coalition service members and civilians. The 332nd is a direct descendant of an organization of the World War II 332nd Fighter Group, known as the Tuskegee Airmen, a group of African-American military heroes who served with honor and distinction in a racially-segregated unit, even though most of them couldn't vote in their own country.

In 2005, when Iraqis held up their index finger marked with purple indelible ink and a security bar to prevent double voting, I knew that every Tuskegee Airman's life was not in vain because black men, like myself, helped to make that possible. I'm Gerald Givens, Jr., the first vice-president of the Raleigh-Apex NAACP, a 20-year United States Air Force honorably retired veteran.

Since 1790 until today, the North
Carolina legislature has viewed a free black man as a problem. I chose the year 1790 because before that time, it's extremely difficult to get any records about free black people. However, starting that year, it's clear that North Carolina viewed a free black man as a dilemma, according to the law.

Today, it's safe to say that the more things change, the more things stay the same.

Here it is, 230 years later and this body continues to legislate with the view that the free black man is a problem. Racial gerrymandering, voter suppression, voter ID laws being followed out with racial, surgical precision. The oath taken by legislators in this state is not for white supremacy. However, it is for the good of the whole as written in our state Constitution.

Draw the map of North Carolina House and Senate districts that honor the North Carolina soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen who died for the free elections at home and abroad. Draw the map of the North Carolina House and Senate districts that give the free black man his voice. And quit trying to regulate through the law how blacks and whites relate in our state according to an acceptable and unacceptable racist beliefs.
The white supremacy in our state breaks my heart. But no matter how many times that this body uses the law to give white men an unfair advantage, free black men like my grandfather, who fought in World War II, grandfather who fought in the Korean War, father who fought in the Vietnam War, we will fight back at the ballot box, we will fight at the court right along with the NAACP and our coalition partners. Forward together and not one step back.

SEN. HISE: Jerry Coleman. Jerry Coleman; then I have Brenda Brough for Erin Trager that's for -- coming in. And James Holcomb. Any of those three present? Robert Aldrich. Okay. You are --

MS. BROUGH: Breana Brough.

REP. LEWIS: Breana Brough for Erin Trager?

MS. BROUGH: She signed up for me earlier. Is that okay?

REP. LEWIS: Okay. That's --

MS. BROUGH: Okay. Couldn't get here 'til I got off work. My name is Breana Brough. I'm a lifelong North Carolina resident, and I live in Durham. I appreciate you all taking the time to
listen to these comments today and I hope you will really listen and truly consider what your constituents are telling you.

The current legislature was elected under unconstitutional racially-gerrymandered legislative maps. This body’s refusal to draw fair maps despite being court ordered to do so now represents a breach of trust and a blatant and cynical attempt to hold onto power acquired through illegal means.

While these new proposed maps may not utilize the same surgical precision to disenfranchise African-American voters as the old maps, it is also plain that these new maps do not cure all the constitutional problems identified in the 2011 plans. There are still districts where it appears that race predominated in the construction of the district without any justification; Senate Districts 21 and 28 and House District 57, for example.

I have read the argument that these maps are excusable because in the past, Democrats have been guilty of gerrymandering districts in their favor. I find this argument to be petty and frankly, ridiculous. Our government doesn’t have to work this way. We can do better. You can do
better. If you care about the best interests of the people of North Carolina, you will do the right thing and allow an independent commission to draw fair, nonpartisan maps so that all North Carolinians can be confident that their voice matters and their interests are represented in the NCGA. Thank you for your time.

SEN. HISE: Thank you. Robert Aldrich?

Then I have Karen Daniels and Erik Raudsep; R-A-U-D-S-E-P. Any of those three individuals present? Robert Aldrich?

MR. RAUDSEP: Erik Raudsep.

REP. LEWIS: Erik Raudsep. Okay. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MR. RAUDSEP: My name is Erik Raudsep, and I am from Durham County; District 31, one of the districts to be found unfair. I'm also a member of the Libertarian Party. Seeing the monitors, we have great attendance around the state and I also applaud all involved citizens throughout the state of North Carolina. And over the many years that I have been working with the Libertarian Party, I've gotten to know several of the esteemed individuals who sit before me. And it's good to see you again.
Seeing this process being played out through a local, state and even unfortunately, once again, the national level, this process is not a cheap one. Wisconsin, it cost in excess of 2 million; in Arizona, in excess of 3.6. And with all of the legal battles that are ensued here in North Carolina regarding this redistricting, I am sure far more. There is no reason that North Carolina would be any different when this process is done. The Republicans are at fault in this round, but both political parties must be held accountable for this dilemma.

This should be a call to action to create real solutions to ensure this never happens again. We must draft and enact fair plans for this and future redistricting by a non-biased -- a nonpartisan process so the evils of gerrymandering districts can never happen again.

In conclusion, you must remember when the term gerrymandering was coined in 1812 by the newspapers of Massachusetts, it was made as a word of warning and unfairness; not a goal to aspire to. Just because it is legal does not make it right. I implore that this esteemed body bring back common sense and fairness to the state of North Carolina.
Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Lekha Shupeck? You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. SHUPECK: My name is Lekha Shupeck. I live in Chapel Hill, but I grew up in Moore County. I have looked over these maps. I have read about them in many different publications and on many different mediums. I have downloaded the PDFs full of statistics that were released just yesterday. And what I have to say to Republicans on the redistricting committee is this. The people of North Carolina are not stupid. You need to try harder.

In the first place, I'm thinking about this ruse that Republicans have carried on, that they've been scrambling to draw these maps over the last two weeks. That is why the public couldn't see the maps until a couple of days ago; why the statistical analyses weren't released until yesterday, barely 24 hours before this hearing. And yet right there on the map posted online that you can look up -- moved from District 34 to District 31 is Senator Andrew Brock, who resigned in June. And I am told that the maps also do not reflect changes made to precincts in Wake County.
way back in April.

So what I would like to know is, what dusty drawer in Mr. Hofeller's office have these maps been sitting in for the past six, eight, 10 or 12 months? Like I said, we are not stupid. Try harder.

Furthermore, we all know that North Carolina is a purple state. Every time there is a statewide election, the vote is split roughly 50-50 between Democrats and Republicans. And yet these maps have been designed so that Republicans retain not just a majority, but a supermajority in the legislature. This is after you received an avalanche of public comments stating that North Carolina voters want fair, impartial districts that represent voters, not parties.

Instead of listening to these public comments, which the court ordered you to do, Republicans in the legislature have decided to protect their oligarchy and continue to disenfranchise North Carolina citizens who want to have an equal voice in their government. And we know that you are playing these disgraceful political games with our votes rather than creating an equitable democracy.
We know that you are more interested in making North Carolina a billionaire's paradise where the rich no longer contribute to society and the poor go without health care and basic services while our homes are sprayed with garbage juice and their water is polluted by coal ash.

We know this because we are not stupid. And so I'm telling you on behalf of my fellow citizens, you need to try harder. Also, if you want targeted criticism, your polls v. popular scores suck.

REP. HISE: Madison Roberts. Madison Roberts, you are recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. ROBERTS: Hi. My name is Madison Roberts, and I live in Raleigh. One of the things that most concerns me about the new maps is the lack of transparency and assurance of good faith. Very little has been done to reassure me that I can trust the intent and process of maps directed by a legislature that already utilized illegal, racially-motivated districts in the first place. My trust in your ability to do this was further eroded when you hired Thomas Hofeller, the same consultant who directed the current illegal maps,
to lead this project. How can I believe that this isn't going to be a repeat of the 2011 maps when you yourselves are on the record stating that the previous election data will be used to draw the maps with political considerations in mind?

