



IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE

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August 18, 2025

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**EXHIBIT**

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IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE  
Transcription of Video Recording on 08/18/2025

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CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE  
MONDAY; AUGUST 18TH, 2025 SESSION

VIDEO TRANSCRIPTION

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Transcribed by Carin Ishida, CSR No. 10960

Job No. 101292

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MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call roll.

COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen, Alvarado-Gil,

Archuleta, Arreguin, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear,

Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle,

Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird,

Limon, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh,

Padilla, Perez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto,

Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares,

Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener.

MR. PRESIDENT: A quorum is present. Would the members on our guest beyond the rail and in the gallery please rise. We will be led in prayer this afternoon by our chaplain, Sister Michelle Gorman. After which, please remain standing for the Pledge Allegiance to the flag.

Chaplain.

SISTER MICHELLE GORMAN: Thank you. So, let us gather again in God's presence. As we continue the urgent work of these times, we remember the advice of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. He says above all, trust in the slow work of God and humans. We are quite naturally impatient to reach the end without delay. We should like to skip the intermediate stages. And, yet, this is the law of all progress that it is made by passing through some stages of instability, and that it may take a very long time.

And so I think it is with us our ideas mature

1 gradually, let them grow. Let them shape themselves  
2 without undue haste. Do not try to force them on, as  
3 though we could be today what grace and circumstances  
4 will make of us tomorrow.

5 Only God could say what this new spirit  
6 gradually forming will be. Let God's hand lead us and  
7 accept the anxiety of feeling in suspense and  
8 incomplete.

9 So gracious and loving God, help us to discern  
10 where we need to wait with patience and where we have  
11 waited long enough. Amen.

12 MR. PRESIDENT: Please join in the Pledge Allegiance  
13 to the flag.

14 I pledge allegiance ..

15 (All recite the Pledge of Allegiance.)

16 I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United  
17 States of America, and to the republic for which it  
18 stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty  
19 and justice for all.

20 MR. PRESIDENT: Majority Leader Senator Gonzalez,  
21 you are recognized.

22 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Mr. President.  
23 Calling a Democratic Caucus in the Maddie Lounge  
24 immediately.

25 MR. PRESIDENT: Members, there is a democratic  
26 caucus in the lounge.

27 Senator Seyarto, you are recognized.

28 SENATOR SEYARTO: Thank you. There will be a

1 Republican caucus in Room 215.

2 MR. PRESIDENT: Republican caucus in Room 215.

3 Members, head to your respective caucuses.

4 And is there any objection to moving to  
5 privileges of the floor to introduce our guest for  
6 today? Seeing and hearing none, the Senate would like  
7 to acknowledge Ingrid Daphner Krasnow, a friend of  
8 Senator Blakespear who is visiting the Capitol today.  
9 Let's welcome -- welcome to the Senate. Up in the  
10 gallery.

11 And then Senator Hurtado from the Majority  
12 Leader's desk, you are recognized.

13 SENATOR HURTADO: Thank you, Mr. President.

14 Colleagues, today I rise to recognize and  
15 celebrate the rich history of Pakistani-American  
16 relations and the many contributions Pakistani-Americans  
17 have made to the State of California. It is also about  
18 acknowledging the ways that Pakistani-Americans have  
19 helped shape our state, our economy, and the valley  
20 communities I'm proud to represent.

21 California is home to more than 75,000  
22 Pakistani-Americans, a vibrant and growing community  
23 that has left a lasting mark on every corner of our  
24 state.

25 As a Chair of the Senate Ag Committee, I want  
26 to pause on a part of history that deserves more  
27 recognition. As early as the 1920s, Pakistani  
28 immigrants came to the San Joaquin Valley to work on

1 farms. They came with little more than help -- with  
2 hope -- than hope, but then they brought resilience and  
3 determination. With their hands, they helped cultivate  
4 the land that feeds not only California, but the entire  
5 nation and the world.

6 Their story is one of sacrifice, dignity and  
7 perseverance. It reminds us that behind every harvest  
8 are families who gave of themselves so future  
9 generations could have opportunities we enjoy today.  
10 That is a story that echoes across the valley, across  
11 our state, whether told by farm workers, small business  
12 owners, or professionals who work their way up through  
13 education and service.

14 As we reflect on Pakistan's independence, we  
15 also recognize enduring partnership between the United  
16 States and Pakistan. That relationship is built not  
17 only on trade and diplomacy, but on shared values,  
18 resilience, democracy and human dignity.

19 It is my honor to welcome distinguished guests  
20 joining us in the chamber today. With us -- with me, I  
21 have Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States, Rizwan  
22 Said Sheikh; Acting Consul General of Pakistan, Mohammed  
23 Mubashir Khan; Dr. Imran Sharif, Chairman Council of  
24 Pakistan; Adman Khan, President Council of Pakistan;  
25 Itrat Sharif, Council of Pakistan; Ismail Kikibai,  
26 Council of Pakistan; Azmigil, Council of Pakistan as  
27 well.

28 And just as a friendly reminder, we will be

1 having a meet-and-greet today in Room 61 in the swing  
2 space. But, Colleagues, please join me in extending a  
3 warm welcome and our deepest gratitude to our guests for  
4 their service, leadership and commitment to  
5 strengthening the bonds between our nations.

6 (Applause)

7 MR. PRESIDENT: And, Members, if you'd like to join  
8 for a picture in the back of the chamber.

9 Senator Menjivar, you are recognized for your  
10 guest introductions as well. When you are ready.

11 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Thank you, Mr. President.

12 Colleagues, please help me welcome a special  
13 group to the Senate Chamber. Central Casting was  
14 founded in Burbank by Will Hayes almost 100 years ago,  
15 December 4th, 1925, in an effort to try to address the  
16 exploitation and working conditions in Hollywood  
17 especially in background casting.

18 Since 1925, Central Casting has served as a  
19 trusted and reliable way for background actors, also  
20 known as extras, to find work in Hollywood and for  
21 studios to hire these actors and directors to find the  
22 right talent.

23 You may recognize some of the names of actors  
24 who were once on their roles. John Wayne, Clark Gable,  
25 Carol Lombard, John Harlow -- Jean Harlow, among many  
26 others.

27 From what began as a reform movement, Central  
28 Casting now sees 20,000 background actors register with

1     them each year and has established itself as a pillar in  
2     California's creative economy. And this body is no  
3     stranger to all the impressive work and benefits that  
4     come to California from this economy. And to my L.A.  
5     members, if -- when you're driving to the Burbank  
6     Airport and you're going off the 5 Freeway, you're going  
7     to see their industry on your way to the Burbank  
8     Airport.

9             They, and actors they represent, contribute to  
10    the cultural fabric of the film and television community  
11    and the economic viability of California.

12            Joining us today and behind me are members of  
13    the leadership team at Central Casting which is located,  
14    like I mentioned, in Burbank.

15            We have the President and CEO, Mark Goldstein.  
16    We have Chief Operating Officer Darren Seidel. And the  
17    Executive Vice President with casting with 30 years in  
18    this company, Jennifer Bender. Please join me in  
19    congratulating them on their 100th anniversary and the  
20    vital role they play in improving the quality of life  
21    for background actors in the film industry. Thank you.

22                             (Applause)

23            MR. PRESIDENT: And Members choosing to be  
24    background images in the next photo, please feel free to  
25    step back in the --

26            SENATOR MENJIVAR: We need some extras.

27            MR. PRESIDENT: They need extras. Senator Cabaldon  
28    could not resist.

1 Senator Caballero from the Majority Leader's  
2 desk, you are recognized for your guest introduction.

3 SENATOR CABALLERO: Thank you, Mr. President.

4 It gives me great pleasure today, great  
5 pleasure and pride to recognize an extraordinary group  
6 of young leaders from Senate District 14. These  
7 students represent the promise of California's rural  
8 communities and innovative spirit that drives our future  
9 forward.

10 We're here to honor Madtown Robotics, also  
11 known as FIRST Robotics Competition Team 1323 from the  
12 Madera Unified School District. Madera is a community  
13 of 69,000 people.

14 In April of this year, Team 1323 captured  
15 their third world championship title at the 2025 FIRST  
16 Robotics World Championship in Houston, Texas. That  
17 made them three time world champions previously winning  
18 in 2019, 2023 and now 2025.

19 These students designed, built and operated  
20 robots that outperformed teams from across the globe.  
21 They competed against the best. From Silicone Valley to  
22 China, Turkey and Canada and they won.

23 In 2025, Mad Robotics -- Madtown Robotics  
24 posted a 53 to 3 match record, one of the most dominant  
25 performances in the world. They were undefeated at the  
26 Silicone Valley Regional, winning both the tournament  
27 and the Autonomous Award for Software Excellence. At  
28 the Contra Costa Regional, they won again and received

1 the Quality Award for machine durability and design.

2 At the world championship in Houston, they  
3 went 15 to 0 in the Newton District, and earned the  
4 creativity award for the robots design, they captained  
5 the top alliance through the playoffs and ultimately  
6 claimed the world championship title.

7 Madtown Robotics is composed of students from  
8 four Madera high schools. Madera High, Madera South,  
9 Matilda Torres and Sherman Thomas Charter. It's a  
10 unique model of regional collaboration. Students from  
11 multiple campuses working as one team. But that's how  
12 we do things in the valley.

13 The students come from a rural agricultural  
14 region, and they are competing at the highest level of  
15 global engineering. They represent the very best of  
16 what public education can produce when students are  
17 given the resources to thrive. They gain hands-on  
18 experience and design, computer-aided design,  
19 fabrication programming and strategy. They learn  
20 leadership, public speaking, project management and  
21 realtime decision-making. Many of them are  
22 first-generation college bound and will pursue STEM  
23 degrees and technical careers.

24 Madtown Robotics was founded in 20-- in 2004  
25 by a Madera High math teacher starting with just four  
26 students and a wooden robot. Today, they are globally  
27 recognized because of sustained community and district  
28 support.

1           The Madera Unified School District, parents,  
2     alumni and industry partners like PG&E and Boeing have  
3     all invested in this team. One of their sponsors, West  
4     Coast Products, was co-founded by a Madtown alumnus. So  
5     they go on to become business leaders in their  
6     community.

7           The cycle of mentorship and reinvestment is  
8     alive and well in Madera, and it is empowering the next  
9     generation of innovators. Madtown Robotics proves that  
10    innovation is not confined to coastal cities, big  
11    cities, or tech capitals. It proves that brilliance and  
12    talent are everywhere, especially in California's  
13    Central Valley.

14           To the students of Madtown Robotics, you have  
15    made Madera proud, the Central Valley and the State of  
16    California. On behalf of the California State Senate,  
17    we thank you for inspiring us with your brilliance, your  
18    teamwork and your championship spirit.

19   (Applause)

20           MR. PRESIDENT: Members, if you'd like to join for a  
21    photograph in the back of the gallery.

22           Members, we're going to take a picture -- a  
23    final picture in the back of the gallery. They are  
24    ready.

25           Members, we'll be moving to our next guest  
26    introduction in just a few seconds. Senator Limon.

27           Members, we have another guest introduction by  
28    Senator Limon from her desk.

1 Senator Limon, you may do your guest  
2 introduction when you are ready.

3 SENATOR LIMON: Thank you very much. Thank you.

4 President and colleagues, as a commissioner for  
5 the California Commission on the Status of Women and  
6 Girls, it is my honor to recognize the long history of  
7 the Commission. For 60 years, the California Commission  
8 on the Status of Women and Girls has served as a vital  
9 voice for equity, access and justice.

10 Since its establishment in 1965, the  
11 Commission has worked tirelessly to identify and  
12 eliminate inequities in laws, practices and conditions  
13 affecting California women and girls. The Commission  
14 promotes equality and justice for more than 19.6 million  
15 women and girls in one of the most diverse states in the  
16 country through research, policy development, education,  
17 outreach and strategic partnerships.

18 Through their partnerships with the California  
19 Legislative Women's Caucus and the first Partner's  
20 Office, the Commission has been able to help women and  
21 girls in California access to opportunities that just  
22 one generation ago were unthinkable for nearly half of  
23 our state's population.

24 The Commission's work is far from finished.  
25 They continue to ensure policies reflect the priorities  
26 of women and girls, that hard won rights are not rolled  
27 back, that we lean into leadership in a moment where it  
28 is most required ensuring that women are not an

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1 afterthought, but part of all conversations.

2 I look forward to the Commission's continued  
3 accomplishments in the three years -- in the years  
4 ahead, and applaud its commitment to a more just and  
5 equitable California for each one of us.

6 Please join me in congratulating the  
7 California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls  
8 on six decades of impactful work. I'd like to recognize  
9 Chair, Dr. Rita Gallardo-Good and commissions -- and our  
10 Commissions Executive Director, Darcy Totten, joining us  
11 from the gallery.

12 (Applause)

13 MR. PRESIDENT: And we also have --

14 Welcome to the senate.

15 Senator Richardson, you would like to make  
16 comments, please.

17 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Thank you. I wanted to join  
18 Senator Limon in congratulating the California  
19 Commission on the Status of Women. This is truly a  
20 pioneering group. The Commission publishes the only  
21 statewide report of its county. The report on the  
22 Status of Women and Girls in California serves as vital  
23 resource for us as lawmakers, educators and advocates to  
24 guide policy and funding decisions.

25 They also have a youth advisory council ages  
26 12 to 19 where the Commission empowers young leaders to  
27 shape policy and advocate for gender justice. This  
28 initiative ensures that the next generation is actively

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1 involved in not only California's future, but our  
2 progress.

3 Finally, I join Senator Limon in honoring  
4 their 60th anniversary. We have to remember that  
5 funding also remains a priority. And as you see bills  
6 coming across the floor. The Commission has co-authored  
7 two bills this session while supporting 20 bills that  
8 range from employment wages, safe reproduction, sexual  
9 assault, homelessness and student safety to name a few.

10 Congratulations.

11 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Richardson.

12 Sentaor Ashby, you are recognized.

13 SENATOR ASHBY: Yeah. I just want to rise to thank  
14 these two who are really good friends of mine,  
15 constituents, hard-working women who, if you look at  
16 them, they -- they live this every single day, and I'm  
17 grateful to the Senator from Santa Barbara for  
18 acknowledging them.

19 But I want to add my personal gratitude to  
20 both of you for everything you do for women and girls  
21 across the State of California, but especially right  
22 here at home. Thank you both so much.

23 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Ashby.

24 And, thank you for your good work and welcome  
25 to the Senate.

26 Members, is there any objection to moving to  
27 Senate third reading at this time to take up file item  
28 46 SCR 80 by Senator Niello?

1           Seeing and hearing no objection, Secretary,  
2     please, read.

3           COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Senate Concurrent Resolution  
4     80 by Senator Niello relative to Frontotemporal  
5     Degeneration Awareness week.

6           MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Niello, you are recognized  
7     from the Majority Leader's desk.

8           SENATOR NIELLO: Thank you, Mr. President.

9           Today I rise to present SCR 80 proclaiming the  
10    week of September 21 through September 28th as  
11    Frontotemporal Degeneration, more easily pronounced as  
12    FTD Awareness Week in conjunction with the observance of  
13    World FTD Awareness Week. The Association for  
14    Frontotemporal Degeneration reports that FTD is a  
15    terminal and incurable neurodegenerative disease  
16    affecting the frontal and temporal lobes causing  
17    impairments to speech, personality, behavior and motor  
18    skills that constitutes truly a major public health  
19    concern. It takes an average of about three and-a-half  
20    years from the initial symptoms even to get an accurate  
21    diagnosis of FTD with an average life expectancy  
22    tragically of 7 to 13 years after initial symptoms.

23           FTD strikes people as young as 21 and as old  
24    as 80 with the largest percentage -- and this is  
25    important -- of those affected being in their 40s to 60s  
26    rendering people in the prime of their life unable to  
27    work or function normally.

28           FTD imposes average annual costs associated

1 with care and living with the disease that are  
2 approximately double those of Alzheimer's. FTD  
3 represents an estimated five to 15 percent of all  
4 dementia cases, and is -- and the most common form of  
5 dementia for people under 60 years of age.

6 Approximately 40 percent of people with FTD  
7 have a family history of FTD or related conditions such  
8 as ALS where -- while there has been a global  
9 epidemiology -- while there has never been a global  
10 epidemiology study of FTD, it is estimated that more  
11 than 60,000 people are affected in the United States  
12 today.

13 It's imperative that there be greater  
14 awareness, and that's what this is all about, of this  
15 serious disease, and more must be done to increase  
16 activity at the local, state and national levels. I  
17 urge your strong support of this measure.

18 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator.

19 Senator Ochoa-Bogh, you are recognized from  
20 your desk.

21 SENATOR OCHOA-BOGH: Thank you, Mr. President.

22 Ladies and Gentlemen and the Senate, I rise in  
23 support of SCR 80 because like most Californians, I knew  
24 very little about frontotemporal degeneration. This  
25 disease is considered one of the most common pre-senile  
26 dementias mostly affecting people in their 50s or 60s,  
27 roughly ten years before the average Alzheimer patient  
28 is diagnosed.

1 FTD is often misdiagnosed due to overlapping  
2 symptoms with psychiatric or other neurological  
3 conditions. Those affected experience a gradual  
4 progressive decline in behavior and language with memory  
5 usually relatively preserved. The disease is  
6 characterized by progressive atrophy of the parts of the  
7 brain that control executive actions or functions  
8 including decision-making, personality, social behavior  
9 and language.

10 As the disease progresses, family and  
11 caregivers often face challenges in coping with the  
12 patient's behavioral changes in communication  
13 difficulties. Strategies like education, support  
14 groups, and respite care can help family members,  
15 caregivers, over the course of the disease.

16 While groups -- while groups like the  
17 Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration are  
18 providing resources to assist FTD patients and their  
19 caregivers, more should be done to increase awareness to  
20 ensure patients receive the best care possible. I  
21 respectfully ask for an aye vote so we can bring  
22 awareness to this little known disease to recognize and  
23 thank all those who serve individuals struggling with  
24 FTD.

25 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator. Senator Allen,  
26 you are recognized.

27 SENATOR ALLEN: Thank you so much, Mr. President.

28 I also rise in support of SCR 80, and I want

1 to thank the member from Fair Oaks for bringing this  
2 important resolution forward.

3 As the author noted, FTD is a terminal and  
4 incurable form of dementia that represents the most  
5 common form of dementia for patients under 60. But what  
6 makes it so pernicious also makes this resolution so  
7 important. Following its onset, patients have an  
8 expected prognosis of seven to 13 years, yet the time it  
9 takes to actually diagnose FTD could be up to have of  
10 that time, taking about 3.5 years on average.

11 So, because it often strikes patients who are  
12 otherwise in their prime, sometimes even as young as 21  
13 years old, valuable years of life are spent in  
14 frustration due to a wide -- the wide range of  
15 behavioral and cognitive symptoms that could be present  
16 before families and physicians identify FTD as the  
17 cause.

18 And so we've had countless families across the  
19 state, including from one of my own staff, who've  
20 experienced an onset and progression of FTD for -- with  
21 a loved one. And organizations like the Association for  
22 FTD or FTD are invaluable in providing understanding and  
23 resources throughout the process. And I just want to  
24 thank them and recognize them for coming from all over  
25 the state to talk about their work here today.

26 By joining in the recognition of World FTD  
27 Awareness Week this September, California can broaden  
28 its understanding and substantively lessen suffering

1 from patients and their loved ones as we work toward a  
2 cure. Thank you, Members. I ask for your aye vote on  
3 SCR 80.

4 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator.

5 Seeing no further debate or discussion, Senator  
6 Niello, you may close.

7 SENATOR NIELLO: Thank you, Mr. President.

8 As I said, this is about raising awareness. I  
9 was not aware of this disease until the folks approached  
10 me several months ago. And with awareness comes  
11 support. With support, eventually resources and  
12 eventually perhaps efforts to find a cure to this  
13 currently tragically uncurable disease.

14 So, please, join me in recognizing September  
15 21 through 28 as FTD Awareness Week and to vote in favor  
16 of SCR 80.

17 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secretary, please call  
18 roll.

19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

20 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?

22 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Archuleta?

24 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

26 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

28 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?  
2 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?  
4 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?  
6 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
8 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Ayes. Cervantes?  
10 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi?  
12 SENATOR CHOI: Aye.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cortese?  
14 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle?  
16 SENATOR DAHLE: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Durazo?  
18 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
20 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
22 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove?  
24 SENATOR GROVE: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Hurtado?  
26 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones?  
28 SENATOR JONES: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Laird?  
2 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
4 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire? McNerney?  
6 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
8 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Niello?  
10 SENATOR NIELLO: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ochoa Bogh?  
12 SENATOR OCHOA-BOGH: Aye.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Padilla? Perez?  
14 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
16 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
18 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
20 SENATOR SEYARTO: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Smallwood-Cuevas?  
22 Stern?  
23 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland?  
25 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Aye.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Umberg?  
27 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.  
28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares?

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1 SENATOR VALLADARES: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Wahab?

3 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

5 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

7 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent

8 members.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McGuire? Padilla? Rubio?  
10 Smallwood-Cuevas?

11 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson?

13 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 36; Noes, 0. The resolution  
14 is adopted.

15 Members, we will return back to privileges of  
16 the floor so that Senator Niello can recognize his  
17 guests.

18 Senator Niello.

19 SENATOR NIELLO: Yes. I have several people on the  
20 floor with me who are passionate about this disease  
21 because they have loved ones who have suffered from it.  
22 We have Emma Heming Willis, who is representing her  
23 husband, the obviously well-known and beloved actor,  
24 Bruce Willis, who is unfortunately a victim of this  
25 awful disease.

26 She is his care partner and advocate for  
27 people with FTD. Joining her is Terry Walter, a  
28 constituent of mine whose husband also passed of this

1 disease. And also her daughters Christine and Jeanine.  
2 And I also want to point out we have several members of  
3 supporters also on behalf of their loved ones in the  
4 gallery above us.

5 So, please, recognize these people dedicated  
6 to raising the awareness of FTD.

7 (Applause)

8 MR. PRESIDENT: Members, if you'd like to join in  
9 the back of the chamber for a picture, now is the time.

10 Members, we are going to continue in Senate  
11 third reading. Moving to Item 38 SCR No. 28.

12 Senator Grove --

13 Secretary, please read.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Senate Concurrent Resolution  
15 28 by Senator Grove, relative to Gold Star Mothers and  
16 Families' Day.

17 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Grove, you're recognized.

18 SENATOR GROVE: Thank you, Mr. President.

19 Colleagues, today I rise to represent SCR 28  
20 which recognizes September 28th as Gold Star Mother's  
21 and Families' Day, a day dedicated to honoring mothers  
22 and families who have endured the profound loss of a  
23 loved one in service to our nation. Gold Star Mothers  
24 and Families' day traces its origins back to World War  
25 I. It honors a tradition of military families  
26 displaying the service flag and a blue star for each  
27 member currently serving, and a gold star on the flag  
28 for each person who has lost their life in military

1 service.

2 When a blue star turns gold, it marks a moment  
3 for these families that they will never forget. It's a  
4 remainder of the strength of the United States armed  
5 forces that it rests not only on the men and women who  
6 put their hand in the air to swear to defend this  
7 country against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and  
8 that have served our nation, but it also brings  
9 recognition to the families who stand behind them,  
10 beside them and around them supporting their decision to  
11 serve our country.

12 SCR 28 designates that September 28th, 2025 as  
13 Gold Star Mother's and families' Day, recognizing the  
14 immense of long-term impact of losing a loved one in  
15 service to our country. For these mothers and families  
16 on this day, it's an opportunity to honor the memory of  
17 their loved ones. I respectfully ask for an aye vote  
18 for SCR 28.

19 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Grove.

20 Seeing no discussion or debate, Secretary,  
21 please call the roll.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

23 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?

25 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Aye.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Archuleta?

27 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

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1 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?  
3 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?  
5 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?  
7 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon? Caballero?  
9 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
11 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi?  
13 SENATOR CHOI: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cortese?  
15 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle?  
17 SENATOR DAHLE: Aye.  
18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Durazo? Gonzalez?  
19 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
21 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove?  
23 SENATOR GROVE: Aye.  
24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Hurtado?  
25 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
27 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?

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1 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire? McNerney?  
3 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
5 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello?  
7 SENATOR NIELLO: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ochoa Bogh?  
9 SENATOR OCHOA-BOGH: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Padilla? Perez?  
11 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
13 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
15 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
17 SENATOR SEYARTO: Aye.  
18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Smallwood-Cuevas?  
19 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.  
20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?  
21 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland?  
23 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Umberg?  
25 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares?  
27 SENATOR VALLADARES: Aye.  
28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Wahab?

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1 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

3 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

5 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent  
6 members.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Cabaldon?

8 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Durazo?

10 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? McGuire?  
12 Padilla? Rubio? Weber Pierson?

13 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 35; Noes, 0. The resolution  
14 is adopted.

15 Members, we're moving to Item 39 SCR No. 61.  
16 Senator Archuleta.

17 Secretary, please read.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Senate Concurrent Resolutions  
19 61 by Senator Archuleta relative to veterans.

20 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Archuleta, you are  
21 recognized.

22 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Thank you, Mr. President.

23 I rise proudly today as State Military and  
24 Veteran's Affairs chair to present SCR 61 honoring  
25 Military and Veterans Suicide Prevention and Awareness  
26 week here in California.

27 Suicide affects all Americans, no doubt. The  
28 data shows that active duty service members and veterans

1 die by suicide at a much higher rate than the civilian  
2 population. In the United States, Department of Defense  
3 annual reporting for 2023 states that military services  
4 reported 363 deaths by suicide for active military  
5 personnel, 69 deaths by suicide for military reserve  
6 members, and 91 deaths by suicide for members of the  
7 National Guard.

8 Although veterans make up just 8.5 percent of  
9 the United States population, they account for  
10 18 percent of all death by suicide among United States  
11 adults.

12 For male veterans, the overall risk of suicide  
13 was 18 percent higher when compared to the United States  
14 civilian adult males. For female veterans, a risk of  
15 suicide was 2.4 percent -- I'm sorry. 2.4 times higher  
16 when compared to the United States civilian adult  
17 females. The data additionally shows that after  
18 adjusting for differences in age and gender, risk for  
19 suicide was 21 percent higher among veterans when  
20 compared to United States civilian adults.

21 In recent years, the U.S. Department of  
22 Defense has worked diligently to reduce these staggering  
23 numbers through all sorts of approaches, suicide  
24 prevention and intervention. They have recently  
25 launched a program entitled, "Be There." Offering  
26 confidential peer coaching and counseling for active  
27 duty service members including our National Guard and  
28 active reserve members and their families.

1           In addition to the Department of Defense, the  
2   VA has undertaken several measures to prevent suicide  
3   among veterans including a 24-hour per day crisis  
4   hotline working with mental health professionals, health  
5   services for female veterans, expanding the ability to  
6   do it telecommunications and proactively reaching out to  
7   veterans needing care.

8           Despite these efforts, it is clear that we  
9   need to do more. And doing more is so vital for our  
10   active duty service members and veterans. This suicide  
11   epidemic is unacceptable and emphasizes the necessity  
12   for increased services care, the respect for the men and  
13   women who have selfishly dedicated their lives and  
14   public service to our nation.

15           Our service members are American heros and  
16   embody the timeless values that makes America strong.  
17   Courage, integrity and devotion to greater good. These  
18   principles transcend time inspiring us to uphold the  
19   ideals of our national motto and to protect everyone.  
20   Our nation was built on that service.

21           It is our duty to honor, support and advocate  
22   for and provide care for our service members while they  
23   are on active duty and when they come home. We also  
24   must come together to address these issues, reduce  
25   suicide risk among our veterans.

26           As I close, I want to take time out to  
27   acknowledge the work that our county Veteran Service  
28   Officers throughout California, what they do for our

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1 veterans. It is impossible to overstate the work they  
2 do to support our veterans. And every one of your  
3 counties throughout California, men and women are  
4 working to help our veterans, the county Veteran Service  
5 Officers, the time they give to provide service to these  
6 veterans, to our National Guard here in California, the  
7 tragedies that happen, but they are there to save as  
8 many lives as possible.

9 I thank you. And I respectfully ask for your  
10 aye vote.

11 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator. Seeing no  
12 discussion or debate, Secretary, please call roll.

13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

14 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?

16 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Aye.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Archuleta?

18 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

20 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

22 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?

24 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?

26 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.

27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?

28 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
2 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
4 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi?  
6 SENATOR CHOI: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cortese?  
8 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle?  
10 SENATOR DAHLE: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Durazo?  
12 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
14 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
16 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado? Jones?  
18 SENATOR JONES: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Laird?  
20 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
22 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire? McNerney?  
24 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
26 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello?  
28 SENATOR NIELLO: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ochoa Bogh?  
2 SENATOR OCHOA-BOGH: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Padilla? Perez?  
4 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
6 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson? Rubio?  
8 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Richardson, aye. Rubio?  
10 Seyarto?  
11 SENATOR SEYARTO: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Smallwood-Cuevas?  
13 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?  
15 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland?  
17 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Umberg?  
19 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.  
20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares?  
21 SENATOR VALLADARES: Aye.  
22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Wahab?  
23 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.  
24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?  
25 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.  
27 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent  
28 members.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Grove?

2 SENATOR GROVE: Aye.

3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Hurtado? McGuire?

4 Padilla? Rubio? Weber Pierson?

5 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Senator Hurtado, aye.

7 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 35; Noes, 0. The reso- --

8 ayes ...

9 Secretary, please call absent members.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McGuire?

11 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Padilla? Rubio? Weber

13 Pierson?

14 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 37; noes, 0. The resolution

15 passes.

16 Members, we are going to move to ...

17 Members, is there any objection to moving to

18 adjournment in memory?

19 Seeing no objection, Senator Grove, you are

20 recognized for your adjournment in memory.

21 SENATOR GROVE: Thank you, Mr. President and

22 colleagues for allowing me to interrupt the schedule and

23 do an adjourn in memory of somebody that we should -- we

24 will all deeply care about as we get started.

25 I rise today to request that we adjourn in the

26 memory of Joel Andrew Nelson who unexpectedly passed

27 away on the morning of Tuesday, July 1st at the age of

28 78.

1 Colleagues, when we lose a loved ones and it's  
2 expected, they're ill for a long time, they have elderly  
3 in years, they've had problems, that's one thing. But  
4 when it happens to be unexpected, it's detrimental and  
5 very painful.

6 In this particular circumstance, Joel was on  
7 his way back east to pick up his grandson to come and  
8 spend the summer with grandma and grandpa. And you'll  
9 understand why in a minute. And he died in the Arizona  
10 airport. So, not only did Connor not get to see his  
11 grandpa, but Suzette lost her husband on the travel that  
12 was only expected to take a couple of days.

13 Joel's legacy is one of dedication, strong  
14 worth ethic, culminating a lifetime of contributions  
15 that profoundly shaped California's citrus industry.

16 Born in San Diego, California on September  
17 27th, 1945, Joel began his career as a produce clerk at  
18 Lucky stores at the age of 16. In 1966 to 1970, he  
19 served four tours in Vietnam with the U.S. Navy.

20 After returning home, he earned a degree at  
21 CSU Fullerton, and he went on to serve as a CEO with the  
22 Fresh Produce Council for 10 years before joining  
23 California's Citrus Mutual. In 1982, Joel moved to  
24 Visalia and became the president of California Citrus  
25 Mutual taking on that role for 37 years advocating for  
26 the largest citrus production in the State of California  
27 across all of our districts, and it was really  
28 incredible that he stayed at the helm with his

1 leadership skills at that position for 37 years.

2 He was instrumental in passing the largest tax  
3 relief package in California agriculture history that  
4 led efforts to block lemon imports from Argentina,  
5 protect our crops from invasive pests and diseases, and  
6 his advocacy extended far beyond California. Regularly  
7 taking trips not only to Sacramento, but Washington D.C.  
8 and abroad, all in the service of California's extensive  
9 citrus industry.

10 Joel's longtime colleagues often remarked of  
11 his commitment of reliability, hard work, dedication.  
12 First one there, early to rise. And he gave his full  
13 effort every single day and never settled for the status  
14 quo.

15 After his retirement in 2019, Joel relished  
16 the opportunity to spend more time with his wife,  
17 Suzette, his daughters Nicole and Laura and their  
18 grandson. Even in retirement, his commitment to his  
19 community endured. During the Covid-19 pandemic, he  
20 founded a neighborhood social group in Visalia known as,  
21 ChitChat on the cul-de-sac.

22 To this day, that group remains a local  
23 tradition that has strengthened community bonds through  
24 regular gatherings and events. Though officially  
25 retired, Joel returned to service in 2023 at the  
26 American Pistachio Growers request. Asked him to lead  
27 the organization through a transitional period. He  
28 stepped in as the interim president CEO, continuing in

1 his legacy of leadership for another year and brought  
2 the American Pistachio Growers where California is one  
3 of the No. 1 producers of pistachios into a transition  
4 period that let them expand their production.

5 Joel Nelson will be deeply missed, but his  
6 impact will live on in the people that he mentored,  
7 empowered through this -- through the impact on growers,  
8 staff, government officials, and industry professionals,  
9 and his legacy will endure the ongoing work that he  
10 inspired.

11 I'd like to acknowledge Joel's wife Suzette in  
12 the gallery, as she waves to us. His daughter, Laura is  
13 with us and her friend. And also Louis Brown who has  
14 advocated for Citrus Mutual for a long period of time  
15 dedicating his life in working with Joel all these  
16 years. He was a great human. He really was. He was an  
17 incredible human. He was kind. He brought all sides  
18 together, and he worked very, very hard to produce a lot  
19 of citrus and make sure that we as Californians were  
20 leaders in the citrus industry.

21 And I respectfully ask for the Senate to  
22 adjourn in his memory, and thank you again for letting  
23 us move that up so the family would be able to have the  
24 opportunity to get on the road and go home.

25 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Grove. Our  
26 sincerest condolences to family and friends.

27 So, Senator Grove, if you'll bring the name of  
28 your adjournment memory to front desk to be properly

1 memorialized. Thank you very much.

2 Senator Majority Leaders, Senator Gonzalez,  
3 you are recognized.

4 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Calling a Democratic caucus  
5 immediately in the Maddie Lounge. Thank you.

6 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Seyarto.

7 SENATOR SEYARTO: We're a Republican caucus in 215.

8 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you.

9 Members, you are to go to your respective  
10 caucuses.

11 Members, we are back in session.

12 Is there any objection to deeming messages  
13 from the Governor as read? Seeing and hearing no  
14 objection, Governor's messages will be deemed read.  
15 There are no assembly messages at the desk at this time.

16 We will move on to reports of committees.

17 Members, is there any objection to deeming as  
18 read the reports on author's amendments from the  
19 Committee on appropriations and amendments adopted?

20 We do have an objection. Secretary, please,  
21 read the report.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Author's amendments Committee  
23 on Appropriations senate chamber, August 18, 2025.

24 Mr. President, the Chair of the Committee on  
25 appropriations to which was referred Assembly Bill 667  
26 reports the same back with author's amendments with the  
27 recommendation amend and refer to the Committee.  
28 Caballero, Chair.

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1 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Strickland, you are  
2 recognized.

3 SENATOR STRICKLAND: I would move to divide the  
4 question on these Committee amendments.

5 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you.

6 Senator Strickland, can you clarify? There's  
7 nothing to divide that we know of. Senator Strickland.

8 SENATOR STRICKLAND: If there's multiple items on  
9 the amendments, I would like to divide the question on  
10 those amendments.

11 MR. PRESIDENT: Okay. Thank you. Give me one  
12 moment for consideration.

13 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Thank you.

14 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Strickland, AB 667 only has  
15 one amendment.

16 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Just making sure that you're  
17 paying attention. So, I will be paying attention and  
18 seeing the amendments as they come forward as well.  
19 Thank you.

20 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you for your honorable  
21 service.

22 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Of course.

23 MR. PRESIDENT: Any further discussion or debate on  
24 these amendments?

25 Seeing none, Secretary, please call the roll.

26 We're working on clarity, Senator --

27 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Got it. Thank you.

28 MR. PRESIDENT: -- Strickland. And we'll be with --

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1 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Can I ask --

2 MR. PRESIDENT: -- you in one moment.

3 SENATOR STRICKLAND: -- a question of the Chair? A  
4 point of clarification? Are the Members going to  
5 receive copies of these amendments as we were going to  
6 vote on these amendments?

7 MR. PRESIDENT: There are -- there are copies of the  
8 amendments available at the desk.

9 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Are they going to be passed out  
10 to each of the Members or --

11 MR. PRESIDENT: You are able to come up and request  
12 a copy at the --

13 SENATOR STRICKLAND: On each one of the amendments  
14 we're doing today?

15 MR. PRESIDENT: That is correct.

16 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Okay. Thank you.

17 MR. PRESIDENT: Yes, sir.

18 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Clarification.

19 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Strickland, you're  
20 recognized.

21 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Are the authors of each one of  
22 these amendments going to present what the amendments  
23 are as we get forward on that -- on each one of these  
24 amendments?

25 MR. PRESIDENT: I will have to get back to you on  
26 that. Give me one minute.

27 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Thank you. Thank you. Thank  
28 you.

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1 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call the roll.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

3 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?

5 Archuleta?

6 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

8 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

10 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?

12 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.

13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?

14 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.

15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?

16 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Caballero?

18 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes? Choi?

20 Cortese?

21 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?

23 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?

25 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?

27 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?

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1 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
3 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
5 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
7 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McNerney?  
9 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
11 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?  
13 Padilla? Perez?  
14 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
16 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
18 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
20 Smallwood-Cuevas?  
21 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.  
22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?  
23 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland? Umberg?  
25 Valladares? Wahab?  
26 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?  
28 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

2 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent  
3 members.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvardao-Gil? Cervantes?

5 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Dahle? Grove?  
7 Jones? Niello? Ochoa Bogh? Padilla? Rubio? Seyarto?  
8 Strickland? Umberg?

9 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Weber  
11 Pierson?

12 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. The amendments  
13 are adopted.

14 Secretary, let's move to the next item on the  
15 report, Committee report.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Author's amendments.  
17 Mr. President, the Chair of the Committee on  
18 Appropriations to which were referred Assembly Bill 62,  
19 561, 586, 740, 863, 1206, 1520, reports the same back  
20 with author's amendments with the recommendation  
21 amendments and refer to the Committee, Caballero, Chair.

22 MR. PRESIDENT: Members, we're going to take each  
23 item up, each bill up individually. Yes? We will take  
24 up each item or bill individually for an individual vote  
25 beginning with item -- or, AB 62.

26 Secretary, is there any debate or discussion  
27 on AB 62? Seeing or --

28 Senator Strickland, you are recognized.

1           SENATOR STRICKLAND: Mr. President, I think it's  
2     important when we talk about these amendments that at  
3     least the author of the amendment can bring forward to  
4     the floor what amendment they're trying to do if they're  
5     floor manager or if it's their bill. I think it's  
6     important for members of this body to know the  
7     amendments especially since we have to go to the desk  
8     and they're not handed out. I think it's important that  
9     for the body that whoever is carrying this amendment  
10    forward at least have a description of the amendment  
11    that they want to get adopted.

12          MR. PRESIDENT: Pro -- Pro Tem Senator McGuire, you  
13    are recognized.

14          SENATOR MCGUIRE: Point of order. I want to  
15    clarify. These aren't author amendments. These are  
16    Committee amendments. There is no author. If you would  
17    have done your homework before playing this shenanigan,  
18    you would have known that. These aren't presented like  
19    author amendments. These are --

20          MR. PRESIDENT: Excuse me.

21          SENATOR MCGUIRE: -- committee amendments. But,  
22    again, I get it. Doing it by the seat of our pants.  
23    And what I would wish is that the Republican party would  
24    spend more time trying to get Donald Trump from stopping  
25    rigging elections than they're doing here tonight.

26          MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator. Point of order.  
27    Or, point of order --

28          SENATOR STRICKLAND: I believe the leader mentioned

1 that I was -- should know this, but, yes. It's a  
2 committee bill, but historic practice of this House is  
3 the committee chair carries the committee bill. So, the  
4 committee chair should therefore present the amendments  
5 on these bills.

6 MR. PRESIDENT: Senators, these are committee  
7 reports that are coming out of author amendments that  
8 were already approved by the committee. We are here --  
9 the -- please state if you have a point of order, the  
10 rule that you are calling into question. Otherwise, we  
11 will do roll call on the amendment, and we will proceed  
12 forward if -- if there is -- if there's -- if there is  
13 no rule that's being called out.

14 No further debate or discussion, Senator  
15 McGuire, you are recognized.

16 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Point of clarification. I want to  
17 state again. These are not author amendments. The Bill  
18 in Chief is not on the floor. What ya'll are wanting to  
19 be able to do is show in a circus about tonight are  
20 amendments that are literally not on the floor, but  
21 going to go back to Committee. The Bill in Chief is not  
22 in front of us tonight. The chair of the elections  
23 Committee or the Appropriations Committee never presents  
24 on these type of amendments. Never. Because these  
25 amendments are made on the floor, traditionally  
26 concurred in and then sent back to Committee. Then when  
27 they're tossed out of Appropriations Committee, then we  
28 have the conversation.

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1           Again, I get it. This is a stunt, but when  
2   you do a stunt, do your homework before you do -- before  
3   you bring it to the floor.

4           MR. PRESIDENT: Members, may I remind you that these  
5   are Committee reports. And we have been asked to split  
6   these reports up into individual actions per each bill  
7   and amendments that apply to each one. And so with  
8   that, the discussion is on the report and the -- and the  
9   amendments that are being proposed go back to Committee  
10   as the pro tem has clarified.

11           Senator Jones, you are recognized.

12           SENATOR JONES: Parliamentary inquiry for further  
13   clarification, please.

14           It is my understanding that these Committee --  
15   these amendments have been adopted by the Committees  
16   which is correct. The House is now taking these  
17   amendments up to be processed by the House. Since the  
18   House has not seen these Committee amendments yet, would  
19   it not be proper for the House to debate these?

20           MR. PRESIDENT: The amendments definitely are  
21   debatable, if that's what you're asking.

22           SENATOR JONES: Yes. That's what I'm asking. So I  
23   just --

24           MR. PRESIDENT: So, amendments are -- amendments are  
25   debatable. And that's why we will go through each one  
26   individually, and you will have your opportunity to  
27   debate the amendments on each bill. Okay?

28           SENATOR JONES: Thank you.

1 MR. PRESIDENT: You're welcome.

2 Pro Tem Senator McGuire?

3 SENATOR MCGUIRE: I want to reiterate to the body.  
4 There are no presentations that are going to happen here  
5 tonight. There are no presentations that are going to  
6 happen by senators tonight. The reason being is the  
7 Bill in Chief is not on the floor.

8 I would ask if you're going to pull a stunt  
9 like this, do your homework first. So what's on the  
10 floor tonight are bills that are being amended. We all  
11 concur on the amendments of the bills and then send the  
12 bills back to Committee. Committee would then process  
13 the amendments. Then if it's the Appropriations  
14 Committee, that bill is sent to the floor.

15 So, I'm just being very clear based off of the  
16 rules that you all know, the Bill in Chief is not  
17 present on this Senate floor tonight. The amendments  
18 that ya'll want to be able to debate in this stunt are  
19 amendments that we concur in and then send the bill back  
20 to Committee.

21 So I just -- I'm going keep reiterating what's  
22 in front of us. There will not be an author because  
23 there is no author because the bill has to go back to  
24 the flipping Appropriations Committee to be approved or  
25 not.

26 And the last thing I'll just say on many of  
27 these amendments, these are cost-saving amendments. I  
28 think that we all want to save taxpayer dollars. The

1 amendments that are on the floor tonight, many of them  
2 coming from the Appropriations Committee which we'll  
3 hear from appropriations chair, save the taxpayer funds.

4 Thank you so much, Mr. President.

5 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you for that clarification,  
6 Pro Tem McGuire.

7 Senator Jones, you are recognized.

8 SENATOR JONES: Thank you, Mr. President.  
9 Additional parliamentary inquiry. If the House doesn't  
10 have possession of the bill, how can we take up  
11 amendments on that bill?

12 MR. PRESIDENT: It is the custom and process of this  
13 House to adopt amendments as we are seeing here and as  
14 long as I've been here in the legislature to do so  
15 through the action of the House through -- through  
16 unanimous consent or author's amendments.

17 SENATOR JONES: The -- one thing I would,  
18 Mr. President, point of personal privilege. Maybe just  
19 admonish the entire membership of this House that we are  
20 debating for the purposes of the State of the  
21 California.

22 I don't appreciate being -- when we are trying  
23 to hold the House accountable to the proper process,  
24 being accused of being a stunt. I think that same thing  
25 could be said about the Governor in this entire process  
26 of what's happening in our state right now. So, let's  
27 move through the proper debate tonight, and -- without  
28 devolving the debate into stunts and other accusations.

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1 MR. PRESIDENT: Seeing no other further discussion  
2 or debate on AB 62, Secretary, please, call roll.

3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

4 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?  
6 Archuleta?

7 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

9 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

11 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?

13 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?

15 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?

17 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?

19 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?

21 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?

23 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?

25 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?

27 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?

