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5 ALABAMA PERMANENT COMMITTEE ON REAPPORTIONMENT
6 AND REDISTRICTING PUBLIC HEARING
7

8 HELD ON
9 THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH, 2021
10 BEGINNING AT 9:00 A.M.
11

12 LOCATION:
13 GADSDEN STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
14 1801 COLEMAN ROAD
15 ANNISTON, ALABAMA 36801
16 AND
17 ONLINE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS MEETING
18
19

20 TRANSCRIBED REMOTELY BY:
21 KATHLEEN F. CAVAZOS, RPR,
22 COURT REPORTER
23
24
25

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EXHIBITS:

(NONE)

1 SENATOR MCCLENDON: Good morning, everybody.
2 We're certainly glad to see everyone attending this
3 public hearing on redistricting.

4 My name is Jim McClendon. I'm a state senator
5 from St. Clair County where I live, and I am Senate chair
6 of the Redistricting and Reapportionment Committee. On
7 my right is Representative Chris Pringle. Chris is the
8 House chair of redistricting. And on my left is Dorman
9 Walker, who is our attorney. He works for the committee,
10 and he is the hearing officer.

11 Let me ask everyone that has come in online to
12 mute your microphones on your devices and turn your
13 cameras off. That will make life better for us.

14 We also have with us here Senator Bobby
15 Singleton, who is a member of this committee and has
16 joined us this morning, and Senator Steve Livingston is
17 with us as well.

18 Every 10 years when the census is taken, the
19 purpose of the census is not only to count the number of
20 people we have in America but to also find out where
21 those people are located. Over a 10-year period, there's
22 a migratory pattern that's pretty consistent throughout
23 the U.S. moving from the rural areas in the direction of
24 the urban areas and suburban areas. So in order to honor
25 the concept of one person, one vote, we have to alter the

1 district lines to capture the correct number of people.

2 Now, our task deals with four different maps
3 that we'll produce, and that will eventually go before
4 the entire Alabama legislature and then on to the
5 governor for her signature. Those maps are the
6 Congressional maps, there's seven districts there, of
7 course, the Alabama Senate, the Alabama House of
8 Representatives and the state board of education.
9 There's eight state board of education districts.

10 To give you an idea how populations have changed
11 over the last 10 years in your area of the state -- and
12 by the way, I'm going to give you Senate districts first.
13 The ideal district size based -- Let me turn my phone
14 off. On the 2020 census data, Senate district 10, for
15 example, has gone down.

16 This is a different map. This is a different
17 list.

18 Senate district 10 has dropped by 7,201. This
19 has got the information I need. Senate 11, that's my
20 district, has increased by about 2,500 people. Senate 12
21 has decreased by 9,200 in round numbers. And 15 has gone
22 up by 11,800.

23 In your House districts, House district 29 has
24 dropped by about 18 -- 1,900. Thirty-two has decreased
25 by about 4,200. Thirty-five has dropped by about 1,500

1 people. Thirty-six, roughly 2,000 people lost in that
2 district. It's gone down. Thirty-nine has gone down by
3 3,300, and 40 has gone down by about 600 people.

4 So with those changes in the population, we have
5 to adjust the lines, and if the population has gone down,
6 we've got to expand those lines to capture and get within
7 plus or minus five percent of the ideal number. If those
8 districts have increased in population, those districts
9 are going to have to shrink and come down in size and
10 reduce the number of people. And what happens, when you
11 change one district, change the shape, you'll have an
12 impact on the adjacent districts, although they may have
13 had very little change in population.

14 With that being said, let me turn this over to
15 Representative Pringle now.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PRINGLE: Thank you, Senator.
17 Again, my name is Chris Pringle. I'm the state
18 representative from House district 101 in Mobile.

19 Today, we will call people to speak in the order
20 in which they have signed up. Speakers are limited to
21 three minutes each. When called, please come to the
22 microphone, clearly state your name and the community you
23 represent and the district or districts you want to speak
24 about. If you decide you want to speak and did not sign
25 up, we'll ask at the end if there's anybody else who

1 would like to come forward. If you are participating
2 remotely, send us your questions or comments, and we'll
3 read them into the record for you.

4 This hearing is being transcribed by a court
5 reporter working remotely. If you have something you
6 would like to introduce into the record as an exhibit,
7 bring it to the microphone when you speak and let the
8 hearing officer know, and we'll have it attached to the
9 permanent record of the committee.

10 Let me remind you this hearing deals strictly
11 with the issue of redistricting. No other issue before
12 the legislature -- We're not here to discuss any other
13 issue other than redistricting.

14 With that, I'll turn it over to Mr. Dorman
15 Walker. Thank you.

16 MR. WALKER: Hello, everyone, and welcome and
17 thank you to Gadsden State for hosting this hearing, and
18 thank you to those of you who are at Gadsden State in
19 person and those of you who are attending virtually.
20 Your participation is very important to the process, and
21 we appreciate the time that you've taken to come.

22 I want to explain, before we receive testimony,
23 a few of the terms that we've talked about and how the
24 process works so that you have some idea of that.

25 Ideal population, which is a guiding term for

1 redistricting, is simply the number of districts that
2 we're dealing with divided into the state population,
3 which the new state population is -- I think it's
4 5,024,000 and some-odd. I'm just going to round that off
5 to five million. So if you want to get the ideal
6 population which Senator McClendon gave you -- For
7 example, for a Senate district, you would divide five
8 million by 35 Senate districts, and you get 143,551. And
9 the same process is used for getting the ideal population
10 for the Congressional districts and the House districts
11 and state board of education districts. So that's how we
12 do that.

13 Senate and House, state board of education
14 districts can be populated within a range of populations
15 up to five percent above or five percent below the ideal
16 population. We have less latitude with Congressional
17 districts. And that's important for what the new
18 district maps are going to look like.

19 Throughout the hearings thus far, a lot of
20 people have complained about their counties being split
21 or their municipalities being split or even voting
22 precincts being split. A lot of those splits were caused
23 last time because the allowable deviation, for reasons
24 that I won't go into, was only plus or minus one percent,
25 for a total range of two percent. That didn't give the

1 legislature much room -- much flexibility with populating
2 districts that is necessary in order to try and keep
3 counties whole or cities whole or, in some cases, voting
4 precincts whole.