Where is the statistical justification of how this will improve fairness? With maps drawn without transparency, let alone fairness, how can I trust that I and others will be fairly represented? Illegal, racially and politically-gerrymandered maps remove our ability to hold you, our elected officials, accountable for the direction of our state.

I call for more transparency and evaluation of the statistical rationale used to draw any proposed maps to ensure that they have been created fairly and without extreme racial and political bias. I don't believe you have executed the current redistricting project in good faith and you have not earned my confidence. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Carol Rist with Common Cause and Democracy NC.

MS. RIST: I'm sure I can walk. Okay. My name is Carol Rist. I'm a resident of Durham County. I'm not a native of North Carolina, but I
am the descendant of North Carolinians who took up arms to fight for government which was fair to all the residents. My fourth great-grandfather, William Hinson and his father, Charles Hinson, were regulators. They fought the colonial government. Not to change the form of their government, but simply to make the colony's political process more equal. They wanted better economic conditions for everyone instead of a system that benefitted colonial officials.

I stand with my ancestors, demanding that the state's political process be more equal. We have lived under unconstitutional districting for all too long. The General Assembly has spent $4.8 million of taxpayer money to defend their maps in court. My ancestors would have understood my anger and stood by me in asking why have you spent $4.8 million of North Carolina taxpayer's money defending unconstitutional maps?

It is well past time to produce maps for North Carolina following the practices used in those states whose districts have been declared legal. Since you waited so long to release your maps, I haven't been able to learn whether or not they follow those practices. If the maps which you
have produced don't follow the practices of the states whose districts have been declared legal, then throw the maps out and start all over again. I demand what my regulator ancestors demanded; to make the state's political process more equal. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Dean Morgan with You Can Vote? And then I would have Isabel Geffner. Dean Morgan is not present? Okay.

MS. GEFFNER: Thank you very much. My name is Isabel Geffner. And I am a resident and taxpayer here in North Carolina. I have been just enormously humbled by the wisdom and passion of my fellow state residents and citizens, both here in Raleigh and in the various areas that we were able to see earlier. And the thing that really resonates with me most is that what we are -- what I am experiencing and I think what I am sharing with others is that there has been an erosion of trust among the citizens of this state. And -- and the very fiber and fabric of community and society is based on trust.

And there are people who have been way more articulate than I can be about the statistics and facts that have led us to this moment. What I
feel most resonant about and -- and what I feel that I need to express most is that what we need to do in our state is to rebuild the trust between the people and our government. And it is exceedingly difficult to do that when the person who is hired to redraw those maps is someone who has drawn maps that have been found to be illegal and unconstitutional.

When the very people who have hired that organization come from districts which have been determined to be illegal and unconstitutional, how can we, the citizens and voters and taxpayers of this state, trust that you are representing us in a way that is fair, honest and that holds integrity? I would like to cede the remaining 50 seconds of my time to the committee and to ask you to tell us how are you going to use this loud cry of public response in the days that follow before the vote. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Charles Upchurch with the Wendell/Wake NAACP. You are recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MR. UPCHURCH: Good evening. My name is Charles Upchurch. I'm with the Wendell/Wake County NAACP. I represent east of Raleigh, Knightdale,
Wendell, Zebulon, Rolesville, Wake Forest. Now, I heard someone say a while ago that gerrymandering is equal to white supremacy. If it's not completely true, then it's leaning in that direction. I want the same things all of you want. The very same things. I've got children. I've got 18 grandchildren. I want them all to get what they are supposed to have.

And we talk about voting. We talk about voting in our family. And I hear it all the time; my vote ain't going to count. And I called them a lie 'cause that's one thing I believe, is you've got to do what you've got to do. Now, voting gets you some of these things that I say I want for my children. I want them to get a good education. I want them to have a decent life. Most of that comes from being able to vote. And if they can't get to the ballot box and do what they need to do, then they don't have a voice to do that.

The courts say that the maps are illegal. Then you go and get somebody to draw them. And then you turn around and use my money again to pay them again to do the same thing. Would you do that if somebody come and -- to work on your roof in your house and -- and you weren't satisfied? Would
you call them back to -- to redo the job? You
would say no. You were going to get you somebody.
And I implore you to get an independent council.
Thank you.

SEN. HI SE: Rick Wynn with Common Cause.

MALE SPEAKER: No. That's not mine.

SEN. HI SE: Rick Wynn with Common Cause.

Andrea Cash with Indivisible and FLIP NC. Andrea
Cash. Phyllis Denko, Common Cause. I don't think
that's Phyllis. Phyllis Denko, Common Cause. Sara
Ferguson. You're recognized for a time not to
exceed three minutes.

MS. FERGUSON: Thank you. Good evening.

My name is Sara Ferguson. I'm here as an
independent citizen of North Carolina. It saddens
me that North Carolina has become a nationally
recognized example of blatant gerrymandering. This
new redistricting map was created by the same
people with the same self-serving ideals as the map
that the Supreme Court ruled illegal.

The purpose of this new map is to protect
incumbent legislatures. It does not serve the
voters and the voters do not support this. This
process has to change. Our voting districts should
be drawn by a nonpartisan commission with citizen
oversight. Incumbency protection and previous election results should not be considered in the drawing of district boundaries.

You'll need to earn your re-elections. It's not right to hold a free ticket. My message to the committee and legislature today is this. Give up your redistricting power and start respecting the voters. Thank you.

SEN. HI SE Amanda Howell.

MS. HOWELL: My name is Amanda Howell. I grew up in rural North Carolina in northern Gaston County. I went to college in Boone and taught there, and I came to Wake County to ironically teach Civics and Economics at Garner Senior High.

I'm here because partisan redistricting is hurting our state. It has gone on for too long and is costing taxpayer dollars to continue to litigate, defend and redraw maps. I know that this has happened on both sides. However, I also know that pointing a finger and saying he started it is not a good excuse for children. And it is certainly not a good excuse for adults who are representing our state.

This is money that is wasted. It could be used for schools, senior citizens,
transportation and other things that our state desperately needs. Non-partisan redistricting is supported on both sides. We have bills that have been proposed by both sides. It is time for our state to listen to the people and move to nonpartisan redistricting. Nonpartisan district commissions have worked better in other states to support voters and operate with more public support and acceptance. It allows everyone to feel confident in the integrity and the results of our elections.

Failure to do so with so much public support on both sides represents partisanship and an unwillingness to truly represent the people of our state. You have bipartisan bills that have already been presented. You have the ability to follow through with these bills. The question is, do you have the will? Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Alison Mahaley. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. MAHALEY: Thank you. My name is Allison Mahaley, and I'm the local president of a chapter of the Americans United for the Separation of Church and State. I'm here today to call out the ruling party for perpetrating fraud and deceit
on the good people of North Carolina.

I want to remind you that just because you can do something doesn't mean that you should. I am fearful of what you have done to our democracy. The entire electoral process has been exposed as racist and you, the North Carolina General Assembly, hold your offices illegally. I have seen you use your ill-begotten power to try and ruin our public schools. And that is what drove me out of the classroom and into activism.

You used your power to siphon money from public schools and send it to religious schools that are not accountable. These schools indoctrinate children to a fear of hell, to bigotry against gay people and who knows what else because these schools are exempt from oversight. You did this because you had the power to do it, not because the people of North Carolina wanted you to.