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1 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
3 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
5 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
7 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
9 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McNerney?  
11 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
13 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?  
15 Padilla? Perez?  
16 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
18 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
20 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
22 Smallwood-Cuevas?  
23 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.  
24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?  
25 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland? Umberg?  
27 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.  
28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?

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1 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

3 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

5 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please, call absent  
6 members.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil? Choi? Dahle?  
8 Grove? Jones? Niello? Ochoa Bogh? Padilla? Rubio?  
9 Seyarto? Strickland? Valladares? Weber Pierson?

10 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. The amendments  
11 are adopted. And, Members, may I remind you we will be  
12 going through these individually, these items  
13 individually, in which you will have the opportunity to  
14 discuss and debate the amendments that are being offered  
15 up. We will move to AB 586.

16 Secretary --

17 561. My apologies. AB 561.

18 Secretary, please, read.

19 Oh. Is there any debate or discussion on  
20 AB 561? The amendments only to 561. Seeing no debate  
21 or discussion, Secretary, please call the roll.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

23 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?  
25 Archuleta?

26 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

28 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?  
2 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?  
4 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?  
6 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?  
8 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
10 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
12 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?  
14 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?  
16 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
18 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
20 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
22 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
24 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
26 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
28 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McNerney?  
2 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
4 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?  
6 Padilla? Perez?  
7 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
9 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
11 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
13 Smallwood-Cuevas?  
14 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?  
16 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland? Umberg?  
18 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?  
20 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?  
22 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.  
24 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent  
25 members.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil? Choi? Dahle?  
27 Grove? Jones? Niello? Ochoa Bogh? Padilla? Rubio?  
28 Seyarto? Strickland? Valladares? Weber Pierson?

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1 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. Amendments are  
2 adopted. Next item, AB 586.

3 Members, any discussion or debate on AB 58- --  
4 on the amendments on 586? Any discussion or debate on  
5 the amendments of AB 586? Seeing no discussion or  
6 debate, Secretary, please call roll.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

8 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?  
10 Archuleta?

11 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

13 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

15 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?

17 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?

19 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon? Caballero?

21 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?

23 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?

25 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?

27 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?

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1 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
3 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
5 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
7 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
9 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
11 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McNerney?  
13 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
15 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?  
17 Padilla? Perez?  
18 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
20 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
22 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
24 Smallwood-Cuevas?  
25 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?  
27 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland? Umberg?

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1 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?

3 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

5 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

7 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent

8 members.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvardao-Gil? Cabaldon?

10 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Dahle? Grove?

12 Jones? Niello? Ochoa Bogh? Padilla? Rubio? Seyarto?

13 Strickland? Valladares? Weber Pierson?

14 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. Amendments are

15 adopted.

16 AB 740 on amendments. Any discussion or

17 debate from members? Any discussion or debate Item 740?

18 Seeing no discussion or debate, Secretary, please call

19 roll.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

21 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?

23 Archuleta?

24 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

26 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

28 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?  
2 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?  
4 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?  
6 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
8 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
10 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?  
12 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?  
14 Gonzalez?  
15 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
17 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
19 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
21 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
23 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
25 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McNerney?  
27 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?

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1 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?

3 Padilla? Perez?

4 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.

5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?

6 SENATOR REYES: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?

8 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?

10 Smallwood-Cuevas?

11 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?

13 SENATOR STERN: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland? Umberg?

15 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?

17 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

19 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

21 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Durazo, aye.

23 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent

24 members.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil? Choi? Dahle?

26 Grove? Jones? Niello? Ochoa Bogh? Padilla? Rubio?

27 Seyarto? Strickland? Valladares? Weber Pierson?

28 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. Amendments are

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1 adopted.

2 Moving to the next item, AB 863 on amendments,  
3 discussion or debate.

4 Members, any discussion or debate on the  
5 amendments? Seeing none, Members, is there any  
6 objection to using previous roll call on this item? We  
7 do have an objection.

8 Secretary, please call the roll.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

10 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?  
12 Archuleta?

13 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

15 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

17 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?

19 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?

21 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?

23 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?

25 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?

27 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?

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1 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?  
3 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
5 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
7 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
9 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
11 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
13 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
15 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McNerney?  
17 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
19 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?  
21 Padilla? Perez?  
22 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
24 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
26 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
28 Smallwood-Cuevas?

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1 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?

3 SENATOR STERN: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland? Umberg?

5 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?

7 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

9 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

11 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent  
12 members.

13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil? Choi? Dahle?  
14 Grove? Jones? Niello? Ochoa Bogh? Padilla? Rubio?  
15 Seyarto? Strickland? Valladares? Weber Pierson?

16 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. Amendments are  
17 adopted. Moving to the next item AB 1206 on amendments  
18 only. Any discussion or debate from any member? Any  
19 discussion or debate from any member on item Bill AB  
20 1206.

21 Members, is there an objection to move -- or  
22 to be able to use previous roll call on this particular  
23 bill? Again, we have objection.

24 Secretary, please call roll.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

26 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?  
28 Archuleta?

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1 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?  
3 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?  
5 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?  
7 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?  
9 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?  
11 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
13 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
15 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?  
17 Cortese?  
18 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?  
20 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
22 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
24 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
26 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
28 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
2 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
4 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McNerney?  
6 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
8 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?  
10 Padilla? Perez?  
11 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
13 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
15 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
17 Smallwood-Cuevas?  
18 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?  
20 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland? Umberg?  
22 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?  
24 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?  
26 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.  
28 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent

1 members.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil? Choi? Dahle?  
3 Grove? Jones? Niello? Ochoa Bogh? Padilla? Rubio?  
4 Seyarto? Strickland? Valladares? Weber Pierson?

5 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. The amendments  
6 are adopted. Moving to the next item AB 1520 on  
7 amendments only.

8 Is there any discussion or debate? Members,  
9 any discussion or debate AB 1520 on amendments only.  
10 Seeing none, is there any objection to moving previous  
11 roll call? There is an objection.

12 Secretary, please call roll.

13 Secretary, please call roll.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

15 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?  
17 Archuleta?

18 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

20 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

22 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?

24 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?

26 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.

27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?

28 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
2 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
4 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?  
6 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?  
8 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
10 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
12 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
14 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
16 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
18 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
20 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McNerney?  
22 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
24 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?  
26 Padilla? Perez?  
27 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?

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1 SENATOR REYES: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?

3 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?

5 Smallwood-Cuevas?

6 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?

8 SENATOR STERN: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland? Umberg?

10 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?

12 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

14 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

16 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent

17 members.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil? Choi? Dahle?

19 Grove? Jones? Niello? Ochoa Bogh? Padilla? Rubio?

20 Seyarto? Strickland? Valladares? Weber Pierson?

21 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. Amendments are

22 adopted.

23 Secretary, please read the next Committee

24 report.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Author's amendments, Senate

26 Chamber, August 18, 2025. Mr. President, the Chair of

27 the Committee on Appropriations to which was referred AB

28 524 reports the same back with author's amendments with

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1 the recommendations amend and refer to the Committee.  
2 Caballero, chair.

3 MR. PRESIDENT: On AB 524 on amendments only, any  
4 discussion or debate from members? Any discussion or  
5 debate? Seeing no discussion or debate on AB 524,  
6 Secretary, please call the roll.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

8 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?  
10 Archuleta?

11 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

13 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

15 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?

17 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?

19 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?

21 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?

23 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?

25 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?

27 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?

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1 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
3 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
5 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
7 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
9 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
11 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
13 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McNerney?  
15 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
17 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?  
19 Padilla? Perez?  
20 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
22 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
24 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
26 Smallwood-Cuevas?  
27 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.  
28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?

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1 SENATOR STERN: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland? Umberg?

3 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?

5 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

7 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

9 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent  
10 members.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil? Choi? Dahle?  
12 Grove? Jones? Niello? Ochoa Bogh? Padilla? Rubio?  
13 Seyarto? Strickland? Valladares? Weber Pierson?

14 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. Amendments are  
15 adopted.

16 Secretary, please read the next Committee  
17 report from appropriations.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Author's amendments. Senate  
19 Chamber, August 18, 2025. Mr. President, the Chair of  
20 Committee on Appropriations to which was referred,  
21 Assembly Bill 747 reports the same back with author's  
22 amendments with the recommendation amend and refer to  
23 the Committee, Caballero, Chair.

24 MR. PRESIDENT: Members, on amendments only AB 747,  
25 is there a discussion or debate? Discussion or debate  
26 for members AB 747? Seeing no discussion or debate,  
27 Secretary, please call the roll.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

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1 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?  
3 Archuleta?  
4 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?  
6 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?  
8 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?  
10 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?  
12 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?  
14 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
16 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
18 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?  
20 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?  
22 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
24 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
26 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
28 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
2 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
4 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
6 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McNerney?  
8 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
10 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?  
12 Padilla? Perez?  
13 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
15 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
17 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
19 Smallwood-Cuevas?  
20 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?  
22 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland? Umberg?  
24 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?  
26 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?  
28 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

2 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent  
3 members.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil? Choi? Dahle?  
5 Grove? Jones? Niello? Ochoa Bogh? Padilla? Rubio?  
6 Seyarto? Strickland? Valladares? Weber Pierson?

7 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. Amendments are  
8 adopted.

9 Secretary, please read the next report from  
10 Committee on Appropriations.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Author's Amendment Senate  
12 Chamber, August 18, 2025. Mr. President, the Chair of  
13 the Committee on Appropriations to which were referred  
14 Assembly Bill 36, 246, 899, reports the same back with  
15 author's amendments with the recommendation amend and  
16 referred to the committee. Caballero, Chair.

17 MR. PRESIDENT: Members, this is discussion or  
18 debates on amendments only for AB 36. AB 36.  
19 Discussion on amendments only. AB 36. Seeing no  
20 discussion or debate, Secretary, please call roll.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

22 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?  
24 Archuleta?

25 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

27 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

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1 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?  
3 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?  
5 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?  
7 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
9 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
11 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?  
13 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?  
15 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
17 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
19 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
21 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
23 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
25 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
27 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McNerney?

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1 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?

3 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?

5 Padilla? Perez?

6 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?

8 SENATOR REYES: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?

10 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?

12 Smallwood-Cuevas?

13 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?

15 SENATOR STERN: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland? Umberg?

17 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?

19 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

21 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

23 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please, call absent

24 members.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil? Choi? Dahle?

26 Grove? Jones? Niello? Ochoa Bogh? Padilla? Rubio?

27 Seyarto? Strickland? Valladares? Weber Pierson?

28 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. Amendments are

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1 adopted.

2 Moving to AB 246, discussion or debate.

3 Members, discussion or debate on amendments only.

4 Seeing no discussion or debate, is there objection to  
5 moving previous roll call? We do have an objection.

6 Secretary, please call the roll on AB 246  
7 amendments.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

9 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?  
11 Archuleta?

12 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

14 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

16 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?

18 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?

20 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?

22 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?

24 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?

26 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.

27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?

28 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?  
2 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
4 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
6 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
8 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
10 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
12 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
14 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McNerney?  
16 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
18 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?  
20 Padilla? Perez?  
21 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
23 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
25 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
27 Smallwood-Cuevas?  
28 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?

2 SENATOR STERN: Aye.

3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland? Umberg?

4 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.

5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?

6 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

8 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

10 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please, call absent  
11 members.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil? Choi? Dahle?  
13 Grove? Jones? Niello? Ochoa Bogh? Padilla? Rubio?  
14 Seyarto? Strickland? Valladares? Weber Pierson?

15 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. Amendments are  
16 adopted.

17 Moving to AB 899. Any discussion or debate on  
18 amendments for AB 899? Discussion or debate? Seeing no  
19 discussion or debate, is there an objection to using  
20 previous roll call? We do have an objection.

21 Secretary, please call the roll.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

23 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?  
25 Archuleta?

26 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

28 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?  
2 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?  
4 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?  
6 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?  
8 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
10 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
12 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?  
14 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?  
16 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
18 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
20 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
22 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
24 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
26 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
28 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McNerney?  
2 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
4 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?  
6 Padilla? Perez?  
7 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
9 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
11 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
13 Smallwood-Cuevas?  
14 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?  
16 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland? Umberg?  
18 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?  
20 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?  
22 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.  
24 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent  
25 members.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil? Choi? Dahle?  
27 Grove? Jones? Niello? Ochoa Bogh? Padilla? Rubio?  
28 Seyarto? Strickland? Valladares? Weber Pierson?

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1 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. Amendments are  
2 adopted.

3 Secretary, please read the next report from  
4 Committee on Appropriations.

5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Author's amendments Senate  
6 Chamber, August 18, 2025. Mr. President, the Chair of  
7 the Committee on Appropriations to which was Referred  
8 Assembly Bill 593 reports the same back with author's  
9 amendments with the recommendation amend and refer to  
10 the Committee, Caballero, Chair.

11 MR. PRESIDENT: Members, any discussion or debate on  
12 the amendments of AB 593? Amendments only on AB 593?  
13 Members, seeing no discussion or debate, Secretary,  
14 please call the roll on AB 593 amendments.

15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

16 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?  
18 Archuleta?

19 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

21 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

23 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?

25 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?

27 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?

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1 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
3 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
5 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?  
7 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle? Durazo?  
9 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez? Grayson?  
11 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
13 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?  
15 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon? McGuire?  
17 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McNerney?  
19 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
21 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Ochoa Bogh?  
23 Padilla? Perez?  
24 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
26 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
28 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
2 Smallwood-Cuevas?

3 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern? Strickland?  
5 Umberg?

6 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?

8 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

10 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

12 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent  
13 members.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil? Choi? Dahle?  
15 Gonzalez?

16 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Jones? Limon?

18 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello? Stern?

20 SENATOR STERN: Aye.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Stern, aye. Ochoa Bogh?  
22 Padilla? Rubio? Seyarto? Strickland? Valladares?  
23 Weber Pierson?

24 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 0. Amendments are  
25 adopted.

26 Members, please give us just one minute to  
27 prepare for the next item.

28 Members, in five minutes, we will be serving

1 pizza to the members. A welcome back dinner to wrap up  
2 the last few weeks of the session. Five minutes. We  
3 will continue to vote. We will continue to do business.  
4 In Room 215, you can go pick up your slice of pizza from  
5 your favorite place.

6 Okay. All right. Members, is there any  
7 objection to deeming as read the report on author's  
8 amendments from the Committee on Elections and  
9 Constitutional Amendments and amendments adopted?  
10 Seeing there is objection, Secretary, please read the  
11 report from Committee on Elections and Constitutional  
12 Amendments.

13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Author's amendments Committee  
14 Elections and Constitutional amendments, Senate Chamber,  
15 August 18, 2025. Mr. President, the Chair of the  
16 Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments to  
17 which was Referred Assembly Bill 604 reports the same  
18 back with author's amendments with the recommendation  
19 amend and re-refer and refer to the Committee.

20 MR. PRESIDENT: Members, may I -- members, may I  
21 remind you that we will be discussing the amendments on  
22 Item AB 604. The discussion will be limited to  
23 amendments only on Item AB 604. Any discussion or  
24 debate?

25 Senator Strickland, you are recognized.

26 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A point  
27 of order. The amendments are not germane pursuant to  
28 Rule 38.5. And I'm asking for the germaneness of this

1 amendment.

2 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator, please hold just for a  
3 minute. I will get you a clear answer.

4 Senator Strickland, the answer that I have for  
5 you is that pursuant to Senate Rule 38.5, President Pro  
6 Tem has determined amendments are germane so your point  
7 of order is not well taken.

8 Senator Strickland, you are recognized. Hang  
9 on one second. Let's get you --

10 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Test. Test. I move to appeal  
11 the decision of the presiding officer of the floor.

12 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Strickland puts the question  
13 to the body. Shall we uphold the ruling of the  
14 presiding officer?

15 SENATOR STRICKLAND: And I believe I have the  
16 ability to speak on that? Or, no?

17 MR. PRESIDENT: You are limited to the appeal  
18 itself. The debate is limited to your appeal of my  
19 ruling.

20 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Okay. So this bill went from a  
21 majority vote to a two-thirds vote. It went from a  
22 residency confirmation, three-page bill, to a  
23 redistricting 338-page bill that is not even in print  
24 for the members. And, therefore, I'm appealing the  
25 ruling of the Chair and the presiding officer. Thank  
26 you.

27 MR. PRESIDENT: Members, any further discussion or  
28 debate on the appeal of the presiding officer's

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1 decision? Seeing no further discussion or debate,  
2 Secretary, please call the roll to uphold my decision.  
3 So Majority Leader is asking for an aye vote, and  
4 Senator Strickland is asking for a thumbs down. No  
5 vote.

6 Senators, this is to uphold the ruling of the  
7 presiding officer. So, Majority Leader is asking for an  
8 aye vote. Senator Strickland is asking for a no vote.

9 Secretary, please, call the roll.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

11 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?

13 Alvarado-Gil?

14 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: No.

15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Archuleta?

16 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ash- -- Arreguin?

18 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

20 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?

22 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?

24 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?

26 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.

27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?

28 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
2 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi?  
4 SENATOR CHOI: No.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Cortese?  
6 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle?  
8 SENATOR DAHLE: No.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Durazo?  
10 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
12 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
14 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove? Hurtado?  
16 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones?  
18 SENATOR JONES: No.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Laird?  
20 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
22 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McGuire?  
24 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McNerney?  
26 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
28 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello?  
2 SENATOR NIELLO: No.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Ochoa Bogh?  
4 SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: No.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Padilla? Perez?  
6 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
8 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
10 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
12 SENATOR SEYARTO: No.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Smallwood-Cuevas?  
14 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?  
16 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland?  
18 SENATOR STRICKLAND: No.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Umberg?  
20 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares?  
22 SENATOR VALLADARES: No.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Wahab?  
24 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?  
26 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.  
28 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent

1 members.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Grove, no. Padilla. Rubio.  
3 Weber Pierson.

4 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Nos, 10. The decision of  
5 the chair is upheld.

6 Senator Strickland, you are recognized. What  
7 purpose?

8 SENATOR STRICKLAND: For the amendments. A  
9 parliamentary inquiry. I would like to know how did  
10 this bill get amended this morning without us being in  
11 session during that time?

12 MR. PRESIDENT: One moment, Senator Strickland, and  
13 we will get an answer to you promptly.

14 In the meantime, Senator Pro Tem Mike McGuire,  
15 you are recognized.

16 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Thank you very much,  
17 Mr. President. I think it's really important to make  
18 the distinction the bill was published, not amended.  
19 That is why we're here tonight to be able to move  
20 forward on the amendments.

21 Again, it was published, not formally amended  
22 which is why we're here to take action this evening.

23 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you for that clarification,  
24 Senator McGuire.

25 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Yeah. Presiding officer --

26 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Strickland, you are  
27 recognized.

28 SENATOR STRICKLAND: This is the bill that we have,

1 and there's no -- it was a previous bill, and it's all  
2 stricken out. And, again, how do you amend a bill when  
3 right now it has no language. It's all stricken out  
4 that you handed out to everybody. And how do you amend  
5 a bill when we're not in session? I don't believe you  
6 can by the rules of this House.

7 MR. PRESIDENT: So, Senator Strickland, it's my  
8 understanding that the bill as was stated by the pro tem  
9 was published, but we have not adopted amendments. And  
10 that's what we are doing here this evening is adopting  
11 the amendments to the bill.

12 SENATOR STRICKLAND: But what you have here that's  
13 in legislative information that you have online, it says  
14 it's already been amended. And right here it says the  
15 Senate amended it August 18th, 2025. If it's already  
16 been amended, why are we voting on something that you  
17 think has been already amended?

18 MR. PRESIDENT: The amendments have not been  
19 adopted. They have been published online, but not  
20 adopted. That's the official business of the  
21 Legislature, the Senate, in order to be transparent.  
22 And so the whole goal and purpose is to exercise  
23 transparency before the people and the body which is why  
24 we're here tonight to do the business of amending the  
25 bill. And before I recognize you again, back and forth,  
26 I'd like to go to the Senate Pro Tem McGuire.

27 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Thank you so much, Mr. President.  
28 Yes. Once again, the bill is being presented to this

1 body. August 18 is absolutely right. That is today,  
2 Monday, August 18, our first day back. The amendments  
3 are in front of us. We are now looking to the body to  
4 take action on that presented bill. That's where we're  
5 at. The bill was presented. And that's what we're  
6 going to need to do tonight is take action on that  
7 presented bill.

8 MR. PRESIDENT: Any further discussion or debate  
9 Senator Strickland, you are recognized.

10 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Has this been time and date  
11 stamped already?

12 MR. PRESIDENT: Yes, it has. And if I may clarify  
13 to all Members. There is precedent. This is something  
14 that -- that precedence has put in place. So, it has  
15 been done.

16 Seeing no further discussion or -- we do  
17 have ...

18 Senator Alvarado-Gil, for what purpose do you  
19 rise?

20 SENATOR ALVARDAO: Point of order, Mr. President.

21 MR. PRESIDENT: State the point of order, please.

22 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: The urgency clause on this  
23 vote is not necessary because there's no immediate  
24 threat to public peace, health or safety as required by  
25 Article 4, Section 8D.

26 MR. PRESIDENT: This is -- this is an amendment.  
27 That's part of the amendment. This is not a point of  
28 order. So, if you like to discuss the urgency clause as

1 part of the debate on the amendment, then we can open  
2 that up for that. Basically, it's not a point of order  
3 item.

4 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: I retract until it's proper  
5 time.

6 MR. PRESIDENT: We are in discussion and debate  
7 right now.

8 Any other further discussion or debate on the  
9 bill? Or on the amendment shall I say. My apologies.  
10 Any discussion or debate on the amendments?

11 Senator Jones, you are recognized.

12 SENATOR JONES: Thank you. Just a quick point of  
13 order because I think you inadvertently went back and  
14 forth there.

15 So, you ruled Senator Alvarado-Gil's point of  
16 order out of order, but then said we are in debate so  
17 I'm just trying to clarify. Can she now debate her --

18 MR. PRESIDENT: She can debate her point, Senator  
19 Jones, but it's not a point of order. The point was  
20 that this is not a point of order.

21 SENATOR JONES: Okay. Then I would ask the  
22 presiding officer to defer to Senator Alvarado-Gil for  
23 her comments.

24 MR. PRESIDENT: Which is exactly what I did when I  
25 opened it back up for debate and discussion. And now  
26 the microphone is raised.

27 Senator Alvarado-Gil, you may proceed.

28 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Thank you, Mr. President. I

1 know this is an unprecedented floor discussion that  
2 we're having so thank you for your patience and for your  
3 instruction.

4 I would like to debate the urgency, the  
5 necessity of the urgency on the amendment because there  
6 is no immediate threat to public safety, health or  
7 safety as required by Article 4, Section 8D.

8 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you for your comments.

9 Anyone else would like to discuss or debate?

10 Senator Strickland, you are recognized.

11 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Thank you, Madam President.

12 Members, we're in an extraordinary time here  
13 as was mentioned. Urgency by the very definition of  
14 what we have a two-thirds vote on, this amendment has no  
15 immediate threat to public peace, health or safety as  
16 required by Article 4, Section 8D of our Constitution.

17 And then on top of that, it seems interesting  
18 that we're going through this incredibly fast to throw  
19 out a non-partisan citizen's redistricting Commission  
20 that has full transparency in front of the people of  
21 California as a non-partisan citizen's Commission, does  
22 that in public over hundreds of meetings throughout the  
23 State of California. And the goal of this legislature  
24 is take that model that should be the model for the rest  
25 of the nation to have a citizen's Commission draw  
26 district lines, and now we're jamming this through  
27 without public debate for the most part. And you don't  
28 even have the language -- you're rushing it so far that

1 you don't even have the language for the Members to read  
2 what you're actually voting on in terms of the Members  
3 and in terms of this body.

4 Members, again, this is a bill that was a  
5 non-controversial bill that was a majority vote bill --

6 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator --

7 SENATOR STRICKLAND: -- that had residency --

8 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator --

9 SENATOR STRICKLAND: -- confirmation --

10 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Strickland --

11 SENATOR STRICKLAND: -- three-page bill that now is  
12 a 338-page bill --

13 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Strickland, may I remind you  
14 that we are discussing the amendments. The bill will be  
15 heard. It's -- the whole purpose of this for  
16 transparency to be heard in Committee, and then the bill  
17 will come back to the floor for to you talk about.

18 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Okay. So, the amendment is a  
19 338-page page bill from a three-page bill. The  
20 amendment goes from a residence -- a residency  
21 confirmation into a total redistricting for the entire  
22 State of California and disenfranchise Democrats,  
23 independents and Republicans throughout the state. And  
24 then on top of that, we go from a majority vote in this  
25 amendment and it takes it to a two-thirds.

26 And, again, to reiterate, in order to do that,  
27 according to Article 4, Section 8D, you need to have a  
28 nec- -- the only way it can go is it has to be

1 necessary, that the -- right now, it has no immediate  
2 threat to public peace, health or safety as required by  
3 Article 5, Section 8D.

4 So, we're violating currently adopting this  
5 amendment Article 4, Section 8D. And for those reasons,  
6 I ask for a no vote on these amendments.

7 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator.

8 Senator Cervantes, you are recognized.

9 SENATOR CERVANTES: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
10 just want to speak to the urgency here. This is an  
11 urgency because of what Texas is doing. California must  
12 be prepared. We do not ask for this fight, and we did  
13 not start this fight.

14 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Cervantes, one moment.  
15 Point of order --

16 SENATOR STRICKLAND: There is nothing mentioned in  
17 any other state in this amendment, and I would encourage  
18 the author to not talk about anything that -- other than  
19 the amendments that are before this body.

20 MR. PRESIDENT: Point of order taken.

21 Majority Leader, point of order?

22 SENATOR GONZALEZ: He asked about urgency, and she's  
23 explaining the urgency right now. So, I would just  
24 defer to urgency --

25 MR. PRESIDENT: Hang on. We will keep order in the  
26 House. So, have your mic raised and I will call you.

27 Thank you, Majority Leader Gonzalez.

28 I would ask that Senator Cervantes, you keep

1 your comments to the amendments and what was stated  
2 about the amendments as far as the urgency and because  
3 the urgency is a part of the amendments. Please, keep  
4 your comments to the urgency and the reason.

5 SENATOR CERVANTES: Again, it was asked about why  
6 the urgency. The urgency is about disenfranchising  
7 voters and we need to respond. California has a duty to  
8 stand up and fight back. That is what is before us  
9 today.

10 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Cervantes.

11 Senator Valladares, you are recognized.

12 MS. VALLADARES: Mr. Chair.

13 So, Colleagues, we're here today to debate  
14 amendments that are going to re-write California's  
15 congressional maps. Let's be very clear here though.  
16 These amendments don't come from voters. They don't  
17 come from our communities. They come from party  
18 operatives drafted behind closed doors by elitists,  
19 politicians and their consultants, Sacramento insiders.

20 For years, Californians have demanded fairness  
21 and transparency. And that's why voters created the  
22 Citizens Redistricting Commission --

23 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Valladares, one moment.  
24 Point of order, Senator Gonzalez.

25 SENATOR GONZALEZ: I would ask that my colleague  
26 stick to the amendment.

27 SENATOR VALLADARES: These -- these points are in  
28 the amendments.

1 MR. PRESIDENT: Hang on. You will through the  
2 chair, please.

3 SENATOR VALLADARES: Through the chair.

4 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you. The request is for you  
5 to stick to the amendments, Senator Valladares. Would  
6 you be so kind as to keep your comments to the  
7 amendments?

8 SENATOR VALLADARES: Absolutely. In the amendments,  
9 in the 302-page amendments being offered, we are  
10 offering maps -- the voters voted for the Independent  
11 Redistricting Commission. They voted for this to stop  
12 politicians from drawing maps that protect themselves  
13 and their buddies.

14 So, why now are we being asked to undo a voter  
15 mandate? Who benefits from this? From these maps?  
16 From politicians that are taking their pens to the back  
17 rooms doing this. The amendments were drawn in --

18 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator, point of order. Senator  
19 Gonzalez.

20 SENATOR GONZALEZ: I would ask that she stick to the  
21 amendments if she's talking about -- if my colleague is  
22 talking about politicians, that has nothing to do with  
23 the amendments as it stands.

24 MR. PRESIDENT: Point well taken.

25 Senator Valladares?

26 SENATOR VALLADARES: The amendments are allowing  
27 politicians to draw congressional lines. That speaks to  
28 the amendments. The maps themselves -- in the maps

1 themselves, 116 counties are split. 145 cities are  
2 split. More than the current independent maps.  
3 Communities like the AAPI community population, eastern  
4 LA county are divided and diminished. A new  
5 congressional district in Los Angeles, while the inland  
6 empire, which is -- actually grew loses representation.  
7 One district stretches 400 -- these are --

8 MR. PRESIDENT: We have another point of orders,  
9 Senator Valladares. One moment.

10 Senator Gonzalez, please state your point of  
11 order.

12 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Again, I will ask that we stick  
13 to the amendments. There's nothing in the amendments  
14 that states anything about cities or counties being  
15 divided. This is not the Bill in Chief. We are talking  
16 about the amendments.

17 SENATOR VALLADARES: I'd like to --

18 MR. PRESIDENT: Please, go ahead.

19 SENATOR VALLADARES: I'd like to understand what --

20 MR. PRESIDENT: -- address -- point well taken.

21 Stick with exactly what's in the amendments.

22 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Parliamentary inquiry?

23 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Strickland, you are  
24 recognized for parliamentary.

25 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Is not the amendment the Bill  
26 in Chief? And, therefore, that amendment allows us to  
27 debate what's before us and what's before us, I believe,  
28 the Senator is addressing.

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1 MR. PRESIDENT: The bill -- the --

2 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Amendments.

3 MR. PRESIDENT: -- amendments are not the Bill in  
4 Chief. The Bill in Chief is being amended --

5 SENATOR STRICKLAND: No. The contents --

6 MR. PRESIDENT: -- what we are discussing.

7 SENATOR STRICKLAND: The amendment is the content of  
8 which the Senator is speaking to the content of the  
9 amendment that's before this body.

10 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Strickland.

11 Senator Valladares, if you may continue with  
12 your comments limited to the amendments that we have  
13 before us.

14 SENATOR VALLADARES: Again, these amendments have  
15 offered up maps. These are the facts about the maps in  
16 the amendment. One district stretches 430 miles, bigger  
17 than some states. Does that sound like maps designed to  
18 respect communities or maps designated to protect  
19 careers? I think the latter. And let's not forget  
20 about the cost. \$200 million. I'm going go back to the  
21 amendments, but this is a --

22 MR. PRESIDENT: Please, stay on the amendments.

23 SENATOR VALLADARES: Yes.

24 MR. PRESIDENT: Don't go back. Stay on.

25 SENATOR VALLADARES: This is a -- this is -- let's  
26 just be real here though. This is a political power  
27 grab. It's a sham. It's a shame --

28 MR. PRESIDENT: Stay with the amendments.

1 SENATOR VALLADARES: The amendments are a political  
2 power grab.

3 Finally, I have to ask. Is this -- if this  
4 process is so transparent, why are these maps being  
5 forced on voters as a binary take it or leave it choice?  
6 Long after any changes can be made --

7 MR. PRESIDENT: On the amendments. Senator --

8 SENATOR VALLADARES: It's what the amendments do.  
9 That's not democracy. That's gaslighting.

10 I strongly oppose adopting these amendments.

11 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Pro Tem McGuire, you are  
12 recognized.

13 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Thank you so much, Mr. President.  
14 On the issue, I'm all for disagreement. If we want to  
15 be flexible and not talk about the amendments in front  
16 of us, it's going to have to work both ways.

17 So, here's the choice that this body has right  
18 now. We are either going to speak to the amendments at  
19 hand or we'll open it up to give political speeches. It  
20 will work both ways. We need to speak to the amendments  
21 at hand.

22 I respectfully request all of us, no matter  
23 your party affiliation, focus on the amendments. If  
24 ya'll want to have this debate, we're going to have  
25 plenty of time on Thursday to be able to do that. But I  
26 would respectfully request per the rules of this House,  
27 stick to the amendments in front of us, and that's pause  
28 on political speeches. Plenty of time to be able to do

1 that as the week carries on into Thursday and  
2 committees.

3 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Pro Tem McGuire.

4 Senator Ochoa Bogh, you are recognized.

5 SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: Thank you, Mr. President.

6 Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senate, so, with  
7 regards to the amendments and with regard to this  
8 particular bill, it is our understanding -- or, my  
9 understanding that it was drafted without constitutional  
10 safeguards intended to promote fair representative  
11 district maps. This mid-cycle redistricting plan in  
12 California based on what is being presented with this --  
13 with this bill undermines the state's constitution by  
14 seeking a voter-approved amendment that would  
15 temporarily waive key provisions of Article 11 allowing  
16 politicians to redraw lines for partisan gain rather  
17 than adhering to establish democratic principals.

18 The plan ignores Article 11, Section 1 mandate  
19 that redistricting occur only in the year following the  
20 year in which the national census is taken under the  
21 direction of congress at the beginning of each decade.  
22 By pushing for changes in mid-decade outside of the post  
23 census windows, the proposal disrupts the decennial  
24 rhythm designed to ensure districts reflect accurate  
25 updated population data opening the door to arbitrary  
26 manipulations.

27 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator, I want to just make sure  
28 you're staying with the actual amendments that are

1 before us. 604.

2 SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: Okay. Okay. So, which part  
3 would that not -- which part would you say that this  
4 does not, what I've stated, include into the amendments  
5 or refer to the amendments?

6 MR. PRESIDENT: So, it's --

7 SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: For clarification purposes,  
8 sir.

9 MR. PRESIDENT: It seems like -- it appears like you  
10 were speaking on a bill that's actually in the other  
11 House at this very moment. And so just if you can  
12 clarify in your comments that is referenced to the  
13 actual amendments that we are debating here.

14 SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: So, it is my understanding that  
15 this bill, AB 604, replaces for the next three election  
16 cycles, 26, 28 and 30, as long as the voters approve  
17 AC88, the existing congressional district map  
18 established in 2021 by the non-partisan California  
19 Citizen's Redistricting Commission. Is that correct?

20 MR. PRESIDENT: You may proceed. Go ahead.

21 SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: So, I am correct?

22 MR. PRESIDENT: No, I didn't say that. I'm just --  
23 I'm waiting for an answer here right now because I had  
24 the amendments right before me as well, but I'm -- it  
25 just appears like you were speaking on another bill.  
26 So, I was asking for you to clarify and make sure you  
27 align with the comments -- your comments with what we're  
28 talking about as far as amendments.

1 SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: And it is my understanding,  
2 Mr. President, with the utmost respect, that this is  
3 part of the analysis that I have before me.

4 Second, it weighs the rigorous criteria  
5 outlined -- sorry.

6 The plan flouts Article 11, Section 2E's  
7 explicit prohibition against partisan gerrymandering  
8 which states that the district shall not be drawn to  
9 favor or discriminate against an incumbent, political  
10 candidate or political party.

11 I believe those are my comments for now, sir.

12 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you for your comments.

13 Senator Alvarado-Gil, you are recognized.

14 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Thank you, Mr. President. I  
15 would like to speak on the matter of urgency, the  
16 urgency clause. I now have the amendment in front of  
17 me. And speaking to the urgency clause, it does say in  
18 order that -- that the urgency clause is asked -- is  
19 necessary, sorry, in order that congressional  
20 redistricting plans may be implemented as soon as  
21 possible and to ensure the rights of all Californians to  
22 equal protections of the law.

23 So, I would argue that currently all  
24 Californians have equal protections of the law, and it  
25 is unnecessary to have these amendments to add to the  
26 urgency that is being requested. So, the amendments  
27 speak to urgency, but talk about equal protection under  
28 the law.

1 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you.

2 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Opportunity to ask a question  
3 of the author?

4 MR. PRESIDENT: Will the author take the question?  
5 There is no author.

6 Will the Chair of elections be so kind as to  
7 take the question?

8 SENATOR CERVANTES: Repeat the question.

9 MR. PRESIDENT: You may ask the question.

10 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Yes. Permission to ask the  
11 question. Please identify which Californians are  
12 being -- let me ask again. Excuse me.

13 Which equal protections of laws are being  
14 violated currently for all Californians that the urgency  
15 is necessary?

16 SENATOR CERVANTES: I will state that this bill will  
17 only take effect if other states engage in mid-decade  
18 partisan gerrymandering of their House seats.

19 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you --

20 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: I'm speaking to the urgency.  
21 My question was to the urgency only of this amendment.

22 In the letter of this amendment, it says that  
23 this is necessary to ensure the rights of all  
24 Californians to equal protection of the law.

25 So, my question is, which equal protection --  
26 which laws of equal protection are currently being  
27 violated for all Californians?

28 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you for that question.

1 And, Senator Cervantes, are you satisfied with  
2 your answer? Senator Cervantes, are you satisfied with  
3 your answer as Chair?

4 SENATOR CERVANTES: The urgency continues to remain.  
5 The dismantling of our democracy piece by piece and the  
6 cuts to healthcare, the cuts to SNAP, the cuts for  
7 vulnerable services --

8 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Point of order of not in the  
9 amendments.

10 MR. PRESIDENT: Okay. Thank you for your answer,  
11 Senator -- Senator Cervantes, thank you for your answer.

12 And, please, speak through the presiding  
13 officer --

14 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Yes.

15 MR. PRESIDENT: -- Senator Alvarado-Gil. She has  
16 answered your question. You don't have to like it. She  
17 has answered your question.

18 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Good point. Good point  
19 there, Mr. President. Thank you so much for the  
20 opportunity.

21 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you. Any other further -- we  
22 do -- Senator Cabaldon, you are recognized.

23 SENATOR CABALDON: Thank you, Mr. President.

24 Let me speak first to the urgency clause  
25 itself and to the continuing enduring hypocrisy that  
26 we're seeing on this floor about whether -- about  
27 everything that we're seeing on this floor this evening.  
28 SB -- let's see. SB 380 by the Republican leader on

1 this floor includes an urgency clause. And that bill  
2 requires that a study be turned in by January of 2027.  
3 There's no imminent threat to life or safety or health  
4 or anything else. SB 385, the Senator from Rancho  
5 Murrieta, deletes a report. I'm speaking to the urgency  
6 clause specifically --

7 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Cabaldon, we have a point of  
8 order.

9 Senator Jones, would you state your point of  
10 order, please.

11 SENATOR JONES: Thank you, Mr. President. We're  
12 debating AB 604, not SB 380. I would ask that the  
13 speaker keep his comments regarding this particular  
14 amendments and not amendments or urgency clauses on  
15 other bills that are not germane to this discussion.

16 MR. PRESIDENT: All right. Senator Cabaldon, would  
17 you please continue to make your comments germane and to  
18 the amendments.

19 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes. Thank you so much,  
20 Mr. President. Because the issue of the appropriateness  
21 of the urgency clause is fundamentally a question of the  
22 custom and practice of the House which is demonstrated  
23 by our actions. SB 385 deletes a report followed -- I  
24 said from Rancho Murrieta. A report adoption by the  
25 Chancellor, and this report was done in 2023 and SB  
26 810 --

27 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Cabaldon, we do have another  
28 point of order.

1 Senator Strickland?

2 SENATOR STRICKLAND: I believe the Chair has already  
3 ruled that the -- the speaker has to stay to the  
4 amendments on AB 604 and not another Bill by another  
5 member on this House.

6 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator, if -- thank you, Senator  
7 Strickland.

8 Senator Cabaldon, if you're going to reference  
9 another bill, please, make sure it's tied to the  
10 amendments that we are talking about.

11 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes, sir. Thank you,  
12 Mr. President.

13 The point here is --

14 MR. PRESIDENT: Point of order. Senator Seyarto.

15 SENATOR SEYARTO: Thank you. I'm from Murrieta, not  
16 Rancho Murrieta. And that bill has nothing to do with  
17 any of the proceedings here.

18 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes. So much of what we heard  
19 tonight has nothing do with the proceedings or the bill  
20 that is before us. So, we have had for decades and  
21 certainly this year, urgency bills for which the urgency  
22 is something -- it would be great if something happened  
23 right now. But in no instance is a report to the  
24 Legislature an action by the PUC to approve a report to  
25 the Legislature more urgent than Californians being  
26 picked up, kidnapped off the streets and sent to prison  
27 in a foreign country. And in no instance of the  
28 elimination of three million Californians --

1 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator, keep your comments --

2 SENATOR STRICKLAND: I believe the senator  
3 speaking is --

4 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Strickland, you are  
5 recognized.

6 SENATOR STRICKLAND: -- is not speaking to directly  
7 the amendments of this bill.

8 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator, if you will please keep  
9 your comments directly --

10 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes. Mr. Chair, let me just --  
11 let me just point out for the -- for the -- for my  
12 colleague is that Mason's manual, which governs this  
13 question makes very clear that -- that we are not each  
14 other's gatekeepers. Mason's manual does not prohibit  
15 the use of analogy. It does not produce -- prohibit the  
16 use of any other parts of the English language to make a  
17 point.

18 It's very clear what the point is here tonight  
19 which is we have an urgent matter. We have an urgency  
20 as a country. We certainly have an urgent action to  
21 take. And not by our doing. We are here tonight and  
22 these amendments are urgent. They are urgent because of  
23 what is happening in the State House in Texas. It is  
24 what is happening in the rest of the country --

25 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Strickland, please state  
26 your point of --

27 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Again, the -- the person  
28 speaking before this body is not speaking to the

1 amendments that are before us right now, and the  
2 amendments before us right now have nothing do with  
3 another state or the federal government. They have to  
4 do with the State of California and this bill, and I  
5 would urge that we stick to the amendments just like you  
6 did with our body and our side of the aisle. Stick to  
7 the amendments of this bill.

8 MR. PRESIDENT: I appreciate that, Senator  
9 Strickland, but I do believe he was talking about  
10 urgency, and it's something he was addressing.

11 I will ask Senator Cabaldon that you, in your  
12 conversation or presentation on urgency, that you keep  
13 it to the amendments as addressed before this body.

14 SENATOR CABALDON: Thank you, Mr. President. I  
15 understand that it is a matter of opinion that this has  
16 nothing do with what's happening in the country or in  
17 Texas, but that is very clearly what the purpose of  
18 these amendments are which is to assure that elections  
19 are not rigged. We didn't set the time line. No one  
20 left this building or this floor a month ago with the  
21 intention of taking these issues up.

22 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Strickland, point of --

23 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Okay. I'll do it one other.  
24 Show me in the amendment where it mentions another state  
25 or the Federal Government in the amendments. If it's in  
26 there, then I'll stop interrupting. But show me in the  
27 amendment where it mentions another state that's before  
28 us or anything that's doing -- has anything to do with

1 the Federal Government. We're dealing with a bill that  
2 has to do with the State of California. And I urge my  
3 colleagues to stick to amendments and arguments that  
4 have to do what's before this body in the State of  
5 California.

6 MR. PRESIDENT: Your point of order is well taken.  
7 I hear it. And we are doing everything we can to make  
8 sure that both sides are able to get their point across  
9 and stay with the amendments as close as I possibly can.

10 Senator, thank you. Your point of order is  
11 well taken. And I will admonish and make sure that we  
12 stick with the amendments.

13 Thank you, Senator Cabaldon. I appreciate you  
14 sticking with the amendments.

15 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes. Sticking with the  
16 amendments and their declared purpose because Mason's  
17 manual -- neither Mason's manual or the senate rules  
18 require that you simply read the amendments in order to  
19 speak to the amendments. That is the purpose of this  
20 legislation.

21 Let me point out one other thing. And that is  
22 that already more than 13,000 Californians have -- are  
23 weighing in on these amendments that they expect to be  
24 heard tomorrow in the elections committee. Over 13,000.  
25 And that is before the hearing has begun.

26 This issue will be taken up this week. There  
27 is actions happening in the other House. The only way  
28 to assure that the people of California have their right

1 to see every word of these maps is by adopting these  
2 amendments tonight. We cannot have transparency about  
3 what the people will vote for if we don't adopt these  
4 amendments. And we must give the people the right to be  
5 heard tomorrow. And then again in November.

6 Mr. President, I ask for an aye vote.

7 MR. PRESIDENT: Members, give me one minute.

8 Members, I really appreciate the robust  
9 discussion and debate that we are having in the chamber  
10 right now. I do want to remind us, according to our  
11 rules, that members are only able to get up twice to  
12 speak on a single topic within one day.

13 So, please, be reminded that if you've already  
14 stood up twice to speak on this subject, you have  
15 reached your limit.

16 Senator Niello, for your first time.

17 SENATOR NIELLO: Thank you, Mr. President.  
18 Parliamentary inquiry. It was -- it was asked earlier  
19 what the time stamp on these amendments is. And the  
20 answer, I believe, was this morning at 8:00 o'clock. At  
21 8:00 a.m. Without a quorum present of the relevant  
22 body, how could we possibly establish amendments at that  
23 time?

24 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Niello, it is our custom and  
25 practice that we actually publish amendments before we  
26 adopt them. And so that's what we are witnessing today.  
27 The amendments were published this morning, and we are  
28 looking to adopt them here now this evening.

1           SENATOR NIELLO: So, what is the relevant time for  
2       which they may then subsequently be brought up as a  
3       bill?

4           MR. PRESIDENT: So, if we adopt the amendments this  
5       evening, then ...

6                     It is my understanding after conferring, it  
7       appears it would be 8:00 a.m. -- to answer your  
8       question, 8:00 a.m. on Thursday.