5 So I think, although I can't tell you exactly
6 what the legislature will do, but I think, just because
7 they have more latitude this time, that the new plans
8 will have fewer county splits and perhaps even fewer
9 municipality splits and few or no precinct splits.

10 If one of the things that you want to say is
11 that your county is split or your municipality is split,
12 that's very important testimony for the legislature to
13 hear. I want to explain why that sometimes happens, and
14 I'm not doing that to say that we don't want to hear that
15 testimony. We do very much want to hear that testimony,
16 but I want to try to explain why even if you testify for
17 it, it might, nevertheless, happen, and it's just -- it
18 comes down to numbers.

19 I'll take, for example, the City of Tuscaloosa,
20 which is a highly concentrated area of population, and
21 it's surrounded by counties that have lost population and
22 are much, much more sparsely populated. So in order
23 to -- And basically all the counties, except for
24 Jefferson County, will need population from somewhere
25 else in order to repopulate those districts. So that's

1 why a county -- why an urban area like Tuscaloosa or
2 Auburn or Montgomery tends to get, in the process, split
3 up, and that sometimes explains why counties get split.
4 So some of that, of necessity, will happen again because,
5 otherwise, those districts, if they couldn't take part of
6 the population from an urban area, would just be very,
7 very large.

8 And the legislature tries to make districts as
9 compact as possible. Of course, that bumps up against
10 the guidelines that the legislature has for respecting
11 communities of interest. So that's an illustration of
12 how those can sometimes conflict, and the legislature has
13 to make a choice.

14 The hearings will end on the 16th, and all of
15 the hearings are being transcribed by a court reporter,
16 and I suspect that we'll soon start receiving
17 transcriptions from the earlier hearings, I would expect,
18 by two weeks after the 16th. All the hearings will be
19 posted online, and you can go and see those transcripts,
20 if you want to. All you do is Google Alabama
21 legislature, and there will be a tab that says
22 redistricting. Click on that, and you'll see a link for
23 each one of the hearings, and you'll be able to look at
24 the transcript and the exhibits that were put in.

25 If you come up to speak and you have paperwork

1 with you that you want to be put in as an exhibit, give
2 that, please, to the coordinator there at Gadsden State,
3 and she or he will pass that on to us, and we'll get it
4 included as an exhibit.

5 But, of course, the hearings are not the end of
6 the process. The legislature and the committee will
7 consider the testimony and will meet with all of the
8 legislators, see what they can agree to or want to agree
9 to with regard to how their district must change, either
10 to add people or lose people, which of course you
11 understand has to happen in cooperation with what their
12 adjoining districts want to do as well. But, ultimately,
13 there will be a bill introduced that is sort of a
14 committee recommendation for each of the districts, and
15 other legislators also may introduce competing bills.

16 Senator Singleton, who is here with us today,
17 has indicated he will sponsor a whole-county
18 Congressional plan by the League -- proposed by the
19 League of Women Voters, for example. So if you want to
20 draw a plan, you're welcome to do that. It has to be a
21 plan for the whole county -- I mean, for the whole state.
22 You can't just use your district or your county because
23 the plan has to be for the whole state. And you can send
24 that in, and it will be looked at, but if you want it to
25 be introduced as a bill, you'll have to get a legislator

1 to sponsor it.

2 And then at some point, we don't know when, or
3 at least I don't, the governor will call a special
4 session, and the legislature will, probably over five
5 work days, pass new legislation. At that time, there
6 will be committee hearings on the various plans that the
7 legislature wants to consider, and it will move forward
8 to enactment of a bill and new districts from that
9 process. So that may happen in the latter part of
10 October, but that's an overview of the process that we're
11 undergoing.

12 So the legislature is not free to draw districts
13 in any manner it wants. It has to comply with federal
14 and state constitutional and statutory requirements, and
15 it also has to comply with its own race-neutral
16 districting guidelines, and I'll go over what these are.
17 Overarching everything are the requirements for equal
18 population, that is, one person, one vote. One person,
19 one vote is synonymous with equal population. It really
20 doesn't have anything to do with how many votes you have.
21 It has to do with the weight of your votes. So
22 overarching everything is one person, one vote, i.e.,
23 equal population and also non-discrimination.

24 Any plan that's enacted has to comply with
25 section two of the Voting Rights Act, as well as the

1 equal protection clause and other provisions of the
2 federal constitution and the state constitution.

3 No district can be drawn in a manner that
4 subordinates the race-neutral districting criteria that I
5 mentioned and that I'll explain later to considerations
6 of race, color or membership in a language minority group
7 except that race, color or membership in a language
8 minority group may predominate over race-neutral
9 districting criteria to comply with section two of the
10 Voting Rights Act, provided there is a strong basis in
11 evidence in support of such a race-based choice. A
12 strong basis in evidence exists when there is good reason
13 to believe that race must be used in order to satisfy the
14 Voting Rights Act.

15 The criteria that the legislature has
16 established include, also, that districts should be
17 reasonably compact and should contain as few counties as
18 possible. Districts should be drawn to reflect the
19 democratic will of the people, which is one of the
20 reasons we're having this hearing, so that we can -- so
21 that the legislature can receive testimony about the
22 democratic will of the people.

23 Districts are drawn on the basis of total
24 population. The census bureau gives many different
25 populations for the state. For example, I could ask the

1 census bureau for all the people in Alabama who have a
2 post-graduate degree or all the people in Alabama who are
3 engaged in agriculture, but we don't use any of those
4 subpopulations for districting. We use total population,
5 which is literally everyone who is in the state on census
6 day, April 1, whether they're a citizen or not, whether
7 they can vote or not. So, obviously, there are a lot of
8 people in total population who can't vote, but that is by
9 tradition, going way back, how redistricting is done.

10 Under some circumstances, we'll also look at
11 voting age population, that is, population 18 and older
12 in a district, and principally we'll be looking at white
13 and black voting age population.

14 The legislature has to draw 35 Senate districts
15 and 105 House districts, although the constitution would
16 allow 106 districts. All districts are single-member
17 districts, and some places in the country, there are
18 multi-member districts where multiple people are elected
19 from one district. We don't have that in Alabama. We
20 have single-member districts.