The overwhelming majority of North Carolinians do not support vouchers. And yet, you got re-elected because of the way your districts are drawn. The Supreme Court ruled these districts are unconstitutional. Politicians choosing their voters instead of voters choosing their politicians have made checking your power impossible. And yet
you keep bringing legislation to limit voting rights and delete the power of African-Americans.

All of this is enough to cause so many to lose faith in our democracy. Some have already sought alternative means of justice, but those of us who have seen this obscenity before have a better plan. And let me tell you, we are getting organized. We are organizing to take our power back. We are in the streets. We are going door-to-door. We are talking to Democrats, Republicans and Independents, and all of them want fair maps. All of them want a nonpartisan commission to redraw the maps and give the power back to the people. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Dennis Burns -- Burns with Common Cause? You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MR. BURNS: Good evening. Dennis Burns, board chair of Common Cause. I'm speaking on behalf of our 10,000 members and allies around the state. And there have been so many great comments, I think what I will do is just spend a few minutes with a little bit of history.

For 20 years -- 20 years, we have objected to the closed door partisan process in
which Democratic and Republican politicians pick their own voters to guarantee in gerrymandered districts the incumbency. In 2011, with the new GOP majority, most of whom were allies of ours, the House overwhelmingly passed our bipartisan, nonpartisan process. What happened? There it goes. And a fair districts bill so we hoped for improvement, but the Senate ignored it. In -- when reform bills, again, introduced by bipartisan supporters, were introduced in 2013 and then in 2015, we again saw no progress.

So in 2016, we had to go to the federal courts in Common Cause versus Rucho to get a hearing to start talking about the damage that this process in these noncompetitive districts are doing to our democracy in the state. And thank you for the historian telling us about Europe in the 1920s and '30s. So now, even orders from the federal judiciary and the Supreme Court cannot seem to change things in a growing and changing North Carolina.

Please, give our citizens a nonpartisan process like in House Bill 200, with 45 sponsors, didn't even get a hearing this year. Please, our fair map bill. Our 10,000 members and the hundreds
who came out today are going to keep trying because three out of four North Carolina voters want us to get rid of this outdated, partisan redistricting process and move into the 21st century. Thank you very much.

SEN. HISE: Bob Hall, Democracy NC?

MR. HALL: Good evening. I am Bob Hall, Executive Director of Democracy North Carolina. And you've heard a lot of criticism about this public hearing process, how disrespectful it is to the public. You also didn't give us the public maps. The maps that were for the public to see. And you didn't give us the data until very late. Also very disrespectful. And you didn't give us the registration of the voters in these districts or the race of the voters. You said you were not going to look at the race of the voters in drawing the maps, as though that would protect you from being accused of drawing racially-biased districts. But it's clear that the practice has continued.

You've heard illustrations here -- named districts, House District 57, Senate Districts 21 and 28, where you're packing more African-Americans into the districts. Because of your fetish for
protecting elephants, you voted to use partisan
election outcomes. That was your priority;
partisan election outcomes to protect incumbents,
to draw the new maps to protect the incumbents.
And so many of these districts are rigged to make
them less competitive than they are now.

In a few cases, your eagerness is even
pushing beyond the state constitution and you've
heard that, in drawing districts that are not
ordered, you don't need to redraw these districts,
that you're violating the state constitution ban
against causing redistricting in the middle of the
decade. The bottom line is, the new maps are
partisan gerrymandering in the extreme and here's
two ways to see this.

First, over 90 percent of the new
districts are not competitive based on the data
that you furnished us here a day or so ago. You
look at the five statewide elections where
candidates won by two percentage points. These are
very competitive elections; Tillis versus Hagan,
Cooper versus McCrory. Five competitive districts
with less than two percent differences, but in most
all of the districts -- the legislative districts
you've drawn, the gap between those candidates is
more than 10 percent. In fact, there's only 15 out of the 170 House and Senate districts where candidates win by less than 10 percentage points in at least four of those five elections. That is to say in 155 of the 170 districts, 90 percent -- that's 90 percent of the districts, you and I know who the winner is going to be.

The second way to look at this is in a partisan gerrymandering -- through the partisan gerrymandering tool called the efficiency gap that measures partisan gerrymandering. The plan that has an efficiency gap of over seven percent is highly partisan. The Campaign Legal Center in the last 24 hours has examined the Senate and the House plans. And they find, looking at those plans, that the efficiency gap is over 11 percent, illustrating extreme partisan gerrymandering. Please take a look at that and draw new lines. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Thank you. Marcia Everett? Recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. EVERETT: Hi. My name is Marcia Everett. I'm from Harnett County. I really came to talk to all of y'all. The most important thing in our country is our self-governance, our ability to vote. It gives us our liberty and
without it, we'd be fighting in the streets. Our forefathers wrote a pretty good law and it's no shame to make some adjustments. They made some and fortunately, we can too.

Even though we disagree on many things, I know we all agree on playing fairly. So what do you do when you get a new game and you open it up? The first thing you do is you take out the rules to figure out who's going -- how the game is played. And those rules apply to everybody playing the game. It applies to the black people, to the white people, to the men, to the women and most importantly, it should apply to the rich and poor.

Voting has a lot of problems, but our forefathers wrote a great law in that they let that law be a living document. Now there are many groups working on ways to fix voting and I think you all should avail yourselves to their ideas. You should study them. Imagine living with them. The idea that I like for gerrymandering is called choice of representation. And you can look that up and you'll probably find direct representation.

You can also go to the Facebook page and you'll find that choice of representation was written by Jim Mueller, but he pronounces it --
it's spelled like Mueller, M-U-E-L-L-E-R. And he ran for office in Wisconsin and when he didn't win, he wondered why all the people who voted for him would not get him as a representative? He thinks that should be a right; that you should have the right to be represented by the person that you choose.

So how it works, or how it would work with only two parties, is that after an election on -- you would count the votes. And say somebody got 400,000 and the other one got 400,100. Usually, the 100 would win, but he says that they both should go and then when the bills come through their office, they would put 400,000 towards the vote and 400,100 against the vote -- 400,100. Anyway, you get what I'm saying. You use the votes to put towards the bills for and against. All right? This would eliminate districts entirely.

Now, I guess my thing is more than three minutes, so basically what I'm saying is, there's lots of things we can do to fix all kinds of problems with voting. You guys need to not take bills based on who's in the majority. The bills need to be addressed in order. These bills have our lives on them. We don't have two years to wait
for another election and another election before
you work on these -- these issues. Thank you.

REP. LEWIS: Mary Lucas? Victoria Shick?
Victoria Shick? Nan Friedman? Nan Friedman?
Taylor Cook? Ma'am, you are?

MR. COOK: Hi there. I am Taylor Cook.
I am from Durham, North Carolina. Thank you for
the time and the opportunity to speak this evening.
And most importantly, thank you everyone for coming
out. Let's give yourselves a round of applause and
maybe some spirit fingers like we've been doing	onight.

I wasn't surprised at all, really, to --
in the new maps that were recently drawn in
response to a request by the courts. I expected
them to be unfair and not representative of our
population since the author of them is the same
author who drew illegal and unfair maps in 2011.
Would you be surprised by a thief who steals or a
liar who lies? Of course not. The main problem
sits with those who choose to put the thief in
charge of protecting the bank.