9           SENATOR NIELLO: Not the point at which the  
10       amendments are adopted?

11          MR. PRESIDENT: We are looking for the right answer  
12       for you.

13                    According to Article 4, Section 8B2, no bill  
14       will be -- no bill may be passed or ultimately become a  
15       statute unless the bill with any amendments has been  
16       printed, distributed to the Members and published on the  
17       internet in its final form for at least 72 hours before  
18       the vote except that this notice period may be waived if  
19       the Governor has submitted to the written statements.

20                    It does not -- however, it does not mention  
21       anything about actual adoptions. So, just publishing on  
22       the internet.

23                    Senator Ochoa Bogh, make it good. This is  
24       your second time.

25          SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: And final.

26          MR. PRESIDENT: And final.

27          SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: Yes. Mr. President, thank you  
28       very much for your time.

1 And, Members, so in addressing the concerns by  
2 my dear friend from West Sacramento regarding the --  
3 the -- the voting of these amendments to be able to have  
4 the public view of these maps, correct? I'd argue that  
5 this particular -- these amendments with this -- within  
6 this bill that was just published this morning waives  
7 the rigorous criteria outlined in Article 11, Section 2D  
8 which prioritize geographical and social considerations  
9 to promote fairness. These include requiring districts  
10 to be geographically contiguous, Criteria 3. Respecting  
11 the integrity of cities, counties, neighborhoods and  
12 communities of interest by minimizing their division,  
13 Criteria Four. And ensuring compactness where --  
14 practical -- where practicable, Criteria Five.

15 This rushed map drawing process discards these  
16 standards potentially fracturing cohesive communities  
17 and creating convoluted districts that prioritize  
18 electoral outcomes over logistical boundaries.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you.

21 Senator Seyarto, you are recognized.

22 SENATOR SEYARTO: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

23 Members, the reason I -- I cannot support this  
24 is because these amendments -- you know, frankly, I  
25 don't even know what's in them. 330 pages, and I  
26 would -- I would venture to bet my pizza in there that  
27 not one person in this room has read all 330 pages, and  
28 is ready to debate the merits of these amendments on the

1 floor.

2 And so with that, it's really difficult for me  
3 to call this a transparent process when it's more of a  
4 ministerial process that they're hoping we do. And I  
5 think that's -- that's not -- that's not something that  
6 as legislators is very responsible. It's not a  
7 responsible way to address an issue, to rush it through  
8 like this. And these amendments do exactly that. 330  
9 and some odd pages, folks. I know I didn't have a  
10 chance to read them today. I was in appropriations  
11 until 5:00, and then over to here and been here since.  
12 So, when in the heck am I supposed to read those?

13 So, with that, I would ask that we don't  
14 approve these amendments tonight. I know that's kind of  
15 a moot point for all of you as we've already been told  
16 what we're supposed to vote like. So, with that, thank  
17 you, Mr. Chair, for the opportunity to comment.

18 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator.

19 Senator Pro Tem McGuire, you are recognized.

20 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Thank you so much.

21 Through the presiding office, I would like to  
22 discuss two specific items on the amendments that were  
23 raised here tonight.

24 First and foremost was the issue of  
25 constitutionality. Under the constitution of the State  
26 of California, the Legislature has the right to place  
27 constitutional questions onto the ballot. And people  
28 have a right to vote on those constitutional challenges.

1 And Legislature does this all the time. So, we believe  
2 that we are, per the amendments, in good standing with  
3 California's constitution. And, ultimately, the people  
4 of this state decide.

5 On the issue of splits and maps, et cetera.  
6 No. 1, the Voting Rights Act in all districts in every  
7 corner of California is upheld. Full stop.

8 No. 2. There are fewer city splits in the  
9 maps that will be in front of us on Thursday than there  
10 are in the approved maps by the Independent  
11 Redistricting Commission. About three, three and-a-half  
12 years ago, fewer city splits than what the Independent  
13 Redistricting Commission had advanced.

14 I think the final item on the issue of the  
15 maps per the amendments as these were advanced all those  
16 minority seats are maintained throughout the state.

17 So, I would respectively ask for an aye vote.  
18 I just wanted to advance those here on the floor.

19 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator McGuire.

20 Senator Strickland.

21 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Was that a close or no? Okay.  
22 Anyway, I would like to say that I believe this body is  
23 doing actually opposite of what they should. Because  
24 under current law in our constitution, no Member on this  
25 body is allowed to even look at a map or affect a map.  
26 So, if you were anywhere involved in the process of  
27 these maps, you violated the state constitution.

28 State constitution is clear that it says no

1 Member of the Legislature are allowed to involve  
2 themselves in the maps. So, the way you should have  
3 gone forward is by adopting, again, the authority from  
4 the people of California and then adopt the maps.

5 But if any of you on this body had anywhere --  
6 you looked at the map and influenced in any way, you've  
7 violated the state constitution.

8 And even if you vote on this today, you're  
9 violating the state constitution.

10 MR. PRESIDENT: Seeing no further --

11 Senator Chiu. Choi. My sincerest apologies.  
12 Senator Choi, you are recognized.

13 SENATOR CHOI: Listening to the debate so far,  
14 amendments 338 pages, I would like to see it. This is a  
15 moment right now we are debating very, very important  
16 future of California. And with this, so many amendments  
17 in there even before Bill in Chief has not been  
18 considered. We haven't had the consideration in the  
19 Committee. It's talking about the amendments and the --  
20 all the maps that you have drawn, I don't know who have  
21 drawn those, and then I hear some points are  
22 unconstitutional. I think this is really a -- raises  
23 many, many questions. We need to table this issue and  
24 do some studying in there --

25 MR. PRESIDENT: We have a point of order Senator --

26 SENATOR CHOI: -- before we continue --

27 MR. PRESIDENT: -- Choi, we have a point of order.

28 Senator Gonzalez, you are recognized.

1 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Mr. President, I'm just asking we  
2 stick to the amendments and not talk about personal --  
3 other personal issues.

4 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Gonzalez, your point is well  
5 taken.

6 Senator Choi, please stick with the  
7 amendments.

8 SENATOR CHOI: Yeah. Let's talk about the  
9 amendments. So, I would like to see all the amendments  
10 in print right now in my possession. And we need some  
11 time to digest. So, I think this is proper to table it  
12 until tomorrow or day after tomorrow so we will have  
13 more study into it, all the maps we need to study. We  
14 need to hear from the constituents. Not too many people  
15 know about what the drawing is, who made these  
16 amendments and even Bill in Chief.

17 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Choi. And I  
18 believe ask and you shall receive. And you now have the  
19 amendments in hands.

20 Seeing no further discussion or --

21 SENATOR CHOI: Okay. But I cannot digest all of  
22 this right now. So, I need time to study this before we  
23 can continue.

24 MR. PRESIDENT: We'll be taking up the bill on  
25 Thursday to discuss it on the floor. So, you'll be able  
26 to --

27 SENATOR CHOI: Yeah. So, I make a motion to table  
28 this.

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1 UNKNOWN SENATOR: Second.

2 MR. PRESIDENT: We have a motion to table and a  
3 second.

4 Senator Choi is asking to lay this on the  
5 table. We have a motion and a second. Senator Choi is  
6 asking for an aye vote.

7 Majority Leader Gonzalez?

8 SENATOR GONZALEZ: For a no vote.

9 MR. PRESIDENT: You are asking for a no vote.  
10 Again, Senator Choi is asking for an aye vote. Senator  
11 Gonzalez is asking for -- I'm sorry. Senator Choi is  
12 asking for an aye vote. Senator Gonzales is asking for  
13 a no vote.

14 Secretary, please call the roll.

15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen? Allen?

16 SENATOR ALLEN: No.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Alvarado-Gil?

18 SENATOR ALVARDO-GIL: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Archuleta?

20 SENATOR ARCHULETA: No.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Arreguin?

22 SENATOR ARREGUIN: No.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Ashby?

24 SENATOR ASHBY: No.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Becker? Blakespear?

26 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: No.

27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Cabaldon?

28 SENATOR CABALDON: No.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Caballero?

2 SENATOR CABALLERO: No.

3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Cervantes?

4 SENATOR CERVANTES: No.

5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Choi?

6 SENATOR CHOI: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cortese?

8 SENATOR CORTESE: No.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Dahle?

10 SENATOR DAHLE: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Durazo?

12 SENATOR DURAZO: No.

13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Gonzalez?

14 SENATOR GONZALEZ: No.

15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Grayson?

16 SENATOR GRAYSON: No.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Grove?

18 SENATOR GROVE: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Hurtado?

20 SENATOR HURTADO: No.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Jones?

22 SENATOR JONES: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Laird?

24 SENATOR LAIRD: No.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Limon? Limon?

26 SENATOR LIMON: No.

27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. McGuire?

28 SENATOR MCGUIRE: No.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. McNerney?  
2 SENATOR MCNERNEY: No.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Menjivar?  
4 SENATOR MENJIVAR: No.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Niello?  
6 SENATOR NIELLO: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ochoa Bogh?  
8 SENATOR OCHOA-BOGH: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Padilla? Perez?  
10 SENATOR PEREZ: No.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Reyes?  
12 SENATOR REYES: No.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Richardson?  
14 SENATOR RICHARDSON: No.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Rubio? Seyarto?  
16 SENATOR SEYARTO: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Smallwood-Cuevas?  
18 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: No.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Stern?  
20 SENATOR STERN: No.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Strickland?  
22 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Umberg?  
24 SENATOR UMBERG: No.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Valladares?  
26 SENATOR VALLADARES: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Wahab?  
28 SENATOR WAHAB: No.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

2 SENATOR WIENER: No.

3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No.

4 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent  
5 members.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Becker?

7 SENATOR BECKER: No.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Padilla? Rubio? Weber  
9 Pierson?

10 MR. PRESIDENT: Noes, 10 -- or, Ayes; 10, Noes 27.  
11 Amendments are not being laid on the table.

12 With that, moving back to debate and  
13 discussion on the amendments, seeing no debate or  
14 discussion, Secretary, please call the roll on the  
15 amendments.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

17 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?

19 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: No.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Archuleta?

21 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

23 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

25 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?

27 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?

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1 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?  
3 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
5 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
7 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi?  
9 SENATOR CHOI: No.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Cortese?  
11 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle?  
13 SENATOR DAHLE: No.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Durazo?  
15 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
17 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
19 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove?  
21 SENATOR GROVE: No.  
22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Hurtado?  
23 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.  
24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones?  
25 SENATOR JONES: No.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Laird?  
27 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?

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1 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?

3 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McNerney?

5 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?

7 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello?

9 SENATOR NIELLO: No.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Ochoa Bogh?

11 SENATOR OCHOA-BOGH: No.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Padilla? Perez?

13 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?

15 SENATOR REYES: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?

17 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?

19 SENATOR SEYARTO: No.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Smallwood-Cuevas?

21 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?

23 SENATOR STERN: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland?

25 SENATOR STRICKLAND: No.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Umberg?

27 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares?

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1 SENATOR VALLADARES: No.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Wahab?

3 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

5 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

7 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent

8 members.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Padilla? Rubio? Weber  
10 Pierson?

11 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 10. Amendments are  
12 adopted.

13 Members, we are moving to Motions for  
14 Resolutions and Notices.

15 Members, is there any objection to the  
16 approval of the State Journals for July 14th through  
17 July 17th, 2025, as corrected by the minute clerk?

18 Senator Alvarado-Gil, you are recognized.  
19 There was -- are you objecting?

20 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: No, Mr. President. I rise  
21 under a different matter.

22 MR. PRESIDENT: Seeing no objection, the journal is  
23 adopted.

24 And for what reason, Senator Alvarado-Gil, do  
25 you rise?

26 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Thank you, Mr. President. I  
27 rise to move SCR 91 File Item No. A6 from the inactive  
28 file to the third reading.

1 MR. PRESIDENT: With no objection, the desk will  
2 note.

3 Senator McNerney, you are recognized.

4 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Mr. President and Members, I rise  
5 to request --

6 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator McNerney, if you can hold on  
7 one second. We need to clarify.

8 Just to clarify, to Senators of the body here  
9 SCR 91 will be going to second reading and then to third  
10 reading. All right. Thank you, Senator.

11 Now, Senator McNerney, you are recognized.

12 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Thank you, Mr. President and  
13 Members. I rise to request that SB 863 by the Committee  
14 on revenue and taxation File Item No. 30 be returned to  
15 the Assembly to be amended.

16 MR. PRESIDENT: Without objection, the desk will  
17 note.

18 Senator Seyarto, you are recognized.

19 SENATOR SEYARTO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to  
20 ask that SB 255 be sent back to the assembly for further  
21 action.

22 MR. PRESIDENT: Without objection from any member?  
23 Such will be the order. The desk will recognize -- or,  
24 acknowledge.

25 Senator Choi, you are recognized.

26 SENATOR CHOI: Thank you, Chair and the Members. I  
27 have a letter to submit to the Journal regarding AB 782.  
28 Thank you.

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1 MR. PRESIDENT: If you'll submit the letter. Thank  
2 you very much. Desk will note.

3 Senator Gonzalez, Majority Leader, you are  
4 recognized under Motions, Resolutions and Notices.

5 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Mr. President. I move  
6 that joint Rule 62A be suspended to allow Committee on  
7 Elections and Constitutional amendments to hear AB 604  
8 without sufficient notice in the daily file.

9 MR. PRESIDENT: Members, just to remind you, there  
10 is no debate on this. These are not debatable motions.

11 Senator Jones, you are recognized for what  
12 reason?

13 SENATOR JONES: Thank you. I would ask for a roll  
14 call vote on this Motion.

15 MR. PRESIDENT: Roll call it is.

16 SENATOR JONES: Roll call vote.

17 MR. PRESIDENT: A no roll call vote.

18 Senator Jones is asking for a no vote. And  
19 Senator Gonzalez is asking for an eye vote.

20 Secretary, please call the roll.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

22 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?

24 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: No.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Archuleta?

26 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

28 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?  
2 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?  
4 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?  
6 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?  
8 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
10 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
12 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi?  
14 SENATOR CHOI: No.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Cortese?  
16 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle?  
18 SENATOR DAHLE: No.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Durazo?  
20 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
22 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
24 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove?  
26 SENATOR GROVE: No.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Hurtado?  
28 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones?  
2 SENATOR JONES: No.  
3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Laird?  
4 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.  
5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?  
6 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.  
7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?  
8 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.  
9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McNerney?  
10 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.  
11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?  
12 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.  
13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello?  
14 SENATOR NIELLO: No.  
15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Ochoa Bogh?  
16 SENATOR OCHOA-BOGH: No.  
17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Padilla? Perez?  
18 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
20 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
22 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
24 SENATOR SEYARTO: No.  
25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Smallwood-Cuevas?  
26 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.  
27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?  
28 SENATOR STERN: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland?

2 SENATOR STRICKLAND: No.

3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Umberg?

4 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.

5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares?

6 SENATOR VALLADARES: No.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: No. Wahab?

8 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

10 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

12 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent  
13 members.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Padilla? Rubio? Weber  
15 Pierson?

16 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 27; Noes, 10. The motion  
17 carries.

18 One moment, Members.

19 Majority Leader Senator Gonzalez, you are  
20 recognized.

21 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Mr. President. I move  
22 that joint rule 62A be suspended to allow the Committee  
23 on Elections and Constitutional Amendments to hold an  
24 informational hearing on the substance of ACA8 and SB  
25 280 without sufficient notice in the daily file.

26 MR. PRESIDENT: Member, this motion is not  
27 debatable. Secretary --

28 SENATOR JONES: Mr. President --

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1 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary -- Senator Jones.

2 SENATOR JONES: Sir, I'm objecting to the Motion and  
3 would accept substitution of the last roll call for  
4 this.

5 MR. PRESIDENT: Seeing no objection, Ayes, 27; Noes,  
6 10. Motion -- motion carries.

7 Senator, Gonzalez, you are recognized.

8 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Mr. President. I move  
9 that joint rule 62A be suspended to allow the Committee  
10 on Appropriations to hear AB 604 without sufficient  
11 notice in the daily file.

12 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Jones, you are recognized.

13 SENATOR JONES: Mr. President, I object to this  
14 Motion as well, and would accept the previous roll call  
15 on this Motion also.

16 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator Jones. Seeing no  
17 objection, Ayes, 27; Noes, 10. This motion carries.

18 Senator Gonzalez, you are once again  
19 recognized.

20 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Mr. President. I move  
21 that AB 604 be read a second time in order to third  
22 reading upon being reported from the Committee on the  
23 appropriations this week.

24 MR. PRESIDENT: Senator Jones, you are recognized.

25 SENATOR JONES: Thank you, Mr. President. I object  
26 to this motion and move that we substitute the roll call  
27 from the previous roll call.

28 MR. PRESIDENT: Seeing no objection, Ayes, 27; Noes,

1 10. The Motion carries.

2 And, Senator Gonzalez?

3 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Mr. President. I move  
4 that file item 166 AB 1129 be removed from the consent  
5 calendar at the request of the author for purposes of  
6 amendments.

7 MR. PRESIDENT: Such will be the order. Desk will  
8 take note.

9 And Senator Gonzalez -- or, Senator Jones had  
10 a little outburst there. It's all good.

11 Members, we will pass and retain on second  
12 reading filed, and we will now move to Governor's  
13 appointments.

14 Senator Grove, you are recognized for Items 6,  
15 7 and 11.

16 SENATOR GROVE: Colleagues, regarding Governor's  
17 appointments this evening. File item 6 is a  
18 confirmation of Deborah Gore, the appointee to State Bar  
19 of Trustees. She's a credible qualified. She was  
20 approved by the Rules committee on June 18th. And a 5-0  
21 vote. Respectfully ask for an aye vote.

22 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator.

23 Secretary, please call the roll.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

25 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?

27 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Archuleta?

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1 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?  
3 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?  
5 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?  
7 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?  
9 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?  
11 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
13 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
15 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi? Cortese?  
17 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle?  
19 SENATOR DAHLE: Aye.  
20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Durazo?  
21 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
23 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?  
25 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove?  
27 SENATOR GROVE: Aye.  
28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Hurtado?

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1 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones? Laird?

3 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?

5 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?

7 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McNerney?

9 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?

11 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello?

13 SENATOR NIELLO: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ochoa Bogh?

15 SENATOR OCHOA-BOGH: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Padilla? Perez?

17 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?

19 SENATOR REYES: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?

21 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?

23 Smallwood-Cuevas?

24 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?

26 SENATOR STERN: Aye.

27 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland?

28 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Aye.

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1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Umberg?

2 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.

3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares?

4 SENATOR VALLADARES: Aye.

5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Wahab?

6 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

8 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

10 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent  
11 members.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Choi? Jones? Padilla?  
13 Rubio? Seyarto? Weber Pierson?

14 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 34; Noes, 0. Governor's  
15 appointment is confirmed.

16 Senator Grove, you're recognized for your next  
17 item.

18 SENATOR GROVE: Thank you, Mr. President,  
19 Colleagues. Mark Kraus is being -- request file item 7,  
20 the confirmation of Mark Kraus for the appointment to  
21 the Public Employee's Relations Board. I am presenting  
22 these appointments. Senator Laird is not. It was a 5-0  
23 vote. Respectfully ask for an aye vote.

24 MR. PRESIDENT: Any discussions or debates? Seeing  
25 none, Secretary, please call the roll.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

27 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?

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1 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Archuleta?  
3 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?  
5 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?  
7 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?  
9 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?  
11 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?  
13 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?  
15 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?  
17 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.  
18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi?  
19 SENATOR CHOI: Aye.  
20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cortese?  
21 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.  
22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle?  
23 SENATOR DAHLE: Aye.  
24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Durazo?  
25 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?  
27 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.  
28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?

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1 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove?

3 SENATOR GROVE: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Hurtado?

5 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones?

7 SENATOR JONES: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Laird?

9 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?

11 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?

13 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McNerney?

15 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?

17 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello?

19 SENATOR NIELLO: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ochoa Bogh?

21 SENATOR OCHOA-BOGH: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Padilla? Perez?

23 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?

25 SENATOR REYES: Aye.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?

27 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?

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1 SENATOR SEYARTO: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Smallwood-Cuevas?

3 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?

5 SENATOR STERN: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland?

7 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Umberg?

9 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares? Wahab?

11 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?

13 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.

15 MR. PRESIDENT: Secretary, please call absent

16 members.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Padilla? Rubio? Valladares?

18 SENATOR VALLADARES: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson?

20 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 37; noes, 0. Governor's

21 appointment is confirmed.

22 Senator Grove, your final item, Item 11.

23 SENATOR GROVE: Thank you, Mr. President,

24 Colleagues. Final -- file item 11 is a confirmation of

25 the following reappointments. Ed Lowry for the

26 Occupational Health and Safety -- or, excuse me. Health

27 and Appeals Board. Dr. Phil Mercado and Roxanne

28 Messina, captor for the California Arts Council. And

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1 Pat Urena for the reappointment to the Off Highway Motor  
2 Vehicle Recreation Commission. They were approved by  
3 the Rules Committee on June 25 on a unanimous vote.  
4 Respectfully ask for an aye vote.

5 MR. PRESIDENT: Any discussion or debate amongst  
6 Members? Seeing no discussion or debate, Secretary,  
7 please call roll.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen?

9 SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Alvarado-Gil?

11 SENATOR ALVARADO-GIL: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Archuleta?

13 SENATOR ARCHULETA: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Arreguin?

15 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ashby?

17 SENATOR ASHBY: Aye.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Becker?

19 SENATOR BECKER: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Blakespear?

21 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cabaldon?

23 SENATOR CABALDON: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Caballero?

25 SENATOR CABALLERO: Aye.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cervantes?

27 SENATOR CERVANTES: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Choi?

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1 SENATOR CHOI: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Cortese?

3 SENATOR CORTESE: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Dahle?

5 SENATOR DAHLE: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Durazo?

7 SENATOR DURAZO: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Gonzalez?

9 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Aye.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grayson?

11 SENATOR GRAYSON: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Grove?

13 SENATOR GROVE: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Hurtado?

15 SENATOR HURTADO: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Jones?

17 SENATOR JONES: Aye.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Laird?

19 SENATOR LAIRD: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Limon?

21 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. McGuire?

23 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: McNerney?

25 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Aye.

26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Menjivar?

27 SENATOR MENJIVAR: Aye.

28 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Niello?

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1 SENATOR NIELLO: Aye.  
2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Ochoa Bogh?  
3 SENATOR OCHOA-BOGH: Aye.  
4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Padilla? Perez?  
5 SENATOR PEREZ: Aye.  
6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Reyes?  
7 SENATOR REYES: Aye.  
8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Richardson?  
9 SENATOR RICHARDSON: Aye.  
10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Rubio? Seyarto?  
11 SENATOR SEYARTO: Aye.  
12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Smallwood-Cuevas?  
13 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Aye.  
14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Stern?  
15 SENATOR STERN: Aye.  
16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Strickland?  
17 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Aye.  
18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Umberg?  
19 SENATOR UMBERG: Aye.  
20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Valladares?  
21 SENATOR VALLADARES: Aye.  
22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Wahab?  
23 SENATOR WAHAB: Aye.  
24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye. Weber Pierson? Wiener?  
25 SENATOR WIENER: Aye.  
26 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Aye.  
27 MR. PRESIDENT: Ayes, 37, Noes, 0. Governor's  
28 appointment is confirmed.

1 If there is no other business, Senator  
2 McGuire, the desk is clear.

3 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Thank you so much, Mr. President  
4 and Members. I would like to do a recap of what we  
5 accomplished here this evening.

6 This evening we insured that the public is  
7 going to have a right to comment on three critical  
8 redistricting bills tomorrow in Committee. Those bills  
9 would have failed on the floor. The public and  
10 transparent process that the Senate cherishes would not  
11 have taken place.

12 No. 2. With all Democratic votes, we advanced  
13 a Republican bill, a Republican author's bill who wanted  
14 the amendments crossed and in a bipartisan fashion  
15 Democrats passed it with just Democratic votes.

16 The third thing we accomplished tonight was  
17 saving the taxpayer's money. I thought that was a  
18 mutual goal. Most of the amendments that were in front  
19 of this body tonight from the appropriations were for  
20 fiscal reasons and requested by the respected Committees  
21 and the authors. So, I want to say thank you.  
22 Transparent process moving full steam ahead to  
23 bipartisan approach and continuing to move forward the  
24 new Republican leader's bill from the California State  
25 Assembly here in the California State Senate with all  
26 Democratic votes.

27 Three, we were able to save countless dollars  
28 for taxpayers via those amendments that are now moving

1 forward to our Appropriations Committee.

2 The next floor session is scheduled for  
3 Thursday, August 21st, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. Let's talk a  
4 little bit about run of show for Thursday. Invite each  
5 and every one to bring their sleeping bags as that will  
6 be a long one. That will start again at 9:00 a.m., and  
7 we'll probably get out at about 12:00 a.m. the next day.  
8 I'm being a little sarcastic, but do plan on a long  
9 floor day on Thursday.

10 With all respect, grateful for the  
11 consideration, the discussion today. Next floor session  
12 is Thursday, August 21st.

13 Thank you so much, Mr. President.

14 MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you. The Senate is adjourned.  
15 We will reconvene August, Thursday 21st, 2025 at  
16 9:00 a.m.

17 Have a good evening.

18 (Senate Floor meeting adjourned.)

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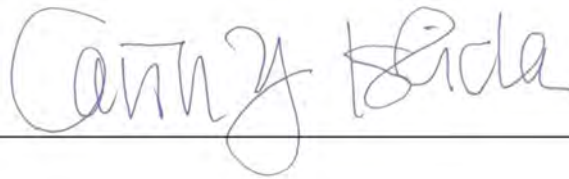
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STATE OF CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

AUGUST 19, 2025

TRANSCRIBED BY: MARY ANN SCANLAN, CSR



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**EXHIBIT**

**5**

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Good morning. I'd like  
2 to call the August 19th, 2025 hearing of the  
3 Assembly Election Committee to order.

4 Before we proceed, let's call the roll  
5 and establish the quorum. Madam Secretary.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin?

7 CHAIR PELLERIN: Here.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin here.  
9 Macedo?

10 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Here.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Macedo here.  
12 Bennett?

13 Berman?

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Here.

15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Berman here.  
16 Solache:

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Present.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Solache here.  
19 Stefani?

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: Here.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Stefani here.  
22 Tangipa?

23 CHAIR PELLERIN: He was here.

24 We have a quorum. Wonderful.

25 I'd like to welcome -- oh, there's

1 Tangipa.

2 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Madam Chair, motion  
3 to adjourn.

4 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: Second that.

5 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I'm asking for the  
6 same amount of time to prepare for this that my  
7 Democrat colleagues did.

8 CHAIR PELLERIN: Just give me one second  
9 here, please.

10 The motion to adjourn is not debatable  
11 and it will take a majority of those present in  
12 voting.

13 Madam Secretary, please call the roll.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin?

15 CHAIR PELLERIN: No.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin, no.  
17 Macedo?

18 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Macedo, aye.  
20 Bennett?

21 Berman?

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: No.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Berman, no.  
24 Solache?

25 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: No.

1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Solache, no.

2 Stefani?

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: No.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Stefani, no.

5 Tangipa?

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Tangipa, aye.

8 CHAIR PELLERIN: The motion fails.

9 Now let me begin. I'd like to welcome  
10 everyone who is here in the hearing room today  
11 and who's watching the hearing online.

12 For the purpose of this hearing, we are  
13 accepting witness testimony in person and we are  
14 also accepting written testimony through the  
15 Legislature's position letter portal, or through  
16 the Committee's redistricting public comment  
17 portal.

18 Both of these portals can be accessed  
19 through the Committee's website at  
20 aelc.assembly.ca.gov.

21 Today's hearing is going to be a little  
22 different than the typical Assembly Elections  
23 Committee bill hearing, so I want to set the  
24 stage for what to expect.

25 The Committee is hearing two measures

1 today, ACA 8 related to congressional  
2 redistricting, and SB 280 related to election  
3 administration and funding.

4 As with a normal bill hearing, those  
5 items will be up for a vote in Committee today.

6 In addition to voting on those two bills,  
7 the Committee will also be holding an  
8 informational hearing on the subject matter of  
9 AB 604 related to proposed congressional  
10 districts.

11 I expect that the Committee will begin by  
12 discussing and voting on ACA 8.

13 After the Committee has dispensed with  
14 ACA 8, in order to make the best use of the time  
15 of the Committee and of the members of the public  
16 who are here in the hearing room, or who are  
17 watching this hearing online, the order in which  
18 the Committee hears the other two bills may  
19 depend on the availability of the bill authors to  
20 come present in the Committee.

21 If the Committee hears AB 604 before  
22 SB 280, for procedural reasons, the Committee  
23 will be recessing the bill hearing and proceeding  
24 to the informational hearing on AB 604. The  
25 Committee would then reconvene the bill hearing

1 after completing the informational hearing on  
2 AB 604. If that occurs, I will make an  
3 appropriate announcement at that time.

4 When we hear the bills on the agenda,  
5 including the informational hearing on AB 604, we  
6 will hear from a maximum of two primary witnesses  
7 in support and two primary witnesses in  
8 opposition of the bill, with a limit of three  
9 minutes per witness. As a reminder, primary  
10 witnesses in support are those designated by the  
11 author.

12 To provide additional opportunity for  
13 public input, we will allow other witnesses to  
14 speak for no more than 30 seconds. In order to  
15 present as many people as possible to testify, I  
16 will enforce that time limit strictly.

17 My 27 years as Santa Cruz County's chief  
18 elections official is what I carry into these  
19 conversations about mid-decade redistricting.  
20 And let me be clear, what we are building in  
21 California is the most transparent process in the  
22 nation.

23 For example, we've launched a public  
24 redistricting comment portal right on the  
25 Committee's website so voters can speak directly

1 to this process. Since Wednesday it's received  
2 more than 16,000 submissions.

3 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Madam Chair --

4 CHAIR PELLERIN: We aren't asking  
5 Californians to --

6 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: -- I have a motion  
7 based on that information.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I'd ask that the  
9 Vice Chair wouldn't interrupt the Chair while  
10 she's speaking.

11 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: It's relevant to what  
12 she's saying.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: It would be nice  
14 if the Vice Chair would let the Chair finish her  
15 comments before interrupting (inaudible).

16 CHAIR PELLERIN: May I finish my  
17 comments?

18 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Will I be able to  
19 make my motion?

20 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yes. May I finish --

21 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Thank you.

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- my comments? Thank  
23 you.

24 We aren't asking Californians to  
25 rubberstamp maps drawn behind closed doors.

1 We're putting the maps front and center and  
2 giving voters the final say.

3 This is not about cherry-picking when we  
4 follow our independent redistricting process. As  
5 a former elections official, I would never stand  
6 for that. It would go counter to my core values  
7 and my life's work.

8 This is about defending democracy itself,  
9 making sure that checks and balances our kids  
10 learn in government class are alive and well  
11 after the 2026 elections.

12 Let's be honest, Donald Trump lit this  
13 fire when he pressured Texas to change the rules  
14 mid game. California is answering that attack.  
15 Not by breaking democracy, but by protecting it.  
16 The bills we are hearing today only take effect  
17 if another state rigs the elections maps.

18 California believes in independent  
19 redistricting. We want every state to adopt it.  
20 And our independent redistricting commission  
21 retains its authority to draw a line -- to draw  
22 the map in 2020 and beyond.

23 I understand this is a fast process, but  
24 we are focusing on transparency and ensuring  
25 voters have the final say on whether to enact

1 temporary adjustments to our congressional  
2 districts.

3 Our democracy is under attack and we  
4 simply do not have the ability to delay actions  
5 so our county elections officials can administer  
6 a secure, transparent, accurate and accessible  
7 election.

8 Because at the end of the day, this isn't  
9 about partisanship. It's about principle. It's  
10 about trust. And it's about making sure every  
11 voter knows their voice still matters in America.

12 We will seek to protect the rights of all  
13 who participate in this legislative process so  
14 that we can have effective deliberation and  
15 decisions on critical issues facing California.

16 In order to facilitate the Committee's  
17 business and public participation in today's  
18 hearing, we will not permit conduct that  
19 disrupts, disturbs or otherwise impedes the  
20 orderly conduct of legislative proceedings.  
21 Violations of these rules may subject you to  
22 removal or other enforcement action.

23 So before we move on to the agenda, I  
24 have an additional announcement to make. I have  
25 a letter from Speaker Rivas requesting that

1 Assembly Member Berman be permitted to present  
2 ACA 8 on his behalf.

3 So with those announcements out of the  
4 way, we will now move on to the Committee's  
5 agenda.

6 And Madam Vice Chair, you had a comment.

7 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Yes. I am  
8 motioning -- as you said, 16,000 comments were  
9 submitted. I have not seen those comments. I'm  
10 not sure if other members of the Committee have  
11 seen those comments. But those would be  
12 pertinent to the discussion that's here today.

13 So I either motion that those comments be  
14 read into the record for all of us to hear, or  
15 that we recess until a time that we can review  
16 those comments.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Second.

18 CHAIR PELLERIN: So the comments are a  
19 part of the bill file, and I did not hear a  
20 motion. Are you making a motion?

21 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I'm motioning to read  
22 those comments into the record here today.

23 Okay, we'll take up that motion. It will  
24 be a majority of those present in voting.

25 Madam Secretary, please call the roll.

1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin?

2 CHAIR PELLERIN: No.

3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin, no.

4 Macedo?

5 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Macedo, aye.

7 Bennett?

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: No.

9 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Bennett, no.

10 Berman?

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: No.

12 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Berman, no.

13 Solache?

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: No.

15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Solache, no.

16 Stefani?

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: No.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Stefani, no.

19 Tangipa?

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Aye.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Tangipa, aye.

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: Motion fails.

23 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Then I make another

24 motion to recess until every Member of this

25 Committee has time to review all 16,000 public

1 comments.

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Second.

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. We have a motion  
4 to recess until they could read the comments.

5 Madam Secretary, please call the roll.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin?

7 CHAIR PELLERIN: No.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin, no.  
9 Macedo?

10 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Macedo, aye.  
12 Bennett?

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: No.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Bennett, no.  
15 Berman?

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: No.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Berman, no.  
18 Solache?

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: No.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Solache, no.  
21 Stefani?

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: No.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Stefani, no.  
24 Tangipa?

25 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Aye.

1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Tangipa, aye.

2 CHAIR PELLERIN: Motion --

3 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Sounds transparent to  
4 me.

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: Motion fails two to  
6 five.

7 We're now going to get on to our hearing.  
8 And let's bring Assembly Member Berman up to the  
9 presentation table to present ACA 8.

10 You may begin when you're ready.

11 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Madam Chair, I have a  
12 point of parliamentary inquiry.

13 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: God help us.  
14 God help us.

15 CHAIR PELLERIN: One minute, please.

16 You may proceed.

17 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: In the letter  
18 Mr. Rivas wrote, did he give a reason why he  
19 would not be joining us today to present his ACA?

20 CHAIR PELLERIN: It's the regular  
21 business of the Committee to allow Members to ask  
22 another Member to present their bill.

23 So we will begin with Assembly Member  
24 Berman presenting ACA 8. You may begin.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Thank you, Madam  
2 Chair and colleagues. Good morning.

3 I'm pleased to present ACA 8 on behalf of  
4 Speaker Rivas, Pro Tem McGuire, and dozens of  
5 co-authors both here in the Assembly and in the  
6 Senate. But make no mistake, I'm not happy to be  
7 here.

8 One of the reasons was alluded to, which  
9 I'm a new dad. My baby boy turned one month old  
10 today, and I'd rather be hanging out with him and  
11 his mom.

12 But ACA 8 and its companion bills are the  
13 culmination of a fight that we don't want, and  
14 it's a fight that we didn't choose. But with our  
15 democracy on the line, we cannot run away from  
16 this fight.

17 ACA 8 is before you today because  
18 President Trump and Republicans in Texas and  
19 other states across the country are attempting to  
20 redraw congressional districts mid decade in an  
21 effort to rig the upcoming election.

22 Americans and Californians deserve  
23 better. And ACA 8, is our response to this  
24 undemocratic and un-American power grab.

1 Known as the Election Rigging Response  
2 Act, ACA 8 would allow for the temporary use of  
3 voter approved, voter approved congressional  
4 district boundaries contained in AB 604. First  
5 and foremost, California voters will have the  
6 final say on whether or not these new district  
7 boundaries get used or not.

8 Should ACA 8 and its companion bills  
9 pass, voters will have their say in a special  
10 election on November 4th, 2025. Because here in  
11 California, unlike in Texas and other Republican-  
12 led states, we respect the will of the voters.

13 Second, these maps would be used through  
14 the 2030 congressional term if and only if Texas  
15 or another state enacts a partisan gerrymander of  
16 its own congressional districts before the 2030  
17 census.

18 This trigger provision is carefully  
19 crafted to ensure that a mid-decade redistricting  
20 required by federal court order does not result  
21 in California changing the maps. It is about the  
22 partisan gerrymandering that President Trump has  
23 demanded of his party.

24 After the 2030 census, ACA 8 returns all  
25 congressional district line-drawing powers back

1 to the Citizen Redistricting Commission. It is  
2 important to note that nothing in this bill  
3 package impacts the role of the Citizens  
4 Redistricting Commission in drawing the Assembly,  
5 the Senate or the Board of Equalization  
6 boundaries.

7 Third, ACA 8 calls on Congress to pass  
8 legislation and propose a constitutional  
9 amendment to the US Constitution to require the  
10 use of fair, independent and nonpartisan  
11 redistricting nationwide. I call this the put up  
12 or shut up clause.

13 I don't want to hear from you if you  
14 support political gerrymandering in Republican  
15 states but not Democrat states and vice versa.  
16 We believe in nonpartisan redistricting for  
17 California and for every state in the country.

18 The bottom line is that ACA 8 sends a  
19 strong message to other states that they cannot  
20 play by different rules when it comes to  
21 redistricting, and it upholds California's values  
22 by neutralizing partisan gerrymandering by other  
23 states, all while giving California voters the  
24 final say on the matter.

1           This situation is an emergency and  
2 California is responding by empowering our voters  
3 with transparency, with respect for our  
4 independent Commission, but with a will to act.

5           I respectfully request an aye vote on  
6 ACA 8.

7           And I'm joined today by Annie Chou with  
8 the California Teachers Association, and Danny  
9 Curtin with the California State Council of  
10 Carpenters.

11           CHAIR PELLERIN: You each have three  
12 minutes. Thank you.

13           MR. CURTIN: Okay. Danny Curtin with the  
14 Carpenters, as you heard.

15           I'm going to sort of read a letter into  
16 the record, so that's one out of 16,000.

17           It is with great reluctance but firm  
18 resolve that I'm testifying on behalf of the  
19 California Conference of Carpenters to strongly  
20 urge your support for ACA 8.

21           The extraordinary measure of redrawing  
22 our congressional district maps in mid decade  
23 rather than the historically established national  
24 norm of realignment following the census at the  
25 end of the decade, a constitutionally required

1 census to count every person living in the  
2 country for the purposes of democratic political  
3 representation, part of the great democratic  
4 experiment that is the United States, and quite  
5 revolutionary at the time, I might add.

6           Unfortunately, these are not normal times  
7 and this isn't politics as usual. Not only has  
8 the Trump Administration denied disaster  
9 assistance to victims of California's devastating  
10 forest fires, it is also seriously damaging our  
11 California economy with targeted arrests of law-  
12 abiding workers without warrants, which I'm sure  
13 many of you are aware of.

14           The Trump administration is now  
15 unilaterally withdrawing from legally binding  
16 union collective bargaining agreements with  
17 federal workforce unions. The President has made  
18 it clear that this is just the beginning.

19           Whatever your opinion of the Carpenters  
20 Union, you all know we are willing to work across  
21 the aisle to find solutions. We supported and  
22 still support the bipartisan reform work of  
23 Governor Schwarzenegger's administration and this  
24 Legislature on redistricting to establish  
25 California Citizen Redistricting Commission. We

1 believe every state should require the use of  
2 fair, nonpartisan redistricting commissions. I'm  
3 going to get that before I'm done. But they  
4 don't.

5           Using that loophole, the Trump  
6 administration is now blatantly attempting to  
7 selectively change election rules in the middle  
8 of the game. Everybody knows why, to ensure  
9 unquestioned congressional support for his  
10 unilateral political agenda.

11           For that reason and that reason alone, we  
12 urge you to enact a one-time redistricting for  
13 congressional districts only to give California  
14 voters the ability to have their voice heard loud  
15 and clear on the national level.

16           We also support the return to  
17 redistricting by Commission following the census.

18           I have a couple of other items. I don't  
19 know how much more time I have, but let me just  
20 start with one thing.

21           CHAIR PELLERIN: Forty-five seconds.

22           MR. CURTIN: When a press conference by  
23 the Governor and the political leaders to discuss  
24 this topic is greeted by a mass gang of Rambo  
25 wannabes in full combat gear with automatic

1 weapons just to intimidate, you know something's  
2 wrong. And I mean all of you know something's  
3 wrong, whatever reasons.

4 When the Speaker of the House condemns  
5 California for going to a vote of the people to  
6 address this blatant power grab, but ignores  
7 Texas for redistricting without a vote of the  
8 people, the hypocrisy is overwhelming. You know  
9 something is wrong here, all of you.

10 I heard on the radio this morning,  
11 President Trump told Sean Hannity that Vladimir  
12 Putin said, quote, your election was rigged  
13 because you have mail-in voting, quote.

14 CHAIR PELLERIN: If you could wrap up,  
15 please.

16 MR. CURTIN: Putin got 88 percent of the  
17 vote. His other buddy, Jim Kung, whatever his  
18 name, forget that, you know something's wrong  
19 here when you take advice from Putin on voting.

20 Thank you very much. Please support this  
21 measure. And I know it's difficult for some of  
22 you, but it needs to be done. Thank you.

23 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you. We'll move  
24 on to the next witness in support. You have  
25 three minutes.

1 MS. CHOU: Good morning, Madam Chair and  
2 Members. I'm Annie Chou with the California  
3 Teachers Association, representing 310,000 public  
4 school educators here to speak in support of  
5 ACA 8.

6 The Trump Administration is waging a war  
7 on every public institution we hold dear. In a  
8 few short months that he's been in office, he has  
9 worked to freeze funds for critical education  
10 programs, including after-school teacher training  
11 and migrant education program.

12 He's cut healthcare for millions of our  
13 students and their families, attempted to  
14 dismantle the Department of Education, and passed  
15 a new voucher program designed to destroy public  
16 education entirely.

17 There's also been unprecedented attacks  
18 to our immigrant communities and our LGBTQIA+  
19 students and families.

20 The Trump administration's removal of  
21 schools as safe zones from ICE has unleashed a  
22 level of trauma and fear that no one should ever  
23 endure, let alone our children.

1           Just this month, a 15-year-old in  
2 Los Angeles was detained by federal agents right  
3 outside her high school.

4           Our students deserve better. They  
5 deserve to feel safe and supported at school.  
6 They deserve every tool they're afforded to  
7 ensure that they are set up for success in life.

8           A majority of Americans are not with him  
9 on these vicious attacks. So what does Trump do  
10 Rig the next election and steal our right for  
11 fair representation. He wants his Republican  
12 allies to redistrict in states where they hold  
13 power so that he can stack the deck to continue  
14 to harm our students.

15           As my Secretary-Treasurer Erica Jones  
16 said, I taught my kindergarteners to be kind and  
17 help each other, not to cheat and be a bully.  
18 Five-year-olds get it. Why doesn't he?

19           My members and our colleagues at NEA  
20 spent months reaching out to our Republican  
21 representatives in California. Several refused  
22 to even meet with local teachers in their  
23 district and in their Capitol offices. Some lied  
24 directly to our faces and promised they wouldn't

1 vote for these draconian cuts for our schools and  
2 our healthcare.

3 When the lawmakers went back to D.C.,  
4 they proved that they'd rather take orders from  
5 Trump, even if it was at the expense of students  
6 and teachers in California.

7 We must fight back. CTA supports the  
8 great work that the Redistricting Commission -- I  
9 caught yours, Danny -- did in 2021, but there  
10 must be some type of check and balance against  
11 these federal attacks.

12 We're living in the most unprecedented of  
13 times. This requires us to meet the moment to  
14 protect our communities.

15 CT stands in full support of bringing the  
16 Brown initiative outlined in ACA 8. We're ready  
17 to do whatever it takes to stop the power grab  
18 and fight back against any and all attacks  
19 against our democracy, our students and public  
20 education. And California has a duty to stand up  
21 and take action.

22 ACA 8 simply empowers California voters  
23 to support a temporary change in our  
24 congressional districts until the next  
25 redistricting cycle to ensure that our students

1 and families are protected. And for those  
2 reasons, CTA urges your aye vote. And I'm also  
3 adding support for the California Federation of  
4 Teachers.

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you so much.

6 We'll now move on to additional  
7 witnesses. They come up to the mic.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair, I  
9 make a motion to amend.

10 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Second.

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: Amend what?

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Amend ACA. And  
13 I would like that the sergeants pass these  
14 amendments out, so that way everybody could read  
15 them.