21 When the legislature draws districts, contests
22 between incumbents must be avoided, and the legislature
23 also tries to preserve the cores of existing districts.

24 Another requirement is that all districts must
25 be contiguous with all other districts. That means that

1 every point on the boundary of a district must either
2 touch another district or one of the state's outer
3 boarders. Contiguity across water is allowed. So if
4 your district is bisected by a river or a lake or Mobile
5 Bay -- not in this case, I think -- then that's okay.

6 Finally, districts should respect communities of
7 interest, neighborhoods and political divisions to the
8 extent practicable. A community of interest is defined
9 as an area with recognized similarities of interest,
10 including, but not limited to, ethnic, racial, economic,
11 tribal, social, geographic or historical identities. The
12 term "communities of interest" may, in certain
13 circumstances, include political subdivisions such as
14 counties, voting precincts, municipalities, tribal lands
15 and reservations or school districts.

16 The discernment, weighing and balancing of the
17 very factors that contribute to communities of interest
18 is an intensely political process best carried out by
19 elected representatives of the people.

20 Also, in establishing legislative districts, the
21 Reapportionment Committee and the legislature must give
22 due consideration to all criteria that I've mentioned,
23 but priority is given to the compelling state interest
24 requiring equality of population among districts and
25 compliance with the federal constitution, state

1 constitution and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 if there's
2 any conflict between the criteria.

3 Finally, the race-neutral criteria that I
4 mentioned are not listed in order of precedence, and in
5 each instance where they conflict, the legislature will,
6 at its discretion, determine which one takes priority.

7 I'm going to call people to speak now. I'll
8 call them, as Representative Pringle indicated, in the
9 order that you signed up. If I mispronounce your name,
10 I'm sorry. Sometimes it's hard to read the names. And,
11 in addition, after I finish the sign-up sheet, I'll see
12 if there's anybody who is attending virtually who wants
13 to speak. If you do, raise your hand or send in a
14 comment by chat.

15 But before I start, I'd like to ask anyone in
16 the media if they'll stand up and identify themselves and
17 who they're reporting for just so we can have some idea
18 of the media coverage for these hearings. So if there's
19 anyone there who represents the media, will you please
20 stand and identify yourself.

21 (Inaudible.)

22 MR. WALKER: Yes, sir. I'm sorry. We can't
23 hear you. You might need to come to the mic. The court
24 reporter said she doesn't understand it. It came through
25 a little bit garbled, sir. Would you give your name and

1 your media again?

2 MR. SUDDUTH: Montessor Sudduth, WHOG 93.5,
3 Anniston, Oxford, Hobson City.

4 MR. WALKER: Would you mind spelling your name,
5 please, sir?

6 MR. SUDDUTH: M-O-N-T-R-E-S-S-O-R S-U-D-D-U-T-H.

7 MR. WALKER: Thank you, sir. You've made our
8 court reporter happy. Appreciate it.

9 All right. The first person to sign up to speak
10 is Martha Jerdin (sic). And could we ask that the camera
11 be canted just a little bit to the right? We can't quite
12 see the person who is speaking. Yes. Thank you.

13 Welcome, Ms. Jerdin, and good morning.

14 MS. JORDAN: Good morning, my name is Martha
15 Jordan, J-O-R-D-A-N. I live in the 11th district,
16 specifically in the county seat of Talladega. I make
17 these remarks to be entered into the record.

18 From the 2010 census, our district was extended far
19 beyond our county. This gerrymandered split resulted in
20 diluted representation of Talladega by splitting or
21 sharing representatives with St. Clair and Shelby County
22 resulting in legislative representatives far removed from
23 the county they stand for and, in some instances, causes
24 a separation of community. For Talladega County, this
25 split in representation resulted in state representation

1 far removed from or near the heart of our county
2 government. Perhaps the same is true of other affected
3 areas or counties.

4 Talladega County is being overlooked on some
5 matters specific to or that affect our county. An
6 example being at least one attempt to use tax money
7 appropriated for county projects on a non-county project
8 with no consultation with our local county government,
9 limited input consultation sometimes with local
10 government.

11 The 2010 redistricting split communities in the
12 city of Lincoln separating at least one street down the
13 middle. Determining your representative in that split
14 district was not easy. It was sometimes confusing.
15 There is no valid reason to split neighborhoods or
16 communities. Doing so is outside of the approved
17 redistricting guidelines.

18 Solutions: We want fair maps not just for
19 Talladega County but for all 67 Alabama counties.
20 Talladega County has a population of over 80,000 people,
21 well above the 47,000-plus ideal size stated in a prior
22 committee hearing. Having 87,000-plus people is
23 substantial enough for the county to warrant its own
24 representative.

25 Keep counties whole, as recommended by the

1 proposed League of Women Voters plan. District lines
2 should be based on the needs of the community not to
3 elect or re-elect a politician. The Alabama legislature
4 should consider establishing or hiring an independent
5 redistricting committee, as is done in some other states.
6 Partisanship should not be a factor in redrawing district
7 lines. We are a diverse nation and state, so drawing
8 district lines should be an inclusive non-partisan
9 process. Our citizens who pay and bear the brunt of
10 funding the government are from various ethnic, racial
11 and other diverse backgrounds. An independent body or
12 impartial committee is needed to draw district lines that
13 are fair and unbiased, not only for Talladega County but
14 for the entire state.

15 I submit these comments for consideration by the
16 state legislature as you go through this process.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Ms. Jordan. Our next
19 speaker is Mr. Ralph Bradford, Sr.

20 MR. BRADFORD, SR.: Good morning. I'm Ralph
21 Bradford, Sr., from Anniston, Alabama. I'm here. I
22 agree with everything from the speaker before me.

23 First, I want to know, where is district 32?
24 Secondly, I came here expecting to see at least a rough
25 drawing of the proposed districts, but all I see through

1 the paperwork that I have here is the drawings of old
2 districts. So when will the public get a chance to even
3 see the possibility of a new proposed district that's
4 being drawn?