My disappointment lies with those who
gave the responsibility of drawing a fair map to
those who have proven incapable of doing so. North
Carolina Republicans are not interested in fair maps. They're not interested in a representative democracy. They are surely interested in taking and retaining power. Their interests are not shared by their constituents. As our nation's courts have repeatedly confirmed, North Carolina Republicans consistently draw unfair and illegal maps. For some reason they continue to be involved in the process of redrawing the maps, despite the fact that they can't stop breaking the law when they do it. Why would we ask them to do something they don't have the capacity to do and clearly aren't interested in doing?

We are a so-called purple state. In the past 10 years, we voted for senators, governors and presidents from each major party. Yet Republicans currently hold supermajorities in both houses of our General Assembly. The only explanation is illegal and unfair maps drawn by our current crop of Republicans. What's more, since the maps are illegal, it's fair to say that many of our state representatives should not even be in office, much less have any say in how the maps are drawn. But here we are, letting the thieves choose how the bank is guarded yet again. Why do we continue to
let the fox guard the henhouse?

Our state will not progress and solve problems if we don't have fairly selected representatives working on our behalf. Unfair maps have a long history not only in our state, but also in our country. While the origins elsewhere may differ, one common theme persists when looking at the history of illegal maps in North Carolina -- race. These very lawmakers have already been found guilty of identifying every voting [inaudible] and then motivated high voter turnout among black voters and then eliminated them, targeting black people with almost surgical precision. They're clearly in the business of suppressing minority votes. The intent and motivator is clear -- racism. Racist mapmaking has no place in North Carolina.

There are several different constructive solutions for more fair maps. And I'm not going to go into the details of all the options now. They're well-documented and I'm sure you know where to find them if you can go look. But rest assured, none of them involve asking the illegally-selected party in power put a partisan mapmaker who previously drew illegal maps. Thank you very much.
SEN. HISE: Ladies and gentlemen, we have -- of speakers who are left to -- signed up to speak, we have 47 individuals who are left signed up to speak. It is obvious to the chairman that that exceeds the number of people in the room who are listening at this point. So at the advice of the other chairs, if members just -- if you have previously signed up to speak and you would just like to line up to speak, we'll be able to move this a little more quickly than 47 individuals called through the ranks of the system.

But it will be exceptionally important that you begin by stating your name and the organization you represent. And if you've already spoken, you have already spoken to the committee.

MR. OJUTIKU: Good evening.

SEN. HISE: Good evening.

MR. OJUTIKU: Question. My name is Adeniya Ojutiku. I represent the interests of over 3,000 registered black Republicans in North -- Wake County and also members of the African-American Faith-Based Organization of the -- of the Carolinas. Lived in Raleigh for the past nearly eight years. I'm a US citizen, a legal immigrant -- not illegal, legal immigrant and my
world view of self is not -- is -- is racially neutral. Okay? So I empathize with so many here that may not be so privileged.

I would like to submit that your redistricted map plan, whether led by Republicans or Democrats, had been able to adequately fix the issues confronting blacks and minority issues. Only fair and equitable legislation as well as some policies that carry everybody along can. Possible gerrymandering by either party may have in the past been a strategy to manipulate and the enforcement of inclusion or exclusion of minority groups as accused and should not be a guiding principle for any legislative redistricting map. This is because it employs and exploits our crudest instincts of racial prejudices.

If as an effort in good faith, then we support the redistricting plan put forth by the criteria that is given to the General Assembly because they confirm with the stipulated guidelines and criteria given to the joint redistricting committee. The new districts herein outlined are also more compact than current ones through the maps, splitting only few precincts. We are pleased that the General Assembly has drawn these maps
without recourse to racial data, biases or prejudices.

However, in conclusion, we demand that each political party recognizes the need for racial inclusion, eliminating candidates for all elections so that everyone shall [inaudible] a keen sense of belonging and an enduring need for sincere contributions to making our state a great one.

Thank you.

DR. SPEARMAN: Good evening. I am T. Anthony Spearman, the third vice president, here to further push the official position of the North Carolina NAACP and the Reverend Dr. William J. Barber onto the record.

Maps should have considered race and should reflect fair districts. We will stand up for our shared democratic principles of fairness. The Grand Old Party caucus admits that they considered, one, past election outcomes, and two, the ability of the Republican Party to win in these districts and that they are drawing these maps for partisan advantage.

House Districts 10, 36 and Senate District 41, for example, combine different communities and fractured communities of interest
and appear to serve only the purpose of creating a Republican advantage in those districts. Substituting party for race for the purpose of achieving that same racially discriminatory election outcome and limiting the voting power of people of color is a cynical strategy that undermines our democracy and fails to remedy the illegal maps.

These maps are not the answer. We do not trust these maps, which were drawn by the same hired helper who drew the 2011 racially-gerrymandered maps and which were commissioned by an illegal legislature that has failed at every turn to act with integrity. Instead, an independent special master should be tasked with drawing new maps to ensure that it is the law that is followed and not the directives of an illegal legislature that the federal courts have already found guilty of intentionally acting to suppress the votes of African-Americans and that numerous federal and state courts have been found guilty of passing legislation that flouts the federal and state constitutions and the will of the people.

These games must stop. At least one federal court has enjoined an unconstitutionally
constituted legislature from taking any further actions until the redistricting process could be completed. See Butterworth versus Dempsey, the Federal District Court decision from Connecticut. And in addition, Costner and Dalton ought to be considered because citizens have a right to vote as soon as possible for their representative under constitutional apportionment plans. Federal courts have also shortened the terms of those legislators who had been elected under illegal maps.

If there's ever been a time that the preamble of the United States Constitution ought to be considered and to prevail, that time is right now. "We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty," that time is now. These maps are not the answer.

SEN. HISE: Thank you. Please state your name for the record, and you're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. SMALLEY-MCMANAHAN: Good evening. I'm Barbara Smalley-McManah. I'm here tonight in the -- in my capacity as the Political Action Chair
with Raleigh-Apex NAACP. And I want to give a shoutout to the North Carolina NAACP and Bob Hall and Democracy North Carolina for the hard work they've done to point out the flaws in the redistricting plan that -- that you are presenting.

As I make my own comments tonight on behalf of our branch, I want to acknowledge that the racialized maps you drew in 2011 were sadly a major, if unintended, victory for many in our state who make up hate groups. My understanding is that the Nazis, the KKK and white supremacists who recently went to Charlottesville didn't go there because of the statue. They chose Charlottesville as their location specifically because that city is known for taking a strong stance on dismantling systemic racism. I'd love to tell you some of the things they've implemented. We could use a little bit of that around here.

In response to our President's defense of these hate groups, people on all sides of the political aisle are coming together to say we will no longer tolerate those who want to dominate and continue to promote racialized systems -- that includes our voting system. If you doubt that we're coming together, I want to share a news
report with you that I heard yesterday as my husband and I drove to Greenville, South Carolina, to see the eclipse.

According to that news report, the alumni from the conservative Liberty University was mailing in their -- y'all know what I want to say -- they're mailing in their diplomas because they do not agree with Jerry Falwell coming out and -- and not denouncing the racism in our President. And they are starting a strong moral movement for others to follow suit. The antidote to racism is democracy -- of, by and for the people. Where everyone has equal access to the polls to cast their vote in favor of their interest, and that includes their interest in healthcare, public schools, livable wages --

SEN. HISE: Thank you.