16 CHAIR PELLERIN: Give me one second,  
17 please.

18 Are the amendments in Leg Council form?

19 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: Yes. Got them  
20 right here.

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay.

22 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Staff to reanalyze  
23 the bill, constitutional amendment or resolution.

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: Just give me a second so  
25 we can answer your question here.

1           So these are not author's amendments, so  
2     the rule you cited is not relevant.

3           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: It says a Member.  
4     Does not say the author.

5           CHAIR PELLERIN: But they are not  
6     author's amendments.

7           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Once again, it's --  
8                                 (Pause on the record.)

9           CHAIR PELLERIN: The Committee rules are  
10    clear that this is related to author's amendments  
11    only. These are not being offered by the author  
12    of the ACA.

13           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: This is not clear.

14           CHAIR PELLERIN: The author is Rivas and  
15    McGuire.

16           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: In section two it  
17    says that we authored this, actually prepared  
18    this ACA.

19           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: We prepared  
20    this ACA.

21           CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Give me one  
22    moment to thoroughly answer your question.

23                                 (Pause on the record.)

24           CHAIR PELLERIN: My ruling is the  
25    amendments are not in order.

1 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: There is a motion on  
2 the table.

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: And your motion is not  
4 in order as well.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair, I  
6 ask to read the amendments into the Journal.

7 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Second.

8 CHAIR PELLERIN: I reject that. No.

9 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: On what grounds,  
10 Madam Chair?

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: My decision.

12 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So there's  
13 transparency and bipartisanship --

14 (Pause on the record.)

15 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yes, Assembly Member  
16 Solache.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: I would like  
18 to move the bill for approval. Move it in.

19 CHAIR PELLERIN: We have a motion to  
20 approve the bill.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam, the  
22 motion to read into the Journal takes precedence.

23 CHAIR PELLERIN: One second, please.

24 (Pause on the record.)

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: I'd like to recognize  
2 Assembly Member Stefani.

3 Okay. There's a motion and a second to  
4 amend ACA 8.

5 I'd like to recognize Assembly Member  
6 Stefani.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: I move to lay  
8 the amendments on the table.

9 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So you're not going  
10 to allow us to debate or present these amendments  
11 for anybody to read? They're just going to vote  
12 on them, correct?

13 CHAIR PELLERIN: We are going to -- the  
14 motion is to lay the Amendments on the table.

15 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So none of my  
16 colleagues are going to read this before they  
17 vote on it, correct? I just want to clarify.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: (Inaudible) as  
19 it is, so I'm good.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair, we  
21 just --

22 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: We could make them  
23 better.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA:

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- we just  
2 heard --

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: I don't think  
4 they will.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: We just  
6 heard --

7 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: You haven't seen  
8 them.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- both  
10 testimony --

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: I don't need  
12 to.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- from the  
14 author and --

15 CHAIR PELLERIN: We haven't even heard  
16 all the testimony, so --

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But we did --

18 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- let's try to get  
19 through this hearing on the bill, all right?  
20 Let's try to hear the bill --

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But we've made  
22 this statement here.

23 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- in its current form.

24 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: We might be able to  
25 add (inaudible) --

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: We have a motion to lay  
2 the amendments on the table.

3 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: -- more that gives a  
4 heads up about this.

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: Madam Secretary, please  
6 call the roll.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But, Madam  
8 Chair, we made the statement that we're making  
9 this very transparent. This is very clear.

10 CHAIR PELLERIN: We have a motion to lay  
11 the amendments on the table.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And I'm just --  
13 I would like --

14 CHAIR PELLERIN: We're going to proceed  
15 with that motion.

16 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Wait a second. The  
17 whole thing is that this is about transparency  
18 and that you want fairness in this.

19 We got the language at eight o'clock.  
20 All we're asking is for our input to be taken.  
21 You didn't talk to me as your Vice Chair about  
22 this, so here's our opportunity, Madam Chair.  
23 All we're asking for is participation in this.

24 And Mr. Tangipa came prepared. The rules  
25 state this. And I would be happy to bring the

1 Chief Clerk in to review this. I don't know why  
2 you're shutting this down.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And Madam  
4 Chair, I would have presented this to you  
5 sometime sooner at any other time. I had no  
6 time. We didn't receive this. And yet, there  
7 are authors on this before I even got to see  
8 this. I didn't get this till last night because  
9 we were not informed.

10 So my question is, since everybody's  
11 prepared, since you're so fine with the ACA, is  
12 how much time did they get to prepare before I  
13 did? Why am I not deserved that same for the  
14 500,000 representatives that I get to represent  
15 in my district? Why am I not granted that same  
16 right to defend them?

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I believe we  
18 have a law in California that Members get 72  
19 hours before final vote on any legislation to  
20 review the legislation and the language of the  
21 legislation before they vote.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But  
23 Mr. Berman --

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- on that  
25 language --

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- did you  
2 have --

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- as the  
4 final --

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- did you have  
6 this --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- as the final  
8 version.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: How early --

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I saw this  
11 language yesterday.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: How -- okay.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I saw this  
14 language yesterday.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: You saw this  
16 language --

17 CHAIR PELLERIN: It was in print  
18 yesterday morning, correct.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It was in  
20 print.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: And that's when  
22 I -- and that's when I saw it.

23 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: It was in print.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And it was --

1 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: -- but when was it  
2 seen?

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It was in print  
4 and --

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I saw it  
6 yesterday.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- you are a  
8 co-author on it immediately?

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Yeah.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So you had seen  
11 that even before it was printed, you were already  
12 a co-author?

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Yeah. I  
14 absolutely support the concept. I had faith in  
15 the authors to get -- to draft the right  
16 language. They did. And I support it.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: But I did not  
18 have that same --

19 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: For the concept, but  
20 you didn't even read the language.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I did not have  
22 that same ability.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: You weren't  
24 aware of the concept? You weren't aware of the  
25 news that we were planning on doing that?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: No, that's not  
2 what I'm saying. Mr. Berman, what I'm saying --

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: Excuse me. We have --  
4 we have the Chief Clerk here, Sue Parker.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I am simply  
6 just asking for the same amount of time, so that  
7 way I can go into this just as much as everybody  
8 else.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I saw the  
10 language --

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And that there  
12 are amendments.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- when it went  
14 into print yesterday morning.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And I  
16 understand that. And I have a different opinion  
17 on that.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Yeah.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And that's okay  
20 because I'm granted that.

21 (Speaking over each other - unintelligible.)

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. All right.  
23 Excuse me. We're going to -- hey. Hey.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I'm asking for  
25 it.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: We're going to stop this  
2 right now, this back and forth. Okay? We have  
3 to have some civility in here.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes, ma'am.

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: We have our Chief Clerk,  
6 Sue Parker. If you could please come on up for a  
7 consult, please.

8 (Pause on the record.)

9 All right. We're going to take a  
10 temporary recess. We'll be back in 10 minutes.  
11 Thanks.

12 (Recess.)

13 CHAIR PELLERIN: All right. We're going  
14 to bring the Committee back.

15 Thank you for giving us the time to  
16 figure this out. In the spirit of transparency,  
17 we're going to go ahead and allow those  
18 amendments to be presented and we're going to  
19 give you three minutes to do so. Thank you so  
20 much.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you,  
22 Madam Chair. That's all I'm asking for is a fair  
23 and equal opportunity to talk for my  
24 representatives, so I appreciate that.

1           And really, as the presenter of the bill  
2   had stated, that he was assigned as a co-author  
3   and there were multiple members on this  
4   Committee --

5           CHAIR PELLERIN: Oh, I'm sorry. One  
6   second.

7           Could we distribute the amendments?

8           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes.

9           CHAIR PELLERIN: Sorry.

10          ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you.

11          CHAIR PELLERIN: And we'll stop the clock  
12   and start it again.

13          ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And the  
14   sergeants.

15                 So as was stated, and not only that, we  
16   see that there are multiple co-authors on this  
17   bill that I hope don't have the same regards as  
18   the presenter of this stated, that they were a  
19   co-author before they even saw this bill.

20                 I believe that these amendments actually  
21   help make sure that we are protecting the  
22   democracy, and which was stated earlier today,  
23   that we're making sure that this is as  
24   transparent. And if you're actually fighting for  
25   the people of California, that you buy into this.

1           So there would be no reason for them to  
2 deny this amendment unless they have a vested  
3 interest in the maps that are being presented  
4 before us and the changes in these congressional  
5 districts.

6           So simply to read the amendment is: A  
7 member of the Legislature who voted in favor of  
8 Assembly Constitutional Amendment 8 of the  
9 2025-2026 Regular Session shall not be a  
10 candidate for congressional office in any  
11 congressional district adopted pursuant to  
12 Section 4.

13           All in an essence of, if everybody here  
14 is saying that they are doing this to protect  
15 democracy, to do it, to make sure that they don't  
16 have a vested interest.

17           And especially when we have seen reports  
18 reported by KCRA that stated that the pro temp  
19 asked for a specific district to be drawn so he  
20 could be included in that. That the DCCC wrote  
21 these maps. And it shows that there is so much  
22 political gains and political partisanship that  
23 has been played, that has been lied to the  
24 California people.

1           You now have the ability to prove that  
2 you are in this for those same right reasons that  
3 the presenter actually asked us to do. You have  
4 the ability right now to say that you're doing  
5 this for those specific reasons.

6           So when you cast your vote on these  
7 amendments, you will declare to the California  
8 people that you do believe in democracy. That  
9 every statement and the amount of placating that  
10 we heard earlier today, that your words are true.

11           And this gives you the chance to tell the  
12 truth, to tell the California people that you  
13 have no vested interest in this. That you  
14 believe in everything that was stated. That the  
15 author and the presenters and all of the other  
16 co-authors on this say that, I'm not running for  
17 this congressional seat because of my personal  
18 gain. I'm doing this, these districts, because  
19 it's what you believe in. So you have the chance  
20 to do so. Every single person who's a co-author  
21 on this who didn't read the bill.

22           Okay. If you didn't read the bill, then  
23 you shouldn't have any issues adding this as an  
24 amendment because you don't have any problems  
25 with it. Thank you.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you very much.

2 Assembly Member Stefani.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: I move to lay  
4 the amendments on the table.

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: We have a motion to lay  
6 the amendments on the table.

7 Madam Secretary, please -- oh, is there a  
8 second?

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Can I just make  
10 a comment?

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yes, you may.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: I'll second it.  
13 I do have a comment.

14 You know, it's really hard for me to  
15 consider any amendments when the first motion,  
16 within seconds of starting this meeting, was to  
17 adjourn this meeting.

18 So I have a question for the proposed  
19 amendments. How did you plan to submit these  
20 amendments if you were planning to end discussion  
21 in the first couple seconds of starting this  
22 meeting?

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, because I  
24 spent 12 hours last --

25

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Because clearly  
2 you were ready with some amendments.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: So how were you  
5 going to have a discussion when you were making a  
6 motion and a second to adjourn?

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes. Thank you  
8 for the question.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: And discussion.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you for  
11 the question.

12 The main reason why that motion was made  
13 in the beginning was because we just need more  
14 time. I did not have as much time as the  
15 majority party in this state as they've seen the  
16 maps. They've had these maps, they've had these  
17 bills, they've had the language significantly  
18 longer.

19 We didn't even set the Committee hearing  
20 on our member portfolio until yesterday. So  
21 we've had less than 24 hours to even know that  
22 this meeting was going to be here.

23 That's why the motion to end the meeting  
24 was there, just to give us time. Shouldn't we

1 have more than 24 hours? Doesn't it worry you,  
2 my friend?

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Thank you.

4 CHAIR PELLERIN: And the motion to lay  
5 the amendments on the table is not debatable.

6 I've given you a little time --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But doesn't  
8 it --

9 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- to have some  
10 comments.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Doesn't it  
12 worry you that they (inaudible) and you agreed to  
13 that?

14 CHAIR PELLERIN: Madam Secretary, now  
15 please call the roll.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: That's all I'm  
17 trying to do is read this.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin?

19 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yes.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin, aye.  
21 Macedo?

22 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: No.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Macedo, no.  
24 Bennett?

25 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Aye.

1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Bennett, aye.

2 Berman?

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Berman, aye.

5 Solache?

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Aye.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Solache, aye.

8 Stefani?

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: Aye.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Stefani, aye.

11 Tangipa?

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: No.

13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Tangipa, no.

14 CHAIR PELLERIN: So the motion to lay the  
15 amendments on the table succeeded.

16 So we will now move on to the other  
17 witnesses in support of ACA 8. You may come to  
18 the mic.

19 And as I stated previously, we are giving  
20 you 30 seconds to provide some information, your  
21 name, organization.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: This is on  
23 support?

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: This is for  
25 people in support of ACA 8.

1           Okay. There's folks outside. We'll give  
2 you a minute. This is for support and to ACA 8.

3           MR. LAZARDI: Thank you. Elmer Lazard,   
4 here on behalf of the California Federation of  
5 Labor Unions and also here in support of UFCW  
6 Western States Council. Thank you.

7           MS. PONTUS: Thank you. Angela Pontus on  
8 behalf of Planned Parenthood Affiliates of  
9 California, in support.

10          MR. KUMAR: Thank you, Chair. Keshav  
11 Kumar with Lighthouse Public Affairs, on behalf  
12 of Reproductive Freedom for All, in strong  
13 support and appreciation.

14          MS. BARREIRO: Thank you, Chair and  
15 members. Sandra Barreiro on behalf of SEIU  
16 California, in support.

17          MR. MIRAMONTES: Good morning, Chair and  
18 members. Bryant Miramontes with AFSCME  
19 California PEOPLE, in support.

20          MS. KING: Sadalia King with UDW Local --  
21 AFSCME Local 3930, in strong support.

22          MS. COLES: Good morning. Krystal Coles  
23 from SEIU Local 1000, in strong support.

1 MS. QUINTERO: Good morning. Annalisa  
2 Quintero with Local 1000, proud UAW member, in  
3 strong support.

4 MS. HILL: Good morning, Chair. My name  
5 is Constance Hill, SEIU 2015. I strongly  
6 support.

7 MR. HART: Good morning. Kaden Hart on  
8 behalf of Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis,  
9 in support.

10 MS. DARLING: Good afternoon. Faith  
11 Darling from Kern County, and support very much.

12 MR. SHAFFER: Jim Shaffer from Taft,  
13 California. Support very much.

14 CHAIR PELLERIN: Any other witnesses in  
15 support?

16 Seeing none, we'll now move on to the  
17 primary witnesses in opposition. Please come to  
18 the -- this is just for the primary right now.  
19 Primary witnesses, come to the presentation  
20 table. And you each will have three minutes.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: And then there's  
22 plenty of seats. Yeah.

23 MS. DYE: Should we both sit over there?

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: No, it doesn't  
25 matter.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: You may begin when  
2 you're ready.

3 MS. DYE: Chair Pellerin and Members, I'm  
4 Cynthia Dye, a San Francisco Democrat, testifying  
5 also for fellow rotating chairs of the First  
6 Citizens Redistricting Commission, Riverside  
7 Republican Jodie Filkins Weber, and Claremont  
8 Republican Peter Yao, San Gabriel Democrat Jeanne  
9 Raya, and Oceanside Independent Connie Archbold  
10 Robinson.

11 Commissioners are chosen to be impartial,  
12 reflect their state's demographics, and apply  
13 constitutional criteria to ensure fair districts  
14 for all Californians, and commissioners cannot  
15 run for office in the districts they draw.

16 The people enshrined independent  
17 redistricting in our constitution, voting three  
18 times against gerrymandering.

19 The Citrin Center poll released just last  
20 week confirms Californians still support the CRC  
21 two to one. And a national YouGov poll shows  
22 that 76 percent of Americans think gerrymandering  
23 is unfair, and 69 percent think it should be  
24 illegal.

1           The current CRC considered over 35,000  
2 public comments to develop their maps, making  
3 difficult tradeoffs to protect communities. This  
4 new proposed map was developed by legislators and  
5 their consultants in a back room.

6           The CRC was prohibited from considering  
7 partisan interests. The new map has only that  
8 goal, adding safe seats.

9           CRC draft maps were posted for 14 days to  
10 allow for thoughtful public input. This map was  
11 released yesterday, yet you're voting today.

12           And why are you not hearing from good  
13 government organizations? Because it takes time  
14 for organizations to inform their members,  
15 debate, formulate, and agree upon a position  
16 statement. That's what democracy looks like.

17           We recognize that many believe we face an  
18 existential threat, and this legislation has been  
19 touted as the only way to fight back and resist  
20 authoritarianism, but this is a false choice.

21           Thanks to the CRC, California has some of  
22 the most competitive districts in the nation. In  
23 fact, there are twice as many districts up for  
24 grabs as proponents of this legislation hope to  
25 eke out through gerrymandering.

1           It just means that parties have to do the  
2 work of appealing -- fielding appealing  
3 candidates, developing a platform that speaks to  
4 the issues voters care about, and getting them to  
5 the polls. That's what democracy looks like.

6           Despite the serious attacks against our  
7 democracy, we cannot preserve it by torching its  
8 fundamental tenet, that voters choose their  
9 representatives, not the other way around.

10           At minimum, release the data and provide  
11 the rationale for your lines. If you want to do  
12 a midcycle redistricting right, do it the  
13 California way.

14           Instead of spending over \$200 million on  
15 a special election, fund the CRC to engage the  
16 public, create updated districts, and pass them  
17 by a cross-partisan supermajority vote.

18           We urge you to serve your constituents by  
19 defending California's independent process and  
20 rejecting this expensive and misguided attempt to  
21 bring back partisan gerrymandering. We welcome  
22 any questions.

23           CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

24           Next witness, three minutes.

1 MS. RAYA: Thank you, Chair Pellerin and  
2 members of the committee, and I apologize for my  
3 back being to some of you.

4 My name is Jeanne Raya. I was privileged  
5 to serve on the first Independent Redistricting  
6 Commission starting in 2010.

7 It was independent, composed of a diverse  
8 pool, representative of California's diversity,  
9 and it was an initiative brought by good  
10 government groups to put voters first.

11 Approving that independent commission  
12 effectively ended the backroom political  
13 gerrymandering that had characterized  
14 redistricting for decades.

15 We drew new maps with full transparency,  
16 giving citizens access to the process in real  
17 time through public meetings and the means to  
18 submit written comments.

19 Voters had the opportunity to describe  
20 their communities, their environment, their  
21 infrastructure, and their economy so they could  
22 be placed in a district with a fair chance of  
23 electing accountable representatives.

24 And in fact, there were significant  
25 changes to the Legislature over the last two

1 Commissions, including the percentage of women in  
2 the Legislature doubled, AAPI representation  
3 tripled, Black representation nearly doubled, and  
4 Latinos increased by 8t percent.

5           If only Texas could learn from  
6 California. Their current attempts to rig the  
7 2026 election in favor of Republicans represents  
8 the basest self-interest of officials who are so  
9 fearful of losing their power that all they can  
10 think to do is cheat.

11           Their determination to stack the  
12 congressional deck in their favor has prompted  
13 our governor to threaten this retaliatory  
14 midcycle redistricting in an effort to elect more  
15 Democrats by sidelining the Independent  
16 Commission and holding a special election just  
17 this once.

18           I'm a registered Democrat, always have  
19 been, and I would celebrate replacing any  
20 congressional member who has forgotten his or her  
21 oath to represent their constituents and protect  
22 the Constitution.

23           But this can't be at the expense of the  
24 California Constitution, nor the California

1 voters who mandated fair, nonpartisan  
2 redistricting.

3 Does the threat really call for  
4 retaliation? We have witnessed on a daily basis  
5 the chaos and mistrust that has come from revenge  
6 politics in Washington. That is not a model for  
7 the responsible government Californians deserve.

8 It's not a model for which we should  
9 spend millions of dollars on a gamble that  
10 different districts would produce different  
11 results, or that we might not lose incumbents in  
12 more competitive districts and fail to elect  
13 whatever magic number is needed to win this  
14 electoral war against Texas and whatever other  
15 states.

16 The Governor says the American people --  
17 the American people need a fair chance. We have  
18 a fair chance here in California. We have  
19 choice. We have a voice. It's called the  
20 Independent Redistricting Commission.

21 The maps that have been proposed are like  
22 a menu that offers you steak, but you're a  
23 vegetarian. Sorry, that's all we have.  
24 California set the gold standard for --

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: If you could wrap up,  
2 please?

3 MS. RAYA: Yes.

4 California set the gold standard for  
5 redistricting. This is not the time to take a  
6 step back from innovative democracy. Thank you.

7 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Madam Chair, before  
8 we proceed --

9 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

10 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I'm sorry. You  
11 weren't introduced. Who are you at sitting at  
12 the table? I'm so sorry.

13 MR. SILVA: Sorry. My name is Aaron  
14 Silva. I'm with the law firm Olson Remcho. I'm  
15 here mainly to answer technical questions about  
16 the measure.

17 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay. Thank you.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: My technical  
19 witness.

20 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

21 We'll now go ahead and bring in witnesses  
22 who are in opposition to ACA 8. You may come to  
23 the mic.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And Madam  
2 Chair, are we going to have an opp -- are we  
3 going to have an opportunity to ask questions --

4 CHAIR PELLERIN: We will.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- to the  
6 opposition?

7 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yeah, yeah. We're going  
8 through our normal procedure where we hear from  
9 the witnesses first.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay.

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Just making  
13 sure.

14 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay.

15 MR. HANNA: Thank you, Madam Chair.  
16 Apologies on being late.

17 My name is J.P. Hanna, on behalf of the  
18 California Nurses Association. We are in strong  
19 support of this measure. Just wanted to make  
20 sure I get on the record. Thank you so much.

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you. You threw me  
22 off there. Okay.

23 MR. HANNA: Strong support. Strong  
24 support.

25 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

1 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: Me Too is in  
2 opposition.

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. We'll now take  
4 the opposition. Please come to the mic.

5 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: We go row by  
6 row.

7 MS. WILLIS: Linda Willis, President of  
8 Bakersfield Republican Women Federated, member of  
9 Greater Bakersfield Republican Assembly,  
10 California Republican Assembly, Revere Resource  
11 Group, and other Republican organizations, as  
12 well as a church-going Christian. Strong  
13 opposition to this bullying method you're using.

14 MS. DRAKE: Margaret Drake, citizen  
15 California, strongly oppose this -- this bill as  
16 a Santa Cruz, California resident.

17 MS. BAX: Hello. Thank you. My name is  
18 Gina Bax. I'm an immigrant, and I'm also the  
19 president for the Chico Evening Republican Women,  
20 and I strongly oppose this. Thank you.

21 MR. BUSSEY: Thirty seconds?

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: You may take 30 seconds.

23 MR. BUSSEY: Thank you.

1           My name is Nick Bussey, and I'm here on  
2 the behalf of the Placer County Republicans  
3 Assembly.

4           And look, redistricting, we could just  
5 have a simple blame for Trump for everything that  
6 goes on. And trust me, if it was that simple, I  
7 would blame the score board whenever the Niners  
8 have lost.

9           Now, I'm hearing words like transparency,  
10 representation and fairness, and it saddens me to  
11 be here today in this chamber and the other  
12 chamber and see the absolute opposite that's  
13 going on.

14           Now, under a supermajority, California's  
15 drowning in crime. We're not funding things like  
16 Proposition 36, unfounded Prop --

17           CHAIR PELLERIN: That is 30 seconds.  
18 Thank you so much.

19           MR. BUSSEY: Thank you. That was not 30  
20 seconds.

21           CHAIR PELLERIN: It wasn't?

22           UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

23           CHAIR PELLERIN: It was.

24           MR. BUSSEY: Oh, yeah. I oppose.

25           CHAIR PELLERIN: We got that. Thank you.

1 MR. NORIEGA: It's a pleasure to be with  
2 you all. My name is Nathaniel Noriega. So the  
3 nine most terrifying words in the English  
4 language are, I'm from the government and I'm  
5 here to help.

6 The California Independent Redistricting  
7 Commission was a bipartisan support, something  
8 that is nearly impossible today, as a check on  
9 all of you politicians.

10 There's a reason why those words were  
11 spoken by Reagan. Just because they're doing it,  
12 we can do it, too, is an argument that only a  
13 child will make.

14 We're not Texas. We are California. We  
15 are held to a different standard, or at least we  
16 should be.

17 It is my first time in our state's  
18 Capitol. It's beautiful. But when I see -- when  
19 I look outside and see someone smoking crystal  
20 meth --

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: And that is 30 seconds.  
22 Thank you.

23 MR. NORIEGA: -- on our Capitol steps --

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

25 MR. NORIEGA: -- it makes me wonder.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

2 MS. AGUILAR: My name is Denise Aguilar.  
3 I'm a co-founder of Freedom Angels, in  
4 opposition.

5 We represent thousands of families across  
6 the state of California. And I'm just a little  
7 confused on why the California Teachers  
8 Association is one of the main witnesses as our  
9 children are graduating illiterate. I think that  
10 the Teachers Association should focus on our  
11 children's education.

12 Thank you. And I oppose.

13 MS. THORNTON: Hi. Tara Thornton,  
14 co-founder of Freedom Angels.

15 I actually didn't have anything prepared  
16 to say. I'm just really shocked. We shouldn't  
17 be doing this. Wrong is wrong, and the people  
18 don't want this. We want independent.

19 I happen to be from one of the districts  
20 that will get decimated with zero representation.  
21 But even if I wasn't, this isn't the right way to  
22 go. And you actually don't have the support of  
23 the people on it.

24 You have a mandate to be independent and  
25 to not do political gerrymandering. I oppose.

1 MS. CARSTENS: Sophia Carstens,  
2 Decentralize America.

3 You can't actually redistrict without  
4 changing the ten-year rule around the census, and  
5 you can't do that without amending the California  
6 Constitution, which is very robust on this issue.  
7 And you can't do that without repealing the Equal  
8 Protections Clause, which you cannot do.

9 All due respect, the argument is that we  
10 want to preserve democracy. You cannot preserve  
11 democracy by suspending it. I oppose.

12 MS. SHAW: Sonja Shaw, Chino Valley  
13 Unified School Board President and candidate for  
14 State Superintendent, trying to take back this  
15 insane California.

16 You call it democratic and transparent.  
17 Give me a break. California's collapsing under  
18 Newsom and his cronies -- most of you are here --  
19 style leadership. Just look around. Lawlessness  
20 in our streets. Schools are failing. Our kids  
21 can only--only 47 percent can read at grade  
22 level, and the CTA is over here doing this?  
23 Shame on you, CTA. You make me nauseated.

24 Anyways, pushing ideologies in the  
25 classroom is something Newsom's wife -- I mean,

1 first partner in destruction is well aware of  
2 because she's pocketing while our kids are  
3 failing there.

4 CHAIR PELLERIN: That is 30 seconds.  
5 Thank you so much.

6 MS. SHAW: Put barf bags behind the  
7 seats.

8 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you so much.

9 MS. ABDOSH: Kelly Abdosh, not only  
10 citizen of this republic, but also wife and  
11 campaign coordinator to a campaign -- oh,  
12 goodness -- person running for State Assembly, in  
13 complete opposition of this far overreach. Thank  
14 you.

15 MS. MASTIN: Heather Mastin with the  
16 elder -- El Dorado County Republican Party.  
17 Sixty-three percent of Californians do not want  
18 this. I strongly oppose.

19 MR. WILLIAMS: Doug Williams, El Dorado  
20 Republican Central Committee. I strongly oppose  
21 this.

22 I am from South Lake Tahoe. I don't see  
23 any transparency on how these maps were drawn.

1           During the redistricting, they had  
2 complete transparency. We could see where the  
3 maps were.

4           I have nothing in common with Sacramento,  
5 and neither does any of the people in South Lake  
6 Tahoe or the Tahoe Basin.

7           MR. AVILA: Hello. My name is Oscar  
8 Avila with California Movement. Totally opposed  
9 to this.

10           This is election interference at the  
11 highest level. You're going to use past results  
12 of elections to base the new maps to rig the  
13 election. This is -- this is election  
14 interference at the highest level. You know,  
15 it's not fair.

16           You're going to literally move around the  
17 boundaries to make sure you get more votes to  
18 remove Republican seats. People voted for the  
19 state republic and you're going to remove those  
20 seats by stealing an election.

21           You guys are trying to commit a crime.  
22 It's a -- it's a -- it's a --

23           CHAIR PELLERIN: That is 30 seconds.  
24 Thank you.

25           MR. AVILA: Thank you. No.

1 MS. DE JANARO: Florentina De Janaro,  
2 representing moms in California with MOM Army,  
3 also representing Glad Tidings Church in Yuba  
4 City and Freedom Coalition in Yuba City. Oppose.

5 MS. KAY: Good morning. Shan Kay, a  
6 proud wife of an International Union of Elevator  
7 Constructors Local 18, and I oppose.

8 MS. CORCORAN: Yvette Corcoran, resident  
9 of San Francisco, and strongly oppose this  
10 redistricting.

11 MS. PATEL: Hello. My name is Priya  
12 Patel, representing the Voters of Los Angeles  
13 County, and I strongly oppose AB 604, and  
14 recognize it as an uprooting of our  
15 constitutional rights and democratic process in  
16 this county -- in the State of California.

17 MS. PATEL: This bill violates state  
18 constitutional law, as well as the Voters Rights  
19 Act. And it seems to me that the author of the  
20 bill and the co-authors that signed off on this  
21 bill haven't actually read the wording and  
22 verbiage of the bill.

23 So I think that the voters of Democ -- of  
24 California deserve more.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: That is 30 seconds, and  
2 this is for ACA 8. Thank you.

3 MS. KONG: Jessica Kong, from an affected  
4 district, in strong opposition.

5 MR. BOLOG: David Bolog, member in good  
6 standing in the International Brotherhood of  
7 Electrical Workers Local 18, also representing  
8 the California GOP Labor Caucus, with the  
9 majority of our members being represented in  
10 collective bargaining by the California Teachers  
11 Association.

12 California Republicans are already  
13 disenfranchised with representation. We're a  
14 60/40 state; 60 percent Republicans, 40 percent  
15 Democrats. Excuse me, got it backwards. Sixty  
16 percent Democrats, 40 percent Republican. This  
17 will disenfranchise us more, and we see that in  
18 the legislation already. We're 75/20 percent.

19 CHAIR PELLERIN: That is 30 seconds.

20 MR. BOLOG: Thank you.

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

22 MR. ARIANO: Good afternoon. My name is  
23 Angel Ariano. I came over six hours to--from  
24 Pomona, California to say that I am in  
25 opposition, and also that I am shocked to see the

1 lack of dignity in this room. And to use the  
2 existing processes that we have. And that's my  
3 statement.

4 MR. CARRILLO: My name is Jose Carrillo,  
5 constituent of Riverside County. I'm a proud  
6 member of the National Brotherhood of Electrical  
7 Workers Union in good standing. So I have my  
8 ticket and I don't know what unions are being --  
9 are a part of this, but I'm just a union member  
10 and I strongly oppose this. Yeah.

11 MS. CARRILLO: Maria Carrillo, mother,  
12 representing Riverside County, all the mothers  
13 that are fighting for our children's freedom and  
14 protections in every school.

15 Transparency, you guys keep bringing it  
16 up, but there's no transparency here.

17 TDS is a real thing. Stop hating Trump  
18 and just blaming him for everything. This is not  
19 right.

20 And Newsom said the people will speak.  
21 We the people will speak if that thing goes on  
22 the ballot on November 4th.

23 MS. BARBRO: Hi. Virginia Barbro from  
24 Solano county. I'm also a California native.  
25 And I strongly oppose.

1           And I'm asking all of you to support real  
2 transparency and have real issues and work  
3 together and listen to the people. Because the  
4 people of California are being slaughtered by  
5 regulations and all that you're proposing to do.  
6 It's not real. Your assertions are off, and you  
7 need to come up.

8           CHAIR PELLERIN: That is 30 seconds.

9           MS. BARBRO: Thank you.

10          CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

11          MS. NIXON: My name is Twyla Nixon. I'm  
12 a native Californian from Solano county, and I  
13 oppose the bill.

14               And everything is becoming very demonic.  
15 We're just asking for God's guidance on this and  
16 pray that the Lord will see us through this.  
17 Praise the Lord. Thank you.

18          MR. GONZALEZ: Madam Chair, Oracio  
19 Gonzalez on behalf of California's Business  
20 Roundtable, one of the early sponsors of  
21 California's independent redistricting process.  
22 We urge you to reject both bills and keep our  
23 process free of politics. Thank you.

24          MR. BURT: Greg Burt with the California  
25 Family Council, in opposition.

1           Some people have already brought up the  
2 issue of transparency. What was this I saw today  
3 out in the hallway was anything but transparent.

4           I'm not sure if the Republicans know  
5 this, but while you were trying to get your  
6 amendments laid out, they were shutting your mic  
7 off, right? So if you go back and listen to the  
8 recording, the mic was going off while you were  
9 talking.

10           How is that transparent, right? You're  
11 shutting people from just open conversation.  
12 We're all talking about democracy. Let's have an  
13 open debate.

14           You are not doing that, right? And then  
15 you go out and have a secret conversation when  
16 nobody saw what you decided.

17           CHAIR PELLERIN: That is 30 seconds.  
18 Thank you.

19           MR. BURT: All right.

20           REVEREND DR. FRAZIER: Hi. Reverend  
21 Dr. Angelo Frazier from Bakersfield, California.  
22 I oppose the bill.

23           I'm a Christian. I'm a Republican. And  
24 I just happen to be Black. This is racism 101  
25 all over again.

1 MS. BURRELL: My name is Dina Burrell.  
2 I'm from Tulare county, Visalia, California, and  
3 I oppose this bill.

4 I am a Christian. I'm not in any kind of  
5 organization, but I'm an American citizen, and I  
6 want my voice to be heard that I strongly oppose  
7 this bill. Thank you.

8 MS. BROKAW: I'm Ruth Brokaw. I'm from  
9 Visalia, California. I'm part of the pastoral  
10 staff at Legacy Church. I represent a lot of  
11 people who, along with me, oppose this bill.

12 MR. BEITHER: I'm Matt Beither.  
13 Appreciate you taking the time.

14 I'm a native Californian, strongly oppose  
15 the bill, and we'll go down fighting for kids'  
16 voice and everything. So appreciate you  
17 listening to our voice.

18 MS. ANDERSON: Hi. I'm Tina Anderson.  
19 I'm coming from Tulare county, Visalia,  
20 California, representing Central California,  
21 predominantly Republican. And we oppose this  
22 bill strongly.

23 MS. WEISAR: My name is Patricia Weisar.  
24 I'm from Tulare county. I'm a first-generation  
25 American.

1 I do not believe that my rights or my  
2 nationality, my primary nationality, is affected  
3 by redistricting, so I oppose the bill.

4 MS. AGUIRRE: My name is Myrna Aguirre.  
5 I'm here from Visalia, California, representing  
6 Deep Rooted Church, and I stand strongly against  
7 this bill.

8 MS. JIMENE: My name is Mary Jimenez from  
9 Visalia, California, Tulare county. I am in the  
10 pastoral ministry also, strong Christian  
11 Republican, and I strongly oppose this bill.

12 MS. CAMARILLO: Good afternoon. My name  
13 is Addie Camarillo from Visalia. I'm just a  
14 grandma. But thank you so much for listening to  
15 our voice. Thank you very, very much. And I do  
16 oppose this bill. Thank you.

17 MR. WILLIAMS: My turn? Okay. My name  
18 is Tim Williams -- I go by Tiki Tim -- from  
19 Suisun, California. You guys have probably heard  
20 a lot about us, about the California ForNever,  
21 you know, scam that's going on, right, you know?

22 But I heard about this meeting today and,  
23 yeah, really disturbs me. You guys could put my  
24 children in jeopardy. I'm a little upset.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: That is 30 seconds.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. WILLIAMS: I'm a little upset about  
4 this.

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: We hear you. Thank you  
6 so much.

7 Next speaker.

8 MR. WILLIAMS: That's all the time we  
9 get?

10 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yeah. Thirty seconds,  
11 yes.

12 MR. WILLIAMS: Remember, you're going to  
13 get judged.

14 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you so much.

15 MR. WILLIAMS: You're going to get  
16 judged.

17 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you so much.

18 MR. WILLIAMS: God is going to judge you.

19 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you so much.

20 MR. WILLIAMS: It's not a laughing  
21 matter.

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: I'm not laughing.

23 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, you are.

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: Next speaker.

1 MS. MUNOZ: Hi. My name is Euphemia  
2 Muñoz. I was born and raised in Tulare,  
3 California, and I strongly oppose this bill.

4 MR. MUNOZ: Good morning. My name is  
5 Iani Munoz. I was born and raised in Tulare,  
6 California also. I'm an Independent by choice.

7 My opinion on this whole redistricting  
8 matter, just seems to me the old adage of monkey  
9 see, monkey do. And it's unfortunate that we  
10 have to go in this direction simply to oppose  
11 another state that's trying to do the same thing.  
12 Which, in general, I believe they had the right  
13 to do.

14 However, California has already done this  
15 and now is simply throwing a monkey wrench into  
16 something to try to do it also. Thank you very  
17 much. I strongly oppose it.

18 MS. WOITALLA: Hi. My name is Ellen  
19 Woitalla. I am a citizen of Visalia, and I am  
20 also an elected member of the Tulare County GOP.

21 I spent 30 years plus being an elementary  
22 school teacher. And one of the basic tenets of  
23 education is learning to be fair.

1           This bill is not fair, so I stand before  
2 you as a retired teacher saying, let's do better,  
3 let's not redistrict, let's not gerrymander.

4           CHAIR PELLERIN: That is 30 seconds.  
5 Thank you.

6           MS. WOITALLA: Yeah. Thank you.

7           MS. VERDUGO: Hi. My name is Sandra  
8 Verdugo. I live in Visalia, California, Tulare  
9 county, and I strongly oppose this bill on behalf  
10 of myself and my family. Thank you.

11           MS. BARAJAS: Hi. My name is Juventina  
12 Barajas, known as Tina, born in Mexico, but a  
13 U.S. citizen. I oppose this bill.

14           We need to be fair and I believe it's  
15 just going to cause more problems. I oppose this  
16 bill.

17           MS. VAUGHN: Hi. I'm Kirsty Vaughn. I'm  
18 at Visalia, California, and I oppose this bill.

19           MS. SNYDER: My name is Valerie Snyder,  
20 and I'm from Visalia, California, and I oppose  
21 this bill.

22           MR. STAIB: Hi. I'm Troy Staib from  
23 Exeter, California, and I oppose the waste of my  
24 money, my tax dollars.

1           They seem like they keep going because  
2 y'all keep taking more of them. I'd like to have  
3 some of that back. And wasting that money on  
4 doing these type -- this type of legislation is  
5 unacceptable to me.

6           I'm opposed to it, obviously. And I  
7 would like to see you guys focus on things that  
8 are more pertinent to our day-to-day activities,  
9 like reduce the cost of doing business in  
10 California.

11           CHAIR PELLERIN: That is 30 seconds.  
12 Thank you.

13           MR. BRUMLEY: My name is Tom Brumley, and  
14 I'm here from Visalia, California.

15           I speak on behalf of the 30 -- 37 percent  
16 of the GOP of California, and opposing this  
17 legislation. And I believe it's a waste of time.

18           And I don't understand how you guys can  
19 be in favor or even see it manageable where  
20 you're trying to get back at what Texas is doing.  
21 Thank you.

22           CHAIR PELLERIN: Next speaker.

23           MS. BRUMLEY: Hi. My name is Jessica  
24 Brumley from Visalia, California, and I

1 absolutely oppose this bill as there's way better  
2 ways to spend our tax dollars. Thank you.

3 MS. ESCOBEDO: Ladies and gentlemen, my  
4 name is Judy Escobedo. I'm from Visalia,  
5 California. I'm here as a citizen of this state,  
6 and I would like to make sure that you understand  
7 that I vehemently oppose this bill.

8 We chose, we voted for this bill. We  
9 voted for this state to have a nonpartisan  
10 commission so that we could pick our politicians,  
11 not have our politicians pick our voters. So I'm  
12 hoping--

13 CHAIR PELLERIN: That is 30 seconds.  
14 Thank you.

15 MS. ESCOBEDO: Thank you.

16 MS. SYLVIA ESCOBEDO: Hi, ladies and  
17 gentlemen. My name is Sylvia Escobedo, and I'm  
18 originally from Texas. moved here back in '64.  
19 and we stayed here because we love California.  
20 But lately, I'm thinking I need to move back to  
21 Texas. Anyway, I greatly oppose this bill.

22 MS. SANTIAGO: My name is Maria Santiago,  
23 Visalia, California. Strongly oppose the bill.  
24 And I tell you right now, you think you're going  
25 to get away with something, but don't forget you

1 do answer -- you will answer to God and God  
2 Almighty.

3 Leave the children alone and leave our  
4 money alone. Use our money for the right things,  
5 not your own desires. Thank you.

6 MS. MORRIS: Hi. I'm Carmen Morris from  
7 Tulare County, and I strongly oppose this bill.

8 MS. PIERCE: Good morning. Thank you for  
9 hearing us today.

10 My name is Rachelle Pierce. I'm from the  
11 Visalia Republican Women. I'm a former member of  
12 the California PTA Board of Managers. I'm a  
13 retired military spouse, mother of three college  
14 students, and a proud native Texan. I oppose  
15 this bill.

16 Your everyday constituent is confused  
17 about where their district is, who their  
18 representative is. I've been working on the  
19 ground. People cannot tell me these things. And  
20 I think that redistricting would actually make it  
21 even worse. Thank you so much for hearing us  
22 today.

23 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

1 MS. BABB: Hi. My name is Gail Babb.  
2 I'm from Visalia, California, and I strongly  
3 oppose this bill.

4 MS. MORLAKE: I am Marla Morlake. I was  
5 bred and born in Southern California. Moved to  
6 Visalia about 20 years ago. And I strongly  
7 oppose this bill.

8 MS. ESCARSEGA: My name is Edie  
9 Escarsega. I'm from Visalia, born and raised  
10 there, Tulare County. I'm representing all of  
11 the Central Valley also. Strongly oppose this  
12 bill.

13 MR. GALVAN: My name is Gilbert Galvan  
14 from Visalia, California, Tulare County. As the  
15 famous words as Greta Thunberg, listen to me.  
16 Listen to me.

17 How dare you. How dare every one of you  
18 guys for trying to pass this bill. Shame on all  
19 of you. Shame, shame, shame. I oppose this  
20 bill. Thank you.

21 MS. GALVAN: Hi. My name is Evelyn  
22 Galvan. I'm from Tulare, California, and I  
23 oppose this bill strongly also.

1 MR. SHAFFER: Jim Shaffer, native  
2 Californian, Republican taxpayer, live in Taft,  
3 California, and I strongly oppose this bill.

4 MS. DARLING: Faith Darling, Bakersfield,  
5 Kern County.

6 And I have been speaking with a lot of  
7 Democrats that are -- I guess you call them  
8 fence-riders. And so many of them are very  
9 confused as the rest of us. And they are getting  
10 help from a lot of us because they didn't sign up  
11 for this either.

12 So just to let you know, you think you  
13 have a lot of votes on your side and you really  
14 don't. I strongly oppose the redistricting.

15 MR. KAUFMAN: Scott Kaufman, Howard  
16 Jarvis Taxpayers Association. We supported  
17 independent redistricting on the ballot and we  
18 will defend it when it's on the ballot. We  
19 oppose this measure. Thank you.

20 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Lance Christensen,  
21 California Policy Center. The one thing I love  
22 about this place is we can actually have a debate  
23 when it's allowed.

1           When I started in this building 20 years  
2 ago, my boss said, I may not like the results or  
3 the outcome, but I appreciate the process.

4           And what we've seen today is a show -- a  
5 circus and a show trial. So I hope the people of  
6 California see through this. And we oppose this  
7 redistricting effort. Thank you.

8           MS. RAMOS: Good morning. My name is  
9 Sandra Ramos. I'm also from Visalia, California.  
10 And I strongly oppose this bill because it's  
11 wrong and should never have even come to this,  
12 you know.

13           And also, because it's going to cost  
14 taxpayer money. Use the money on something good  
15 and useful. Don't waste your time on this.  
16 Thank you.

17           MR. RAMOS: Good morning and God bless  
18 you all. My name is Daniel Ramos from Legacy  
19 Church, Visalia, California. I'd like to say  
20 that I strongly oppose this bill.

21           I strongly oppose the nonsense of the  
22 leadership of Gavin Newsom and all the Democratic  
23 leaders, that they have nothing good to do except  
24 to drive people out of California because they

1 have no substance to them. We need to have

2 common sense again in government, so I --

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: That is 30 seconds.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. RAMOS: Thank you.

6 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

7 MR. FRIEND: Good morning, Madam Chair,

8 honorable Members. Michael Friend, native

9 Californian.

10 I was always brought up to believe that

11 two wrongs do not make a right. I strongly

12 oppose this bill and the blatant hypocrisy. What

13 a joke.

14 MR. JOHNSON: My name is Bernie Johnson.

15 I'm a resident here. I'm born and raised here in

16 California. And I oppose this bill.

17 MS. JACKSON: My name is Jennifer

18 Jackson. I'm from Burbank, California. And I'm

19 here to speak for the 16,000 people that wrote

20 in, took their time to write comments.

21 And you don't have the time to look at

22 them and you won't put them in as part of this

23 meeting. That's despicable. I am strongly

24 opposed to this bill. Thank you.