5 Secondly, we'll talk about diversity, as the
6 speaker before me said. Over the last 30 years,
7 according to recent U.S. census bureau data and
8 Washington Post research, here just in Calhoun County, we
9 have four tracks that have undergone a stark demographic
10 change. (Inaudible.) They are much less white and more
11 black/Hispanic than they were in the 1990s. A majority
12 of the county here, census data explains similar
13 demographic changes that are minors that changed the face
14 of the American population all across America.
15 Diversity, diversity, diversity is the new word for
16 drawing these maps.

17 It is not surprising, said Nayia Black,
18 director of socio-economic analysis and demographics at
19 the University of Alabama, in Anniston the census track
20 between South Quintar Avenue and Kelly Lynn Drive just
21 north of Oxford is home to 3,503 white residents, but
22 this isn't a story of whole numbers. Since 1990, the
23 share of white residents in that track has fallen 32
24 percent to 61 percent. Black residents now comprise 25
25 percent of that area residents, a 20 percent increase.

1 The Oxford tract just below the previous tract shows
2 similar changes, bounds on the west by Leon Smith Parkway
3 and on the east by Sonny Deek (phonetic) Road. That
4 tract has seen its share of white residents fall 24
5 percent since 1990. Blacks, Asians, Hispanics and
6 residents who identify as multi-cultural remain the
7 minority but makes up 26 percent of their tract.

8 To the west, the Oxford tract that surrounds
9 Oxford Lake and sits atop I-20 has seen its share of
10 white residents drop so persistently that racial minority
11 residents are now statistically the norm. The percentage
12 of white residents in that tract has fallen 38 percent to
13 47 percent in the last 30 years, while the share of black
14 residents has risen 21 percent. Directly south, the
15 Oxford tract below I-20 and west of Leon Parkway remain
16 overwhelmingly white, but white residents of that tract
17 population has dropped 26 percent. It is one of the many
18 Calhoun County tracts in which black residents have seen
19 their population share post double digit percentage.

20 There are two things happening, Black said.
21 There is increased diversity across the country just
22 because younger generations are more diverse than older
23 generations. Just as important, if not more, so she
24 said, is the census bureau's decision to allow
25 respondents to select more than just black or white. Now

1 you can mark multi-cultured.

2 MR. WALKER: Reverend Bradford, excuse me, sir.
3 You've exceeded your three minutes. If you would, please
4 wrap up.

5 MR. BRADWELL, SR.: Well, we intend to draw up
6 our own proposed map and present it to the committee
7 there, the Reapportionment Committee in Montgomery, and
8 we also will be sending our map to Washington to the U.S.
9 Justice Department because of Alabama's history of racial
10 discrimination against African-Americans and because the
11 majority of elected officials in this state are white
12 Republicans, and they just recently, the white
13 Republicans in Alabama, voted against the Voting Rights
14 Act. So it is past time for African-Americans to have
15 their own district, and we want -- We want district 32
16 back like it were. We want Talladega, Calhoun County to
17 be a whole county, which would give us an opportunity to
18 have an African-American Senator and an African-American
19 Congressman in Mike Rogers' district, district three.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. WALKER: Thank you so much, sir. I think
22 you asked me when would there be a map that you could
23 see. Obviously, the purpose of these hearings is to
24 receive testimony about how those maps should be drawn,
25 and the maps are not drawn yet. The legislators are just

1 beginning to meet with our topographer and talk with him
2 about how they would like for their districts to change
3 according to the change. And, of course, the testimony
4 that we receive here will be instrumental in that, too.

5 So the plans -- some plans are available now.
6 For example, the League of Women Voter whole-county
7 Congressional plan is available now. If you have a plan
8 that you've indicated you want to do, you can make it
9 available before the legislative session. You can
10 certainly send it in to the Reapportionment Committee,
11 and we'll attach it to these proceedings, but the -- I
12 imagine that a number of legislative proposals will not
13 be made available for review until they're introduced as
14 bills, and that's a matter that's controlled by
15 individual legislators who decide when they want to make
16 their plans public and when they want to introduce them
17 as bills.

18 Was there a second question that you asked me?

19 MR. BRADFORD: Yes, in reference to
20 Congressional district three. Mr. McClendon, you said
21 that you're going to trim around Talladega County to get
22 a census, right? You said that in Huntsville a few days
23 ago.

24 SENATOR MCCLENDON: I don't recall making any
25 comments about -- I don't recall that at all.

1 MR. BRADFORD: Well, I'm reading what I have in
2 the paper, but that's okay. My point is that every step
3 you all make toward developing this map, gerrymandering
4 map, we will and want to be a part of it to ensure that
5 we as African-Americans in the State of Alabama have fair
6 and equal representation. We only have one Congressman,
7 one Congressman out of Alabama. Terri Sewell is the only
8 one we have. Everyone else up in there is all white,
9 predominantly white males, and, by the way, I am a
10 Republican.

11 MR. WALKER: Thank you, sir, and I'll say again
12 that it's likely that -- I don't know what will happen to
13 Talladega County, but I do think that it's likely that
14 there will be many more whole counties in the new plans
15 that we see. I thank you for your testimony,
16 Mr. Bradford.

17 The next speaker is Carla Shackelford.
18 Ms. Shackelford. Welcome, Ms. Shackelford.

19 MS. SHACKLEFORD: Thank you. I would like to
20 speak for just a moment about the argument for keeping
21 communities together. My name is Carla Shackelford, and
22 I live in Lincoln in Talladega County for 16 years.

23 We are represented by Senate districts 11 and 12
24 and House districts 36, 33, sometimes 35, occasionally
25 32, I think. It's confusing.

1 And if you look at the map -- and I'm sorry
2 there is not a good one here -- what you can see is that
3 Lincoln is used as a connecting point between other areas
4 of constituents so that it's like a series of little
5 strips coming down the middle of Lincoln. So Lincoln,
6 which has -- well, I don't know the exact population in
7 this census but around 6700 members living there, is far
8 from able to command a representative of its own.
9 Further, it's nestled into the corner of Talladega so
10 that it shares borders with both Calhoun and St. Clair
11 County.

12 I suspect as a little town, we'd be totally
13 ignored if we didn't have this one great employer there,
14 the Honda plant. However, the community's representation
15 is reduced because it's split into so many different
16 House and Senate districts. There's at least four
17 representatives and sometimes five.