MS. SMALLEY-MCMANAN: -- and reform of the criminal justice system Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Next speaker is recognized. Please state your name and you're recognized not to exceed three minutes.

MR. SFEIR: My name is Mark Sfeir. I'm from Durham One moment, please. As we know, gerrymandering across America has inevitably led to
unresponsive governments as politicians representing both major parties have embraced districts where they face no serious electoral challenges, wanting incentives for legislators to meet their constituent's needs.

As it relates to alternatives to the previous districts, mathematical techniques to randomize the political profile of a given district and thus make elections fair, such as computational geometry and Monte Carlo simulations, exist, are well-established, and are prepared to take into account considerations of population, zoning and topography if needed and as deemed constitutional.

Amidst this talk of technical solutions to gerrymandering, however, I want to say that almost anything is preferable to a system where the ruling parties draw their own lines.

It is time to consider mathematical methods for generating districts, which could be amply used by nonpartisan transparence, open source commission of elected experts in order to move our state in a radically new and better direction, setting a new standard even among states for fairness of elections. California was able to effectively counter gerrymandering under the --
under the direction of Arnold Schwarzenegger, and so can we. And -- thank you, that's all I have.

SEN. HISE: Thank you. Next speaker, please state your name. You're recognized for three minutes.

MR. WEEKS: Eugene Weeks, I'm a member of the Wake County Voting Coalition and a former member of the Raleigh City Council for five-and-a-half years. As a 20-year Air Force veteran, serving my country, it amazed me that I'm here tonight talking about voter rights.

I did not see this during the time that I was serving my country, and I don't think I need to be seeing this now. I'm going -- we've heard many comments tonight and I'm going to just reiterate probably -- of all the comments we've had, I just want to reiterate what I thought the courts passed down for you to do and not to do. And I think this'll be what I call a lesson; a plan that you can go by.

First, three months ago the courts plainly ruled that race cannot be used to obtain partisan advantages. In order to be fair, new maps must be compact, contiguous and must comply with the Voting Rights Act to give minority voters an
opportunity to elect their candidates of choice -- not your candidates of choice. The maps must also be free from partisan politics, ignoring voter registration data and past election results. They must also ignore incumbent addresses to avoid intentionally double-bunking two incumbents in order to force one of them out of office.

Unfortunately, the new redistricting process is too partisan to ensure that their maps -- that fair maps are drawn. The maps have been drawn behind closed doors after midnight and any other time that you can do it without the public being around. And voters have not been given sufficient time to review any of the maps before the public hearing.

At the end of the day, these maps have still been drawn by the same GOP lawmakers and consultants using the same software as the previous maps and approved by the unconstitutional legislature that was elected using those racial -- racial gerrymandered maps. For years, you have waged a three-prong war on democracy through racial and partisan gerrymandering, unconstitutional assault on voter rights and partisan meddling with the judicial system.
Unfortunately, this new redistricting is simply another part of the assault on democracy. We need to stop it now. As we stated in the military, do the right thing because it's the right thing to do. Throw these maps into File 13. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Next. State your name.

MS. GRIFFIN: Hi. My name is Maryclare Griffin. I came here from Durham. I'm a North Carolina resident. So just also, there was some confusion earlier about how this process works on your end, so many of us signed up very early in the day, some as early as 4:00. So earlier you advised a woman that if she'd just come at 6:30, she could've spent less time here. I don't think that's very clear.

Anyway, moving on. So a lot of people have said a lot of things that I wanted to say up here already and they've said it very well. So we know that the maps are still racially gerrymandered, I think you know that too. And we also know that this hearing is really a farce. I also think those of you who made these maps know that. That said, I did want to make one point that
I don't think I heard people make, which is that I think you're probably feeling pretty comfortable today and this year.

As we all know, when it comes down to it, we can't really distinguish partisan gerrymandering from racial gerrymandering. And the fact is, in states like North Carolina, where racial gerrymandering is highly -- where race has correlated with political party, you can keep trying to hide racial gerrymandering behind partisan gerrymandering. And honestly, for now you will probably succeed.

But I'm here today to look you in the eye and actually thank you, because of your arrogance and the maps you made in 2011, the Supreme Court not only struck them down, but Clarence Thomas joined in a decision, that among other things, legal scholars agree set a precedent that we may not be able to distinguish racial gerrymandering from partisan gerrymandering, and that does not mean that we'll just have to be okay with racial gerrymandering; that means that you have laid the groundwork to eradicate partisan gerrymandering altogether.

Now, today, you could make a decision.
You could move forward and make better maps -- listen to the people here. I don't think you'll go do that, and in the meantime, I just hope that this will be worth it to you. As you move forward with these racial maps, you will expedite the process of eradicating partisan gerrymandering and you will be remembered as having done things that are very undemocratic and shameful. That is all I have to say on this matter. I will also comment, I very much appreciate those who have listened very sincerely to the speakers. I've also seen many people staring at their phones and their computers and through notes that could not possibly be urgent. This is your job. Take it seriously.

SEN. HISE: Next speaker, please state your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. DONALYN: Hi. My name is Stacy Donalyn [phonetic]. I live in Chatham County, North Carolina, for the last four years. During the '90s, I lived here in Chatham County and Orange County for six years, and really if this was two weeks ago, I probably won't be here speaking, but it's not. It's -- it's two weeks later, and in the 10 years that I lived -- for 10 years before I live
here, again, in Chatham County, I lived in Charlottesville, Virginia, and, you know, people could go there and lose their lives by standing in for justice, then I can get through my jitters and come here and speak on a microphone.

Thing to know about me is I'm actually a Pollyanna, and I'm a little bit more jaded this year than last, but I still believe in the basic goodness in people and the fairness of our system. I'm still really hopeful that we can win the day by goodness and fairness. However, witnessing, sort of, this messy process in the last couple of years with these different maps, made me wonder a few things about the Committee and the assembly in general. Why did you get into politics? I would hope that you saw an injustice and you wanted to go and fight it and said how can I do it; I know, I'll get elected and I'll make change.

Hopefully, you were thinking of the good of all North Carolina and by extension our country, but if you didn't do that, what were you thinking? Was it just for greed? For power-grabbing? Did you just want power and self-advancement? I think all the people here and all the people in -- in the other venues tonight are saying that's not the way
to go. You need to think about us. Think of yourselves as North Carolinas, but remember that you're representing the entire state.

The distinguishing by the first round of district maps and now this new one, the same committee working on it, the same analyst working on it, shows me that you're not quite on board yet with goodness and fairness. Thank you. I don't know about these colorful maps; they look a lot like the other colorful maps -- a couple less squiggly lines. I just think that -- you know, think about it more -- less political terms and more product terms. If you send out, you know, our Olympic athletes and you want them to compete fairly and win the day, you don't want the other side doping. You're -- you're doping our government and you need to stop.

So let's call for fairness. Let's -- I'm asking you to act in good conscience. Not in more greed, not in moral greed and power grabbing and to fashion fair and nonpartisan district maps, like the HB200 calls for. Failing maps -- if you map the districts according to partisan affiliations, then make it 50/50 -- go Republicans and Democrats 50/50 and just see where the elections stand out.
We can't have good dialogue if we don't have people who can speak on both sides and work together. And if you believe in the power of your convictions, your stances, then you'll suddenly run out. If not, then the other one will, and we can talk and move forward. Thank you very much.

SEN. HISE: Thank you. Next speaker, please state your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. MATHIS: My name is Kirsten Mathis. My husband and I live in Wake County. Thank you very much for holding this hearing, and I look forward to many more.