1 MS. SANDOVAL: Hello, I'm Lynn Sandoval  
2 from Hemet in Riverside County. Strongly  
3 opposing this whole measure.

4 This is my first time in Sacramento and  
5 observing what goes on here, and I also am really  
6 frustrated by seeing how you're silencing the  
7 voices.

8 And it's a huge waste of money. How do  
9 we have this kind of money to waste at a time  
10 like this in California when so much is getting  
11 cut? Thank you.

12 MR. SANDOVAL: Hi, Mr. Berman.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Good to see you.

14 MR. SANDOVAL: Hello. My name is Rudy  
15 Sandoval, and I'm from Hemet, California, a  
16 native Californian.

17 And I drove all the way from Hemet just  
18 to see what a rig operation you guys run over  
19 here in Sacramento, and I just want to thank you  
20 for proving me right. Thank you. And I do  
21 totally oppose this bill.

22 MR. KROLL: Good morning. My name is  
23 David Kroll. I am from San Diego, California.  
24 And I strongly oppose this bill.

1           And this is highly, highly unpopular.  
2   And you guys are actually doing us a favor, so  
3   thank you, because people are going to come out  
4   en masse against this. Have a great day. God  
5   bless.

6           MS. KIRKENDALL: Hi. My name is Deborah  
7   Kirkendall. I'm from Hilmar, Merced County.

8           And I first want to thank you for this  
9   honor. My dad and my husband, a disabled army  
10   veteran -- sorry -- with brain damage because  
11   they fought for our country, I get to come and  
12   speak before you, and I thank you for that.  
13   That's an honor.

14           But I want to tell you, my husband with  
15   brain damage, he knows this is wrong, and I'm  
16   here to say no for me and for him. Thank you for  
17   the honor to give my word.

18           MS. MINOR: Bella Minor with Central  
19   Valley Republican Party. And I strongly oppose  
20   this bill. And shame on everyone who is a  
21   support for this bill.

22           MS. LAU: Hi. I'm Catherine Lau from  
23   Tracy, California in San Joaquin County, and I  
24   represent Central Valley Impact Republicans, as  
25   well as Jim Shoemaker for Congress.

1           And as a native Californian, fourth  
2 generation, I am just appalled that you would  
3 take this opportunity to try to redistrict and  
4 not even -- in less than 24 hours, and not even  
5 read the bill. It's really, truly appalling, and  
6 I'm really saddened to hear this. And I strongly  
7 oppose this.

8           CHAIR PELLERIN: That's 30 seconds.  
9 Thank you.

10           MS. LAU: Thank you.

11           MR. BONILLA: Good evening, Committee.  
12 My name is Max Bonilla. I'm from Sacramento,  
13 California.

14           I'm a taxpayer who would definitely love  
15 to see our money going to better things. Two  
16 hundred and thirty million could definitely do  
17 things like helping rebuild the Palisades, or  
18 communities that have been impacted by recent  
19 fire -- wildfires, but not this.

20           Not this political gerrymandering. Not  
21 this political posturing. Not these ridiculous  
22 talking points by Governor Gavin Newsom. Thank  
23 you very much.

24           DONNELLA: My name is Donnella, and I  
25 oppose.

1 MR. GREGORY: Good morning. I'm Dennis  
2 Gregory. I'm from Eastvale, here in California.

3 And if you people weren't suffering so  
4 much from Trump derangement syndrome, you'd see  
5 the right thing and you'd understand what needs  
6 to be done in this state and this country. Open  
7 your eyes before it's too late.

8 MS. ANGELI: Good morning. Olivia Angeli  
9 from Elk Grove. Strongly oppose this.

10 MS. PLENT: Good afternoon. My name is  
11 Lena Plent from Chino Hills, California. I  
12 strongly oppose this bill.

13 MR. KNUTSEN: Good morning. Lars  
14 Knutsen, El Dorado County.

15 There's no political solution to this  
16 spiritual problem. And I've been praying for  
17 Gavin Newsom since he was the mayor.

18 And I'd encourage all of us to take a  
19 look at our own hearts. Be led by the true  
20 spirit of the living God. And I just ask God to  
21 bless you. May his wisdom flow, and tell the  
22 devil to get out in Jesus' name.

23 MR. NIIMI: My name is Riley Niimi. I'm  
24 from Temecula, California.

1           And I want to tell you to oppose this  
2 because Republicans in California are already  
3 greatly underrepresented. We only have nine  
4 congressional seats out of 52, which means we  
5 have less than 20 percent representation in  
6 Congress, although Republicans make up 40 percent  
7 of the State of California. So thank you.

8           MS. ALLERS: Good morning. I'm Priscilla  
9 Allers from Montrose, California in Los Angeles  
10 county, and I strongly oppose this Bill.

11           MR. PANTOJA: My name is Adan Pantoja  
12 from Riverside, and I strongly oppose this Bill.

13           MS. SOPHIA PANTOJA: My name is Sophia  
14 Bell from -- my name is Sophia Pantoja from  
15 Riverside. California, and I strongly oppose  
16 this Bill.

17           MS. CECILIA PANTOJA: My name is Cecilia  
18 Pantoja, and I strongly oppose this Bill.

19           MS. ANNETTE PANTOJA: My name is Annette  
20 Pantoja, and I'm from Riverside, and I strongly  
21 oppose this Bill.

22           MR. JOHNSON: My name is Timothy Johnson  
23 from Fontana. There is no wisdom and no  
24 understanding and no counsel against the Lord. I  
25 strongly oppose this bill.

1 MR. SHOEMAKER: I'm Jim Shoemaker, and  
2 I'm a candidate for the 9th Congressional  
3 District, so I do oppose this Bill.

4 I see that -- what's happening. We need  
5 to go back and let the Commission handle all  
6 these things. I'd appreciate you guys to vote  
7 no.

8 MR. SCHULTZ: Hello, Dave Schultz,  
9 Bakersfield, California. I oppose this bill.

10 I don't understand why we are so involved  
11 that we have to redistrict our districts because  
12 something that is happening halfway across the  
13 country.

14 I oppose this bill. I think we should  
15 pay attention to what is really important to the  
16 people of California.

17 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Seeing no  
18 witnesses in opposition, we'll bring it back to  
19 the dais.

20 Members, any questions, comments?

21 Assembly Member Bennett.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Thank you very  
23 much, Madam Chair. I appreciate the indulgence.  
24 I have nine points. I'm going to read them. I'd

1 like to speak them all, but I want to make sure I  
2 actually get this said properly.

3 And the first point is, the fundamental  
4 question I think in front of us is who should  
5 have control of the power, the vast power of the  
6 federal government.

7 And our founding fathers agreed hundreds  
8 of years ago on a special form of democracy  
9 designed to protect our democracy from power  
10 grabs. They created the rules and norms for how  
11 we compete for power. That's the fundamental  
12 problem that democracies are created to solve.

13 We could have it just be military might.  
14 Whoever's strongest, they get the power. Not in  
15 the United States. We created these rules, and  
16 we're a rule of law, not men. We have checks and  
17 balances. We have a free press. And we created  
18 all kinds of historical norms that kept us all  
19 agreeing we would follow those rules rather than  
20 go to war with each other over power.

21 Democracy requires many of these critical  
22 components to work. Not just one of them, but  
23 all of these critical components need to work for  
24 democracy to thrive.

1 Autocrats around the world today have  
2 learned to grab power by weakening these  
3 democratic institutions, rules, and norms.  
4 Weakening democracy by attacking and ignoring  
5 those rules and norms by intimidation, by deceit,  
6 by militarization of our civilian life. Those  
7 are all ways you weaken those norms that we have  
8 to have if we want to transfer power peacefully,  
9 and here in the United States.

10 Autocrats count on democratic advocates  
11 to play by the old rules while they grab power  
12 using their new rules. And I want to repeat  
13 that. Autocrats count on democracy advocates to  
14 play by the old rules while they grab power using  
15 their new rules.

16 It's a false scenario to say we can win  
17 simply by working harder, right? While autocrats  
18 grab power using their old rules.

19 A few decades ago, Russia was a  
20 democracy. Today, democratic advocates, no  
21 matter how hard they work, have no chance of  
22 voting Putin out of power. He will kill off any  
23 of the stronger opponents that he has.

24 Many of us prefer the old rules. We  
25 prefer the agreement we all had to play by those

1 rules, right? But when autocrats change the  
2 rules and the norms that we are using to decide  
3 who has power, we can either fight back or we can  
4 potentially permanently lose the ability ever to  
5 fight back again in the future.

6 That is the question in front of us, in  
7 spite of all kinds of other distractions we will  
8 have. What are the rules and norms for how we  
9 transfer power?

10 This is an attempt to grab control of the  
11 power of the House of Representatives with  
12 redistricting and permanently potentially grab  
13 that control.

14 That is too big of a risk for us to say,  
15 well, we like doing it the other way. We like  
16 the more get along, everybody follow democratic  
17 way. We simply don't have that choice today.

18 I strongly support this bill. I  
19 appreciate the Speaker's leadership. I  
20 appreciate the Chair's leadership in bringing  
21 this forward. Thank you very much.

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: Assembly Member Tangipa.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. I hope  
24 you bear with me because I spent a lot of time  
25 trying to catch up, trying to read, trying to

1 inform myself as much as possible. Because we've  
2 had so little time, so little time that even the  
3 presenters stated that they didn't even read the  
4 bill.

5 And I would hope that the authors or --  
6 don't hold -- or the other co-authors on this  
7 bill, I hope they don't hold the same sentiment  
8 that the people of California don't even deserve  
9 a read on a bill.

10 I have a few technical questions,  
11 actually. And first and foremost, I do want to  
12 say thank you to the opposition testimony. I can  
13 say this, what we've seen today is, I know I'm a  
14 conservative, I know I'm a Republican, I know  
15 that we have differences, but the maps that both  
16 of you worked on, especially in the beginning,  
17 too, did give representation.

18 Now, I can say that I did not vote on the  
19 fair Commission mainly because I was 12 years old  
20 at the time, but I respected it. I truly  
21 respected it. And a lot of the work and the  
22 deliberation -- because I was one of those kids  
23 that was overly, overly into, you know, our  
24 elected leaders. And a big portion of that is  
25 because I grew up right down the street from the

1 Capitol, you know, in one of the poorest  
2 communities in the entire state of California.

3 And actually one of the roughest gang-  
4 affiliated communities. And it was those gang  
5 members that actually protected me, paid for me  
6 to get into this position.

7 And now I can proudly say, as the first  
8 Polynesian individual ever elected to the State  
9 of California, you know, it was done by an  
10 Independent Redistricting Commission that  
11 actually believed in the efficacy of what this  
12 state can be.

13 And there's a lot that we've heard today  
14 of testimony, you know, and we've seen a true  
15 bipartisan coalition here just trying to protect  
16 because California should lead the way.

17 When other states decide to do something  
18 else, we shouldn't react to them. We should  
19 prove by example that we can do this better.  
20 That we create the foundations for the rest of  
21 the nation. Because it's supposed to go, as  
22 California goes, the nation. That's -- we've  
23 lost that. And that's what we've seen and heard  
24 today.

1 I mean, we can't even read our own bill,  
2 but we'll decide to present it and vote on it,  
3 too. That's insanity. And that's heartbreaking  
4 to the rest of Californians.

5 Because, again, I was one of those kids  
6 who just obsessed that the policymakers in this  
7 building actually cared about the people of  
8 California.

9 But how can you say you actually care  
10 about the people of California if you didn't even  
11 read it, you know? And that breaks my heart  
12 because I spend so much time on this. Because  
13 I'll work myself to death trying, trying, trying  
14 to make sure -- I didn't ask a question, but I  
15 just wanted to make sure --

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: No. But you're  
17 misrepresenting what I said, Mr. Tangipa. And  
18 you're doing it over and over and over again.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And simply --

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: And I will  
21 correct the record when it's my time.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I'm just  
23 asking --

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Assembly Member  
25 Tangipa, let's let --

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah.

2 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- Assembly Member  
3 Berman speak.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But I was --  
5 no.

6 CHAIR PELLERIN: Tangipa, let's --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Go ahead. Just  
8 know that --

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But I just  
10 wasn't --

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- Tangipa is  
12 absolutely misrepresenting what I said over and  
13 over again.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. Do you  
15 want me to (inaudible)?

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Which he needs  
17 to do to try to justify his position on this  
18 bill.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I can.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: And I understand  
21 that.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But you  
23 stated --

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Go ahead.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- you  
2 supported it prior to seeing it. Is that not  
3 what you said verbatim?

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: What I said is  
5 that there were discussions about the concept of  
6 the bill and I absolutely support those concepts.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Prior to  
8 reading them, right?

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: The bill is five  
10 pages long. I'm sorry it took you so long to  
11 read it.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I'm sorry  
14 that --

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And I  
16 understand.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- yesterday  
18 morning was too long --

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: That's okay.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- for you to be  
21 able to read a five-page bill.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: That's all  
23 right.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: But we discuss  
25 as legislators, right?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah. Uh-huh.

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: We discuss  
3 concepts. We discuss ideas. We decide whether  
4 or not we're going to support things.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, because  
6 this bill is attached to so many --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So I don't  
8 understand why that's a new concept for you.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: That's okay.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: But I'm glad  
11 that you took 36 hours to --

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- read a five-  
14 page bill.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It does.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: And --

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It does take me  
18 time.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: And I welcome a  
20 debate.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It does take me  
22 time because I will take 36 hours to read a five-  
23 page bill for 40 million people in this state  
24 because they deserve it. Because they deserve  
25 it.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: It's five pages,  
2 Mr. Tangipa.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: That's okay.  
4 And those five pages --

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. We're not  
6 debating the length of the time it takes to read  
7 five pages. Let's stick to the substance of the  
8 bill, please.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Exactly. Thank  
10 you, Madam Chair. So, truly, I appreciate it  
11 all.

12 Some of my technical questions, too. The  
13 lawyer that is here, so you have gone through the  
14 bill, right? You have read the language. It  
15 probably took you -- you got through it a lot  
16 faster than I did, I assume.

17 Can I ask you who is -- and actually,  
18 we're going to become really good friends. I  
19 hope you know that. Because who is paying your  
20 retainer?

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Excuse me, Madam  
22 Chair. The Assembly Member seems to be making  
23 veiled threats to my witness, which I don't  
24 appreciate. Well, I don't know why he's talking

1 about becoming really good friends. Let's just  
2 ask some questions and get some answers.

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: If we could definitely  
4 stick to just asking the questions --

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes.

6 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- through the Chair.  
7 Thank you.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, because  
9 he is here to answer the legal question --

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Doesn't mean  
11 he's going to be your friend.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. That's  
13 fine.

14 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Madam Chair, are we  
15 just going to -- are we going to allow my  
16 colleague to ask questions, or is this going to  
17 be drawn out even longer?

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: But I just would  
19 like to --

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I don't know.  
21 You did this (inaudible).

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: It's kind of going back  
23 and forth there. Let's have one person speak at  
24 a time.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Mr. Berman, I  
2 asked you to respect us to ask these questions.

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: Assembly Member Tangipa,  
4 please ask your question to the witness.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: As long as you  
6 don't make veiled threats to my witnesses, that's  
7 no problem at all.

8 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: A threat to  
9 (inaudible).

10 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Let's just let a  
11 Assembly Member Tangipa ask his question, please.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, who is  
13 funding the retainer for you to be here, and how  
14 long have you seen the language in this bill?  
15 When did you first get it and when did you start  
16 seeing it? Because I did not get it till  
17 yesterday. So how much time did you have to  
18 review this?

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Go ahead.

20 MR. SILVA: Mr. Tangipa, I'm here to  
21 answer technical questions about how the bill  
22 works. I'm not here to talk -- reveal attorney-  
23 client privileged information about the  
24 representation I provide, or anything that went

1 into the work product. I can answer questions  
2 about the face of the measure.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, just for  
4 me, since it takes me so long to read, I just  
5 wanted to know how long you had to read it, and  
6 if you as a representative --

7 CHAIR PELLERIN: Let's stick to the  
8 merits of the bill. Let's ask questions about --

9 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Isn't there -- this  
10 is back for comment.

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: How long it takes  
12 somebody to read a bill is not --

13 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: (Inaudible) covered  
14 by attorney-client privilege.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: (Inaudible.) We  
16 consult with people before we introduce those  
17 bills.

18 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: This isn't a  
20 foreign concept. This isn't a lack of  
21 transparency.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So you admitted  
23 that --

24

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Assembly Member Tangipa,  
2 if you have a question about the merits of the  
3 bill, please ask it.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. Then  
5 we'll go into even more of the merits.

6 So under the new redistricting proposal,  
7 in a lot of these -- and the main reason why I'm  
8 asking for so much time is because the questions  
9 that I prepped yesterday when I saw this all  
10 changed because the maps changed at 8:00 p.m.  
11 last night.

12 And I think that it's well within the  
13 process to say like I should know -- the maps  
14 changed at eight o'clock, at 8:00 p.m. last  
15 night.

16 CHAIR PELLERIN: The maps were released  
17 on Friday, I believe, and they have not changed.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: They change per  
19 the census tract.

20 Madam Chair, the fact that you don't know  
21 that should cause worry to everybody.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Assembly Member  
23 Tangipa --

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

2 8:00 a.m. yesterday. Sorry. Sorry. Not

3 8:00 p.m. 8:00 a.m. yesterday.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: They changed at

5 8:00 p.m. last night. There was a change at

6 8:00 p.m.

7 CHAIR PELLERIN: My understanding, it was

8 8:00 a.m. But --

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I am eager to

10 hear your questions --

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: What are your

12 questions --

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- in regards to

14 whatever changes there were to the maps.

15 CHAIR PELLERIN: Regardless, what is your

16 question to the merits of the bill?

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. Well,

18 that Clovis would be split into three different

19 congressional districts. Not anymore, because

20 the last change that I got as of 2 hours ago on

21 the new maps, now they are kept into one

22 district.

23 Can you explain the rationale for

24 splitting up Clovis residents, thus weakening

25 their voice?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I think that  
2 would be a better question for the authors of the  
3 bill that actually has to do with the maps.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well --

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: My bill has to  
6 do with putting -- or the Speaker's bill --  
7 constitutional amendment has to do with giving  
8 voters the opportunity to have their voices heard  
9 and whether or not we will have a special  
10 election on November 4th.

11 So I am not prepared to speak to the  
12 specific iterations of the maps, but I believe  
13 somebody will be presenting that bill after this  
14 ACA, who hopefully will be better prepared to  
15 discuss individual line drawing of communities.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, the maps  
17 are pertinent to this ACA because they're all  
18 synonymous.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: But the ACA is  
20 to give voters the voice and an opportunity to  
21 have their voices heard on whether or not they  
22 want to have a mid-decade redistricting.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Can you speak  
24 to the cost of the ACA and how much it's going to  
25 cost the taxpayers of California, then?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: About the same  
2 as the recall --

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: How much is  
4 that?

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- that  
6 Republicans put forward.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: How much is  
8 that?

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I believe  
10 it's --

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, but that  
12 recall was done by the citizens' initiative. It  
13 wasn't done by this body. Fundamentally  
14 (inaudible).

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: But the answer  
16 remains the same, that it's the same cost. Your  
17 question was what's the cost, and I said it's the  
18 same as the recall. Doesn't matter who put it on  
19 the ballot.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But how could  
21 you say its the same as the recall --

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: (Inaudible)  
23 answer.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- since  
25 2021 -- or 2021 to where we're at now, we've seen

1 40 percent inflation rates. So is it 40 percent  
2 more with the tariffs?

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Well, I mean,  
4 with the tariffs that Trump just put into effect,  
5 it's probably more than 40 percent inflation  
6 rates.

7 But I believe the cost of the special  
8 election is --

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Mr. Berman, I'd  
10 ask you to speak the merits --

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- approximately  
12 \$200 million.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- of the  
14 question that I asked. Just how much does it  
15 cost?

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: (Inaudible.)

17 CHAIR PELLERIN: Mr. Tangipa, excuse me.  
18 Could you just let him answer the question? He's  
19 doing so. Just close your mouth, open your ears,  
20 listen to him for a second.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Did you  
22 (inaudible)? I just said I believe it's  
23 approximately \$200 million.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: We all need to listen to  
2 each other. So when someone else is speaking,  
3 let's have one speaker at a time.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So why do I  
5 have to close my mouth when somebody else  
6 interrupts me?

7 CHAIR PELLERIN: I'm just saying -- no.  
8 I'm saying it to both of you.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Do you not find  
10 that --

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: I'm going to say that to  
12 both of you. I'm going to say that to both of  
13 you. Please refrain from speaking when the other  
14 person is speaking.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Thank you, Madam  
16 Chair.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Ask the  
18 question.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: How much does  
20 this cost?

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Is there a  
22 actual fiscal analysis on how much this will cost  
23 the State of California in its current 2025-2026  
24 cost. Not to the 2021. You can't -- it doesn't  
25 make sense.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Well, I think  
2 the recall was approximately \$200 million, so  
3 this will be over \$200 million.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I think  
6 somewhere between 200 and \$250 million.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. And so  
8 with a rolling and looming \$20 billion deficit  
9 predicted by the LAO all the way until 2028, you  
10 believe that it's within the right that the State  
11 of California and this legislative body, not the  
12 people who put it on the initiative -- when it  
13 came to the recall election, that was done  
14 through a citizens' initiative. Nobody here did  
15 that.

16 This is being done by us, the legislators  
17 here. Hang on.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: By all means,  
19 please.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So --

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I'll let you  
22 pontificate as long as you want.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah. Thank  
24 you. I appreciate that.

1           Is, do you believe that that 200 -- and  
2 we can adjust cost for inflation -- \$300 million  
3 is what a state in a massive deficit and a  
4 rolling deficit year over year predicted by the  
5 LAO is what this state should be spending money  
6 on?

7           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Can I answer?

8           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes, sir.

9           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Thank you,  
10 Mr. Tangipa.

11           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you.

12           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: So, absolutely.

13 And the reason for that is because the damage  
14 that this Republican Congress has done to the  
15 State of California makes \$250 million looks like  
16 couch cushion change.

17           One of my communities that I represent,  
18 Santa Clara county, is going to voters -- to the  
19 ballot to try to recoup some of the over  
20 \$1 billion, over \$1 billion just to the County of  
21 Santa Clara, to their health system because of  
22 Trump's big, beautiful bill and the decimation  
23 that that is having that all nine Republican  
24 Members of California's congressional delegation  
25 voted on like a bunch of feckless followers.

1           No matter the damage that is doing to  
2     their communities, the billions of dollars that  
3     the Republican Congress is taking away, and the  
4     cost that that's having for Californians and  
5     California taxpayers.

6           And so that's just Santa Clara county,  
7     two million people, and it's over a \$1 billion  
8     hit that their healthcare system is taking that  
9     the poorest residents of Santa Clara county rely  
10    on just to get their basic healthcare. Over  
11    \$1 billion. Imagine the cost that this  
12    Republican Congress is costing the entire State  
13    of California.

14           So do I think that we should spend  
15    \$200 million for the opportunity to avoid  
16    billions of dollars in Republican hits to our  
17    budget? I absolutely do. And I'm curious to see  
18    if voters will agree with me.

19           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA:

20           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Thank you.

21           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: The biggest  
22    thing that I'm looking at -- and, again, we've  
23    had very, very little time, very little time.

24           The question for the Members that were on  
25    the Citizens Redistricting Commission, how much

1 time on average did you spend when it comes to  
2 developing maps?

3 MS. RAYA: Well, we were the first  
4 Commission. And because the Voters Act for  
5 Congress -- voted First Act for Congress passed  
6 pretty late, we got the congressional map along  
7 with the state legislative maps, and then we had  
8 to do it one month earlier. So I think in total  
9 we had seven-and-a-half months.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Seven-and-a-  
11 half months.

12 MS. RAYA: Yeah. Which we worked pretty,  
13 pretty long hours to meet the deadlines.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: How many  
15 meetings do you think you can estimate around?

16 MS. RAYA: We had about a hundred  
17 meetings. Some of them were dedicated public  
18 input hearings and some of them were business  
19 meetings. We always had public input available  
20 at those meetings.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you. And  
22 how many hours do you think?

23 MS. DYE: It would be the same.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah.

25 MS. RAYA: Yeah.

1 MS. DYE: The Commission was very  
2 diligent in all Members participating to the  
3 fullest.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: What do you  
5 think were some of the best protections that the  
6 independent redistricting, you know, really  
7 implemented, you know, some of the rules and  
8 stipulations? Can you go over that?

9 Because when -- you know, I just have  
10 very, very large, very large worries, especially  
11 with this ACA, that not only does it open us up  
12 for litigation just simply in the way that it's  
13 written, but that we're going to do this and  
14 then -- you know, some of us believe that we  
15 should spend hundreds of millions of dollars for  
16 something that will be sued and will be  
17 challenged, or could be implemented, and then --  
18 I mean, we don't even, it won't even work by  
19 getting this onto the ballot.

20 And the big reason why I say that is  
21 because when it states here that redistricting in  
22 all the other states, so there's a portion of the  
23 bill that talks about that this won't kick into  
24 effect unless Texas, Florida and all the other  
25 states, you know, don't redistrict unless court

1 ordered. Unless court ordered. That's in the  
2 bill.

3 Texas on the 7th of July got a DOJ  
4 notice, stated that they had a -- they had to do  
5 something different. So if they eventually get a  
6 court order, and we come back to this, we're  
7 going to do this ACA and it's not even going to  
8 be able to be implemented because the rules and  
9 stipulations under this ACA change that.

10 So the protections under the Independent  
11 Redistricting Commission, can you speak to the  
12 merits of that?

13 MS. DYE: So when we talk about the CRC,  
14 we talk about its independence, its transparency  
15 and the fact that it's community centered. So  
16 the independence is that it's a multipartisan  
17 Commission consisting of five Democrats, five  
18 Republicans and four Independents.

19 And as you may have heard me mention, we  
20 rotated the chair and the vice chair, so that  
21 every meeting we switched it up so that no party  
22 was in control at any time.

23 For transparency, everything we did was  
24 in the light of day. We drew lines in real time  
25 when we could, especially during the refinement

1 period. Every map that we asked -- we directed  
2 our line drawing consultants to create was  
3 immediately shared with the public.

4 People were allowed to comment as these  
5 maps are being presented, and we would receive  
6 that input and put it in the public input file.

7 The current Commission, by the way, has a  
8 very nice dashboard showing all of the public  
9 comment they got and interactive. Wish we had  
10 that technology back in 2011.

11 And then, finally, that it's a very  
12 community centered process. So the fact that we  
13 had a hundred meetings that anyone could come and  
14 testify, or they could email. We were getting,  
15 you know, tweets at the time, and, you know,  
16 letters, hand-drawn maps, all kinds of different  
17 public testimony that we all worked really hard  
18 to read.

19 We had over, I think, 22,000 public  
20 comments in our cycle. I think the current  
21 Commission had about 35,000 public comments,  
22 thanks to new technology. So that was a very  
23 critical part, was this collaboration and  
24 interaction with the public.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah. I spent  
2 a lot of time just listening into these  
3 commissions, and I could tell you that I truly,  
4 truly thank you for the sacrifice that you made  
5 to sit on there. Because, I mean, I did it from  
6 a phone and I got to listen because I cared about  
7 my community. This is before any political  
8 aspirations, any, any goals, just to listen into  
9 the Commission.

10 And it's something that I can say, you  
11 know, as they drew the maps in real time, that's  
12 a process, right? That the maps have to be drawn  
13 in public view and you can see the lines. That's  
14 part of the Redistricting Commission, right?

15 MS. DYE: Yeah. Just to be clear, the  
16 initial maps, you know, we would give direction  
17 in public to our line drawing consultants because  
18 took a lot of computer crunching.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Uh-huh.

20 MS. DYE: And they would come back and  
21 present them to make sure it was consistent with  
22 our direction. And those were available for the  
23 public to view and comment on.

1           And when they were official draft maps,  
2 they had to be posted for 14 days with no  
3 changes.

4           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: One of the  
5 coolest things that I got to see is like which  
6 communities would come out, and they'd all say,  
7 keep us together and do all this. And just to  
8 see like the people of California really to just  
9 say, like, have a vested interest.

10           CHAIR PELLERIN: Yeah. I think there's  
11 no doubt that we support the work of the  
12 Independent Redistricting Commission.

13           But if we could bring the conversation  
14 back to the merits of the bill, that would be  
15 great.

16           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Could you  
17 continue on some of the transparency portions of  
18 that and how the transparency is different  
19 compared to the bill that we're seeing today?

20           MS. DYE: Well, so live map drawing,  
21 interactive map drawing, we were not allowed to  
22 discuss redistricting matters outside of a public  
23 meeting, so commissioners were barred from  
24 discussing anything not in public.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: And I'd like to bring in  
2 a Assembly Member Bennett. You have a question?

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Yeah, I just  
4 have a question, and that is that, you know, when  
5 you watch committees at the national level, and  
6 oftentimes committees have some kind of time  
7 limit on each member in terms of the amount of  
8 time they get to talk, or else literally we could  
9 keep going and asking more questions about  
10 transparency and more questions about  
11 transparency.

12 I'm just raising the question. I would  
13 propose that this issue may be one of those ones  
14 where we need to have some kind of time limit. I  
15 want it to be fair, want everybody to have -- but  
16 there's -- it is appropriate for legislative  
17 bodies to at some point in time identify so a  
18 Member can focus on their most important  
19 questions before their time limit is up.

20 CHAIR PELLERIN: Absolutely. We're  
21 trying to bring the conversation back to the  
22 merits of the bill.

23 There's no doubt that we honor and  
24 appreciate the work that you've done for our  
25 state, but these are very uncertain and different

1 times now, and we're no longer governing in a  
2 democracy. So we are having to move quickly in  
3 order to meet the timelines of doing this work  
4 and giving the voters an opportunity to vote on  
5 whether they support these maps or not.

6 Does any other Member have a question on  
7 the content of the bill?

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But, Madam  
9 Chair, I'm not done yet.

10 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Okay.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And so I  
12 know --

13 CHAIR PELLERIN: What is your question  
14 about the merits of the bill?

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah, yeah.  
16 It's mainly I'm just trying to highlight the  
17 transparency differences between the ACA and  
18 that, so -- and I think it's --

19 CHAIR PELLERIN: Let's focus on the  
20 merits of this bill, on what's being proposed  
21 today.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Is a comparison  
23 to the current iteration of what we do now to  
24 what we're trying to do not to the merits of this  
25 bill? Is that what you're saying?

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: I think you've made your  
2 point on that. And if we can ask any other  
3 questions about ACA 8, please do so.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And I  
5 completely agree, and I understand. And, you  
6 know, I mean, I just tried to get a time limit on  
7 me for something that we just heard had thousands  
8 of hours of negotiation, thousands and thousands  
9 and thousands of hours, and community meetings,  
10 hundreds of meetings. And now I'm being  
11 attempted to stop with 20 minutes of questioning.

12 CHAIR PELLERIN: I'm just --

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Does that not  
14 worry us?

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Madam Chair --

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But when it  
17 comes to the transparency --

18 CHAIR PELLERIN: Excuse me.

19 Assembly Member Bennett.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: It is always  
21 appropriate for the Chair to identify when an  
22 appropriate time limit has come. That's normal  
23 procedure. So, yes, at some point in time. I'm  
24 not saying it's 20 minutes. It's up to the  
25 Chair.

1 But the issue should be how much time is  
2 too much time for anybody to take to dominate so  
3 that we can go on and do the legislative  
4 business.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah.

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: So that  
7 somebody doesn't abuse this privilege that we all  
8 have to speak here.

9 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yes. We have a lot of  
10 work to do and we want to keep the questions to  
11 the content and merits of the bill.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. Well,  
13 then I will continue, hopefully, Mr. Berman.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: It's up to the  
15 Chair.

16 CHAIR PELLERIN: Do you have another  
17 question?

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I do.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Oh, perfect.

20 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Under the new  
22 redistricting proposal, Fresno would be split  
23 into four different congressional districts. How  
24 does that benefit the City of Fresno?

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Again, we're not  
2 doing the content of the districts. This is  
3 about the ACA 8. That is, putting the measure  
4 before the voters to do a constitutional  
5 amendment. That is what we're talking about  
6 here.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: ACA 8 is --

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: (Inaudible) the  
9 other bill is going to be presented.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: The contents of  
11 the bill in ACA 8, it states AB 604 and the maps.

12 CHAIR PELLERIN: Uh-huh.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: How is that not  
14 pertinent to this?

15 CHAIR PELLERIN: Because I think we need  
16 to be speaking to the author of that bill as far  
17 as the map and the lines and what they're doing.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: There's a  
19 direct line between what can be done. So if --

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Sorry. I guess  
21 I was just --

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- if AB 604  
23 doesn't pass, then ACA 8 no longer moves forward.  
24 Because it can't, because it's written into the  
25 legislation. I'm trying to understand.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Let's see if Assembly  
2 Member Berman has a response.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I'll defer to  
4 the authors of that bill when they present that  
5 bill in front of this Committee, I'm guessing  
6 around midnight, to give an opportunity to  
7 discuss the specific line drawing of different  
8 communities, like I mentioned about half an hour  
9 ago.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay.

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So when will  
13 the public comments be released to the Members of  
14 the Committee and -- okay.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I'm sorry?

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: When will the  
17 public comments be released to the members of the  
18 public?

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: That's not a  
20 question for me. That's up to the chair of the  
21 Committee, so ...

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: We're following the  
23 typical procedures for comments, and those will  
24 be -- they're not -- they're public to our

1 Members, and then they will be made public after  
2 the bill is processed.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. How are  
4 we supposed to vote on this, like when we haven't  
5 even seen those public comments?

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Well, you have  
7 the five-page bill in front of you, and so I  
8 think the -- what you are voting on is the bill.  
9 It is not the public comments.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So on that  
11 five-page bill it states AB 604 and SB 280.

12 Okay. Yeah. It took me a little while  
13 because. Those are longer than this one. It is.  
14 Yeah.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So on that  
16 five-page bill it states AB 604 and SB 280.  
17 Those bills are hundreds of pages long. Since  
18 they're attached to each other, have you read  
19 those?

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I have not read  
21 every page of those bills.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Yeah.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It took me a  
25 little while because --

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I bet. Those  
2 are longer than this one.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It is.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Yeah.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So, you know,  
6 I'm just -- since they're attached to each  
7 other --

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Yeah.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- they cannot  
10 pass without the other one not passing. I really  
11 do think the merits of one or the other are very  
12 important to that.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Uh-huh.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And so is it  
15 possible that these maps are struck down in  
16 court, and we're about to spend hundreds of  
17 millions of dollars because of the way that we've  
18 done this with such urgency?

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I'm not prepared  
20 to predict what the courts might do.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Point of order.  
22 Point of order.

23 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Yes.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Could I make a  
2 motion that every Member's time speaking here is  
3 limited to 25 minutes?

4 (Pause on the record.)

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: I'm trying to provide  
6 opportunity for people to speak to the measures  
7 and ask the questions that they have.

8 I know this is a very fast-moving  
9 process. I've already explained the reason why  
10 we are moving quickly on this issue. And I don't  
11 want people to be abusing this opportunity to ask  
12 pertinent questions related to the bills.

13 So give me one second here.

14 (Pause on the record.)

15 CHAIR PELLERIN: So I believe the  
16 questions you've asked so far have been answered.  
17 Do you have additional questions?

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes, ma'am.

19 CHAIR PELLERIN: You may go ahead and ask  
20 another one.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you.

22 Is there a work into the bill with the  
23 fiscal cost of legal challenges?

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I'm sorry, say  
25 that one more time.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Is there a work  
2 into the bill for legal challenges that are --  
3 that I presume are going to show up left and  
4 right?

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Is there work in  
6 the bill?

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Is there a --  
8 when lawsuits --

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Happen.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- happen --

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Yeah.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- do we  
13 have -- are we prepared for that with this ACA?

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: We have a very  
15 robust Department of Justice that is prepared to  
16 defend new laws that are passed by the  
17 Legislature, yes.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: The way that  
19 the districts are drawn, you know, it really  
20 worries me that it makes it possible for us to  
21 not just spend the \$300 million to get this onto  
22 the ballot, but then to open up our communities  
23 and the State of California into more litigation.

1           So when the lawsuits happen at the local  
2 county level as well, because they're split up,  
3 who's going to pay for that?

4           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Well, actually,  
5 a big distinction between these maps that were  
6 drawn in California and the maps that are  
7 currently being passed by the State of Texas, for  
8 example, are California's maps strictly abide by  
9 the Federal Voting Rights Act, which the Texas  
10 maps don't.

11           And so we've actually put ourselves in a  
12 very good position to defend the maps that have  
13 been drawn because the Voting Rights Act and the  
14 principles of the Voting Rights Act were taken  
15 into very high consideration when those maps were  
16 drawn.

17           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, that's  
18 interesting. The statement that you made is that  
19 Texas did not follow that.

20           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Correct.

21           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay.

22           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: It's bad.

23           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So does that  
24 mean that Texas has to redraw?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: It depends on  
2 what the courts do. I'm not a judge.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay.

4 CHAIR PELLERIN: Again, can we bring the  
5 conversation back to the merits of ACA 8?

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: This bill is  
7 written specifically triggering if Texas  
8 redistricts.

9 CHAIR PELLERIN: Right.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So it's in the  
11 bill. The name Texas is in the bill.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: So is the  
13 question if Texas -- if Texas's maps are thrown  
14 out, would this move forward? Is that your  
15 question?

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, maybe I  
17 can ask -- I can ask your legal --

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I'll go ahead  
19 and ask.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- legal  
21 counsel anyway.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: But -- so the  
23 question is, if -- just so I understand the  
24 question --

25 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Uh-huh.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- if Texas's  
2 maps are determined to be unconstitutional by the  
3 courts --

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Uh-huh.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- then would  
6 California -- would that trigger, actually  
7 trigger for the ACA? I think that's the  
8 question.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, it  
10 actually states if they get a court order, it  
11 doesn't trigger it.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Well, that -- so  
13 that was put in there, I believe, in regards to  
14 some other states. Maybe Ohio, is it --

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- that --

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Florida.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- has --

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah, Florida.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- has some  
21 different situations.

22 For Texas, that's the Legislature.  
23 There's no court.

24 And I know you alluded earlier to the  
25 federal Department of Justice. They're not a

1 court, even though I know Trump wants them to be.  
2 And so that is not -- actually, when the DOJ  
3 sends a letter to Texas, that's not a court  
4 order.

5 But if -- I believe your question is, if  
6 the Texas maps are thrown out by the courts,  
7 would California -- and no other state has passed  
8 a partisan gerrymander --

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- would  
11 Texas -- would Californians move forward? Am I  
12 understanding just the crux of the question?

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Great.

15 Do you have thoughts on that?

16 MR. SILVA: The way the -- as you point  
17 out, the way that the trigger works in the  
18 measure is that it's only triggered if -- or it  
19 would not be triggered if another state,  
20 including Texas, is forced to redistrict -- is  
21 required to redistrict by a federal court order,  
22 so that's correct.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So Texas  
24 decided to stop and then they got a court order.  
25 We would put this on the ballot, spend

1 300 millions of dollars, and then we couldn't  
2 even redistrict because of that work in, right?

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Assembly Member,  
4 I agree with you that I wish Texas wasn't doing  
5 this. And, you know, this was not on my bingo  
6 card a month ago when we broke for summer recess.

7 But, unfortunately, under the edict of  
8 President Trump, Texas Republicans are rushing  
9 through --

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: That's not  
11 accurate.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- a partisan  
13 redistricting in --

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I think there  
15 was a lawsuit, Petteway v. --

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- in Texas.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- Galveston  
18 County --

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I mean, I just  
20 ask for the same common courtesy --

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- that you  
23 demanded. Thank you, sir.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But there was  
25 a -- there was a --

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: And so -- I'm  
2 sorry.

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: Again, one person, one  
4 person at a --

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Madam Chair.

6 CHAIR PELLERIN: One person at a time,  
7 please. Thank you.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: And so when  
9 Texas -- when Trump demanded -- I'm sorry, let me  
10 get this straight.

11 When Trump said out loud that he was  
12 entitled, entitled to five additional Republican  
13 congressional districts in Texas -- which, for  
14 the record, is an insane thing for any President  
15 of the United States to think, let alone say out  
16 loud.

17 But when he said that he was entitled to  
18 five more Republican congressional districts in  
19 Texas, and all the Texas legislators immediately  
20 lined up to do whatever Trump wanted, that forced  
21 us to put this together. Not because we want to,  
22 but because we have to.

23 And that's why the trigger language is  
24 in, and that's why the trigger language is in the  
25 constitutional amendment that says if Texas backs

1 down -- which I really hope they do. If Texas  
2 backs down from their partisan gerrymander, per  
3 the edict of Trump and his entitlements, then  
4 this will not go into effect. And that's exactly  
5 why that's there.

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And that's what  
7 I'm saying is, because of previous lawsuits like  
8 Petteway v. Galveston County, which went through  
9 in Texas at the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals  
10 and is now sitting on the docket for the Supreme  
11 Court to weigh in on, that happened in Texas  
12 claiming that some of their districts were seen  
13 as unconstitutional.

14 That if they receive a court order -- and  
15 this is why it's important to me. If they  
16 receive a court order because they back down and  
17 stop, then we in the State of California are  
18 about to spend \$300 million to do nothing.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: So --

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And that's the  
21 part --

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Madam Chair,  
23 point of order.

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. I think -- all  
25 right. We have a point of order.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: This is a clear  
2 abuse -- this is an attempt to try to stretch  
3 this out.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: This is very  
5 personal.

6 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: This is a clear  
8 abuse of the discretion that we all have --

9 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: -- in terms of  
11 asking questions.

12 CHAIR PELLERIN: I'm trying to be patient  
13 with you, and you have been asking the same  
14 questions over again, and your questions have  
15 been answered.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Madam, can  
17 we --

18 CHAIR PELLERIN: This author is not  
19 prepared to --

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Can we move on  
21 to other speakers?

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: We're going to move on  
23 to some other questions --

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair --

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- in regards to the  
2 bill.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- this is very  
4 important to me because of the cost. And the  
5 main reason why --

6 CHAIR PELLERIN: And the cost has been  
7 stated very clearly.

8 Does any other Member have a question in  
9 regards to ACA 8?

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But there's --

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: Excuse me.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: --  
13 significantly more.

14 CHAIR PELLERIN: Excuse me.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair,  
16 please.

17 CHAIR PELLERIN: Give me one minute,  
18 please.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: My --

20 CHAIR PELLERIN: I'm asking --

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: This entire  
22 break --

23 CHAIR PELLERIN: Mr. Tangipa --

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: My sister --

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: I have one thing to say  
2 here.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- was put on  
4 hospice because of Medi-Cal couldn't afford --

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: I'm asking to see if any  
6 other Member has questions in regards to this  
7 bill.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: This last -- my  
9 sister was put on hospice because the State of  
10 California couldn't afford to pay it anymore  
11 because she was on Medi-Cal.

12 (Simultaneous speakers - inaudible.)

13 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. I do not -- I am  
14 sorry for that.

15 We need to bring control back to this.  
16 Hey.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And so I'm  
18 asking --

19 CHAIR PELLERIN: I'm trying to get some  
20 control here.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- for the  
22 financials here.

23 CHAIR PELLERIN: And you are speaking  
24 when I'm asking you to please stop. Just give me  
25 one minute here.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes, ma'am.

2 CHAIR PELLERIN: I'm asking if any other  
3 Member has a question in relationship to ACA 8.

4 We've given you plenty of time to ask  
5 questions and you're asking the same question  
6 over again. The questions have been answered.

7 Give me one second to see if anyone else  
8 has something to say. Can you please yield the  
9 floor to somebody else for a minute?

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Am I able to  
11 then return and ask more questions? Because the  
12 funding is important. It's very important.

13 CHAIR PELLERIN: And the funding has been  
14 clearly stated.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. But --

16 CHAIR PELLERIN: So any other Member have  
17 a question?

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But I have  
19 another question for the funding for Fresno  
20 county.

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: Assembly Member Bennett.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Yes. I have  
23 two quick points. Yes, every one of these issues  
24 is important, funding, et cetera.

1 But the other thing that's important is  
2 that we have a responsibility to meet certain  
3 time frames to be able to actually adopt  
4 legislation.

5 And so it is appropriate for us to weigh  
6 all of these issues, the important issues of the  
7 bill, but also the timing issues that we have to  
8 operate under. This is not the only bill that  
9 this Assembly is going to deal with.

10 But I mentioned a number of techniques  
11 that autocrats use when they try to grab power,  
12 and it is deceit and it is intimidation. And  
13 intimidation comes in lots of different forms.  
14 It's militarization of civilian life.

15 But probably one of the most common  
16 things being used is literally distraction of the  
17 public with all kinds of other issues instead of  
18 focusing on the basic fundamental issue.

19 And so we'll talk about how cool was the  
20 redistricting that we did before. We all agree  
21 it was cool. The question is, is that -- going  
22 back to that, is that going to protect us from  
23 this power grab by autocrats?

24 And that's what we have to make sure we  
25 don't get distracted by the kabuki theater that's

1 going on that says, come up with anything you can  
2 to distract people from the fundamental issue  
3 here, a power grab by autocrats that can't be  
4 fought by the old rules.