18 Keeping communities together is a standard
19 philosophy of fair maps. None of the members of the
20 state legislature and the state Senate who represent
21 Lincoln live in the city. That's not essential, but
22 Lincoln, as it's currently sliced and diced, doesn't make
23 up a significant percentage of any representative's
24 voters.

25 When Lincoln needs adequacy or resources,

1 citizens have to go to four or more different state
2 senators and representatives who may have more allegiance
3 to one county than another. Of the four current
4 legislators, only one lives in Talladega County, and he's
5 at the other end of the county. And I think, this has
6 been hard to verify, that of the four, he has the fewest
7 constituents in Lincoln. This is a clear disadvantage to
8 the citizens of Lincoln and serves to dilute the votes of
9 everyone in the city.

10 It's only fair that the Redistricting Committee,
11 as you mentioned earlier, identify a configuration of
12 districts that will stop splitting our community and
13 diluting our votes. We only have a chance once every 10
14 years. I know we're a small town, but as the home of one
15 of the area's major employers, we are poised to grow and
16 deserve to be more than a (inaudible) in a gerrymandered
17 time.

18 We respectfully ask that you take the
19 opportunity before us to erase the gerrymandering of the
20 past and keep Lincoln and similar communities together.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Ms. Shackelford.

23 Next is James Williams. Welcome, Mr. Williams.

24 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you very much. I'm James
25 Williams, resident of Anniston, Calhoun County. I urge

1 the Redistricting Committee to draw maps that represent
2 communities of interest and keep them geographically
3 compact insofar as possible and provide fair representation
4 to minority groups. Protecting incumbents should be a
5 secondary interest, at best.

6 Since 2015, I'm a resident of the City of
7 Anniston, and before that for 10 years, I lived on Lake
8 Logan Martin in rural Talladega County. My focus is on
9 House and Senate districts. Because of my moving from
10 rural Talladega County of Anniston in 2015, I've lived in
11 different districting situations. In both cases, either
12 the House or Senate districts, or both, were confusing
13 and made little or no geographic sense. Talladega
14 County, as others have already mentioned, was split
15 among several Senate districts. I was in Senator
16 McClendon's district which stretched far west. My House
17 representative was Ron Johnson in Sylacauga, about 35
18 miles away. That district reached up, taking a finger
19 along the lake to take in the area where I lived. It did
20 not represent my community at all. My address was
21 Talladega, which was about 15 miles from my home. Most
22 of my business and social contact was with Talladega.
23 Otherwise, most of my engagement for shopping was in
24 Lincoln or Pell City.

25 I now live in the eastern part of the city of

1 Anniston. I'm in Randy Wood's House district that takes
2 in part of Anniston but stretches all the way to take in
3 part or all of Pell City, about 30 miles away. My
4 neighbor across the street is in Barbara Boyd's House
5 district. Neighbors about a mile away to the east but
6 still part of Anniston are in K.L. Brown's district which
7 takes in Jacksonville and wraps all the way around into
8 Oxford several miles away.

9 Barbara Boyd's district takes in part of
10 Talladega County and would be considered a minority
11 district and, thus, a community of interest. It's very
12 hard to see how these other districts represent
13 communities of interest.

14 I understand the desire for incumbents and
15 political parties to avoid pitting incumbents against
16 each other. However, the purpose of electing
17 representatives is to put the needs and interests of
18 residents and constituents first. I urge the committee
19 to do that.

20 Thank you for your time.

21 MR. WALKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Williams.

22 The next speaker is Pamela Howard. Welcome,
23 Ms. Howard.

24 MS. HOWARD: Good morning. Thank you for having
25 us. My name is Pamela Howard. I am from the community

1 of Jacksonville. I live in Senate district 12 and
2 legislative district 40.

3 Today, I would like to talk for a minute about
4 Calhoun County and our legislative districts. We have
5 one senator who geographically serves the community well.
6 In Calhoun County, we have six legislative districts,
7 district 29, district 32, district 35, district 36,
8 district 39, and district 40. Having one county divided
9 into six legislative districts creates a real issue with
10 being able to have a relationship with your
11 representative, and that has resulted with many years of
12 having completely absent communications with most of our
13 representatives, and one of our representatives is here
14 today, and I want her to know that is not directed at her
15 in any way. Representative Boyd, I see you everywhere
16 and I truly appreciate those efforts.

17 In your opening presentation, we talked about
18 the population changes in Calhoun County, and all six of
19 the districts that I have listed have lost populations.
20 You say you will move the lines to make them fair, but if
21 we lost in all six of those districts, I'm not sure how
22 you can do that other than to pull in communities in
23 other counties, which is only going to create more of a
24 problem.

25 I personally believe that it has an effect with

1 our county government because in order for them to get
2 county issues addressed, they have to try to get support
3 from so many different legislators. I wish I could tell
4 you that I could suggest an easy plan, but it is
5 definitely something that needs to be addressed. And I
6 agree with Mr. Williams that keeping incumbents in office
7 is not the first priority.

8 Another thing I would like to be really looked
9 at when you're drawing these maps is, if you were to take
10 the time to actually come and drive through our
11 community, you would know that these lines carefully are
12 drawn to keep minority populations in very segmented
13 places where they lose their ability to have influence on
14 government decisions. If we don't have inclusive
15 districts that truly represent the people who live there,
16 I don't understand what the point of the government is
17 other than to control and not to work for the people who
18 elect them.

19 I hope you will take that into consideration. I
20 look forward to seeing the proposed maps, and I hope that
21 you will do something to help keep our communities
22 together and keep our communities in a position of power
23 to be able to make the changes that we need to make to
24 make Alabama the best it can be.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. WALKER: Thank you very much, Ms. Howard,
2 for your comments.

3 The next speaker is Gaylen Ray -- or Glen Ray.
4 I'm sorry. Welcome, Mr. Ray.

5 MR. RAY: Good morning, and thank you for giving
6 me a new name.

7 MR. WALKER: Mr. Ray, we can barely hear you.

8 MR. RAY: This must be off or something. Hello?
9 Can you hear me? It won't take me long because I have
10 one thing to say. The one thing that I want to say is I
11 came here looking for a new map. So that was a rumor
12 that got to me because I was concerned about district 32,
13 which I don't even see. So it's hard for me to discuss
14 something that I don't even see but what I had heard.
15 And if the rumor is correct that you're trying to take
16 32, it's gonna make it hard for us to put a black down in
17 Montgomery.