When my husband and I moved to North Carolina two years ago, we had always paid attention to politics and voted, but never in our lives have we been so shocked and appalled by the actions of our legislators that we felt compelled to attend a town hall meeting. Because these meetings were scheduled so last minute, he could not get away from work, so I am also speaking on his behalf. His name is Mike.

It may seem apparent that we usually lean progressive, but we have on many occasions voted across party lines for the right candidate. I
shouldn't have to explain that to convince myself that you might care, but your actions as legislators prove otherwise. You clearly need every last vote you can get. Unless these new maps prove to be innocent of racist and partisan gerrymandering, you won't have a snowball's chance in a North Carolina August of getting our votes.

Our state's history of excelling at racist and partisan gerrymandering should have disqualified the very politicians who drew the unconstitutional maps in the first place from hiring the same partisan consultants, Thomas Hofeller, to redraw the new maps. This is tantamount to allowing a person who has been convicted of burglary to wire the new security system.

If you showed as much dedication to representing the constituents who pay you as you do toward rigging the elections in your favor, your jobs as legislators -- legislators will be secure. Until that day comes, you have inspired my husband and I to be more politically active than ever and to do everything in our power to make sure each vote counts. Thank you very much.

SEN. HISE: Next speaker, please state
your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MR. BOTTS: Dewey Botts, number 58, from North Carolina. I feel like I'm in a third-world authoritarian country, not a democracy where we the people have a right to vote. Because these maps are racially discriminating and more elusive than the last maps, and because these maps are clearly more politically biased, and because these maps are blatantly unfair, I request the three-judge panel immediately the ditch this fiasco and appoint their map master to draw nonpartisan maps for all the people of North Carolina -- House Bill 2 would do that.

My experience over here taught me not to close this way, but I have to say this. In my last years of my second career, I was in this building many times and must say this drawn out process is an embarrassment to me, to our state and is sadly mean-spirited.

SEN. HISE: Next speaker, please state your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. CAMERON: Good evening. My name is Chris Cameron, and I'm from Durham County. The
current legislators were elected based on unconstitutional, racially-gerrymandered maps. Our courts have mandated that North Carolina districts be redrawn. To be fair, the districts must be compact, contiguous and must comply with the Voting Rights Act to give minority voters an opportunity to elect the candidates of their choice.

These maps were drawn in defiance of the court orders. On top of that, the public was given very little time to review the new maps that were released, beginning Saturday, while public comment was scheduled to be held today. We need a process that will produce nonpartisan maps. Since the same North Carolina Republican GOP lawmakers have been unable to provide nonpartisan maps, we must have the maps drawn by a nonpartisan group to produce more fair maps that restore our ability to successfully elect representatives that have our own interest at heart. The redistricting Committee, along with these maps that have been produced, are despicable. Shame on you. I urge the General Assembly to go back and give the constituents of this great state nonpartisan maps. We want our democracy back. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Next speaker, please state
your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. COLE: Good evening. My name is Susan Perry Cole. I'm from Edgecombe County, and I'm speaking as a concerned citizen tonight.

I think it's worth noting that after the lengthy court battles, the North Carolina General Assembly had the golden opportunity to propose a redistricting plan that would include fair, constitutional, un-gerrymandered new districts. Sadly -- very sadly, that is not the route the legislative leadership chose to take. Instead it is plain that extreme partisanship drove the construct of the district lines, extreme partisanship giving an unfair advantage to Republican voters. That strategy has no place in a meaningful democracy.

Many districts are uncompetitive, so said the Raleigh News & Observer in a front-page article today. Just 10 of 50 Senate districts will likely be competitive, and just 19 of 120 House districts are competitive.

Let me take a moment to comment on the fact that the legislative leadership offered inadequate time to review and analyze the proposed
remedial maps. It appears that the legislative leaders purposely refrained from releasing the data files in order to impede a full analysis before the public hearing. This is a very cynical and insulting move to the citizens of this state.

It's also plain that the enacted map did not cure all the constitutional problems identified in the 2011 plan. There are still districts where it appears that race predominated in the construction of the district. Examples of that would be Senate District 21, 28 and House District 57. The proposed House plan does not remedy all the racial gerrymandering in the 2011 plan. The House plan perpetuates the same strategies of racial gerrymandering, unnecessarily packing black voters in districts and limiting their political statewide power.

So let me conclude by just urging this body to reject the plan that's on the table. Go back to the drawing boards. Respect the citizens of this state and draw a fair plan. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Next speaker, please state your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. BREMER: Thank you. My name is
Jennifer Bremer, and I live in Orange County. I'm here representing the League of Women Voters. I want to thank you very much for this opportunity to comment on the draft maps. We appreciate the Committee's work to produce maps that improve on the current maps, but it still -- seems we still have ways to go.

We would like to emphasize that while we don't see the Committee members as foxes and we certainly do not see ourselves as hens, we're still letting the foxes guard the henhouse. We need to put the voters, not the politicians in the drivers' seat. Voter participation in drawing the maps is key to making this happen. The real public participation requires time and citizens have had only three days to look at the House map, two days for the Senate map and just a day for the data.

By putting off the map drawing to the last minute, the legislature has denied voters a real chance to have their say. Some of the Committee's nine criteria, such as more compactness and less precinct splitting, were welcome, but others have no place in drawing fair districts. But even for the appropriate criteria, the Committee gave us yardsticks that don't have any
numbers on them. This makes it pretty hard to say how the new districts really measure up. For example, the criteria called for splitting fewer precincts, but didn’t set a target or say how to decide which ones to split.

So what about the maps themselves? We appreciate the Committee’s reporting of at least some data on how to propose maps perform against their criteria, and we’ve used this information to attempt to assess them ourselves.

Since time is short, I’m just going to hit the highlights. The Committee clearly made the right choice in adopting county groupings that conform to the North Carolina Constitution, producing a map that improves on the current one in that respect, even if it does not by itself guarantee that the district also complied. We also see some progress on compactness with somewhat better average scores than last time for the Senate maps on both majors. The House districts have much less squiggly boundaries, but the new maps apparently don’t score much better on either measure.

This suggests we’re still falling short of fair districts. The promise to split fewer
precincts came without a target, but we're glad to see that the new maps split far fewer precincts -- in the House just 49, which is still a lot less than the 394 split in 2011. The Committee decided to avoid pitting incumbents against each other. This criterion simply has no place in a fair process. Elections should be all about protecting voters' ability to have their say, not protecting incumbents.

We hadn't been able to assess how the political considerations and election results affected the maps, but misuse of this data to determine election outcomes is really what gerrymandering is all about.

Exclusion of racial data also makes it impossible to say whether in all cases, minority voters have a reasonable chance to elect their preferred candidate, so we can't say whether the maps meet this core requirement in the Voting Rights Act. Overall, given that more data are needed for a full assessment, for now we'll just also, like a previous speaker, grade the Committee's work as incomplete. However the Court responds to the maps that the General Assembly submits, let's work together for a truly fair
Mr. McAllister: Good evening, Chairman Lewis and members of the Committee. My name is Stephen McAllister. I'm an unaffiliated voter, and I live here in Raleigh. I'm grateful for the opportunity to be heard tonight. There are a couple of things that I wanted to address.