5 So we need two things. One, to pay  
6 attention to that, and to pay attention to the  
7 fact that we have a certain amount of time to get  
8 the legislative business done. And it's  
9 appropriate for us all to be limited into how  
10 much time we get to talk because none of us --  
11 even on the Assembly floor, we have a five-minute  
12 rule.

13 Certainly in a committee, we could have  
14 some kind of rule that says you don't get an  
15 unlimited amount of time.

16 The Chair, I strongly request, will  
17 assert that. Thank you.

18 CHAIR PELLERIN: Absolutely. And I think  
19 we've deliberated on this measure quite a bit.

20 Is there any other Member who has a  
21 question?

22 Assembly Member Stefani.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: Not so much a  
24 question. I just want to weigh in. Thank you,  
25 Madam Chair, for this hearing.

1           And I want to thank Assembly Member  
2 Berman for presenting this bill.

3           And I just want to recognize and  
4 associate myself with the comments of Assembly  
5 Member Bennett in terms of the theater that we  
6 are witnessing here. It is absolute theater.

7           We all know, we all know how we feel  
8 about what's happening in Texas. You feel one  
9 way, we feel another. We are responding to what  
10 Texas is doing. That is all. That is all that  
11 is happening here.

12           We have a different idea on how to  
13 respond to autocrats who want to basically  
14 control this country in an unfair way by  
15 redistricting in a way that completely avoids  
16 voter input. And that's what Texas is doing.  
17 And that's why California is responding.

18           So don't sit here and play games when on  
19 April 9th, 2025, when AB 1441 was before you by  
20 Soria, which directed the County of Merced to  
21 establish an independent citizens redistricting  
22 commission to ensure fairly drawn districts that  
23 take into account demographics and communities of  
24 interest, when the Republicans on this Committee

1 voted no. So don't sit here and play games. We  
2 know what's at stake. Don't interrupt me.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair,  
4 that is -- that is --

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: Do not  
6 interrupt me.

7 CHAIR PELLERIN: No.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: You have had --

9 CHAIR PELLERIN: She is speaking.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Don't interrupt  
11 her.

12 CHAIR PELLERIN: We are letting her  
13 speak.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But I as --

15 CHAIR PELLERIN: We are letting her  
16 speak.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: I am speaking  
18 now. I have not spoken yet. Do not --

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Point of order.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: -- interrupt  
21 me.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Point of order.

23 CHAIR PELLERIN: No.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: Do not  
25 interrupt me. I --

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Point of --  
2 point of order.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: This is the  
4 Democrats' response --

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Wait. I --

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: -- to what is  
7 happening --

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But Madam  
9 Chair, you stated to me --

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: -- in Texas --

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: -- that I had  
12 to remain on the purpose of the bill.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: -- what might  
14 happen in Ohio, what might happen in Missouri.  
15 It's a blatant attempt --

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Point of order.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: -- to control  
18 the elections.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Point of order.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: And this is  
21 California's response.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: Point of order.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: We have come up  
24 with a way to respond and this is --

25 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Point of order.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: -- the bill  
2 that we are presenting today.

3 You play stupid games, you get stupid  
4 prizes.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Point of order.

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: And that's what  
7 you are doing.

8 CHAIR PELLERIN: What is your point of  
9 order?

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I was  
11 constantly reminded to remain to the pertinence  
12 of the bill.

13 What does that bill in Merced have  
14 anything to do with this one?

15 And then I was constantly reminded,  
16 whenever I brought up Texas, to remain to the  
17 pertinence of the bill. So I would ask the same,  
18 please. Thank you.

19 CHAIR PELLERIN: Your point of voter was  
20 not well-taken.

21 Assembly Member Stefani, do you have any  
22 other comments?

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: I support this  
24 bill, and I urge anyone that cares about  
25 democracy to support it as well.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Is that a motion?

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: We moved the  
3 bill already.

4 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. We have a  
5 motion --

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair, I  
7 have questions.

8 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- and a second on the  
9 bill.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam --

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: We are trying to wrap up  
12 the vote on this bill.

13 If any Member who has not spoken yet has  
14 a question, please ask your question.

15 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Can I use the poster  
16 boards that I brought?

17 CHAIR PELLERIN: We have not gotten  
18 approval for any props, so, no.

19 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I'm asking for  
20 approval.

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: No.

22 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay. Well, I'll  
23 tell you what's on the poster boards. They're  
24 great. I'll show you at the press conference  
25 after.

1 California's Citizens Redistricting  
2 Commission was born out of voter frustration with  
3 politicians gaming the system for their own  
4 benefit. Twice the people of California voted to  
5 take the power of drawing district lines away  
6 from the Legislature and give it to an  
7 independent body that operates with full  
8 transparency, open hearings, and strict rules, as  
9 we have heard, to prevent partisan  
10 gerrymandering.

11 This reform was not handed down by  
12 politicians. It was demanded and approved by  
13 voters. We are dismissing the will of those  
14 voters. Now, Governor Newsom, Democrat party  
15 bosses and Democrat lawmakers want to take the  
16 power away from the voters.

17 Three measures, ACA 8, SB 280, and  
18 AB 604, represent a coordinated effort to tear  
19 down independent redistricting and hand power  
20 back to the very politicians voters explicitly  
21 rejected. It is a blatant attempt to gerrymander  
22 congressional districts for partisan gain.

23 Even worse, it would force taxpayers to  
24 spend hundreds of millions of dollars on a  
25 rushed, confusing special election at a time when

1 California is already facing severe budget  
2 shortfalls and deep cuts to essential services  
3 like education, public safety, and healthcare.

4 I have questions. So ACA 8 cuts directly  
5 against the heart of California's democratic  
6 reforms. Voters twice went to the ballot box to  
7 take redistricting power away. So here are my  
8 questions.

9 Voters enshrined independent  
10 redistricting in the Constitution to prevent  
11 politicians from rigging the system. How does  
12 ACA 8 comply with the constitutional ban on  
13 favoring or discriminating against a political  
14 party?

15 And really quickly, Mr. Berman --

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: By all means.

17 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: -- who is your  
18 client, sir?

19 CHAIR PELLERIN: Let's stick to the  
20 question.

21 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Well, he said he had  
22 attorney-client privilege, so that's pertinent.

23 MR. SILVA: I'm not here to talk about  
24 who my client is. I'm just here to talk about  
25 the substance of the bill.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Assembly Member  
2 Berman, please answer the question.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: So going back.  
4 So the question was, how does the constitutional  
5 amendment amend the Constitution to allow this to  
6 happen?

7 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So there's a  
8 constitutional ban on favoring or discriminating  
9 against a political party.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: And this is a  
11 constitutional amendment.

12 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: What language in this  
13 is saying that you are reversing that  
14 specifically?

15 MR. SILVA: Well, the bill not withstands  
16 any other provision of this Constitution. So any  
17 criteria that currently exist in the Constitution  
18 regarding redistricting are suspended for  
19 purposes of this redistricting.

20 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I understand. But  
21 what specific language, legal language, did you  
22 put in there saying that we are now changing --  
23 that we can now discriminate against a political  
24 party?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I think he said  
2 that, but I'm going to ask him to repeat it.

3 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Yeah.

4 MR. SILVA: Yeah. Again, the language in  
5 this provision not withstands any other provision  
6 in the Constitution, including the criteria that  
7 you're identifying.

8 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So we're throwing the  
9 Constitution in the trash and starting all over.  
10 Why should --

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: We are --

12 CHAIR PELLERIN: Your question's been  
13 answered.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: We are asking  
15 voters --

16 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: (Inaudible.)

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: We are asking  
18 California's voters whether or not they want to  
19 adopt this constitutional amendment,  
20 notwithstanding what is currently in the  
21 Constitution. We are not doing that. This does  
22 not go into effect if the Legislature passes it.  
23 Twenty million California voters have to vote to  
24 approve the constitutional amendment. That's the  
25 system we have in California.

1           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Yes, I got that. So  
2 why should lawmakers override the will of the  
3 people who have twice told us that they want to  
4 keep the redistricting in the hands of the people  
5 that we have here testifying that have given  
6 wonderful reasons why it should stay there?

7           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I appreciate the  
8 question, and I think it's an important one.

9           We, once again, are asking the voters  
10 whether or not they want to approve this change.  
11 So this is not the Legislature approving this  
12 change.

13           This is the Legislature putting on the  
14 ballot the opportunity for every California voter  
15 in 2025 whether or not this is a change that they  
16 approve.

17           And I know it was jokingly mentioned  
18 earlier that my colleague and friend, Assembly  
19 Member Tangipa, was not able to vote on the  
20 original redistricting. I don't think that's a  
21 joke.

22           I think it's a very important point. And  
23 the point is that, since 2010, an estimated  
24 3.6 million California voters have died, and  
25 there are 6 million more Californians registered

1 to vote now than in 2010, including two very  
2 important voices in California, you two, Vice  
3 Chair Macedo and Assembly Member Tangipa. You  
4 did not have a voice in that decision.

5 Over half of registered voters in  
6 California did not have a voice in that decision.  
7 And so what we are saying is let's give  
8 California voters in 2025, half of which weren't  
9 even registered voters in 2010, a chance to have  
10 their voice be heard. And I can think of nothing  
11 more democratic than doing that.

12 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So then why not a  
13 census to see who we have in California, who's  
14 registered to vote?

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: We did a census,  
16 I believe, four years ago.

17 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yes. Thank you.

18 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay.

19 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you. All right.

20 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: One more question.

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: We've deliberated on  
22 this measure --

23 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: You have given other  
24 Members plenty of time to speak. Please --

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: How many more questions  
2 do you --

3 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: -- I have questions  
4 prepared.

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. What other  
6 question do you have?

7 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: (Inaudible.)

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And Madam  
9 Chair, I have some more questions as well.

10 CHAIR PELLERIN: We are done with the  
11 questions. We're going to try to wrap this up  
12 and put this to a vote.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But --

14 CHAIR PELLERIN: Macedo, please ask your  
15 final question.

16 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: My final question?  
17 Madam Chair, I came prepared after you gave me 24  
18 hours. All I'm asking for is a little bit of  
19 time. You let Mr. Berman speak twice. I'm  
20 sorry, Mr. Bennett speak twice.

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: Would you like to ask  
22 your question or would you like to not? Would  
23 you like to ask your question?

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I would.

1 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I will absolutely ask  
2 my question. I'm sure these will be asked in a  
3 courtroom, but this is ridiculous.

4 Governor Newsom himself said this  
5 proposal is about electing more Democrats. Isn't  
6 that the very definition of partisan  
7 gerrymandering voters sought to prevent?

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: We are asking  
9 voters whether or not they want to have different  
10 criteria used in determining the congressional  
11 maps, and it'll be up to voters as to whether or  
12 not they want to say yes or no. That's the  
13 beauty of this.

14 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Madam Chair, may I  
15 proceed with my relevant questions?

16 CHAIR PELLERIN: We have a motion and we  
17 have a second.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair --

19 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Madam Chair, I'd like  
20 to recess --

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: We have deliberated this  
22 measure --

23 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: -- and bring in the  
24 Chief Clerk --

25 CHAIR PELLERIN: --for several hours.

1 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: -- to see if it's in  
2 line (inaudible).

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: We are calling this  
4 debate --

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair --

6 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- to conclusion.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair,  
8 please --

9 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: You are not allowing  
10 me to exercise my parliamentary right to speak.

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: And with that --

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam, you  
13 pontificated on transparency.

14 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- I will go ahead and  
15 allow the Assembly Member Berman --

16 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I (inaudible) last  
17 night if we (inaudible).

18 CHAIR PELLERIN: Excuse me.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair.

20 CHAIR PELLERIN: This is not the way we  
21 conduct our hearings. Okay?

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It's not.

23 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: It's not because  
24 you're not answering my questions.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It's not the  
2 way.

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: I have allowed you --

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: This is not the  
5 way we --

6 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- plenty of time to ask  
7 your questions.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- conduct our  
9 hearings. This is an urgency that is being moved  
10 through.

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: I have allowed --

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So we --

13 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- plenty of time for  
14 you to --

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair,  
16 please.

17 CHAIR PELLERIN: I have allowed you  
18 plenty of time to ask your questions.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I am still not  
20 done.

21 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: You have not allowed  
22 me (inaudible).

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It took me a  
24 long time --

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: I have allowed you  
2 plenty of time to ask your questions.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: As the  
4 presenter stated (inaudible).

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: Assembly Member Berman,  
6 you may close.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair,  
8 please.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Out of respect  
10 for my Republican colleagues --

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair,  
12 there are so many more questions.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- I had a long  
14 close prepared, but I am going to forego that --

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: We do need to  
16 know --

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: -- and just ask  
18 for an aye vote.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair, we  
20 asked you --

21 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Mr. Berman, would you  
22 be willing to answer my questions that I have  
23 prepared?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I am following  
2 the direction of the Chair on how the Committee  
3 hearing will proceed.

4 CHAIR PELLERIN: We have to be  
5 respectful --

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Mr. Berman, can  
7 you explain to me how spending --

8 CHAIR PELLERIN: We have to be respectful  
9 of people's times.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- \$250 million  
11 on the special election provides a greater public  
12 health benefit than constructing egress routes  
13 for our mountain communities?

14 (Simultaneous speakers - inaudible.)

15 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Mr. Tangipa, you  
16 have been asked to stop. We are done --

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Mr. Berman, can  
18 you explain to me how \$250 million --

19 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- with the questions  
20 and the deliberation of this measure.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- for a  
22 special election (inaudible).

23 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: I make a motion  
24 (inaudible).

25 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: Second.

1 (Simultaneous speakers - inaudible.)

2 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER:

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: Mr. Tangipa, you're out  
4 of order.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- when they  
6 are overwhelmingly (inaudible).

7 CHAIR PELLERIN: Mr. Tangipa, you are out  
8 of order.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Mr. Berman, can  
10 you explain to me how spending 200 --

11 (Pause on the record.)

12 CHAIR PELLERIN: Mr. Tangipa --

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I appreciate  
14 your passion.

15 CHAIR PELLERIN: I know.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I appreciate  
17 your passion.

18 CHAIR PELLERIN: I mean, our hearts break  
19 for you and your family. I'm trying to -- I'm  
20 trying to move this hearing along.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: (Inaudible.)

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: I understand.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: I call the  
24 question.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: We call the question.

2 We have a motion. We have a second.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I'm just trying  
4 to get the questions -- when it comes to the  
5 question --

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Madam Secretary,  
7 please call the roll.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I care about  
9 the State of California.

10 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: On ACA 8 by Rivas,  
11 the motion is --

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- and I think  
13 that we should, too. This money is very  
14 important to me. It's personal.

15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: -- be adopted and  
16 be re-referred to the Committee on  
17 Appropriations.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And I care  
19 about you. I know you care. We care. We all  
20 care.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin?

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: Aye.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: That's all  
24 we're asking for.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin, aye.

1 Macedo?

2 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: No.

3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Macedo, no.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: That's it. And  
5 it worries me.

6 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Bennett?

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Bennett, aye.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It truly  
10 worries me.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Berman?

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Aye.

13 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Berman, aye.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I get it.

15 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Solache?

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Aye.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Solache, aye.

18 Stefani?

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Stefani, aye.

21 Tangipa?

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: No.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Tangipa, no.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It should worry  
25 everybody.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: That bill --

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: That's all I'm  
3 asking for.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I hear you.

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: That bill passes five to  
6 two.

7 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Without proper  
8 ability for us to ask questions. Let that be  
9 reflected in the record. I was given less than  
10 five minutes to speak.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I've got to pay  
12 \$2500 later today so she can be cremated.

13 CHAIR PELLERIN: We're going to go ahead  
14 and take a recess for 30 minutes.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But the Medi-  
16 Cal doctors won't sign off on it.

17 CHAIR PELLERIN: This hearing --

18 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: Madam Chair,  
19 (inaudible).

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: The Medi-Cal  
21 doctors will not sign off on it.

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. I don't know if  
23 you can.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Mr. Tangipa,  
25 it's my turn to speak.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Is that not  
2 important?

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Mr. Tangipa,  
4 it's my turn to speak.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- for me to  
6 just -- since I haven't had a chance --

7 (Pause on the record.)

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And we've --  
9 everybody has seen this longer than me.

10 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. We're going to --

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Everybody has  
12 seen this longer than me.

13 CHAIR PELLERIN: Call for order here.  
14 We've had enough --

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I've gotten the  
16 least amount of time to even see this bill.

17 CHAIR PELLERIN: We've had enough  
18 comments taken out of order.

19 Solache, did you have a 30-second comment  
20 you wanted to make?

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: I do, Madam  
22 Chair.

23 I just wanted to say that after the vote  
24 that I casted today, I'm happy that Californians  
25 will have a choice to vote how they feel,

1 respecting everyone's opinion today, including  
2 those that support it and don't support this bill  
3 at today's public comment, and those that  
4 submitted.

5 Californians will have a right at the  
6 ballot box to express and to vote their  
7 conscience.

8 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yes.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: So every  
10 Californian has a right, and I'm just happy to  
11 support that. Thank you.

12 CHAIR PELLERIN: And we will now take a  
13 30-minute recess. Thank you.

14 (Recess.)

15 CHAIR PELLERIN: Good afternoon. We will  
16 go ahead and reconvene the August 19th, 2025  
17 Assembly Elections Committee hearing.

18 We have two remaining items, one for a  
19 vote SB 280 by Cervantes, and then we will be  
20 doing an informational hearing only on AB 604.

21 And with that, in the spirit of ensuring  
22 that everybody has time to speak, we have  
23 expanded our witnesses to three minutes each.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: The ME TOOs can take up  
2 to 30 seconds and we'll hold you accountable to  
3 that.

4 For our members, we are going to limit  
5 debate to 15 minutes for you to present comments  
6 or questions. So we have a lot of work to do  
7 today and we need to be moving forward.

8 So with that, we will bring up our next  
9 author, Senator Cervantes. And you may begin  
10 when you're ready.

11 SENATOR CERVANTES: Thank you Madam Chair  
12 and Committee Members for the opportunity to  
13 present Senate Bill 280 today, which calls for a  
14 statewide special election on November 4th of  
15 this year.

16 The special election would allow  
17 California voters to consider an Assembly  
18 Constitutional Amendment, ACA 8, which would  
19 allow this Legislature to engage in a one-time,  
20 mid-decade redistricting of our state's districts  
21 in the U.S. House of Representatives.

22 The Citizens Redistricting Commission  
23 would then be able to engage in its regularly  
24 scheduled program, independent redistricting  
25 process after the 2030 census.

1 SB 280 also appropriates the funding  
2 necessary for the Secretary of State and for our  
3 county registrars to administer the special  
4 election.

5 The bill also makes the necessary  
6 statutory changes to allow the June 2026  
7 statewide primary election to be held on time.

8 California did not start this fight.  
9 This fight came to us. We are here because  
10 President Trump and Republicans in Congress know  
11 that their agenda is deeply unpopular and they  
12 see the writing on the wall.

13 They know that the mass deportation  
14 regime that uses secret police to kidnap  
15 police -- people off our streets and into  
16 unmarked vans goes against our American values.

17 They know that voters will hold them  
18 accountable for the spending cuts they jammed  
19 through Congress that strip healthcare away from  
20 millions of Americans.

21 And they know that giving tax cuts to  
22 billionaires while Trump imposes tariff taxes on  
23 essential goods, such as coffee and bananas, will  
24 continue to raise the cost of living for everyday  
25 working families.

1           What Trump knows is that the only path  
2 for Republicans to hold onto the House in the  
3 midterms is to change the rules in the middle of  
4 the game. That is why in Texas and in other red  
5 states, Republican legislators are preparing to  
6 redraw their congressional maps so that  
7 Republican politicians get to choose their  
8 voters.

9           Again, Republican politicians get to  
10 choose their voters instead of letting voters  
11 choose their representative. They want to  
12 silence the voices of Latino voters, Black  
13 voters, API voters, and LGBTQ voters.

14           Trump wants to change the rules of the  
15 game in the fifth inning so that Republicans get  
16 four strikes while Democrats get three. Their  
17 goal is simple, to rig congressional maps in  
18 Republican states across our country to make it  
19 impossible for Democrats to retake control of the  
20 House of Representatives in 2026.

21           California cannot stand by while Donald  
22 Trump dismantles our democracy piece by piece.  
23 We will not let him determine the outcome of  
24 future elections years in advance before any vote  
25 is cast to prop up his authoritarian presidency.

1           And if you doubt that Trump is trying to  
2 become a dictator, remember that he sent armed  
3 federal agents to harass the peaceful press  
4 conference that took place last week in LA with  
5 Governor Newsom.

6           The truth of the matter is, if we let  
7 Donald Trump get away with this rigging of  
8 elections through gerrymandering, partisan  
9 gerrymandering, we may not have free or fair  
10 elections in the United States in the future. If  
11 Donald Trump pursues this partisan power grab,  
12 then California is ready to respond.

13           Our plan will only go into effect if  
14 Texas and other states move to redraw their  
15 lines. Again, our plan will only go into effect  
16 if Texas and other red states move to redraw  
17 their lines.

18           Trump can do the right thing today and  
19 stand down and not move forward in redrawing  
20 Congressional maps in Republican states, and  
21 California's current districts will remain in  
22 place.

23           Ultimately, this is our preferred outcome  
24 because we do value the California's Independent  
25 Redistricting Commission, which is the gold

1 standard of our country. And this crisis shows  
2 that we need to enact a nationwide citizens  
3 nonpartisan commission.

4 If every state followed California's lead  
5 and adopted these independent redistricting  
6 commissions, or if Congress required this, we  
7 wouldn't be in this crisis to begin with.  
8 Gerrymandering would be a thing of the past.

9 Finally, I want to address Republican  
10 Members of Congress from California. You have  
11 the power to stop this from happening. The power  
12 is in your hands.

13 I appeal to your better angles, but if  
14 you refuse to listen to those angles, I will rely  
15 on your ambition, your self-interest and your  
16 desire to keep your House seats and your  
17 paycheck. You can ask President Trump to end  
18 this now. You can tell him to call off these  
19 partisan gerrymanderings in Texas and other  
20 states.

21 But if Trump decides to move forward with  
22 his plan to steal Democratic seats, then  
23 California will be the firewall. We have  
24 defeated authoritarianism before, and we will  
25 defeat it again, but at the ballot box, with the

1 voters in the state of California making the  
2 ultimate decision on November 4th, 2025.

3 Today we have two witnesses testifying in  
4 support. I'll allow them to self-identify.

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: And you each have three  
6 minutes.

7 MS. HICKS: Thank you. Thank you, Madam  
8 Chair. Thank you Members.

9 I am Jody Hicks, the CEO and President of  
10 Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California, here  
11 representing all seven affiliates and over 100  
12 health centers throughout the State of  
13 California.

14 And I'm here in strong support to this  
15 measure and to California's response to President  
16 Trump, to Texas Republicans, to any state that's  
17 planning to game the 2026 midterm elections. And  
18 I just want to point out why.

19 I know this Committee has already heard a  
20 lot about the Commission. I'm sure there'll be  
21 more conversation about that.

22 What I want to talk about is the impact  
23 of what's happening to Californians, to  
24 California values. With HR 1 that just passed,  
25 California -- over three-and-a-half million

1 people will be without healthcare. Planned  
2 Parenthood was effectively defunded in that bill  
3 for all of the services that Planned Parenthood  
4 provides, whether that's cancer screenings or  
5 birth control or even prenatal care.

6 Stripped all of the funding from Planned  
7 Parenthood in an attempt to try and reduce access  
8 to reproductive healthcare in the state of  
9 California, despite the fact that 67 percent of  
10 Californians voted to ensure that, in our  
11 California Constitution, Californians have access  
12 to reproductive healthcare.

13 So our intent is to go up and down the  
14 state and talk about the impact of what happened  
15 in HR 1. And what we know is, when Californians  
16 understand that access to healthcare, when their  
17 very values are at stake, they will respond and  
18 they will hold Members accountable. But that  
19 can't happen if another state is rigging the  
20 election before those votes even occur.

21 You know, if we were able to have our gold  
22 standard across every state in the state of  
23 California -- or in the country of the United  
24 States, we wouldn't be having this conversation.

1 We'd be talking to voters the way that we want  
2 to.

3 But that's just not the case. And  
4 sending this to the voters, letting them decide  
5 how they want to respond to what another state is  
6 doing to try and hold on to power.

7 So there's no way to react to what is  
8 affecting their very lives, to what is affecting  
9 their healthcare, to what is affecting the very  
10 values of California.

11 We have a gold standard. We are the  
12 model with our Independent Redistricting  
13 Commission. But guess what? We are the model  
14 for our values here, too. We are a model for how  
15 we value diversity, for how we value  
16 inclusivity --

17 CHAIR PELLERIN: If you could wrap up,  
18 please.

19 MS. HICKS: -- and for how we value  
20 access to healthcare, including reproductive  
21 healthcare. And we are a reproductive freedom  
22 state, and voters deserve to vote on that. Thank  
23 you.

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: Next witness. You have  
25 three minutes.

1 MR. CURTIN: Okay. Danny Curtin,  
2 California Conference of Carpenters. Whoopsie  
3 Daisy. Thank you.

4 You've all heard from me before not too  
5 long ago. Danny Curtin with the Carpenters  
6 Union.

7 I want to reiterate that we didn't come  
8 here because we were joyfully approaching this  
9 problem. There's no question that this was  
10 triggered by the President for reasons that we  
11 all understand.

12 The impacts of what's been happening in  
13 the past on this administration, but also the  
14 impacts of what happens in the future is really  
15 what's at point, the discussion point here.

16 The targeted tax on California workforce  
17 is one of the most disturbing portions of this  
18 for me. We are in the midst of a housing crisis  
19 that's dividing us like no other crisis. And we  
20 have plenty more to think about, water, energy,  
21 you name it. And that housing crisis is  
22 primarily private sector housing, which is not  
23 being produced at the rate it needs to be  
24 produced.

1           And now we have armed battle ready -- I  
2   don't know what they are. They're not  
3   identifying themselves. In some cases, they're  
4   wearing masks. And I call them Rambo wannabes.  
5   Attacking people on the job sites, going to  
6   places where people go to work. And the industry  
7   that's going to get most impacted by this, among  
8   others, is construction and housing construction.

9           That is the number one issue in terms of  
10   what's dividing Californians and causing part of  
11   this massive political rift. Not just housing,  
12   but ag, restaurants, hospitality. You know the  
13   differences here.

14           The cuts in healthcare were well laid  
15   out. This is not insubstantial in what's going  
16   on and what we're fighting about. And I want to  
17   keep the focus on what we're fighting about, not  
18   the specific details.

19           I believe all of this is done  
20   constitutionally. We have the right to take a  
21   whack at this, give it to the voters. Other  
22   states have it, too. But we can't sit here and  
23   just let it go in one direction because of  
24   possible ramifications.

1           One or two more little things. So far,  
2 the Congress -- Senate and Congress has been  
3 relatively supine in regards to the Trump agenda.  
4 Now, they were elected and that happens. And a  
5 lot of people don't like it, and a lot of people  
6 like it.

7           But it's the next election that's going  
8 to matter now. And for Donald Trump to get up  
9 and say publicly, like he did a couple of things,  
10 while he's claiming the elections in 2020 were  
11 rigged, he is now openly, on behalf of the  
12 Republicans -- I heard this again on the radio  
13 today -- on behalf of the Republicans going  
14 after -- he's going to put an executive order  
15 attacking vote by mail. Because, he says, more  
16 Democrats vote by mail than more Republicans vote  
17 by mail. How can you not respond to that in a  
18 political manner?

19           We don't like it. We don't really want  
20 to see it happen. But there is no option if it's  
21 going to be a one-way street. And that's what's  
22 happening. He's saying it openly and there's no  
23 mystery here. And I appreciate the dilemma --

24           CHAIR PELLERIN: Please wrap up.

1 MR. CURTIN: Okay. I appreciate the  
2 dilemma that some of our Members here feel that  
3 they are in. I really do. Makes life very  
4 complicated. But we just can't sit around and  
5 let that agenda continue without people pushing  
6 back. So thank you.

7 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. We'll now open it  
8 up to the mic. If anybody in support of SB 280  
9 can come up to the mic. And we are extending 30  
10 seconds to you as well.

11 MR. HANNA: Thank you, Madam Chair,  
12 Members. J.P. Hanna on behalf of the California  
13 Nurses Association, representing over 100,000  
14 registered nurses in California.

15 Nurses are unequivocally committed to  
16 blocking the over -- authoritarian overthrow of  
17 our democracy. These attacks on our democracy  
18 are much bigger than Texas.

19 They are a power grab for the billionaire  
20 elite at the expense of our patients, the working  
21 class and the communities that we advocate for  
22 every day.

23 We thank you for bringing this measure  
24 forward and proudly stand in strong support.  
25 Thank you.

1 MR. KUMAR: Thank you, Chair Pellerin and  
2 Members of the Committee. Keshav Kumar with  
3 Lighthouse Public Affairs on behalf of  
4 Reproductive Freedom For All.

5 We are in strong support on behalf of our  
6 4 million members across every single  
7 congressional district in this country, and we  
8 think that this is the moment and that California  
9 is meeting that moment.

10 We thank you, especially. We thank Chair  
11 Senator Cervantes, and we thank Mr. Berman.  
12 Because the leadership that you have demonstrated  
13 today is so powerful, and the rest of the country  
14 is watching in appreciation.

15 MS. CHOU: Hi. Annie Chou with the  
16 California Teachers Association representing  
17 310,000 members in support.

18 There's been, you know, aspersions cast  
19 against CTA, telling me to stay in my lane.

20 I want to make it super duper clear that  
21 federal funding funds everything that happens in  
22 a school site, whether it be mental health  
23 services for kids, free and reduced meals.  
24 Whether it be, you know, IDA funding. There's a  
25 lot of things that are critically important to

1 CTA's mission, and that's why CTA is very much in  
2 this lane. So thank you so much.

3 MS. HINES-SHAIKH: Honorable Chair and  
4 Members, Amy Hines-Shaikh for UDW AFSCME Local  
5 3930 and their 200,000 IHSS members in strong  
6 support in defending our Medi-Cal recipients and  
7 providers, and also UNITE HERE! Local 11 and  
8 their 32,000 hospitality members in Orange  
9 county, Riverside, San Bernardino and Los Angeles  
10 county. Thank you.

11 MR. BARREIRO: Thank you, Chair and  
12 Members. Sandra Barreiro on behalf of SEIU  
13 California, representing over 750,000 frontline  
14 essential workers who couldn't be here today  
15 because they are busy working and serving their  
16 communities.

17 All of them have been targeted by the  
18 Trump administration's steamrolling of the  
19 democratic principles that our country is  
20 supposed to stand for.

21 So SEIU is proud to support this bill  
22 because we can't stand by while Texas and Trump  
23 manipulates our election. It's the most  
24 democratic district setting process ever proposed  
25 by a state. And unlike Texas --

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thirty seconds. Thank  
2 you.

3 MS. BARREIRO: Thank you.

4 MR. HART: Good afternoon. Kaden Hart on  
5 behalf of Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis in  
6 support.

7 MS. NIELSEN: Good afternoon. Julie  
8 Nielsen on behalf of the National Union of  
9 Healthcare Workers in strong support of this  
10 important measure. Thank you.

11 MS. COLES: Good afternoon. Krystal  
12 Coles. I'm a state worker with Housing and  
13 Community Development. I'm also on the board of  
14 directors for SEIU Local 1000 in strong support  
15 for the fight for our democracy. Thank you.

16 MS. HILL: Good afternoon. My name is  
17 Constance Hill. I'm with SEIU 2015. I'm also an  
18 in-home support caregiver/provider. I strongly  
19 support.

20 I'm representing all those who are not  
21 here, but I'm here standing in solidarity with my  
22 brothers and sisters here. Thank you.

23 MS. MOK: Tiffany Mok on behalf of CFT, a  
24 union of educators and classified professionals.

1 We stand here reluctantly, but are very proud to  
2 stand to defend our democracy and fairness.

3 Our educators teach about fairness and  
4 democracy, and we have seen nothing but incessant  
5 attacks, whether it's \$1 billion that's being  
6 demanded at UCLA by our lecturers there, through  
7 the special ed cuts that we see and mental health  
8 problems that are our educators and our students  
9 see that are being threatened by federal funding.

10 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thirty seconds. Thank  
11 you.

12 MS. MOK: Thank you.

13 MR. GUSMAN: Good afternoon. Connor  
14 Gusman on behalf of Teamsters California in  
15 support. Thank you.

16 MS. FLOCKS: Madam Chair, Members, Sarah  
17 Flocks, the California Federation of Labor  
18 Unions. We represent 2.3 million union members  
19 across the State of California, and we are in  
20 strong support. Thank you.

21 MS. QUINTERO: Hello again. Analisa  
22 Quintero from SEIU Local 1000. I'm here in  
23 support because our state workers deserve fair  
24 representation, just like all workers across  
25 California.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: We will now move on to  
2 the primary witnesses in opposition.

3 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Madam Chair, while  
4 we're waiting for those witnesses to come up, I  
5 have a motion.

6 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yes.

7 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I would like to  
8 motion to refer to Judiciary SB 280 and then to  
9 the Appropriations Committee.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Second.

11 (Pause on the record.)

12 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. We have a motion  
13 and a second to double refer this bill to  
14 Judiciary Committee.

15 And Madam Secretary, please call the roll  
16 on that. Takes a majority vote.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin?

18 CHAIR PELLERIN: No.

19 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin, no.  
20 Macedo?

21 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Macedo, aye.  
23 Bennett?

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: No.

25 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Bennett, no.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: No.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Berman, no.

3 Solache?

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: No.

5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Solache, no.

6 Stefani?

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: No.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Stefani, no.

9 Tanipa?

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Tangipa, aye.

12 CHAIR PELLERIN: That motion fails two to  
13 five.

14 The primary witnesses in opposition,  
15 would you like to come forward?

16 Anybody in the room who would like to  
17 step up to the mic and state your name, and 30  
18 seconds of time. Anybody in opposition, give you  
19 opportunity speak.

20 MR. BOLOG: Thank you much for the 30  
21 seconds. It's very generous and it's refreshing.

22 My name is David Bolog. I am AFL CIO  
23 union member affiliate, and I represent the  
24 California GOP Union Caucus. I also represent

1 Serving Family Values and Moms for Liberty. We  
2 are opposed to this bill. Thank you.

3 MS. ARIS: Hello. My name is Amber  
4 Arias. I'm standup ministry leader with Calvary  
5 Chapel, Solano county.

6 And I believe that this is very redundant  
7 and retaliatory. And just because other states  
8 don't want to play fair does not negate the fact  
9 that California Legislature has sworn an oath to  
10 uphold integrity and the Constitution of the  
11 United States. And with that, I oppose this  
12 bill. Thank you.

13 MS. RENTERIA: My name is Porphyria  
14 Renteria, and I'm in opposition of this bill.

15 MS. GONALEZ: Hello. My name is Rosa  
16 Gonzalez and I am a mother, and I am in  
17 opposition of this bill.

18 MS. MIXON: My name is Christina Mixon,  
19 and I am a mother, and I am in opposition of this  
20 bill.

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you so much.

22 We will now bring the questions and  
23 discussion back to the Committee.

24 Any Member -- Assemblymember Stefani.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: Thank you,  
2 Chair Pellerin.

3 I'm just wondering if there's anyone from  
4 the California Association of Clerks and Election  
5 Officials that can comment on their opinion of  
6 this bill.

7 CHAIR PELLERIN: All right. So it looks  
8 like we do have someone here from California  
9 Association of Clerks and Election Officials.

10 You could come up and sit here at the  
11 desk and give us the perspective from the  
12 counties on -- so go ahead and ask.

13 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Can I ask that the  
14 your witnesses identify themselves that are with  
15 you as well that were not introduced previously?  
16 There's two gentlemen.

17 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: Oh, yes,  
18 certainly.

19 MR. WILLIS: Good afternoon. My name is  
20 Tom Willis with the law firm of Olson Remcho.  
21 I'm kind of replacing Aaron Silva.

22 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Who are you here  
23 representing?

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: I think this is  
25 int response to --

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: (Inaudible.)

2 MR. SALINAS: I'm the Center's  
3 Legislative Director.

4 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. All right. So do  
5 you have a question or --

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: Just wanting to  
7 get your perspective on this, given that there  
8 will be a huge undertaking, and I want to find  
9 out what the organization is thinking about it.

10 MR. SALINAS: Yes. Okay. Thank you very  
11 much, Madam Chair and Committee Members.

12 Jesse Salinas. I am the assessor, clerk,  
13 recorder and registrar of voters for Yolo County.  
14 I'm also serving as president of the California  
15 Association of Clerks and Election Officials. So  
16 very honored to be here.

17 Thank you very much for the question.  
18 And I can share with you that we are working  
19 diligently. We're a very -- collection of highly  
20 skilled professionals that are preparing for this  
21 election, this pending election that's coming up.  
22 And we are working diligently right now in  
23 preparing for the election and identifying the  
24 necessary sites and locations and preparing  
25 accordingly with that.

1           We also are working closely with the  
2 Secretary of State's office on follow-up details  
3 to ensure that this election is run as  
4 efficiently and effectively as possible moving  
5 forward.

6           CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you so much.

7           Any other questions or comments from  
8 Committee Members?

9           Vice Chair Macedo.

10          VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I will leave my  
11 feelings on this out of this because I have 15  
12 minutes and I want to make sure that I get my  
13 questions answered.

14          How can the Legislature justify spending  
15 235 million on a rush special election when core  
16 programs like education, healthcare and wildfire  
17 prevention are being cut?

18          SENATOR CERVANTES: So first off, I want  
19 to say we're in this crisis because of the  
20 federal administration. And this election is  
21 going to cost as much as a new ballroom that  
22 President Trump wants to build at the White  
23 House.

24          VICE CHAIR MACEDO: We have the fourth  
25 largest economy in the world and a large budget,

1 so we can't figure out how to fund those things.  
2 We're expecting the federal government to do  
3 that.

4 My next question is, why was this urgency  
5 election necessary when no genuine emergency  
6 exists? The Governor has not declared a State of  
7 Emergency.

8 Just feeling like we should sound the  
9 alarm this is not enough to do so. There's an  
10 urgency clause in here.

11 SENATOR CERVANTES: Again, this is a  
12 crisis brought upon us because of what the State  
13 of Texas is doing. If they would pull back their  
14 measure, we would not be moving forward today  
15 with this urgency. It is a crisis what is  
16 happening to our families and our neighborhoods.  
17 This is how Californians have a direct response  
18 in what is occurring and the future that they  
19 want to see for this country.

20 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So because you feel  
21 that way, but no real emergency has been  
22 declared.

23 How will counties be reimbursed for these  
24 costs?

1           SENATOR CERVANTES: The Department of  
2 Finance will determine the cost for this  
3 election. That will be through the Secretary of  
4 State, as well as to the county registrars to  
5 administer the election on November 4th.

6           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Will they be paid in  
7 full up front or left to bear the burden  
8 themselves?

9           SENATOR CERVANTES: The Secretary of  
10 State -- I know perhaps we have folks here or  
11 Madam Chair.

12          CHAIR PELLERIN: My understanding is the  
13 counties will be paid up front.

14          VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Is that in the  
15 language of the bill? Because counties like mine  
16 won't be able to do the election to the extent  
17 necessary.

18          CHAIR PELLERIN: As a former county  
19 elections official, this is something I care very  
20 deeply about. And we want to make sure the  
21 counties are made whole and they receive the  
22 funds up front.

23          VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So can we get that in  
24 the bill?

25          SENATOR CERVANTES: It is in the bill.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: It is stated as so.

2 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay.

3 SENATOR CERVANTES: It is very clear that  
4 counties will be made whole to administer the  
5 election on November 4th.

6 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay. Just wanted to  
7 make sure that my county, who's very rural, is  
8 going to be taken care of.

9 You made a really great point that I have  
10 questions, but I do want to mention that you talk  
11 about disenfranchising minority in communities.

12 At the Independent Redistricting  
13 Commission hearings, they have translators  
14 available. To my knowledge, we have no  
15 translators available for this hearing, so talk  
16 about disenfranchising minority communities.

17 What assurance do counties have that they  
18 will not be subject to unfunded mandates by being  
19 forced to carry out this rush process?

20 SENATOR CERVANTES: Again, it is stated  
21 in the bill and the analysis of the bill.

22 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Can you point to the  
23 exact language in the bill, or your attorney?

24 SENATOR CERVANTES: You have the analysis  
25 before you.

1 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I'm not asking for  
2 the analysis.

3 SENATOR CERVANTES: And we are making  
4 sure that --

5 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I'm asking for the  
6 bill language.

7 SENATOR CERVANTES: The Department of  
8 Finance will determine the cost of this election.  
9 And at the end of the day, we are going to ensure  
10 that the counties will have everything that they  
11 need to conduct a special election on  
12 November 4th.

13 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay. And I  
14 appreciate that. I appreciate that you're saying  
15 that.

16 What I am asking for is verbiage in  
17 legislation. And you have an attorney next to  
18 you that I'm sure participated in the drafting of  
19 this, as well as your leg director. I'm asking  
20 for not just your testimony saying, we promise  
21 this is going to happen. I'm asking -- and not  
22 in the analysis, because that's not legally  
23 binding. I'm asking --

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: I got it right here.

25 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Section 4(a) says, it is  
2 the intent of the Legislature to ensure counties  
3 have sufficient funding to effectuate the  
4 November 4th, 2025 special statewide election.

5 An amount is hereby appropriated from the  
6 General Fund to the controller for the actual and  
7 reasonably necessary costs as determined by the  
8 Director of Finance for the counties to conduct  
9 that November 4th, 2025 statewide special  
10 election.

11 Again, this is not a Appropriations  
12 Committee. The funding issues will be addressed  
13 in that Committee.

14 We are policy, so let's move our  
15 questions back to policy.

16 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: And this is a funding  
17 a special election bill.

18 So my -- I'm glad that you read that  
19 aloud. So we have intent language. We know how  
20 much that's legally binding. We have, I'm sure,  
21 attorneys in the room that can tell us that.

22 Can counties realistically administer a  
23 statewide redistricting election on such a  
24 compressed timeline that you talked about without  
25 errors, lawsuits or disenfranchisement?

1 MR. SALINAS: So we have actually had  
2 some tight timelines in the past and this is  
3 going to be a challenge. There's no question  
4 there's going to be challenging administrative  
5 challenges to this election.

6 But I think in working with what  
7 guidelines we have and in working with the  
8 Secretary of State's office on looking at some  
9 details, that we can work collectively to book  
10 this election. We've done a lot of successful,  
11 difficult elections in the past. I remind  
12 everybody of the 2020 election, which was a  
13 general election under COVID, and we were able to  
14 do amazing work.

15 And I know I have the highest confidence  
16 in my colleagues across the state, that they will  
17 be successful in making it happen with -- as long  
18 as these details that we're working through is --  
19 are finalized and can be done in a timely  
20 fashion.

21 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: What is the shortest  
22 timeline you've pulled an election together and  
23 been successful?

24 MR. SALINAS: When I think about the  
25 timing -- good question. I don't think I can

1 tell you of a specific timeline of what we've  
2 done. Typically we like to have additional  
3 timing.

4 That's why in the legislation, one of the  
5 things we did ask for is for E minus 88 cutoff in  
6 the legislation, which was helpful for us because  
7 that gives us time to start preparing and not  
8 have other add-ons to the legislation. So that  
9 was really appreciated on behalf of the Members.

10 So there's not a specific timeline that I  
11 can tell you. The earliest that I've ever run an  
12 election, I think it may have been the recall  
13 election in the past, because that -- but we had  
14 a little bit of a heads up on that one.

15 But this is coming through the gate  
16 quickly and that's why we're responding as fast  
17 as we can on this.

18 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So this potentially  
19 could be the shortest timeline you've pulled an  
20 election together?

21 MR. SALINAS: Could potentially, yes.

22 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay. Which also  
23 makes me nervous when we've talked in extensive  
24 amounts on this Committee, particularly about  
25 making sure that all voters' voices are heard.

1           And although I can appreciate COVID, it  
2       seemed like daily things were changing, it was  
3       still during a general election that we knew was  
4       coming. so I think that's a little bit different.  
5       But seems like you're up for the challenge.

6           So then my next question is, is this  
7       process fair to county registrars and elections  
8       officials who already face tremendous pressure to  
9       ensure accuracy?

10           MR. SALINAS: So I know we are -- so to  
11       understand your question, you're asking if this  
12       is --

13           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Is how -- I mean,  
14       your job is tough enough.

15           MR. SALINAS: Yes.

16           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: And we've heard from  
17       our chair, who was an elections official, this is  
18       a tough job. And now we are adding even more to  
19       your plate. I just don't think that's very fair  
20       that we're demanding more from you guys and not  
21       really giving you much of a runway to do it.

22           MR. SALINAS: Well, I do think that the  
23       resources are going to be helpful, for sure,  
24       because it allows us --

1 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Resources meaning  
2 finances or --

3 MR. SALINAS: Finances.

4 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: -- what other  
5 resources?

6 MR. SALINAS: Funding. Well, funding to  
7 be able to actually pay for it, because that is a  
8 critical need. And that's why right now I can  
9 tell you, across the state -- there are  
10 registrars across the state that have already  
11 begun the process. Because once we heard that  
12 this legislation was coming down the pike, we've  
13 begun to make plans.