18 So if that's -- If the point of drawing
19 districts, then -- You know, I think that's just not
20 right. Mike Rogers has been up there so long that he
21 don't even have to come out and campaign because he knows
22 who's in his district, and that's how the lines have been
23 drawn. Y'all draw blacks out of the district, and how
24 can we have a voice? And so I'm not going to say too
25 much because, like I said, I'm not here -- I don't see

1 what I came here for. So I'll just wait until you get
2 the new map, but I can tell you this: It's time for you
3 to start drawing fair lines so nobody can just be
4 comfortable and don't even have to come out and campaign
5 anymore.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. WALKER: Thank you, sir, for your comments.

8 The next speaker is -- I'm not sure what this
9 first name is. Maybe it's Dr. Ada Winfrey.

10 DR. WINFREY: Good morning. It's Adia Winfrey.

11 MR. WALKER: Dr. Adia Winfrey. Thank you. I'm
12 sorry. Somebody wrote over your signature, and it made
13 it hard to see.

14 DR. WINFREY: Okay. You're not the first. My
15 name gets chopped up a lot.

16 I want to say good morning to everyone. It was
17 really encouraging to come in and see so many familiar
18 faces. So I think that speaks highly of how important
19 this issue is.

20 I also appreciate the information that was
21 shared by the committee in the opening statements, and I
22 also want to shout out to Representative Boyd for
23 actually being present and listening to the constituents
24 and our concerns.

25 My name is Dr. Adia Winfrey. I'm the mother of

1 four children, and I live in Talladega, Alabama. In
2 2018, I was home-schooling my oldest son. He was in
3 middle school, and we had a home-school day in Montgomery
4 where all the children -- We were in the K-12 program,
5 and all the children throughout the State of Alabama
6 converged on our state capital so the children could
7 actually meet their legislators and talk to them about
8 how important home-schooling is to them.

9 My son was able to meet our state House
10 representative, who is Dr. Barbara Boyd. And everybody
11 was at a loss to try to figure out who our state senator
12 was because Talladega County is so sliced and diced.
13 It's ironic that we have so much so-called representation
14 but no representation at all. In the end, we were never
15 able to meet you, Senator McClendon, because nobody
16 really knew who our representative was, and when we
17 finally figured it out, you were unavailable. And that
18 moment has stuck with me, and that moment has actually
19 stuck with my children.

20 So I stand here today, like so many of the other
21 speakers so eloquently stated, we as citizens of
22 Talladega County and Calhoun County deserve
23 representation regardless of political party, regardless
24 of incumbency. We deserve representation.

25 So many of my peers have returned back home to

1 Alabama in the last 10 years. Looking at the census
2 numbers for the City of Talladega, there was a slight
3 uptick in the city, and I now personally, I'm part of
4 that uptick because we got our degrees, we got our
5 experience, and we came on back home. So just know that
6 there are others like me who are ready to demand change
7 and representation. As another speaker said, it's not
8 about political parties. It is really about
9 representation.

10 So I want to thank you guys for giving me the
11 opportunity to speak today. Again, thank you to everyone
12 who came out and raised these concerns, and just know
13 that we are definitely watching. I've never been so
14 engaged in redistricting in my life, but now is a crucial
15 moment, and I think the comments today really showcase
16 that.

17 So, again, thank you, and this is Dr. Adia
18 Winfrey.

19 MR. WALKER: Dr. Winfrey, thank you for your
20 testimony and for your interest in redistricting.

21 The next speaker is Richard Jackson.
22 Mr. Jackson. Welcome, Mr. Jackson.

23 MR. JACKSON: Hello. I don't have a lot written
24 down, and I don't have a lot that I can dedicate to
25 memory because in my lifetime, my district has been so

1 many different districts that it's hard to keep them in
2 line. I want to say this: The way that things are done
3 here in Alabama and predominantly the southeast really
4 took shape during the civil rights movement, and it's
5 just an indication of just how far people will go to keep
6 other people in line. And I want to say that, you know,
7 it depends on who's got the pencil, but more importantly
8 than that, it depends on who's got the eraser. It's a
9 lot of people that's got control of the eraser that if we
10 get the new maps done in the next few weeks, I guarantee
11 that if the population of minorities increases, that the
12 eraser will come out before the next -- or after the next
13 census to keep people in line.

14 I don't know if you can see the people that's in
15 this audience right now, but for the minority people in
16 the State of Alabama and in this area, it's a majority of
17 minorities that are concerned about the way you guys with
18 the pencil and the eraser does business in our state.
19 And I want to tell you this: I'll be 70 years old in a
20 little bit, and just about every 10 years in my lifetime
21 there's been redistricting since the civil rights
22 movement to keep our power down. There's about 85
23 percent minorities in this room, and I'll bet you one
24 thing, Mr. Mike Rogers has never come to our area and
25 said nothing. Just like Glen said a minute ago, he

1 didn't have to campaign. He just goes and promises
2 things to people. And I'm saying this out loud. I'm not
3 saying it silently because there's some changes that need
4 to be made, and it needs to be made from the inside out.
5 It needs to be some changes made from people that's
6 sitting around the table with the pencils in hand and
7 with the erasers and with the White-Out that can change
8 the maps whenever they feel like they need to. Maybe we
9 should go down to Talladega, down to the racetrack and
10 get those people involved in being fair. Maybe we would
11 have nooses in the garage area. I'm just saying this.
12 You know, you can bury your head in the sand and act like
13 it's not real, but there's a generation coming along like
14 you've never seen before, and they're not going to stand
15 for this. I'm not going to stand for it. I'll be 70
16 years old, and I'll just be damned if I go to my grave
17 with the things that I put up as a 12-year-old that I'm
18 still putting up with.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Jackson. I'll point
21 out that the legislature is required to conduct
22 redistricting after the decennial census, and it cannot
23 do any further redistricting after that except by court
24 order. So once the legislature draws these districts for
25 the next 10 years, unless a court orders the legislature

1 to change it, those are the districts that we will have.
2 Thank you for your comments.