First, and reference was made to this a little earlier, today the Campaign Legal Center released an analysis examining the efficiency gap of the current maps, and they're just shy of 12 percent for both the House, which was 11.98 percent, and the Senate, which is 11.87 percent. My understanding is that the author of this, Ruth Greenwood, addressed this in the form of a memo to this Committee, and I just wanted to ask that you make sure that this memo be included as part of the record if it isn't already. It can be found at campaignlegalcenter.org.

I would note that her conclusion about the maps were that this 12 -- roughly 12 percent participate -- participatory and transparent process. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Next speaker, please identify your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.
The efficiency gap was an extraordinarily large efficiency gap that she concluded would give an enormous Republican edge in the coming two elections, and so the concern is that racial gerrymandering has been supplanted with just pure partisan gerrymandering.

The other thing I wanted to share with you was an analogy and -- and we're talking about efficiency gaps, and the concept of gerrymandering can be fairly complex. I think sometimes it's helpful to think of things in more simplistic terms, and at the risk of oversimplifying, I'd like you to imagine the following hypothetical.

Imagine that you invite your neighbors over for a pizza party. Your neighbor, his wife and their two kids join you, your wife and your two kids around your dinner table. You take the pizza out of the oven, you bring it over to the table and you slice it up into eight pieces -- one for everybody. You dish out a piece to everyone, you say grace, and then an awkward silence falls over the table. As folks looked down at their plates, they look around the table and then they look back at you, because the slices aren't equal. Your slice and your wife's slice and your kids' slices
are all significantly bigger than the slices you gave to your neighbor and his family. In fact, you gave your family two-thirds of the pizza, and you gave your neighbor and his family only a third of the pizza.

Now, this is sort of silly, because no one would treat their neighbors that way. In fact, you'd never even think about doing this, but just imagine that you did do this. Just indulge the hypothetical. Imagine that your pizza had a roughly 12 percent efficiency gap in its slicing. How do explain this to your wife and your neighbor and the children sitting around the table?

Would you say well, my own family is more important to me than yours, so I decided to give them most of the pizza? In fact, I would have given my family even bigger slices if I could have, but I couldn't figure out a way to make those slices any bigger. You wouldn't do that, but that's what you're doing with these maps. I'd ask you to reconsider and be better versions of yourself. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Next speaker, please state your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.
MS. FANSLAU: Thank you. I'm Reverend Cathy Fanslau, and I live in Raleigh. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the House and Senate working to get these maps ready, however long it took. Being asked to do this task again is surely burdensome and tedious.

Our state legislators have faithfully, again, done their best to prepare these maps in a fair and colorblind manner. It is my hope that the Courts accept the work that has been done in these maps and refrain from making changes. Based on the 2010 Census, these districts align with the one man, one vote goals, and you did a good job of keeping precincts together. My precinct changes.

However, I am still in the same district, and you respected city and town boundaries the best you could. I live in the diverse community by choice and I'm thankful that you've showed respect in at least keeping me in the same district, even though not the same precinct, but in my opinions, segregating such populations only creates more tension. It's not your job to create a partisan war.

If the state is moving to become more Republican, it's the responsibility of the
Democrats to change that. You surely can't accomplish creating more Democratic districts by how you draw lines. These maps are fair and legal. They follow the letter of the law, as understood today. Better policies in our state can make a difference on both sides of the aisle. Maps enable North Carolina to be fair and respectful of all people.

Thank you for all of the hard work in preparing these maps, and it is my prayer that somehow, someday we do find ourselves in unity. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Thank you. Next speaker, please state your name. You'll be recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. SALZER: Thank you, sir. My name is Grace Salzer. I'm a native of North Carolina and four years a resident of Wake County.

Right now, I am so proud of my state and everybody here who has taken the time out of their busy schedules to come to this hearing. I know many of you have been here for hours.

What I'm not proud of right now is the North Carolina General Assembly and its unconstitutional machinations -- most especially
from the North Carolina GOP. Y'all are acting not just like losers, but sore losers. You're changing the rules of the game because you are afraid to fight fair. And don't get me wrong, gerrymandering is wrong regardless of party, which is why the only proper solution is going to emerge from an independent voting commission.

The NCGOP used unconstitutional means to get their way last time, and now they're putting lipstick on a pig and trying to convince me that it's not a pig. Y'all, this is North Carolina. I've been to enough pig pickings that I know what one looks like. Give us an independent voting commission or stop pretending you actually give a damn about party over people or people over party. I want the people of this great state to only have to worry about fighting over things like eastern versus western barbecue, or Duke versus Carolina basketball, not their fundamental right to have a voice in the democratic process.

Look to make it easier to vote, not harder. Consider race only inasmuch as you can make sure that the votes of people of color count, not to unconstitutionally redraw districts. Resist your baser urges and the silence on the power and
let an unbiased, outside party redraw these maps.
You can do better; you know you can do better. So
please, for the sake of our citizens, start acting
better.

SEN. HISE: Next speaker, please state your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. DIETTNER: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for allowing me to speak today. My name is Melissa Diettner, and I have been a Raleigh resident for nearly 30 years. I'm also a mom

I have been hearing members of the NCGOP whining that Democrats gerrymandered the state for years. It's honestly like listening to my seven-year-old son. It's time to grow up. If the GOP is not ready to do that, it's time for all of you to step aside. We are disgusted with the childishness, and frankly with the plantation owner mentality. North Carolina deserves equality and justice. We also deserve legislators who are picked by the constituents, not illegally gerry --- gerrymandered districts, which were deliberately created to allow legislatures to pick voters who will vote them in. It is time to put this in the hands of a nonpartisan committee, so the very
people who created the unconstitutional maps are not involved in redrawing them. Let's see what happens when the districts are drawn in a non-partisan manner. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Next speaker, please state your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MR. COOK: Hello. My name is Mitchell Cook. First of all, I'd like to say that I just graduated from NC State, and usually on the first day of class -- some of us stay, the Professor says; I don't want to see any cell phones in class on the first day, and after that it's not an issue, so with that -- anyway. I'd like to just ask -- ask you what are we doing? Does it help democracy? Does it forward the principles of democracy, which you were all elected to uphold?

We all know why the districts are drawn the way they are. Everyone in the room knows why gerrymandering happening -- is happening and we know that it has happened.

I just want all the lawmakers in the room to ask themselves; do my own political aspirations, do aspirations of my party really deserve to supersede the will of the people and the principles
of democracy? I think everyone in the room knows in their heart what is the right answer, and whether or not the lawmakers will choose to act on the right answer -- what is just and what is fair and not necessarily what is just illegal, is up to their own will, but I really hope you can find in yourself to do that, because ultimately you have to look in the mirror at night and live with yourselves and ask yourself, did I do something to just help myself, or was I really working for the good of the people and really helping everybody and all the North Carolinians. Because we're North Carolinians first. We're not Democrats or Republicans. We're all North Carolinians. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Next speaker, please state your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. GOLDSHLAG: My name is Marni Goldshlag. I am from Durham I'm a volunteer with Democracy North Carolina, and I'm an Indivisible.

I'm here today because I feel strongly that the legislature which was elected from gerrymandered districts which the courts have declared illegal, should not be the body redrawing
the districts. I don't believe that this legislature will draw maps which are any more fair than the old ones.

This is especially true because they're using the same mapmaker and clearly have partisan goals in mind. These legislatures have -- legislators have used unlawful gerrymandered maps to win elections in 2012, 2014 and 2016. They have spent millions of taxpayers' dollars defending these bad maps in court, while writing terrible laws and being totally unaccountable for their actions.