14 So, for example, in my office, we've  
15 already begun to go through our checklist and  
16 making sure that we get caught up, because there  
17 is a checklist that we're going through, so we're  
18 quickly navigating that list.

19 And we're reaching out to our vendors.  
20 We're reaching out to our locations. Because  
21 we're expeditiously trying to make sure we are  
22 ready for this election.

23 And, yes, there's a lot of work ahead.  
24 I'm not going to say that there's not. And it's  
25 true across the state. So is it going to be a

1 challenge? Yes, there's administrative  
2 challenges to such a short timeline.

3 But I do believe that the elections  
4 officials, in the past they have stepped up in  
5 tremendous ways. Look again at the 2020  
6 election.

7 I'm proud to say that I'm a member of  
8 this membership that has done an amazing job in  
9 the past. And I do believe we can rise to the  
10 occasion as long as we have the support and  
11 the -- not only the funding, but the little  
12 details that we'll be working with Secretary of  
13 State to make sure we can be effective in making  
14 sure to run these elections.

15 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So state resources  
16 have already gone into this process is what  
17 you're telling me?

18 MR. SALINAS: No. We're planning as if  
19 it's coming because we've read through the  
20 legislation that there will be funding for it.  
21 So we are moving forward with the assumption that  
22 we will be having resources to pay for this  
23 election from the state.

24 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Can you walk me  
25 through what this planning includes? If it

1 doesn't require funding to do, what is the  
2 (inaudible)?

3 MR. SALINAS: So we have a checklist  
4 where we will contact vendors to make sure that  
5 they're able to do the print jobs in time. We  
6 will be contacting our locations that we are  
7 actually able to have locations available to run  
8 these elections, which are critical. Because if  
9 they are a VCA versus a polling place, there's  
10 different timelines that are required.

11 So those are factors that we're still  
12 working through because we have to be able to  
13 line up not only locations, the vendors. We have  
14 to get translators. Talking about translators,  
15 we have to make sure the translators are ready  
16 for all of this. So there's just a myriad of  
17 issues.

18 We have a checklist -- to give you a  
19 context, we have a checklist of some 500 items  
20 that we're going through through every election.  
21 So we're speeding through those to make sure we  
22 don't miss anything.

23 So one of the things I take great pride  
24 in in our association is we are attention to

1 detail. We have our checklist. We will make  
2 sure not to skip any of those.

3 Are we going to quickly go through them  
4 to try and catch up? Yes, we will. And  
5 everybody across the state is doing that. So we  
6 are working hard with the anticipation that this  
7 is a pending legislation.

8 That if it does go through, that we're  
9 ready to move forward to the best of our  
10 abilities given this very compressed timeline.  
11 Because it is a compressed timeline, I will  
12 acknowledge that.

13 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So no vendors, no  
14 locations, nobody has been contacted, just the  
15 creation of a checklist?

16 MR. SALINAS: No. We've been contacting  
17 vendors. We actually have been contacting  
18 vendors, contacting locations. We are actually  
19 trying to lock down all of the locations. We  
20 have a few still outstanding. For myself in Yolo  
21 County, we still have a few outstanding. But  
22 we've got most of them locked up.

23 So there's still a process that we have  
24 to do to be able to continue to do the checklist  
25 and verify that we're ready to run the election.

1 We're not done yet. It's an ongoing process  
2 still.

3 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: When specifically did  
4 you start this process? Do you have a date?

5 MR. SALINAS: So we started when we heard  
6 through the grapevine there would be a potential  
7 piece of legislation coming out. When  
8 announcements started coming out, we as  
9 registrars became proactive. Because you can't  
10 wait till it's already done and approved. You  
11 have to start lining up as quickly as possible.

12 So we are -- already started this a  
13 couple of weeks ago when the word was out that  
14 there was likely a possible piece of legislation  
15 coming through. So across the state, we started  
16 contacting our vendors, our contacts to say, in  
17 the event this happens, we want to make sure that  
18 we're ready for it. So that's primarily how  
19 we've approached it.

20 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So you haven't signed  
21 any contracts with vendors or done anything?

22 MR. SALINAS: At this point, we have not.

23 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: You just contacted  
24 them?

1 MR. SALINAS: Yes, we are contacting them  
2 to see their availability, to see if there's  
3 locations available, so we're in the process of  
4 doing that. Because, again, this hasn't  
5 officially been passed yet. We're not going to  
6 be able to do it until we know this legislation's  
7 passed.

8 But you try and frontload it as much as  
9 you can, and that's true of any election. You  
10 try and frontload as much as you can in that  
11 process.

12 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Interesting.

13 If the justification for urgency is  
14 political advantage rather than a true emergency,  
15 does this not set a very dangerous precedent for  
16 future Legislatures?

17 SENATOR CERVANTES: Well, I find it  
18 interesting that your line of questioning is on  
19 the timing and on the finance when your own party  
20 called for the recall in 2021 special election.

21 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: We're not talking  
22 about the recall. I don't know why this keeps  
23 getting brought up today. I'd really like to  
24 stick to the merits of the bill.

25 So no answer for that?

1           SENATOR CERVANTES: I gave you my  
2 response.

3           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Would any of the  
4 witnesses like to answer that question? I'm sure  
5 it'll come up in court, but -- okay.

6           That's all I have, Madam Chair.

7           CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

8           Assembly Member Tangipa. And there's 15  
9 minutes.

10          ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you.

11          Yeah. I mean, we heard in the testimony  
12 that changing the rules of the game in the middle  
13 of it are, you know, unacceptable, and yet we  
14 displayed that right here. But, okay, we'll hop  
15 into the questions, then.

16          Do you believe that the Independent  
17 Redistricting Commission congressional lines  
18 conform to the California Constitution? To the  
19 author? Anybody? Do you believe --

20          MR. WILLIS: I'm sorry, can you repeat  
21 the question?

22          ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Do you believe  
23 that the Independent Redistricting Commission's  
24 congressional lines conform to the California  
25 Constitution?

1 MR. WILLIS: Yes.

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Do they follow  
3 the Voter Rights Act?

4 MR. WILLIS: I believe so, yes. I mean,  
5 they haven't been challenged. But, yes, I have  
6 every reason to believe they were legal and  
7 complied with all of the rules, federal and  
8 constitutional rules.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So protected  
10 classes, districts were created to protect off of  
11 race, religion, sex, all of that?

12 MR. WILLIS: I wasn't involved in those  
13 lines, but --

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But you just  
15 spoke that you knew the lines.

16 CHAIR PELLERIN: And can you ask the  
17 questions to the merit of this bill?

18 MR. WILLIS: I have no reason to believe  
19 that the Redistricting Commission's plans were  
20 not in compliance with federal -- all federal  
21 laws, including the Voting Rights Act.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Can I ask you  
23 how long have you seen this piece of legislation  
24 and how long you were granted access to this?

1 MR. WILLIS: So are you talking about  
2 the -- which -- what are we talking about? Are  
3 we talking about the re --

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: The bill. How  
5 long have you seen the language?

6 MR. WILLIS: Are we talking about these  
7 lines or the Redistricting Commission's lines.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: My original --  
9 these lines. I'm talking about --

10 MR. WILLIS: This is not the maps bill.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: No, I  
12 understand that. No, I know.

13 Do you think that any of the lines drawn  
14 by the Commission were racially gerrymandered?

15

16 MR. WILLIS: By the Commission?

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: By the  
18 Commission.

19 MR. WILLIS: By the Redistricting  
20 Commission?

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes.

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: These are not questions  
23 pertaining to SB 280. SB 280 contains the  
24 components that are critical to ensuring that  
25 county elections officials and the Secretary of

1 State are able to administer the statewide  
2 special election in this timeframe.

3 So it's not going into the details of the  
4 maps. This is actually the administration of the  
5 election and the funding of it.

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. I  
7 understand.

8 There's so many changes that have  
9 happened, you know, it's -- wouldn't we think  
10 that a lot of these questions would be worked out  
11 if we had longer than 24 hours to review this?  
12 Because that's what I think. I mean, there's a  
13 struggle here for a general reason, because I  
14 haven't seen them.

15 The voter guide for Prop. 20 also stated  
16 it'll put an end to backroom deals by ensuring  
17 redistricting is completely open to the public.

18 KCRA just reported that there is a  
19 certain Senator who agreed to support this if  
20 congressional districts were drawn for him.

21 So you agree that the purpose of the  
22 process is to undermine Prop. 20 and a backroom  
23 deal was done.

24 My question to the author now is, how  
25 long have you known about these lines with this

1 urgency involved? Do you know anybody that has  
2 been involved that has a vested interest in this  
3 legislative body, and do you have a vested  
4 interest in these map -- in this election being  
5 performed?

6 SENATOR CERVANTES: Again, this bill  
7 before us, SB 280, calls for the election to take  
8 place on November 4, 2025 and the administration  
9 of that election, making statutory changes to  
10 ensure that a primary will be conducted on time,  
11 June of next year.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Do you have a  
13 vested interest in these lines in this election?

14 SENATOR CERVANTES: Pertaining to this  
15 bill, this is -- what we are debating today.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Pertaining to  
17 this election.

18 SENATOR CERVANTES: -- is the SB 280  
19 calling for the special election against the  
20 rigging that is happening across our country  
21 because of what Trump is demanding of Texas and  
22 Governor Abbott.

23 This is how California responds and this  
24 is how we allow 40 million Californians to have a  
25 say in the direction of our country

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Because of the  
2 urgency in this bill, do you have any vested  
3 interests in it? Do you have any vested --

4 SENATOR CERVANTES: It is democracy that  
5 we are standing up for. This is an emergency  
6 situation --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So democracy --

8 SENATOR CERVANTES: -- that requires an  
9 emergency response.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: You can't  
11 say --

12 SENATOR CERVANTES: And, again, you --

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: You can't say  
14 that you have a vested interest because of  
15 democracy?

16 SENATOR CERVANTES: I have a vested  
17 interest in supporting my constituency and making  
18 sure that I fight for them. When we go back to  
19 our districts, just as we did over summer recess,  
20 we get asked, what are you doing to stand up  
21 against this power grab, against this political  
22 gerrymandering that is happening? What can you  
23 do as our state representative?

24 This is how we respond. This is our duty  
25 to uphold and to ensure that we continue having

1 fair and -- fair elections, not just in the State  
2 of California, but across our country. Because  
3 California will remain the firewall. This is  
4 what voters are asking for. They want to have a  
5 say at the ballot box.

6 And, again, much different than what  
7 Texas is doing. Texas is drawing their lines to  
8 choose their voters, as opposed to letting voters  
9 choose who their representative is.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Senator, I  
11 understand that and -- but this is California and  
12 this is the California Constitution that I'm  
13 trying to speak about, which is why I'm simply  
14 just asking if there is a vested interest in  
15 these lines and if anybody in California has a  
16 vested interest because of the urgency behind  
17 this. Because this -- we can do all of this and  
18 then completely lose it.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Madam Chair, I  
20 think the question's been asked and answered five  
21 times.

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yeah. And the urgency  
23 on this is because the elections officials need  
24 to be moving ahead and continuing their process

1 to conduct that secure, accurate, transparent,  
2 accessible election on November 4th.

3 So if we can keep the questions to the  
4 merits of this bill, that would be appreciated.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Can you speak  
6 to the fact that Members who are filing for  
7 Congress cannot put on their ballot statement  
8 incumbent, which is within the bill?

9 CHAIR PELLERIN: And that is based on  
10 prior procedures that we have used in these kinds  
11 of situations where they cannot use incumbent.  
12 They can only use their title of a Member of  
13 Congress or U.S. representative.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Is there any  
15 fear at all that that would be a violation of the  
16 First Amendment?

17 MR. WILLIS: No. I would say also this  
18 is past practice. And as the Chair mentioned,  
19 anyone can say that they -- what their title is  
20 in the ballot label.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Within this  
22 bill, too, it states that this was -- that the  
23 maps were created and submitted to the Assembly  
24 Committee and prepared by us here.

1           Because of the KCRA report, the maps were  
2 done by the DCCC. Is that an accurate statement?  
3 Were the maps created by the DCCC?

4           MR. WILLIS: I don't know personally. I  
5 know that they were publicly submitted and then  
6 the Legislature looked at them and reviewed them  
7 carefully for legal compliance.

8           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you.

9           CHAIR PELLERIN: Any other Members have  
10 any questions or comments?

11           Assembly Member Berman.

12           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Yeah. I'll make  
13 some comments that I was going to make at the end  
14 of my presentation, but didn't in the -- to save  
15 everyone some time.

16           But it was said by the Vice Chair of the  
17 Committee that there is no emergency, and I would  
18 urge everybody to wake up.

19           If you don't think that our democracy is  
20 currently under attack, if you don't think that  
21 the President of the United States getting  
22 elections, getting democracy advice from Vladimir  
23 Putin isn't an emergency, and then bragging about  
24 it on national TV, if you don't think that the  
25 President of the United States calling elections

1 officials in Georgia and asking those Republican  
2 elections officials to find him 12,000 votes  
3 isn't an emergency.

4 If you don't think that this President of  
5 the United States won't continue to attack our  
6 democracy over and over and over again if we let  
7 him isn't an emergency, you're not paying  
8 attention.

9 And whether it's for your side or my side  
10 doesn't matter. This is our democracy we're  
11 talking about. And the President of the United  
12 States has shown zero interest in democracy. He  
13 has shown only interest in power.

14 And if California doesn't finally push  
15 back on these constant attempts to erode our  
16 societal norms, to erode our democracy, we won't  
17 have an America to fight for in the future. And  
18 we're there.

19 I don't like to be hyperbolic. It's not  
20 really my style. But if you don't think that the  
21 fate of our democracy is at stake when the  
22 President of the United States demands, says that  
23 he's entitled to five Republican congressional  
24 districts, and unlike those Republican elections  
25 officials in Georgia who had a spine and a moral

1 compass and said, no, Mr. President, that's wrong  
2 and we are not going to do that, that doesn't  
3 exist in the Republican Party in 2025.

4           The only answer from Republicans in 2025  
5 is, yes, Mr. President, how can I jump higher?  
6 Yes, Mr. President, how can I bow lower at your  
7 feet? So there is no check. There is no check  
8 on this President of the United States,  
9 especially when you've got an absolutely  
10 compliant majority in the House and the Senate.

11           And that's what he's trying to keep into  
12 perpetuity by rigging elections in Texas and  
13 other states. And that's what we're fighting  
14 back on in California.

15           And we're going to put it to voters and  
16 give California voters the opportunity. Do you  
17 want to fight back on these power grabs by  
18 President Trump and Republicans in other states,  
19 who then make decisions that destroy communities  
20 in California, that rip away Medi-Cal from  
21 3.5 million Californians?

22           And what do our nine Republican Congress  
23 Members do? Do they defend their constituents?  
24 No. When they know that hundreds of thousands of  
25 their constituents are going to lose healthcare,

1 tens of thousands of their constituents are going  
2 to lose food stamps, free and reduced meals at  
3 lunch, a lot of the things at school, a lot of  
4 the things that generations of Californians have  
5 been able to depend on. And those things are  
6 being taken away. And if that doesn't scare the  
7 hell out of you, I don't know what will.

8           So the emergency is here. It's a  
9 ten o'clock -- ten alarm fire. And that's what  
10 we're responding to, and we need to respond to  
11 today.

12           And to the point of the timing, I think  
13 the timing sucks. But when we broke for recess,  
14 Texans weren't talking about rigging their  
15 election for the next decade.

16           Voters are going to have 74 days to  
17 review these maps. Voters, California voters,  
18 are going to get the chance to vote on these  
19 maps. And California voters will decide whether  
20 or not we enact these maps or not. I can't think  
21 of a more democratic process than that. I don't  
22 know why my Republican colleagues are so afraid  
23 of the voters of California.

24           So let's put it to the voters in  
25 California. Let's give them an opportunity to

1 decide. Are they tired of President Trump  
2 attacking California over and over again? Are  
3 they tired of Republican Congress Members in  
4 California constantly bowing down to the  
5 President instead of standing up for them or not?  
6 And that's the chance that they're going to get.  
7 And that's the beauty of this process. That's  
8 the beauty of the opportunity that they're going  
9 to have on November 4th.

10 So I want to thank my colleague, the  
11 Elections Chair in the Senate, for bringing  
12 forward this bill. I want to thank my colleague,  
13 the Elections Chair of the Assembly, for joint  
14 authoring it. And I'm happy to support it. I'll  
15 move the bill.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: Second.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNET: Second.

18 CHAIR PELLERIN: We have a motion, and we  
19 have a second.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Can I --

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: You have one more  
22 question?

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I do.

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yeah. Well,  
2 more of a comment.

3 You know, the main reason why I truly  
4 brought up urgency and why it's so vital and so  
5 important, because I agree, when we all took a  
6 break here, this wasn't something that we all  
7 thought about, wasn't something that we talked  
8 about. I don't think anybody -- any of us want  
9 to be here going through this process.

10 But with urgency and the way this has  
11 been done and the way we're thinking about it,  
12 the people of California can see right now that  
13 if they wanted us to take on cost of living,  
14 insurance, utilities, everything else --

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Madam Chair, can  
16 we speak to the bill?

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- it's urgency  
18 and --

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: You're talking  
20 about urgency (inaudible)?

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Mr. Berman, you  
22 just --

23 (Simultaneous speakers - inaudible.)

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: Excuse me. Excuse me.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: The main reason  
2 why --

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: We have a motion, and we  
4 have a second.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Madam Chair,  
6 the main reason why --

7 CHAIR PELLERIN: And so for that, in all  
8 intents and purposes, ends debate.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But for my 15  
10 minutes, can I just --

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: You're just about -- you  
12 got one more minute.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. I'll do  
14 it in one minute.

15 It tells us that the State of California  
16 can move at lightning speed to handle something  
17 when it's for political gain, but we can't do it  
18 to take on the cost of living, to take on  
19 utilities, to take on everything else. And I'm  
20 sorry --

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Thank you for  
22 not speaking of this bill at all.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And I'm sorry  
24 that we can find urgency on this bill, but we

1 can't find urgency to take on so many issues here  
2 in the state of California.

3 And I'm sorry, but when your family would  
4 be sitting in the morgue right now, I think you  
5 would ask for 15 more minutes. I think you would  
6 ask for more --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I would  
8 (inaudible).

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- when I  
10 haven't seen this.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: (Inaudible)  
12 money away from (inaudible).

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: When I haven't  
14 seen this.

15 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. All right. So --

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you.  
17 Thank you.

18 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- bringing the control  
19 back here to the Chair.

20 We have a motion, and we have a second on  
21 SB 280.

22 Senator Cervantes, you may close.

23 SENATOR CERVANTES: Thank you, Madam  
24 Chair and Committee Members, for the opportunity  
25 to close today.

1           You know, I want to make a few statements  
2 because of what I heard from our two Republican  
3 colleagues, Assembly Member Macedo and Assembly  
4 Member Tangipa.

5           You know, earlier this year, you had an  
6 opportunity to vote on an independent,  
7 nonpartisan commission through a bill by your own  
8 colleague, Assemblymember Soria. And yet, you  
9 both voted against it twice. So that is where  
10 the hypocrisy lies.

11           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Madam Chair -- Madam  
12 Chair, we've been attacked on this twice.

13           CHAIR PELLERIN: Let's let the Senator  
14 complete her close, please.

15           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Are we allowed  
16 to respond to the disparaging comments?

17           CHAIR PELLERIN: No, you're not. We're  
18 going to complete your close.

19           SENATOR CERVANTES: Thank you, Madam  
20 Chair.

21           This is an opportunity for the voters to  
22 have a direct say in the future of California and  
23 our country. This is a response to Trump's  
24 election rigging scheme, which is an emergency  
25 for our democracy.

1 SB 280 is to hold an election to give  
2 voters, California voters, a voice that Texas  
3 Republicans are denying Texans. Let Californians  
4 vote and have a say at the ballot box.

5 I respectfully ask for your aye vote.

6 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

7 And I'm sorry, I did miss Assembly Member  
8 Bennett, who had a comment he would like to make,  
9 so I'm going to open the floor to him.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Thank you very  
11 much. I appreciate that. I'll try to be very  
12 brief here.

13 I talked earlier about this real issue is  
14 about how do we set the rules of the game to  
15 decide who controls the power of the federal  
16 government. And the old way is being changed at  
17 the federal government level. I talked about  
18 that in my earlier comments and so I won't repeat  
19 all that.

20 But I do think there's one thing that  
21 really merits repeating because between now and  
22 November, we will get an enormous amount of what  
23 I'm going to talk about, and that autocrats use  
24 four major techniques to -- autocrats use four  
25 major techniques to weaken democracy and do these

1 kinds of things that are happening in Texas. And  
2 that is, they're just deceitful about what's  
3 going on, one.

4 Two, they practice lots of intimidation.  
5 I would offer the laughter and the jeering,  
6 et cetera that took place in this hearing in the  
7 first -- as we discussed the first bill as just  
8 an example of that. Didn't come from the other  
9 side anywhere near like it came from that.

10 The third thing is the militarization of  
11 civilian life is part of this create this crisis  
12 mentality.

13 But the fourth one that is the most  
14 difficult is to keep raising issues to deflect us  
15 from the real issue. This is about changing the  
16 rules, rigging the game so that one side has an  
17 advantage in keeping the resources and the power  
18 of the federal government.

19 And that technique is to deflect us with,  
20 well, why is this more urgent than that? Why is  
21 this, and why didn't we do it like the old  
22 Commission? It's every trick in the book and it  
23 is kabuki theater, as I said before.

24 But I want to repeat that we all have to  
25 be looking out for an enormous amount of this

1 between now and November and we have to do  
2 everything we can to educate the public.

3 And thank you very much for letting me  
4 make that point before we go.

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you. And my  
6 apologies for missing that.

7 So there's a motion and a second, and the  
8 Senator has closed. So the motion is to do pass  
9 and re-refer to Appropriations.

10 Madam Secretary, please call the roll.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: On SB 280 by  
12 Cervantes, Pellerin?

13 CHAIR PELLERIN: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin, aye.  
15 Macedo?

16 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: No.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Macedo, no.  
18 Bennett?

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Bennett, aye.  
21 Berman?

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Berman, aye.  
24 Solache?

25 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Aye.

1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Solache, aye.

2 Stefani?

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Stefani, aye.

5 Tangipa?

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: No.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Tangipa, no.

8 CHAIR PELLERIN: That bill is out five to  
9 two.

10 Thank you so much.

11 We are now going to go ahead and recess  
12 our Assembly Bill hearing and move on to our  
13 informational hearing on Assembly Bill 604. And  
14 the author is present.

15 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Madam Chair, motion  
16 to recess till tomorrow considering the maps were  
17 just changed at eight o'clock last night.

18 CHAIR PELLERIN: We've already considered  
19 that motion earlier.

20 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Different bill. That  
21 was on the ACA, not on the maps bill.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: This is a  
23 different bill.

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. We have a motion  
25 to recess again, yes. Apparently it's an order

1 again for this bill. And so we'll put that to a  
2 vote.

3 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin?

4 CHAIR PELLERIN: No.

5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Pellerin, no.  
6 Macedo?

7 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Macedo, aye.  
9 Bennett?

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: No.

11 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Bennett, no.  
12 Berman?

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: No.

14 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Berman, no.  
15 Solache?

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: No.

17 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Solache, no.  
18 Stefani?

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER STEFANI: No.

20 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Stefani, no.  
21 Tangipa?

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Tangipa, aye.

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: That motion fails two to  
25 five.

1           Majority Floor Leader, you may begin your  
2 presentation of AB 604.

3           ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY:     Great.  
4 I'm just waiting for someone to hold -- okay.

5           Thank you, Madam Chair and Members.

6           Let's not dance around the issue here.  
7 If California Democrats had our way, the midterms  
8 would continue as they are with the map drawn by  
9 our state's Independent California Citizens  
10 Redistricting Commission. I think we need to --  
11 we agree on that.

12           But that's not good enough for this  
13 President or for Republicans following his  
14 commands in Texas and D.C. We weren't planning  
15 on redistricting until they made attempts to rig  
16 the 2026 election by stacking the deck in other  
17 states. We didn't start this and we are not  
18 going to roll over.

19           This bill lays out new congressional  
20 districts only, only if voters pass ACA 8. If  
21 voters approve the new map, the Independent  
22 Redistricting Commission will continue its  
23 mission after the 2030 census.

24           If California voters approve this plan,  
25 the temporary maps only happen if D.C.

1 Republicans and the Republican-led states push  
2 through mid-decade partisan maps first. Unlike  
3 Texas, which is forcing maps on their voters,  
4 we're taking ours for their approval. We're  
5 asking ours for their approval. There is nothing  
6 more Democratic than letting California voters  
7 decide.

8           Unlike the map proposed in Texas, the map  
9 in AB 604 respects California's constitutional  
10 requirement for maintaining communities of  
11 interest. With this bill, there is less breakup  
12 of local jurisdictions. With this bill, we seek  
13 the public's input. The voters will decide.

14           So if our Republican colleagues in  
15 California want this to stop, they don't need us  
16 to do it. They can convince the Republican  
17 colleagues in Texas and D.C. to stop trying to  
18 rig the 2026 elections. And they can ask  
19 Congressional Republicans to pass the Republican  
20 proposal to make midterm redistricting illegal,  
21 to finally create a system where every state uses  
22 a fair, independent districting system.

23           Again, colleagues, their choice is to  
24 stand down or support a fair system for every  
25 state. That's how this ends. Until this

1 President's followers stop trying to rig the  
2 elections, we won't and we can't sit on our  
3 hands.

4 What happens next year is up to the  
5 President, and it's up to the national  
6 Republicans, and it's up to California voters.

7 With me today, I believe -- right now we  
8 will have Terry Brennand with SEIU and Tom Willis  
9 from Olson Remcho speak. We're also waiting for  
10 our other member. Thank you.

11 MR. BRENNAN: Madam Chair, Members, Terry  
12 Brennand on behalf of SEIU California.

13 SEIU local unions are made up of workers  
14 in the frontline, essential roles across the  
15 state, nurses, healthcare workers, janitors,  
16 social workers, security officers, in-home  
17 caregivers, school and university employees,  
18 court workers, airport workers, city, county,  
19 state employees, all of whom are targets of this  
20 federal administration.

21 On behalf of our 750,000 workers and 17  
22 SEIU locals, we are in strong support of this  
23 bill and the entire redistricting package. It  
24 represents a sensible and, in fact, possibly the

1 only path for California to fight back against  
2 Trump's efforts to steal the next election.

3 As has already been stated, this bill  
4 only goes into effect if Trump and his MAGA  
5 loyalists are successful in the one party rule of  
6 redistricting, and only as a temporary measure to  
7 respond to the election rigging from the White  
8 House.

9 While SEIU wouldn't have chosen this  
10 path, it's not the cleanest, easiest way to do  
11 things, we are proud that California isn't going  
12 to just sit here like Texas, and let Texas and  
13 Trump roll over our democracy.

14 And unlike Texas, which obliterated their  
15 current congressional districts, drafting maps  
16 for this proposal overwhelmingly reinforced  
17 California's commitment to our democracy and the  
18 vote of every Californian.

19 The maps proposed in AB 604 build upon  
20 the work of the Redistricting Commission and keep  
21 the majority of districts established by that  
22 Commission intact.

23 The plan you will get to vote on and the  
24 voters will get to vote on in November was  
25 created using traditional redistricting criteria

1 consistent with the State Commission criteria and  
2 the Fair Maps Act, but with the additional  
3 criteria of improving partisan gains in response  
4 to Texas and other states who are conducting mid-  
5 decade redistricting. Using objective metrics,  
6 the districts maintain and even, in some cases,  
7 improve district compactness compared to the  
8 existing commission maps.

9           For people who are concerned about  
10 splitting up cities, it should be noted that the  
11 maps in AB 604 split fewer cities than the  
12 current Commission plan that we're operating  
13 under. In contrast, the Texican -- Texican --  
14 Texas Republicans aimed to maximize Republican  
15 gains with no consideration of the state's  
16 residents.

17           Their proposed map doesn't even consider  
18 communities of interest or political  
19 subdivisions, splitting 142 cities, more than  
20 double the number of cities compared to the  
21 California map drawn by the Commission.

22           Not only does California redistricting  
23 plan better represent the people of California,  
24 but the proposed changes impact significantly  
25 fewer residents.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: If you could wrap up.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. BRENNAN: Okay, I'll wind up.

4 Californians will get a chance to vote on  
5 our future. Every American's voice and their  
6 voice will be at stake.

7 For these reasons we urge an aye vote  
8 when you get a chance to vote on this.

9 Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

10 CHAIR PELLERIN: And welcome to Senator  
11 Gonzalez.

12 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: It's your turn.

13 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Oh, okay.

14 Thank you very much, Madam Chair. My  
15 apologies for being a little late. And thank you  
16 to the Members who are here today.

17 And in partnership with Assembly Majority  
18 Leader Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, presenting AB 604,  
19 which represents a reasonable and rational  
20 response to the anti-Democratic actions of this  
21 federal administration.

22 AB 604, as has been mentioned and we'll  
23 continue to reiterate, gives California voters  
24 the last say, an opportunity to decide in  
25 November whether they support newly drawn maps to

1 elect congressional representatives that will  
2 stand up against threats to our democracy.

3 Californians and all Americans are facing  
4 an endless cycle of worry under this reckless  
5 federal administration, and that means  
6 Republicans, Democrats, no party preference,  
7 Americans and Californians are facing this worry.

8 Families have been separated in my  
9 district alone. Immigrant communities completely  
10 traumatized for the overreach of this egregious  
11 administration.

12 Vital programs have been cut. Medicare,  
13 we have about 6 million folks on Medicare here in  
14 California. Over 3 million of them will be  
15 affected by the Medicare cuts in our communities.  
16 And that's exactly why this moment is so urgent.  
17 Our communities deserve better.

18 And for you, I don't know personally,  
19 seeing my Texas colleagues being locked up, being  
20 threatened with the FBI coming after them, being  
21 threatened to require them to have law  
22 enforcement at their every waking hour just to be  
23 able to do their job is really an egregious  
24 crime, in my opinion, to be able to represent

1 your communities, but still have this hanging  
2 over you.

3 So AB 604 is a temporary solution that  
4 provides California voters with the means to  
5 balance the scales.

6 And I look forward to the discussion here  
7 and testifying in support.

8 In addition to Mr. Brennand, we also have  
9 Mr. Willis here, too, from Olson Remcho.

10 MR. WILLIS: Thank you. I'll just be  
11 very, very brief.

12 The AB 604 is obviously the Maps Act. It  
13 is a long list of census blocks. But  
14 nonetheless, that is seen through interactive  
15 maps that will be widely available. And more  
16 importantly, the SB 280, which you just had the  
17 hearing on, commands that the voter pamphlet  
18 include maps for everyone to see. I have a  
19 feeling that these maps over the next 74 days  
20 will be discussed widely by everyone, and so it  
21 is up to the public.

22 These maps only go into effect if Texas  
23 or other districts do mid-decade redistricting  
24 and if our voters, the California voters, approve

1   them.  Probably the most democratic process you  
2   can have.

3               So those are my two points.  I'm happy to  
4   answer any technical questions or legal questions  
5   you have.

6               CHAIR PELLERIN:  Thank you so much.

7               We'll now open it up to the room.  If  
8   there's anybody who wants to add on as a support  
9   to AB 604, you may step up, and you're each given  
10  30 seconds.

11              MS. HINES-SHAIKH:  Honorable Chair and  
12  Members, Amy Hines-Shaikh representing UDW AFSCME  
13  Local 3930 and their 200,000 in-home supportive  
14  services members standing up for Medi-Cal funding  
15  and these bills, the whole redistricting package,  
16  in strong support, and UNITE HERE! Local 11  
17  representing 32,000 folks in Orange County,  
18  San Bernardino, Riverside And Los Angeles  
19  counties, in strong support of the whole  
20  redistricting package, including this bill.  
21  Thank you.

22              MS. CHOU:  Annie Chou with the California  
23  Teachers Association in support of this bill.

24              Again, just reminding that CTA is  
25  supporting these bills because of, you know, the

1 effect at the school site. So when we're talking  
2 about the reduction in force in the Department of  
3 Education and protecting those workers, when  
4 we're talking about funding for Education  
5 Department.

6 And I know that our state was involved  
7 in, you know, making sure that we were ensured  
8 those federal funding. Those are the types of  
9 things that are super critical to the task at  
10 hand for the California Teachers Association. So  
11 thank you so much.

12 MS. MOK: Tiffany Mok on behalf of CFT, a  
13 union of educators and classified professionals.  
14 We stand proud to support this legislation, not  
15 because we wanted to, but because we believe it  
16 is necessary to defend against the threats that  
17 we see every day on our school campuses.

18 CFT's mission is to ensure that there are  
19 the necessary conditions for learning. And under  
20 this administration, we feel like many of the  
21 attacks --

22 (Cell phone ringing.)

23 MS. MOK: Okay. And so that's not me.  
24 Okay.

1           Anyway, so we support this legislation  
2           because we feel we're threatened by this  
3           administration.

4           CHAIR PELLERIN: But now it's me.

5           MS. NIELSEN: Julie Nielsen on behalf of  
6           the National Union of Healthcare Workers,  
7           representing healthcare workers up and down the  
8           state of California, in strong support of this  
9           legislation and the fight back. Thank you.

10          MR. KUMAR: Thank you, Chair and Members.  
11          Keshav Kumar for the final time on behalf of  
12          Lighthouse Public Affairs representing  
13          Reproductive Freedom for All.

14          Really want to say thank you to the  
15          Members of the Committee who are in support of  
16          this and the Legislature in general.

17          This is what we need to do at this moment  
18          because of what Texas is planning on doing and  
19          what other states may do. And Reproductive  
20          Freedom for All has members in every single  
21          congressional district. And we are in strong  
22          support on behalf of our 4 million members.  
23          Thank you.

1 MS. GUSMAN: Good afternoon. Connor  
2 Gusman on behalf of Teamsters California, in  
3 support. Thank you.

4 MS. FLOCKS: Madam Chair, Members, Sara  
5 Flocks, California Federation of Labor Unions.  
6 On behalf of our 2.3 million members, we're in  
7 strong support. Thank you.

8 MS. MCMICHAEL: Shelby McMichael on  
9 behalf of Planned Parenthood Affiliates of  
10 California, in strong support.

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

12 We will now open it up to primary  
13 witnesses in opposition. If there's primary  
14 witnesses in opposition, you may step up to the  
15 presentation table. And you're provided with  
16 three minutes.

17 MR. BOLOG: Thank you so much. My name  
18 is David Bolog. I am an employee of the City of  
19 Los Angeles, although I do not speak for the City  
20 of Los Angeles, nor do I speak for my unions. I  
21 am a member of a union.

22 One of the presenters here today stated  
23 that, because of the cuts, we are losing to be  
24 able to provide services. In the City of LA, we  
25 are facing a budget crisis. We are having to lay

1 off people. But it has nothing to do with the  
2 administration. It has to do with our poor  
3 planning of our leaderships and lawsuits.

4           So one of the big problems that a lot of  
5 Republicans have with this map and with the  
6 process of doing the redistricting is that we are  
7 losing representation. And I do know -- even  
8 though I do not agree with the supermajority  
9 party's politics, you've been nothing but fair to  
10 us.

11           You've been fair to my -- I consider them  
12 my representatives, even though they're not my  
13 district. You've given them ample amount of time  
14 and allowed them to express their dismay with  
15 this and allow them to ask their questions.

16           But by passing this -- and I understand  
17 the reasons why you're doing it. By passing  
18 this, you are limiting our congressional  
19 representation. We make up about 40 percent --  
20 and I said this already, and another person said  
21 it. We make up about 40 percent of the voting  
22 block.

23           I think what this is going to do is limit  
24 it to, if I'm not mistaken, 20 percent, so it's  
25 going to cut our representation down in half.

1 And I do know you care about that. So I think  
2 you -- and I understand, again, why you're doing  
3 it. But I think you all could do a lot better  
4 than this.

5 And, again, thank you for your  
6 generosity, and I thank you for allowing me to  
7 speak, and I thank you allowing for everybody to  
8 give 30 seconds.

9 I know it's probably not going to happen,  
10 but I really wish that that will become a trend  
11 in this Legislature with the committees. Thank  
12 you.

13 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you so much.

14 Anybody else in the room that would just  
15 like to come to the mic and give your 30 seconds.

16 MS. PATEL: Hello. My name is Preet  
17 Patel, and I strongly oppose this piece of  
18 legislation.

19 Your duty as this state's Legislature is  
20 to the voters of California, not to perform  
21 retaliatory responses to the actions of other  
22 states.

23 So by overriding our State Constitution,  
24 to retaliate to the actions of the State of Texas  
25 is completely disregarding your constituents.

1           And the reason that you are elected into  
2 office is not to sit here and --

3           CHAIR PELLERIN: That's 30 seconds.

4           MS. PATEL: Okay. Well, I don't know  
5 that that was 30 seconds, but thank you.

6           CHAIR PELLERIN: Actually, it's 37 now.

7           And let's refrain from the applause.

8 Thank you.

9           MS. KAY: Hello. My name is Shan Kay. I  
10 was in here earlier posing as well. Drove all  
11 the way up from Southern California this morning  
12 to come up and oppose.

13           My sentiments are the same. We are  
14 not -- I know you're trying to Trump proof  
15 California, but we are constituents in California  
16 and we feel like our voices should mean  
17 something, not just something to fight what's  
18 going on in another state.

19           So I'm just here, driving all the way up  
20 here from one o'clock in the morning to oppose  
21 this bill. Thank you.

22           CHAIR PELLERIN: All right. Thank you  
23 very much.

24           All right. Is that everybody that --  
25 okay.

1           So we will now bring it back to the  
2 Committee.

3           Members, do you have any comments or  
4 questions?

5           Assemblymember Bennett.

6           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT:     Just one quick  
7 one. This bill is on a tight time frame. All  
8 three bills are on tight time frames, and so I  
9 think it's appropriate for us to recognize that.

10           Many attempts will be made to delay  
11 things, and there will be all kinds of reasons  
12 for why we should delay. But I think we should  
13 all call out that one of the major reasons is, if  
14 you have a tight time frame and you can delay  
15 something long enough, that's a way to defeat  
16 this bill. And that's simply rather than -- it's  
17 a genuine issue that's being brought up, it's an  
18 issue being brought up for the ulterior motive of  
19 allowing the autocrats to win and change the  
20 rules and have us not be able to respond. Thank  
21 you very much.

22           CHAIR PELLERIN: Any -- I'm sorry,  
23 there's two more people that were wanting to have  
24 opposition recorded. Go ahead and take your 30  
25 seconds each. My apologies.

1 MS. GRAY: No worries.

2 My name is Yasmina Gray, and I'm a  
3 resident here in Sacramento. And my sentiments  
4 are the same as what was explained before, is  
5 that as a citizen, as a resident here, I don't  
6 think that our law should be looking at  
7 countering what's going on in another state.

8 It should be reflective of what is needed  
9 here, for the residents here. And so I want to  
10 strongly oppose the bill. Thank you.

11 MS. CHAVEZ: My name is Diana Chavez.  
12 And as a Republican minority now here in  
13 California, I strongly oppose this because I  
14 think my voice is being completely shut down as  
15 being a Republican. It seems everything wants to  
16 go Democratic. And so I strongly oppose this  
17 redistricting.

18 CHAIR PELLERIN: Any other comments or  
19 questions from Committee Members?

20 Assembly Member Tangipa.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes, I have  
22 quite a few.

23 So I actually just wanted some clarity,  
24 too. If you can answer this, when did we first

1 see the maps and when were you given the maps to  
2 start drawing these lines?

3 And I ask -- and the main reason why I  
4 ask that is because there was statement that was  
5 made that these congressional maps have fewer --  
6 you stated that there were fewer splits with  
7 these maps.

8 It is my understanding that, as of last  
9 night at eight o'clock that there are more splits  
10 now and that was completely changed. So if you  
11 wrote your testimony before 8:00 p.m., the entire  
12 maps are completely different.

13 MR. BRENNAND: I did it based on the maps  
14 released on Friday.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: On Friday?

16 MR. BRENNAND: Yeah.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. So the  
18 maps changed last night and now there are more  
19 splits.

20 CHAIR PELLERIN: Again, the maps were  
21 changed as of yesterday morning at 8:00 a.m., and  
22 it was just a couple of tweaks that were done  
23 in --

24 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: I know, I know, I know.  
2 But it's not the entire map.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But I meant it  
4 more towards the testimony was wrong. It was  
5 incorrect.

6 MR. BRENNAND: Well, there are fewer,  
7 fewer splits than the Texas maps for sure.  
8 That's what my testimony was.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. The --

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: If you  
11 don't mind, there --

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: When did --

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: -- there  
14 were -- just so you know, we did have -- there  
15 were some changes. They did two things. They  
16 eliminate a zero population split in the City of  
17 Industry and improve the compactness of the plan  
18 in Southern Santa Ana.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: When did those  
20 changes happen?

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: Yesterday.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: When were those  
23 changes made public to all Committee Members?  
24 Because they weren't made public yesterday at  
25 8:00 a.m. for me. Because when I read mine, the

1 City of Clovis had three congressional districts.

2 The City of Clovis now has a change and has one.

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: It's my understanding  
4 that our Committee staff posted them on our  
5 Assembly elections website yesterday morning at  
6 8:00 a.m.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: That's  
8 when they were there.

9 SENATOR GONZALEZ: And we've had over  
10 3,000 -- probably now about 5,000 residents  
11 across California that have submitted to the  
12 online portal that was available -- thank you,  
13 Madam Chair on the Assembly side, as well as  
14 Chair Cervantes in the Senate side -- a portal  
15 that was available to residents as of Friday. I  
16 think even before that.

17 And so we want to thank you for being so  
18 transparent and providing the opportunity for  
19 folks to see the maps.

20 And as been mentioned by our witnesses  
21 too, you know, 70 -- I'm going to be very clear  
22 here with the data, 76.7 percent of people will  
23 be in their same congressional district. The  
24 maps change 58 percent of districts by less than  
25 20 percent, and 37 percent by less than

1 10 percent. Eight districts will be identical to  
2 the lines drawn by the Citizens Redistricting  
3 Commission.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. Thank  
5 you.

6 SENATOR GONZALEZ: And we all know --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I've got to  
8 move on to my next question.

9 SENATOR GONZALEZ: I'm not done here.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I have a  
11 limited amount of time, so I got to move on.

12 SENATOR GONZALEZ: I understand, but I  
13 have the floor.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So do you agree  
15 that --

16 SENATOR GONZALEZ: If you don't mind --

17 CHAIR PELLERIN: Excuse me. Assembly  
18 Member Tangipa, we're going to freeze your  
19 time --

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay.

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- and allow the Senator  
22 to finish with her report.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: How much time  
24 do I have left?

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Eleven minutes and 45  
2 seconds.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you.

4 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam  
5 Chair.

6 And we just -- you know, I will certainly  
7 keep decorum here as much as possible, but I want  
8 to make sure that the public understands what  
9 we're doing here.

10 And then there's 21 districts, exactly  
11 the ideal district size, the same number as the  
12 Citizen Redistricting Commission.

13 And the proposed congressional map, as  
14 been mentioned by Mr. Brennand, keeps more cities  
15 whole than -- within a single district than most  
16 recent maps enacted by the Commission.

17 As you know, the Commission had six  
18 Republicans, five Democrats, four nonparty  
19 preference folks that were doing the hard work  
20 back in 2020.

21 And so I think that, you know, again,  
22 76.7 percent of the current maps that you see  
23 here are based off that Commission map in 2020.  
24 So that's -- these are small changes, while also

1 ensuring that we're combating Texas on this  
2 democracy issue, which is very important.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you.

4 Do you agree that we have not -- are we  
5 starting? Okay.

6 Do you agree that we have not had as many  
7 hearings as were held by the Citizens  
8 Redistricting Commission? Just do you agree that  
9 we haven't had as much -- as many hearings?

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: Well, I  
11 think the information has been that the maps are  
12 based on proceedings, records and public input  
13 from Independent Commission process based on the  
14 2020 census.

15 Voters are able to see those maps in the  
16 Assembly Elections Committee website, submit  
17 public comments so we can answer their questions.  
18 The voters will make the ultimate decision on  
19 their maps.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Got it. So you  
21 agree.

22 Do you agree that we have not followed  
23 the same requirements in drawing lines as the  
24 Citizens Redistricting Commission was required to  
25 follow pursuant to the California Constitution?

1           SENATOR GONZALEZ: And we'll say again,  
2 over 76 percent of this map that you see here had  
3 been vetted publicly, had been done by the  
4 Commission. And from Mr. Willis's testimony  
5 back in Senate elections -- and if you'd like to  
6 pontificate on this -- is the Members of the  
7 public since Friday of last week will have 78  
8 days did we say? Seventy-eight days to look at  
9 this before it hits the ballots.

10           And on the ballot they will have a link  
11 that will direct them to the map, so they can  
12 obviously have -- be more educated when they're  
13 at the ballot box as well. And Californians will  
14 have the final say.

15           This is much more time than would be --  
16 than would have been given through the  
17 redistricting process, which was 14 days.