3 There is no one who is attending virtually who
4 has raised their hand or submitted a comment by chat.
5 This is your -- Wait. We just got one. Thank you.

6 MS. TAYLOR: Ms. Kendra Majors. "Would you
7 please give the citation for the deviation of one person
8 on a Congressional district? Several people have asked
9 over the last few days, and constituents would like this
10 answered. Also, will the districting and mapping process
11 in Alabama be non-partisan? Who specifically was
12 responsible for promoting the hearings to the public?
13 Also, considering hearings were made to get public input,
14 is there a reason why only one of the 28 hearings was
15 planned after five p.m. which is accessible to many
16 working individuals?"

17 MR. WALKER: I think that was -- Court reporter,
18 it's Kendra M-A-J-O-R-S, Kendra Majors.

19 Ms. Majors, I don't have that cite. You can ask
20 Jim Blacksher for that.

21 There are different schools of thought about
22 whether redistricting should be partisan or non-partisan.
23 There is a healthy school that says it's an inherently
24 partisan activity, although perhaps you could have too
25 much partisanship, and that was an issue recently dealt

1 with by the Supreme Court. The committee -- The
2 Reapportionment Committee has both Republicans and
3 Democrats on it. Typically, states in which there is an
4 avowedly non-partisan redistricting do that by a
5 redistricting committee but, there again, the members of
6 the committee are appointed by politicians. So I leave
7 it to you as to whether or not you can really get
8 politics out of redistricting. I'm doubtful myself, but
9 if you want to pursue that as a goal, that's fine.

10 Was there another question? Thank you very
11 much.

12 Somebody is raising their hand there. Ma'am, in
13 the red dress, if you want to get up and speak, that
14 would be good.

15 MS. CARTER: My name is Shirley Carter. I live
16 in Anniston.

17 MR. WALKER: Did you say Shirley Carter?

18 MS. CARTER: Shirley, S-H-I-R-L-E-Y.

19 MR. WALKER: Carter?

20 MS. CARTER: Carter, C-A-R-T-E-R.

21 MR. WALKER: Okay. Thank you. It's helpful to
22 our court reporter to get the spelling.

23 MS. CARTER: Okay. I'm a newbie to this
24 situation, to this redistricting. So I am thinking,
25 procedurally-wise, since the information that we got as

1 we came in today is old, how long does it take you to
2 make -- First, who will make the new redistricting
3 guidelines? Who is responsible for that? How long will
4 it take? And once they are done, will it be presented
5 back to the public to have input? Could you please
6 answer me that? I can give you my email address and you
7 can send me that information.

8 MR. WALKER: I can give it to you right now.
9 The guidelines were adopted by the legislature back in
10 May or March -- May, and they're the ones who control the
11 choices -- or guide the choices the legislature makes in
12 drawing districts.

13 What was your next question?

14 MS. CARTER: Okay. Let me tag onto that one.
15 You said they were drawn back in May?

16 MR. WALKER: No. The guidelines are not the
17 maps. Maybe I misunderstood your question. The
18 race-neutral guidelines were adopted by the legislature
19 in May of '21, and those were, frankly, quite similar to
20 the guidelines that had been adopted by the legislature
21 in 2011 and also in 2000, i.e., through both Democratic
22 and Republican administrations.

23 The plans will be available as the legislators
24 who sponsor them decide to make them available. That's
25 the prerogative of the legislator sponsoring each bill.

1 There is not time for hearings on those plans after
2 they're drawn as comprehensive as what we're doing now.
3 As you may be aware, we got the census data, for various
4 reasons, several months later than had been anticipated.
5 But there will, of course, be committee hearings on the
6 plans, and those committee hearings are public, and if
7 you're interested in attending those, then I would
8 suggest that you pay attention to the Reapportionment
9 Committee part of the legislative website which will say
10 when there are going to be committee meetings so that you
11 can attend those.

12 MS. CARTER: So that answers my first question.
13 The legislators draw these plans.

14 MR. WALKER: Yes, effectively. They have some
15 help --

16 MS. CARTER: There is no timeline for it?

17 MR. WALKER: -- doing that, but it's the
18 legislators -- It's a bill, in other words, and therefore
19 it's the legislators.

20 MS. CARTER: Okay. And there is no timeline?

21 MR. WALKER: Well, we don't know when, or at
22 least I don't know when -- Excuse me. I'm running out of
23 time myself. We don't know when Governor Ivey is going
24 to call a special session. It will have to be done by
25 special session because of upcoming elections in 2022,

1 meaning that we have to have the districts drawn this
2 year, and, of course, the regular legislative session was
3 held back in the spring where it was required to be. So
4 there will have to be a special session, and I keep
5 hearing it will be later in October, but I don't know.

6 MS. CARTER: Okay. So can you give me the
7 resource for me to be able to find out more about this?
8 You said you could give it to me now.

9 MR. WALKER: I need a little bit more
10 specificity.

11 MS. CARTER: Okay. Give me somebody's email who
12 can give me some information as to when these legislators
13 will have submitted their guidelines, their maps.

14 MR. WALKER: I can't tell you that because
15 that's up to each legislator. They don't have any
16 obligation to tell me. I can tell you that one map has
17 been proposed, the one from the League of Women Voters,
18 and that's going to be submitted as a bill, although it
19 hasn't been submitted as a bill yet, I don't think. And
20 several other people have indicated that they're going to
21 propose bills, but I simply cannot tell you when that's
22 going to happen. I can tell you that if bills are drawn
23 outside of the reapportionment office -- and every
24 legislator has the ability to come into the
25 reapportionment office and work with the staff to draw

1 districts. But if they prefer to use a different system
2 rather than the legislature system, then those bills have
3 to be introduced no less than 10 days -- they have to be
4 given to the reapportionment office no less than 10 days
5 before they're introduced. I think all the legislators
6 are aware of that rule and that before or right at the
7 opening whenever a special session is called, that there
8 will be a flurry of bills that are introduced, and a
9 number of those -- most of the bills that will be
10 introduced for the special session will be redistricting
11 bills if the call is only for redistricting.