Enough is enough. It's time that North Carolina have districts which are drawn fairly without racial or partisan bias. It's time for our districts to allow competition for the legislative seats. It's time for the legislature to stop playing these games and for the courts to take the process over. Ultimately, it's time for a nonpartisan commission to be the entity to draw legislative maps. Thank you.

SEN. HISE: Next speaker, please state your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. FOSTER: Thank you, I appreciate your
time. My name is Caroline Foster. I'm from Durham, North Carolina, but I grew up in Davidson County. So I appreciate, again, the time for those of you that have stayed, it means a lot to us as citizens.

So you've heard a lot of people saying the same thing over and over again today. The courts and the people of North Carolinas are in near-unanimous agreement. We demand a nonpartisan districting process. Despite the guidance of the courts and popular opinion, the North Carolina legislature has acted to obstruct and subvert the creation of their voting districts yet again.

In the context of the racially polarized population, which we have in North Carolina, partisan gerrymandering is the same as a racial gerrymandering. You have unapologetically, unabashedly announced that partisan gerrymandering is in fact your objective, and that you will grossly ignore data that would help you service minority communities. This de facto embrace of the old, shameful Jim Crow playbook makes the actions of this legislative -- legislature especially troubling.

These are not the actions of true public
servants. These actions are motivated by selfishness and fear. Each of you has, in this moment, the opportunity to do better, to be better. A true public servant finding their districts rejected by the Courts and their voters would go above and beyond to make their districts and to be open about the process that produced them. I am certain such a public servant would not re-hire the same consultant who produced the flawed maps to begin with.

For North Carolinians to have confidence in our government, we demand better and open compliance with the law and not secretive processes designed to protect an illegal, unconstitutionally, unconstitutional supermajority.

Nonpartisan redistricting is very clearly a popular issue. Embrace it and then get to work. Winning in the voting booth, rather than try to cling to power through backroom machinations. If you are too afraid to fight a fair fight at the polls, what does that say about your ability to faithfully represent the people of North Carolina?

Thank you again for your time. I appreciate you staying, and I hope that you use this as an opportunity to reconsider your actions.
and do the right thing. Thank you again.

SEN. HISÈ: Thank you. Next speaker, please state your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MS. FULCHER: Good evening. My name is Nan Fulcher, and I'm from Hillsborough, and I'd like to speak to two issues.

One is considering the maps. These maps appear to have all the criteria that the redistricting committee has agreed to -- equal population, contiguity, county grouping, municipal boundaries, incumbency protection, compactness, and fewer split districts. Compared to the 2011 maps, the new ones are a huge improvement. The districts are built exclusively on intact voter tabulation districts, at least from the resolution of the urban areas that I could see, and you can tell at the glance they -- they look compact. They look better without any fancy calculations, and they don't have all the squiggly lines that people hate. The maps, then, are a great success because they prove you can meet the Committee criterion and still achieve extreme partisan gerrymandering, nonetheless.

Congratulations; you've achieved the goal
on the very first try. Things should be wrapping up more quickly than the public even suspected. It is time, also, for the public and all people involved in redistricting to understand these criteria can be used as smoke screens for more partisan, extreme boundary drawing. A long time ago, they were developed to help the process to make things look better and less gerrymandered, but now they're working against us. People need to see this.

The second issue is transparency of the redistricting process. The redistricting committee should provide a list of the technicians that are assisting Dr. Hofeller and whether they're staff or contractors, a list of legal counsel, and to specify the location of the mapping process. The reason these issues are important is they relate to what happened in the 2001 mapping process. Testimony from the Dickson versus Rucho -- the redistricting case has the following information. Several lawyers were co-counsel, including former Republican Representative and Budget Director Art Pope, who directly influenced the boundaries of the districts. Some staff were hired four months prior to the release of Census data to work on the
groupings and the last point is the Republican Party Headquarters contain the redistricting database, and those sorts of things should not be repeated.

SEN. HISE: Thank you. Next speaker, please state your name. You're recognized for a time not to exceed three minutes.

MR. PHILLIPS: Good evening. I'm Bob Phillips with Common Cause North Carolina, and not my intention to have been to be the last speaker, but here I am--I guess even my board chair has left the building. But I will say this, I've been very impressed with the number of people who've come here and at all the other the satellite sites. They've come with a lot of emotion and a lot of passion. You all may not have agreed with everything that has been said today and this evening, but I hope that it does give you a representation that a lot of folks are upset, and a lot of folks do feel like we need to change the way we do redistricting and you all -- many of you know me, I'm a lobbyist. I've had the opportunity to come to your offices and talk to you directly about the cause of redistricting reform.

And when I look up from the dais and I
look around the room I see a lot of allies for redistricting reform. Some of you former champions, some of you current champions, that elusive goal of getting everyone together at the same time doesn't have to be elusive. We're not going to give up on that. But what I will say and you know that when I've talked to you all in your offices, is we need a new process. We need fairness. We simply need to take the politics out of the process.

I remember 15 years ago, when I've stood shoulder to shoulder with other folks -- with the late Senator Ham Horton, a Republican who was the champion in this body for redistricting reform. And we stand shoulder to shoulder with the bipartisan group of lawmakers who also are supportive of redistricting reform. And Senator Horton's bill and the House Bill 200 and all the bills that have been filed in between have the same thing in common; it had fairness. It had a sense of taking politics out of the process. It was an independence to it as well as more transparency.

I know that you all do know what the right thing to do, and I know that a lot of you all have heard that tonight, and I know that some
people will say, well, there's no such thing as a nonpartisan process, and I say that's a bit of a cynical view. You have rules that you have to follow -- equal population, whole county, abiding by the Voting Rights Act. The rule to take politics out of the process can also be a rule you follow. It's an insurance policy for both parties, so that when you're in the minority, you know that you're not going to be gerrymandered into irrelevance.

I don't really know whether the maps are fair and legal; the Courts will decide that. But I do know that the paths to a fair and legal map is reform and I know that a majority of North Carolinians want you to take that path. So again, thank you for your service to the state.

SEN. HISLE: Thank you. Any other speakers which signed up prior the 6:30 deadline, wishing to speak at this point? Seeing none, the chair will recognize Chairman Lewis for a statement.

REP. LEWIS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank all the members and the public that are here tonight. I want to thank you for participating. I would like to say one of the
speakers who spoke earlier before she left early, commented on the number of empty chairs that were in this room. I did want to state for the record that we have 10 members of the Committee who were presiding at the satellite sites, and by my count at least six members of the minority party who are also present at the satellite sites. I think the characterization that the Committee was not present is certainly not a fair one.

We will work to continue to comply with the order of the Court, which states, for the record, that 14 days after -- 14 work days after receipt of the order of the Court is when the House map was released -- 19 total days. So, again, I appreciate everyone for their time tonight. We will -- it's our intention to continue this discussion on Thursday after we've reviewed the comment from tonight, and again, I do hope everyone travels home safely.

SEN. HISE: Having exhausted the list of speakers wishing to give public comment, this public comment meeting is adjourned.

(End of proceedings.)
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF GRANVILLE

CERTIFICATION OF TRANSCRIPT

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript of proceedings held on August 22, 2017, is a true and accurate transcript of the proceedings as transcribed by me or under my supervision. I further certify that I am not related to any party or attorney, nor do I have any interest whatsoever in the outcome of this action.

This 28th day of August, 2017.

[Signature]

Worley Reporting