12 You'll be able to go on -- If you go to the
13 Alabama legislature website, that's Allison (phonetic),
14 you can go into the House or the Senate, look for the
15 current session and click on prefiled bills, and you'll
16 be able to pull down those bills and see what the plans
17 are.

18 Yes, sir? Senator Singleton wants to speak.

19 MS. CARTER: I have one other question before
20 you go. You said all of the legislators -- How many
21 legislators present these maps?

22 MR. WALKER: Well, there are 105 in the House
23 and 35 in the Senate, and all of them have the right to
24 present a bill, so I can't answer that question. But
25 Senator Singleton wanted to address one of your

1 questions. He's not on the camera, but you can hear his
2 voice.

3 SENATOR SINGLETON: Ma'am, this is Senator
4 Singleton. You could email me at bsingle362@gmail.com,
5 and I will get you the information that you need, and I
6 will be presenting the map on behalf of the League of
7 Women Voters.

8 MS. CARTER: All right. Thank you so very much,
9 sir.

10 SENATOR SINGLETON: You're welcome.

11 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Ms. Carter.

12 Yes?

13 MS. TAYLOR: Gene Johnson. "Who is Jim
14 Blacksher?"

15 MR. WALKER: Jim Blacksher is the very able
16 attorney for the League of Women Voters and is the one
17 with whom they've worked to prepare the no-county split
18 Congressional plan.

19 MS. TAYLOR: Kendra Majors again. "I really
20 would like answers to these two questions: Who
21 specifically was responsible for promoting the hearings
22 to the public? Also, considering hearings were made to
23 get public input, is there a reason why only one of the
24 28 hearings was planned after five p.m., which is
25 essential to many working individuals?"

1 MR. WALKER: The hearings were publicized
2 through all the state media. They were posted on the
3 legislature's website. They were posted on the secretary
4 of state website, and they were also sent to television,
5 radio and digital media sources throughout the state with
6 a request that they be publicized, and what happened
7 after that, the committee really has no control over
8 that. There have been several persons who pointed out
9 that there should have been more hearings after -- at six
10 or not during the day, and perhaps that's something that
11 the committee will have to take into account next time.

12 MS. TAYLOR: Kathy Jones, "Will the special
13 legislative session be live streamed?"

14 MR. WALKER: Yes, it will.

15 MS. TAYLOR: Kendra Majors again. "Mr. Walker,
16 can you follow up with Mr. Blacksher regarding the
17 citation so you can be better prepared in the remaining
18 hearing to answer the question since you are using that
19 language in your opening statement?"

20 MR. WALKER: Actually, Mr. Blacksher and I
21 disagree on what the case law is, but I believe he can
22 tell you the answer to your question.

23 Is there anybody else in the auditorium? We
24 don't have anybody else attending remotely. There's
25 somebody else. Yes, sir.

1 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Thank you so much,
2 Committee, for being in my area today.

3 MR. WALKER: Is this Representative Boyd?

4 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Sir, you know my voice up
5 there. Yes, this is she.

6 MR. WALKER: I just wanted to make clear for the
7 record who is speaking.

8 REPRESENTATIVE BOYD: Oh, come on. First of
9 all, thank you so much, all of you who have shown up here
10 today and all of those who we cannot see. I am a part of
11 that committee, and I also want to let you know I feel
12 very at home where we are today. I am retired from
13 Gadsden State Community College. You know, there are
14 some of my students among those who talked. I want to --

15 I want you to listen and listen well. I brought
16 my granddaughter with me today, who is a very political
17 student. She's gone to Montgomery, paged and paged and
18 paged. But you know what I miss most now? As a
19 legislator, with COVID coming in, denying me the
20 opportunity to bring my fourth graders to Montgomery, and
21 this is what this is all about today.

22 A lot of you may look around and say diversity.
23 I'm going to stand here and say I represent that
24 diversity, and I want that committee to hear and
25 understand, in between Calhoun County and Talladega

1 County, I have taught more students that look like my
2 fellow committee members up there than look like me.

3 So it's not about being so political today.
4 It's about doing the right thing, Committee, and make it
5 right. But I understand the political process. But to
6 those who are within the sound of my voice, God has been
7 good to me, but these are times that try men, women and
8 everybody's souls. As my grandmother used to say,
9 (inaudible) anything, it's time to stand up and be
10 counted.

11 Do you realize there's a saying that say old
12 soldiers never die, they just, what? Fade away. So as
13 many of us are beginning to fade away, the challenge for
14 us is when you come to that fork in the middle of the
15 road, I believe as Robert Frost said, they chose that
16 road that was less traveled by, and it has made all the
17 difference. So your presence here today, you're choosing
18 that role, and I have faith -- There was so much
19 diversity in here. You taught me a lesson today to sit
20 still for this long in my seat and listen. Come on and
21 laugh with me. I'm proud of myself for that because
22 that's not a characteristic of mine.

23 But thank you so much, Committee, and I'll see
24 you at the special session, and to God be the glory for
25 the things he's going to allow us to do. Be safe and

1 follow the guidelines and rules as much as you can.

2 Thank you so much, Committee, for being here and thank
3 you all for sharing today.

4 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Representative Boyd.

5 Is there -- One last call. Anyone further who
6 would like to speak? Now is your chance. Okay.

7 Let me just say that this has been a really good
8 hearing. The committee appreciates hearing from the
9 people in the community, and it's clear that the people
10 in Talladega are interested in the issue and have
11 something to say, and you've given us a good record.
12 Thank you very much for that.

13 There being no one else who wants to speak, this
14 hearing is closed. Thank you again to Gadsden State for
15 hosting this hearing and for all of you coming and
16 participating.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ALABAMA)
COUNTY OF MOBILE)

I hereby certify that the above and foregoing deposition was taken down by me in stenotype and transcribed by means of computer-aided transcription, and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the testimony given by said witness upon said hearing.

I further certify that I am neither of counsel nor of kin to any of the parties, nor am I in anywise interested in the result of said cause.

I further certify that I am duly licensed by the Alabama Board of Court Reporting as a Certified Court Reporter as evidenced by the ACCR number following my name found below.



KATHLEEN F. CAVAZOS, RPR, ACCR302

NOTARY PUBLIC

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES: 12/16/23

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