18           So if you'd like to add to that,  
19 Mr. Willis, we'd love to put you on the spot.

20           MR. WILLIS: (Inaudible.)

21           SENATOR GONZALEZ: Okay, good. I did  
22 well for you. Thank you.

23           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Was any  
24 nongovernment employee assisting in the drawings  
25 of these lines?

1           SENATOR GONZALEZ: Not that I know of.  
2 I'm not sure why you would infer that. Again,  
3 this is a -- this is an attack on Californians.  
4 This is an attack on Californians. Let's be very  
5 clear here what is happening.

6           There are Texas legislators that are  
7 being locked up and required to be with law  
8 enforcement because they're just trying to do  
9 their job representing their communities.

10           So our response is absolutely going to  
11 say we want as Californians to combat that. How  
12 in the hell are we going to say that Medicare --  
13 children that are on Medicare, it's okay to  
14 continue to cut 3.4 million Californians off of  
15 Medicare?

16           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So I ask --

17           SENATOR GONZALEZ: Would you be okay  
18 with that --

19           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I ask --

20           SENATOR GONZALEZ: -- telling your  
21 residents in the district that it's okay to cut  
22 them from Medicare?

23           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So I'm asking  
24 the questions.

25           SENATOR GONZALEZ: Disabled children.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And one of the  
2 main things that we wanted to know on this is  
3 because we want to know who wrote the maps.

4 There was a report done by KCRA that stated that  
5 the DCCC had a direct involvement with this.

6 In this legislation, it states that the  
7 maps were created, prepared by, by the Assembly  
8 Committee. That's inaccurate. That's why it's  
9 pertinent to this.

10 But moving on, do you believe that  
11 Members have a vested interest in these maps  
12 passed?

13 SENATOR GONZALEZ: We do in the sense  
14 that we want to protect Medicare. We want to  
15 make sure that Medicare is not continued to be  
16 cut. We want to ensure that SNAP benefits for  
17 children -- why are they being cut?

18 Why -- can you go back to your district  
19 and really tell them, we're going to cut your  
20 SNAP benefits, we're going to cut your Medicare,  
21 we're going to continue to racially profile you  
22 in Los Angeles because you're an immigrant?

23 And on top of that, we might just decide,  
24 if we lose this election, that Trump might be  
25 elected for a third term. Because now we're

1 electing kings all of a sudden. We cannot do  
2 that. We cannot and we won't.

3 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Let's have order,  
4 please.

5 SENATOR GONZALEZ: You might think it's  
6 laughable, but this is where we're at right now.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: No, but  
8 Senator.

9 SENATOR GONZALEZ: This is true -- this  
10 is true stuff.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I appreciate  
12 you truly being honest with that.

13 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Absolutely.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I really do,  
15 like honestly.

16 That's fairly surprising, understanding  
17 the urgency done with this and how we're moving  
18 it through, that it was openly admitted that  
19 we -- that the Members of this legislative  
20 Committee and this body have a vested interest.  
21 Thank you.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I appreciate  
23 that we not misrepresent the answers that are  
24 given.

1           SENATOR GONZALEZ: That was not what was  
2 said, but --

3           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Given that  
4 this -- given this -- given this is being rushed  
5 through --

6           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Every member of  
7 California has a vested interest in our  
8 democracy, Mr. Tangipa.

9           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- with zero  
10 research --

11          CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay.

12          ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: I realize that  
13 we like to play gotcha games today, but let's  
14 keep it in check.

15          CHAIR PELLERIN: Let's keep our  
16 questions --

17          ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you.

18          CHAIR PELLERIN: -- to the merits of this  
19 bill, AB604, please.

20          ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Given this is  
21 being rushed through with zero research or  
22 consideration of implication, I feel it's kind of  
23 worthless to ask. But, you know, have you read  
24 the study by Jones's regarding partisan  
25 gerrymandering and turnout?

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Do you have questions  
2 about AB 604, the merits of the bill, what is  
3 contained in the bill?

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, it's --

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: I don't see how that's  
6 relevant.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: In the bill it  
8 states that it's the gerrymandered map, and I'm  
9 asking about research done on gerrymandering.

10 CHAIR PELLERIN: The maps are publicly  
11 posted on the Assembly Committee's website for  
12 everybody to see. The voters will be the  
13 ultimate say on whether these districts are  
14 approved or not for the temporary basis until  
15 2032.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But I believe  
17 that gerrymandering is pertinent to it, and there  
18 is multiple studies that have to deal with  
19 gerrymandering that I think are very relevant to  
20 the bill since it's in the bill.

21 SENATOR GONZALEZ: We have not read it.  
22 What is your point? Can you tell us what your  
23 question is? That'd be great to know.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, it's the  
25 fact that gerrymandering happening anywhere else

1 or everywhere else, when we have empirical data  
2 that it does not help the people of California,  
3 why would we bring that here if it shows us.

4 And it tells us that in these studies --  
5 you know, there's a study done by BMC Starkey  
6 that actually talked about the relationship  
7 between gerrymandering, redistricting.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: Voters  
9 will decide.

10 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yeah.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- and infant  
12 mortality and deaths.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: The voters  
14 will decide.

15 CHAIR PELLERIN: Am I taking this to be a  
16 position that you support independent  
17 redistricting for the entire 50 states in the  
18 United States?

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes.

20 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Good to know.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes, of course  
22 I do.

23 CHAIR PELLERIN: That's great to hear.

24 SENATOR GONZALEZ: We can actually align  
25 on that.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yeah. Anything you  
2 could do to help Texas and Florida, let them know  
3 that that position would be greatly appreciated.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And I will say  
5 that time and time again. I've gone to advocate.  
6 But I also understand my position as a Legislator  
7 in the State of California is to the California  
8 people, and we can't react to what other states  
9 do, what everybody else does.

10 Because the way I think about it, seven  
11 months ago, there's a different person in the  
12 federal administration and in the White House.  
13 Cost of living was still \$825,000 in the state.  
14 25 percent of residents, 20 percent of residents  
15 still couldn't afford it.

16 So if we created our policies, which it  
17 feels like here in this legislative body is  
18 reacting to everybody else, we're doing a  
19 disservice to the people of California. That's  
20 why it's important.

21 So, yes, I agree with you and everybody  
22 else here. I wish we would continue to be the  
23 model to the rest of the nation that they should  
24 adopt ours.

1 But instead, it seems like we've  
2 forgotten the statement that was made by Michelle  
3 Obama that when they go low, we go high. But  
4 instead, now we've -- this -- the leadership here  
5 in the state says when they go low, we'll go  
6 lower. When they go authoritarian, we'll be more  
7 authoritarian.

8 CHAIR PELLERIN: And did you have more  
9 questions about the merits of the bill?

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes, ma'am,  
11 I -- yes. I do.

12 CHAIR PELLERIN: Please go ahead and ask  
13 those.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: You know, there  
15 are just so many empirical studies that are done  
16 on this. When we're looking at the maps, how did  
17 we take into consideration communities of  
18 interest?

19 You know, were they done to protect race,  
20 religion, all the ideologies that we have right  
21 now to make sure that we're protecting the voters  
22 of California? Was that done in that  
23 consideration?

24 SENATOR GONZALEZ: It's a partisan  
25 gerrymander. That's what we're talking about

1 here. This is partisan politics is what we're  
2 talking about here.

3 If Texas wants to -- again, if Trump  
4 gives them a call and says, literally, as he did  
5 with Governor Abbott, find me five seats, well,  
6 we're not going to sit back and just say, well,  
7 it's okay, find the five seats. And you know  
8 what? Six million people will be taken off of  
9 Medicare in California.

10 We are not going to stand by for that.  
11 So, no, this is completely partisan politics  
12 here. Obviously, that is happening. And we're  
13 doing so with the intent of supporting and  
14 bringing forward the quality of life issues that  
15 have been so affected by Californians, regardless  
16 of what your party affiliation, regardless of  
17 where you live in the state.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Do you know if  
19 the maps were made sure -- to make sure that we  
20 were protecting communities of interest?

21 Because it's stated in the bill. It  
22 states that these maps --

23 MR. BRENNAND: Yes.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- were created  
2 to protect communities of interest, and it  
3 defines that, too.

4 MR. WILLIS: Yeah, I'll just go back to  
5 what has been said several times, which is this  
6 map -- the main architecture of this map is from  
7 the Redistricting Commission.

8 And the Redistricting Commission issued a  
9 voluminous report and maps all about how they  
10 followed that, or how they followed the Voting  
11 Rights Act, how they followed communities of  
12 interest --

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: When you say --

14 MR. WILLIS: -- how they followed  
15 geographic integrity.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Just for  
17 clarity for me, you mean the Redistricting  
18 Commission --

19 MR. WILLIS: Right.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- on the  
21 independent -- and you guys.

22 MR. WILLIS: That's correct. That's  
23 right.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- utilize  
2 those to create -- okay. So that was just for  
3 clarity on my part.

4 MR. WILLIS: Correct. Yes. And -- but  
5 that -- as many people have said already, that is  
6 the basis, the fundamental basis, the beginning  
7 part for this map.

8 And as people have said over and over  
9 again, 76 percent of that map is baked into this  
10 map.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But what I  
12 heard from some of the testimony from SEIU, too,  
13 that the communities of interest were taken into  
14 account to make this map.

15 MR. BRENNAND: As they were by the  
16 Commission, correct.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay.

18 MR. BRENNAND: They followed the same  
19 criteria, Fair Maps Act, the criteria for the  
20 Commission and consistent with the State  
21 Constitution.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So all of  
23 those --

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: And you have just over  
25 two more minutes.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yep. Thank  
2 you.

3 No, I appreciate it. I appreciate the  
4 clarity provided here. You know, I -- you know,  
5 I really do wish that I had more time, that  
6 everybody had more time as we get to see this as  
7 it's changing so quickly.

8 So thank you for being here and thank you  
9 for the honesty.

10 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you.

11 We'll now move on to Assembly Member  
12 Solache.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Thank you,  
14 Madam Chair and Committee Members.

15 I do appreciate the second part of  
16 today's meeting a little more with decorum. And  
17 I do encourage all of us to remember that we are  
18 ambassadors of Californians and that our  
19 constituents want to see us behave with decorum.  
20 So I want to just thank my colleagues all that  
21 the second part has been a little more -- with  
22 more class and more respect to each other.

23 That being said, thank you to both  
24 Majority Leaders for today's presentation. I

1 know this is informational. That continues part  
2 of the process.

3 And I know that one of the questions that  
4 was asked multiple times, is there any vested  
5 interest? Well, I just want to, for the record,  
6 point out that in 2026, I have zero interest  
7 running for Congress. Want to put that on the  
8 record.

9 I'm very happy to represent a half a  
10 million people in my Assembly district, and I am  
11 very proud to represent and so I will continue  
12 working with -- for them.

13 That being said, also, I actually want to  
14 appreciate some of the comments made today by the  
15 public, specifically those that were in  
16 opposition. Why? Because they were raising the  
17 alarm of representation.

18 And I cannot tell you how much I agree  
19 with you when I represent a district that's  
20 highly immigrant, highly undocumented, and they  
21 want a voice, a voice of their families being  
22 taken, their families being kidnapped by this  
23 administration.

24 And I will tell you firsthand that  
25 maybe -- I can't say a hundred percent, but a

1 good amount of examples where there's no  
2 warrants, there's no documentation and showing it  
3 to snatch people around. Take them. Just take  
4 them. So my district, who I probably represent,  
5 will not stand for that.

6 And what I'm very happy, including in the  
7 panel earlier that spoke in opposition, very  
8 credible individuals that spoke about the process  
9 of the Independent Commission and how they were  
10 part of the process. And, yeah, they shared that  
11 there's -- there are no sides.

12 But they spoke about the process, the  
13 public comment, what it took to get to this  
14 point. And as they say, as California goes, the  
15 nation goes.

16 So now that we're talking about how this  
17 process was great and meaningful, I could tell,  
18 as a formal council member of my district, we  
19 were part of that process in public hearings and  
20 raising our hand and saying that this city should  
21 be part of that city, that this city that.

22 It just -- it was a process that at least  
23 as a local council member I was part of. And I  
24 could tell you that it felt good to be part of a  
25 process of what our districts look like, not only

1 for congressional, for State Senate and for State  
2 Assembly.

3 I'm happy -- because I will be honest  
4 with you, I had some concerns of this, moving  
5 forward with this. But when I read in the bill,  
6 because I read it, too, that it would be  
7 temporary and that it will return back to the  
8 Independent Commission, I was very proud.

9 And I think Independents out there in  
10 California, not looking at either representation  
11 of a party, I think that's very meaningful  
12 because this is very direct to my pro tem, my  
13 majority leader's comments.

14 She said, you know, this is a temporary  
15 approach. That once we get back to the regular  
16 schedule, Californians will have a Commission  
17 that they support and they like, Independents,  
18 Republicans and Democrats. So that being said is  
19 a temporary approach.

20 And I respect the opposition's comments,  
21 but I also have to represent in my district. As  
22 Senator Cervantes earlier said, when she goes to  
23 the district -- we were out for -- in the  
24 district for 30 days and I heard from community,

1 how are you going to protect me? How are you as  
2 being a state rep?

3 You were a local mayor, and now you're a  
4 state rep. You now have, quote, unquote, I quote  
5 the resident, more power now. And they see it as  
6 more authority, more power.

7 I see it as more of a voice. And I'm  
8 bringing that voice to my constituents to say,  
9 yes, this is how we're going to react.

10 And the biggest part of this process,  
11 unlike Texas, where they're going to legislate  
12 and do this and ram it down people's throats,  
13 we're going to give the voters of California a  
14 voice, say you decide.

15 And so everyone talked about a process of  
16 how we got here. Fully understand and fully  
17 respect my colleagues on the other side of how we  
18 got here. Fully respect that.

19 But I can assure you that one of the  
20 questions that I asked in this process is, how  
21 were these maps put together?

22 And I think within time of us moving  
23 forward, we will see that the process of the  
24 Commission was mirrored in protecting  
25 communities. Protecting -- is it a hundred

1 percent? To my Majority Leader's comment, it's a  
2 process to protect community. It's not going to  
3 be a hundred percent favorable for everyone, but  
4 it's temporary. It's going to be three cycles,  
5 '26, '28 and '30. Back in '32, we're going to go  
6 back to the Commission.

7 And I will happily, Mr. Tangipa, with  
8 you, and I will co-author a resolution saying  
9 that we should have all 50 states do this. I  
10 will co-author that with you with as Republican  
11 and Democrat, saying all states should do this  
12 moving forward. Happily would do that because  
13 it's the right thing to do.

14 And once the voters decide that this  
15 might be a temporary approach to protect  
16 democracy, and we will happily do that today, at  
17 least my vote for my constituents, that we go  
18 back in 2032 and the voters go back to this  
19 Commission that they fully support, Independents,  
20 Republicans, Democrats, based on today's public  
21 comment.

22 But SNAP programs, Medi-Cal, Medicaid are  
23 on the line.

24 And I will not stand for any one more of  
25 my community members to be taken and snatched

1 from my community. Because one part of our  
2 nation, one part of our state, one part of our  
3 city is being targeted. So I welcome the support  
4 of community.

5 Let's make this a temporary approach.  
6 And last thing I'll say is, if Texas and any  
7 other states backs down, so will California.  
8 Because it's very clear in the language that if  
9 no one else does anything, California will remain  
10 and we will continue respecting the lines that  
11 the Commission put together.

12 So with that, I look forward to  
13 Californians of 20 million voters. Is that what  
14 we said?

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Twenty plus.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Twenty plus  
17 million voters will have a say at the ballot box  
18 November 4th. And respecting everyone's opinion,  
19 they will decide what happens next.

20 And the last, last part of that process,  
21 they will have 78 days to look at the maps. It's  
22 public now. I have the link. If anyone wants, I  
23 can send it to you. There's a link of our  
24 Assembly website where our Chair has put the  
25 maps, and it shows clearly.

1           You could tap on it. It's pretty  
2 interesting, to be honest. You tap on it.  
3 There's a demographics, population. It's pretty  
4 interesting how the map is.

5           And again, these are, these are three  
6 years, three cycles. So I look forward for  
7 Californians, Republicans, Democrats,  
8 Independents and anyone that votes to have the  
9 right to say, we do like these maps, we don't  
10 like these maps.

11           It's not politicians voting. It's just  
12 giving Californians the option of do you want  
13 these maps or not. And in my district, we need  
14 to protect democracy to the fullest.

15           Thank you so much, Madam Chair.

16           CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you so much.

17           Any other Members have questions,  
18 comments?

19           Assembly Member Macedo.

20           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Well, I have great  
21 news for all of you. AJR 21 is in print and you  
22 are welcome to join on with us. That sends the  
23 message to all 50 states that we would like  
24 independent redistricting commissions. So we --

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: We do have that in the  
2 Constitution as well, the ACA.

3 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Yes, absolutely.

4 So with that being said, there's a couple  
5 of things that I -- I mean, it's really so  
6 fundamental.

7 But before I begin, sir, who are you one  
8 more time, I'm sorry, here to answer technical  
9 questions?

10 MR. WILLIS: Tom Willis.

11 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: With who?

12 MR. WILLIS: I'm with the law firm Olson  
13 Remchon.

14 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: And who are you  
15 representing today?

16 MR. WILLIS: I think we've gone over  
17 this. That the -- that we're not going to get  
18 into that today. And happy to answer any legal  
19 questions.

20 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Are you being paid  
21 for your time to be here today?

22 MR. WILLIS: Again, I'm not going to get  
23 into (inaudible).

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: Again --

25 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- if you have questions  
2 to the merits of the bill, AB 604, that's what  
3 we're --

4 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Well, he's been  
5 testifying, so I would like to know who he is  
6 testifying on behalf of.

7 CHAIR PELLERIN: He is a technical  
8 witness. He's identified himself and his law  
9 firm.

10 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay. Well, I'm sure  
11 we'll figure that in a courtroom.

12 But who drew these maps? And I'm not  
13 saying general groups. I'd like specific names.  
14 Who specifically drew these maps?

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: So these  
16 are the legislators' maps, the Legislature's  
17 maps. We did three important things. We took  
18 the knowledge and public input from the  
19 independent Commission. We keep the more cities  
20 whole than the Commission's map. And we are  
21 letting our voters see the map to make the  
22 ultimate decision.

23 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Madam Majority  
24 Leader, I understand. I've heard all that.

1           Who drew the maps? It's a very simple  
2 question. Names, preferably.

3           ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: The Assembly.

4           ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: The  
5 Assembly did.

6           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay. I'm in the  
7 Assembly and I did not draw these maps.

8           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Well, you're  
9 not the leadership, though.

10          VICE CHAIR MACEDO: No, and I'm aware of  
11 that.

12          But the same way that in this bill it  
13 says that the Assembly Elections Committee, not  
14 Chair Pellerin, not Assembly Member Solache, not  
15 Assembly Member Bennett.

16          I am a part of that group. So by  
17 association, I have been lumped in, Mr. Bennett.

18          So I'm asking, who drew these maps? Not  
19 a general group.

20          ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: The  
21 Legislature drew the maps.

22          VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Who specifically in  
23 the Legislature?

24          ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: The  
25 Legislature drew the maps.

1 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: This is transparency  
2 that we don't get to know who drew the maps?

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: The  
4 Legislature drew the maps.

5 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Again, over  
6 76 percent --

7 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: That's not what I'm  
8 asking.

9 SENATOR GONZALEZ: But you are, though.

10 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I've heard --

11 SENATOR GONZALEZ: This is where the maps  
12 are coming from.

13 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I have heard --

14 SENATOR GONZALEZ: (Inaudible.)

15 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: -- your response to  
16 that. I am asking you a specific question --

17 SENATOR GONZALEZ: The Citizen  
18 Redistricting Commission, which is bipartisan.

19 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: -- that you are --

20 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Let's have one  
21 person speak at a time, please.

22 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: And my question has  
23 not been answered. The information you've given,  
24 I've already heard. I've got it here.

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: The question has been  
2 answered. You just don't like the answer.

3 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: You said the  
4 Legislature. I am the Legislature. I am part of  
5 the Legislature. Is that correct, Madam Chair?

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Madam Chair,  
7 can I try again?

8 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Because I'm not a  
9 Democrat, I'm not (inaudible).

10 CHAIR PELLERIN: Assembly Member Bennett,  
11 you may --

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Can I just try  
13 and answer in good faith?

14 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Is my time paused?

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Yeah, you could  
16 pause the time.

17 But when we say the Legislature, all  
18 kinds of things happen in the Legislature. We're  
19 not all involved in every one. But they're all  
20 controlled by the legislative leadership. The  
21 legislative leadership wrote these maps. A  
22 combination -- we have a leader right here.

23 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So --

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: And she's part  
25 of the leadership.

1 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So you wrote the  
2 map --

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: So the  
4 leadership team --

5 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: -- or helped write  
6 the map?

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: The leadership  
8 team --

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: The team  
10 did.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: Leadership  
12 team --

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: I didn't  
14 personally write the maps.

15 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So, then, there you  
16 go. She's in leadership, and she just said she  
17 didn't write the maps.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: No.  
19 There's others that are in the leadership.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BENNETT: She had some --  
21 she was part of the leadership team. That  
22 doesn't mean everybody on the team (inaudible).

23 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Can we bring the  
24 debate back to the Chair, please?

25 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So who is the team?

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay.

2 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: You know who the team  
3 is?

4 SENATOR GONZALEZ: I think we've answered  
5 the question.

6 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: No, you have not.

7 CHAIR PELLERIN: The question has been  
8 answered. Do you have another question?

9 And I'm sorry, did you have a comment you  
10 wanted to make?

11 MR. WILLIS: I just wanted to say -- you  
12 can all verify this -- this week's edition of  
13 Capitol Weekly Podcast had Paul Mitchell as their  
14 guest from Political Data. He spoke about the  
15 fact that he foregone an Italian vacation with  
16 his family in order to work on redrawing these  
17 maps.

18 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Fantastic. Why can  
19 we not have Paul Mitchell here, then, to testify?

20 SENATOR GONZALEZ: We're the authors of  
21 the bill.

22 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yeah.

23 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay.

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: Do you have other --

25 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: You are witnesses --

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Do you have other  
2 questions about --

3 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Yes. I have lots of  
4 them.

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: Let's go ahead and move  
6 forward with those questions.

7 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay. So then my  
8 question is, is how much was Paul Mitchell paid?  
9 Does anybody know?

10 Okay. Well, if it was over \$5,000, he  
11 would have to register as a lobbyist.

12 So did any lobbyists help with this? No?  
13 Okay.

14 How many versions of these maps were  
15 created?

16 SENATOR GONZALEZ: I'm sorry?

17 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: How many versions of  
18 the maps have been created to this point?

19 SENATOR GONZALEZ: This is the version  
20 you see here. There were tweaks done yesterday  
21 at 8:00 a.m. They were timestamped. The  
22 changes --

23 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: How many versions?

24 SENATOR GONZALEZ: This is the version  
25 you see here as Friday at 8:00 -- Friday --

1 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: You guys have been  
2 well prepped by Legal, let me tell you.

3 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Friday of last week we  
4 saw the maps.

5 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: You're welcome.

6 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: What safeguards are  
7 there to prevent legislators or staff with  
8 conflicts of interest from manipulating the maps?

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: Repeat  
10 that again.

11 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: What safeguards  
12 prevent legislators or staff with conflicts of  
13 interest from manipulating the maps?

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: My morals  
15 and my ethics. Let's start -- just start there.

16 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I -- and I know,  
17 Ms. Curry, that you are.

18 But I'm asking, within the language, what  
19 are we doing to safeguard that? Not just a  
20 handshake and a promise.

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: The maps are publicly  
22 posted on the Election Elections Committee's  
23 website.

24 SENATOR GONZALEZ: The public has 78  
25 days, as we've been mentioning. This is a much

1 more transparent process than our colleagues in  
2 Texas who, as has been mentioned by the good  
3 Assembly Member from southeast Los Angeles, that  
4 has been just a nontransparent process and have  
5 locked up legislators.

6 I mean, is that what we want to do? We  
7 don't. We want to provide the public an ability  
8 to look at these maps and then have an option to  
9 weigh in, which they have been able to do over, I  
10 think, 4,000 or 5,000 people.

11 You know more than I do, Madam Chair, on  
12 this good work that you've done to be able to  
13 make the maps very public.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: So the  
15 maps were based, remember, on knowledge and  
16 public input from the Independent Commission, so  
17 we agree with that.

18 And the proposed map splits fewer cities  
19 than the Independent Commission map. We agree  
20 with that.

21 The map reduces the number of split  
22 cities from 60 to 57. This map makes 26 cities  
23 whole that have been split up under the current  
24 lines.

1           So I'm going to give you a little bit  
2 example because I did overhear your conversation  
3 before, Assembly Member Tangipa, because you were  
4 concerned about the City of Clovis; is that true?

5           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes.

6           ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: Okay.

7           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Yes. The  
8 original map that I'd seen --

9           ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: So I did a  
10 little bit of --

11           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- Clovis was  
12 split into three --

13           ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: I did a  
14 little bit of --

15           CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Okay.

16           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- but the map  
17 yesterday put it in one.

18           ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: So it's  
19 great. I'm glad you were looking at the maps to  
20 understand the impacts on your communities.  
21 Because of this legislation, every Californian  
22 will be able to do that.

23           So specific to the city of Fresno, the  
24 city was already split by the Redistricting  
25 Commission into three districts.

1           Specific to the City of Clovis it was  
2 previously whole and is split by this plan.

3           However, there are 26 cities that were  
4 split by the Redistricting Commission that this  
5 plan makes whole.

6           So as a result, the total number of  
7 cities split is reduced from 60 to 57, and two of  
8 those involve zero people.

9           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: That was  
10 direct. Can I respond?

11           CHAIR PELLERIN: We're going to go back  
12 to Vice Chair Macedo. She had the floor here.  
13 Let her continue with her questioning, please.

14           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I'm not expecting an  
15 answer to this, but I'll ask it anyway.

16           Did anyone with a conflict of interest,  
17 including potential candidates for Congress --  
18 Mr. Solache, I know this takes you out of it, so  
19 don't worry -- participate in drawing or  
20 reviewing the maps, any potential candidates for  
21 Congress?

22           ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: Not to my  
23 knowledge.

24           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay. If these maps  
25 are challenged in court, how long could

1 Californians be left uncertain about who  
2 represents them in which districts they reside?  
3 That probably would be a question for the  
4 attorneys.

5 MR. WILLIS: Can you repeat the question?

6 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: If these maps are  
7 challenged in court, which I'm assuming they  
8 likely will be, how long could Californians be  
9 left uncertain about who represents them and in  
10 which districts they reside?

11 MR. WILLIS: I think they will always be  
12 certain -- I mean, they will always be certain on  
13 who represents them and what maps apply to each  
14 election.

15 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So you don't see any  
16 challenges in court delaying this?

17 MR. WILLIS: I think that these maps are  
18 legally sound, absolutely.

19 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Interesting. Okay.  
20 Whoever is paying you I'm sure will maybe agree  
21 with you.

22 How can the Legislature justify  
23 abandoning the transparent voter-approved  
24 Commission process in favor of a secretive  
25 process controlled by, like you just said,

1 partisan interest? Because this is a partisan  
2 gerrymander.

3 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yeah. Texas started  
4 it. I mean, if Texas -- when President Trump  
5 calls the Governor of Texas to find him five  
6 seats -- let's be clear what happened. Just like  
7 he did in Georgia during the '20 -- the last  
8 election.

9 So you want to talk about conflict of  
10 interest and corruption? Let's talk about it.  
11 Let's absolutely talk about it because I think  
12 the public should know what exactly is going on  
13 here.

14 So what we're doing in the very legal way  
15 and transparent way is providing a reaction to  
16 the Texas phone call that Trump decided to do to  
17 ask for five seats to basically circumvent our  
18 democracy, to supersede and to take away  
19 healthcare from people.

20 That's the reason why we have a bunch of  
21 working family organizations that are here today  
22 because they're tired of it. Rural hospitals are  
23 going to be completely decimated. I mean, all of  
24 it. You know this. And it's going to be really  
25 tough.

1           And I would actually just say, too, if --  
2 I'm down with you. I think if you want to create  
3 a constitutional amendment at the federal level,  
4 you all have the opportunity to do that. You can  
5 go to the White House and ask for it now to  
6 create a 50 state nationwide independent  
7 redistricting plan. That would be fantastic. I  
8 think we can all do it.

9           ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: Do it for  
10 us. Thank you.

11           SENATOR GONZALEZ: Absolutely.

12           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: If you keep -- you  
13 guys keep bringing up Texas. Why is other  
14 states --

15           ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: And  
16 Missouri.

17           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Well, so now you  
18 bring it up, Majority Leader, but that's -- I  
19 mean, this isn't a -- this isn't about Texas.

20           ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY:  
21 (Inaudible.)

22           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: And I understand what  
23 you guys are going at. Listen, Texas does not  
24 have the independent redistricting commission.  
25 And this -- whether we want to talk about it or

1 not, this started with Democrat groups suing the  
2 State of Texas for their maps.

3 And, yes, then afterwards we can talk  
4 about what happened and disagree on it.

5 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Over the Voting Rights  
6 Act.

7 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So they had to redo  
8 their maps because Democrat groups told them they  
9 had to. That's what this all started with.

10 SENATOR GONZALEZ: It wasn't democratic  
11 groups.

12 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: That was exacerbated,  
13 likely, by other things.

14 But my question is, is what consideration  
15 was given to compliance with California's  
16 requirement that districts be contiguous and  
17 compact?

18 Because there's one district that is, I  
19 believe, 30 miles wide and 40 -- or, I'm sorry,  
20 30 miles wide and 400 miles long, or something  
21 like that.

22 MR. BRENNAND: Are you talking about the  
23 current Kevin Kiley district? Because that's the  
24 case.

25 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: No, it's not.

1 MR. BRENNAND: It goes from Lake Tahoe to  
2 Death Valley.

3 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I'm not speaking  
4 of --

5 MR. BRENNAND: Is that the district --

6 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: No.

7 MR. BRENNAND: -- that exists now.

8 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. If we could bring  
9 comments through the Chair here as well.

10 MR. BRENNAND: Oh, I'm sorry.

11 CHAIR PELLERIN: Let's go ahead and have  
12 the Vice Chair continue to ask her questioning of  
13 the authors.

14 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: What consideration  
15 was given to compliance with California's  
16 requirement that districts be contiguous and  
17 compact?

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: I don't  
19 have legal (inaudible) for that.

20 SENATOR GONZALEZ: (Inaudible)  
21 Redistricting Commission requirements as well.  
22 So, again, I'm going to continue to hit this  
23 point, and I know you don't want to hear it, but  
24 76.7 percent of this map currently is based off  
25 of the 2020 Redistricting Commission.

1 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So just yes or no.

2 SENATOR GONZALEZ: All of the parameters  
3 that are required under that --

4 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: No consideration was  
5 given, then, to the compliance with California  
6 requirements?

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: There are  
8 more contiguous now than they've been before.

9 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yes.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: The new --  
11 the maps that are out there now --

12 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Less splitting.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: -- are  
14 more contiguous and more compact.

15 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: So just that  
16 particular compliance rule, I wasn't -- I'm not  
17 part of leadership, as Mr. Bennett pointed out.  
18 So I don't know if this was, hey, we need to make  
19 sure we're doing this.

20 Was is it talked about? Was it, hey, we  
21 need to make sure we're doing this, or you're  
22 just saying it's done?

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: As far as  
24 I'm concerned, it's done.

1 VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Okay. If the  
2 Commission's maps are already constitutional and  
3 enforceable, what public interest is served by  
4 passing AB 604 besides giving the middle finger  
5 to President Trump?

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: Taking  
7 care of our constituents.

8 SENATOR GONZALEZ: I think we've given  
9 you a lot of the data. I mean, again,  
10 6.4 million Californians are on Medicare. And as  
11 you've seen here, we've got health workers that  
12 are in the audience that have supported this bill  
13 because 3.4 million are under attack and may lose  
14 their healthcare based on what this big,  
15 beautiful, ugly, horrible bill just did. And so  
16 that is a direct attack on Californians.

17 And I don't know how I can go back to my  
18 district, if I were a Republican, and say, I  
19 allowed this and I'm not even speaking up on it,  
20 and I'm not going to even fight up against it.  
21 I'm not going to try to even in one slightest bit  
22 try to claim five more seats to actually protect  
23 my constituents, which is what we were all  
24 done -- which we all decided to do when we took  
25 the oath to become State Representatives.

1           And, you know, I think SNAP benefits,  
2   education, you name it. We're getting a  
3   \$1 billion ransom now from the Trump  
4   administration against UCLA. This is horrendous.  
5   For research grants to (inaudible) cancer.

6           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I'm glad that you  
7   brought up rural -- like healthcare.

8           CHAIR PELLERIN: And just a couple more  
9   minutes here.

10          VICE CHAIR MACEDO: I'm glad that you  
11   brought that up because I, as a Republican, have  
12   gone back to my districts. Because I've been  
13   asking Gavin Newsom why he left billions of  
14   dollars ready to be reimbursed to our Medi-Cal  
15   system that he didn't even bother to turn in the  
16   application for. I have fought for reimbursement  
17   for providers in rural hospitals because they are  
18   leaving.

19          So as a Republican, I can tell you I'm  
20   fighting for my constituents. But the same way  
21   that we don't have jurisdiction over the federal  
22   government, I don't have jurisdiction over Texas  
23   electeds. I'm trying to focus on what I can do  
24   here with the dollars we have here.

1           With that being said, there was  
2   disparaging comments made about myself and my  
3   colleague's vote on a redistricting bill. And I  
4   would like to clarify, if the Chair would allow  
5   me that vote.

6           SENATOR GONZALEZ: I'm not sure what this  
7   has to do with the bill.

8           VICE CHAIR MACEDO: It was brought up  
9   previously.

10          CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. Can we hold on  
11   that? And we'll allow that at the end of the  
12   hearing here.

13          VICE CHAIR MACEDO: Well --

14          CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay.

15          CHAIR PELLERIN: Try to continue on  
16   AB 604.

17          Any other comments from Members on the  
18   dais?

19          ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Quick comments.  
20   I know there's been a lot of conversation and  
21   bipartisan support, which is amazing, for federal  
22   independent redistricting legislation.

23          The good news is we have a template for  
24   that because it has been passed by the House of  
25   Representatives at the congressional level twice.

1 There was the For the People Act in 2019  
2 legislative session, and the Freedom to Vote Act  
3 in the 2021 legislative session.

4 Both versions passed the House. Both  
5 versions were filibustered by -- unanimously by  
6 Republicans in the Senate. So we would have this  
7 in the United States if Republicans at the  
8 federal level would support it.

9 I want to encourage my -- because I know  
10 y'all have more sway with Republican Senators, US  
11 Senators, than I do. I'd encourage you to reach  
12 out to them and let them know, hey, this is  
13 important for America. This is important for  
14 democracy. Because right now it's Republican  
15 United States Senators that are blocking the  
16 ability for us to have that in the United States.

17 And I will say kudos to my former  
18 colleague, Congressman Kevin Kiley, for finding  
19 Jesus on this issue when all of a sudden he has  
20 concerns about his political future and  
21 introducing his legislation. I don't care what  
22 caused him to all of a sudden support independent  
23 redistricting. I just support him in that  
24 effort.

1           And so I want to say, everybody get out  
2     there. Get Mike Johnson, the Speaker, to let  
3     Kevin Kiley bring his bill and let's have that be  
4     a vote in the United States Congress. And then  
5     let's get Republican U.S. Senators who oppose it  
6     prior to support it now because that's the best  
7     solution to this problem, to this situation.

8           And I'm happy to move the bill if it  
9     hasn't happened already.

10           CHAIR PELLERIN: This is just am  
11     informational hearings, so we're just --

12           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: No motions. No  
13     motions.

14           CHAIR PELLERIN: -- we're just hearing  
15     each other out.

16           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: There will be no  
17     votes.

18           CHAIR PELLERIN: And is there any Member  
19     who has not spoken yet that would like to say a  
20     few words or have any questions?

21           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But, Madam  
22     Chair, because this is an informational hearing,  
23     can we ask more questions?

24           CHAIR PELLERIN: Absolutely, no.

25           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Why?

1 CHAIR PELLERIN: Yeah, yeah.

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But it's an  
3 informational hearing.

4 CHAIR PELLERIN: I know. I know. And  
5 you have had more than 15 minutes of time to ask  
6 your questions.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Because I  
8 believe the people of California, which this  
9 affects 40 million people, they deserve more than  
10 15 minutes.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: And they're  
12 going to get 75 days.

13 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. So we are going  
14 to allow the authors to have any close, and then  
15 I'm going to have a few closing statements as  
16 well.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So the 40  
18 million people, they don't get more than 15  
19 minutes? But not only that --

20 CHAIR PELLERIN: We're going to have  
21 our --

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: They're going to  
23 have 78 days, Assembly Member Tangipa.

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- co-authors go ahead  
25 and close.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Seventy-eight  
2 days.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But  
4 Mr. Berman --

5 CHAIR PELLERIN: Okay. We are not doing  
6 cross talk.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Part of what  
8 I --

9 CHAIR PELLERIN: I am speaking to the  
10 authors.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It's an --

12 CHAIR PELLERIN: -- and I would like you  
13 both to just please give me a little bit of time  
14 and respect.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BERMAN: Yes, Madam  
16 Chair.

17 CHAIR PELLERIN: So thank you.

18 I'm now going to turn it over --

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: But I asked for  
20 more time.

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: --to our co-chair -- our  
22 co-authors to go ahead.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: Thank you  
24 very much. Thank you. Thank you very much.  
25 Thank you very much for the lively discussion

1 today. I appreciate it. I appreciate some of  
2 the commitments my colleagues have made today.

3 But remember, we didn't pick this fight  
4 or this timing, but our process will be most  
5 transparent in the nation. Finally, our voters  
6 will decide. And you can smirk all you want.

7 Thank you for all your thoughtful  
8 consideration. And we will move forward and we  
9 will do the right thing. The voters will decide.

10 CHAIR PELLERIN: Did you have any  
11 comments?

12 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam  
13 Chair. I just want to say thank you. I respect  
14 you so very much and all of your incredible work  
15 in the elections world. And I know that  
16 Californians will have an opportunity to have the  
17 final say in November.

18 We're very thankful to the witnesses and  
19 the testimony in support, and the many working  
20 people that rely on this. They're really looking  
21 to us and the eyes are on us to make this the  
22 best decision for them. Their health, their  
23 safety, education, we're safeguarding that by  
24 this bill today.

25 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you. Thank you.

1           Now, I would like to say a few words.  
2       First of all, I just want to thank the Members of  
3       this Committee for being here today and  
4       participating in this hearing. I appreciate your  
5       time, your thoughtfulness, your care, your  
6       concerns. I feel your comments. I feel your  
7       ideas. And it's very important for the public to  
8       hear from all of us.

9           I do want to say to you, Assembly Member  
10      Tangipa, I'm so sorry about your family  
11      situation. That truly does break my heart, and I  
12      know how difficult that is. So you have my  
13      condolences.

14           These are definitely difficult, uncertain  
15      and trying times right now, and we have got to  
16      find a way to move forward and to protect the  
17      people of the State of California.

18           In my over 27 years serving as a chief  
19      elections official, I fought very hard to ensure  
20      that we had independent redistricting commissions  
21      to draw these lines.

22           And we are no longer governing in a  
23      democracy that I love. We are governing with a  
24      President who is an authoritarian fascist, who

1 does not care and concern himself with the well-  
2 being of the residents of this state.

3 And I was thinking about this. I spent a  
4 lot of time, a lot of hours at home struggling  
5 with where we are at this particular point in  
6 time.

7 And I thought about what would happen if  
8 someone broke into my home and attacked my  
9 children. Would I be able to fight that person?  
10 And I would. I would do whatever it took to  
11 protect what I love.

12 What is happening now in this nation is  
13 an attack on the people of this state. We have  
14 seen children torn from their families. We have  
15 children without enough food. We have seniors  
16 who cannot support their healthcare.

17 We have a climate existential crisis on  
18 our hands and we are throwing out science and  
19 scientists. We are closing education, so  
20 children that need special education no longer  
21 going to get those services.

22 So damn right I'm ready to fight. And  
23 these bills is not my fight alone. This is the  
24 fight for the people of the State of California.

1           We are not jamming this down your throat.  
2   We are not doing it in a closed room. We are  
3   doing it openly and transparently. And the  
4   voters, the 40 million voters of this state,  
5   every one of you have a right and a  
6   responsibility to stand up and cast your vote for  
7   these measures.

8           And they will be on your ballot November  
9   4th of 2025. And I expect every eligible  
10   registered voter of this state to make their  
11   voice heard.

12           And with that we are concluding this  
13   hearing.

14                           (Hearing concluded.)  
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1  
2 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER  
3

4 I, MARY ANN SCANLAN, hereby certify that  
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9 I further state that pages 1 through 286,  
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STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

AUGUST 19, 2025

TRANSCRIBED BY: MARY ANN SCANLAN, CSR



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**EXHIBIT**

**6**

1 CHAIR CERVANTES: Good morning, everyone.  
2 It's a pleasure to welcome you all here today.

3 I am Senator Sabrina Cervantes, proud to  
4 serve as Chair of the Senate Elections Committee  
5 on Constitutional Amendments.

6 I want to begin by recognizing that we  
7 have many new faces in the room today, and that  
8 this hearing be one of the most widely  
9 broadcasted hearings in this Committee in  
10 decades. The eyes of the nation are on  
11 California, and rightfully so.

12 We are in a defining moment, a time of  
13 choosing. If California does not push back  
14 against President Trump's attack to rig our  
15 elections through partisan gerrymandering in  
16 states like Texas, we risk losing one of the most  
17 fundamental pillars of our system, the right of  
18 every community to fair representation.

19 Unlike Governor Abbott, California will  
20 not bend the knee to authoritarian demands. We  
21 will not allow red states to strip seats in  
22 Congress, and we will not stand silent while the  
23 communities we represent are robbed of their  
24 voices.

25 Let me be clear. California is not acting

1 unilaterally. This legislative package is a  
2 response, a safeguard, only if Texas and other  
3 states move first to redraw their maps for  
4 partisanship gain.

5 Now, I know some will raise the question  
6 of whether these maps should be drawn now or  
7 later. That debate has been at the center of  
8 discussion for the past month. Here's the  
9 reality.

10 There is only one responsible way to do  
11 redistricting in this moment and that is to be  
12 fully transparent with the people of California.  
13 Unlike other states, we have put these maps on  
14 public display for everyone to see months before  
15 the election.

16 Voters will have the chance to review them  
17 and ultimately decide at the ballot box whether  
18 they should be used as Texas and other states  
19 follow the President's demands for more seats.  
20 This is the most transparent process in the  
21 nation.

22 Drawing maps later, after the election,  
23 would mean little to no transparency and no  
24 direct voter approval. Let me be clear. Drawing  
25 maps later simply does not work with the election

1 calendar. Anyone suggesting otherwise either  
2 hasn't looked at the deadlines or isn't being  
3 honest.

4 Do we really want to delay the June  
5 primaries to September? Do we really want voters  
6 not knowing their candidate options?

7 Our responsibility is to ensure that  
8 California stands as a firewall against the abuse  
9 of power. At the end of the day, our system of  
10 government is only as strong as our willingness  
11 to defend it, and today that defense depends on  
12 us.

13 With that, I want to thank everyone for  
14 attending today's hearing. We will now begin  
15 with the first file item, ACA 8.

16 Senator Cabaldon, please approach. Begin  
17 when you are ready.

18 SENATOR CABALDON: Madam Chair, thank you  
19 so much, and to Members of the Committee and  
20 members of the public. And I know, Madam Chair,  
21 you've reported that more than 13,000  
22 Californians have already weighed in on this  
23 issue. And very much appreciate the opportunity  
24 to present one of the pieces of the legislation  
25 that are necessary for the public to have the

1 ability to chart their own course for California  
2 and vote on the maps.

3 I'm here today to present on behalf of  
4 Speaker Rivas Assembly Constitutional Amendment  
5 Number 8, which, if enacted by the Legislature,  
6 will go directly to a vote of the people on the  
7 November election.

8 ACA 8 is intended to make possible the  
9 public vote that the Chair just described, to  
10 make it possible for the first time in California  
11 history for California voters to draw their own  
12 maps at the ballot box. Not just the first in  
13 the country, but the first in California as well.

14 Redistricting has a long history in the  
15 California Constitution. Since the 1920s there  
16 have been ballot measures placed before the  
17 people of California to create independent  
18 commissions, to have redistricting done by  
19 judges. And over and over and over and over and  
20 over again from the '20s until the 2000s the  
21 voters have overwhelmingly rejected them.

22 It was in 2008, after rejecting  
23 independent commissions in 2005, 1989, 1984,  
24 1994, repeatedly by two-to-one margins that the  
25 voters finally by the slightest margin that you

1 can imagine -- I was one of them who voted yes on  
2 the constitutional amendment in 19 -- in 2008  
3 that passed with 50.8 percent of the vote, the  
4 narrowest of margins in order to amend our  
5 Constitution to create the Independent  
6 Redistricting Commission.

7 That Commission in the Constitution is  
8 charged with remove -- with protecting  
9 communities of interest fundamentally, with  
10 hearing from the public during the process of  
11 redistricting, and incorporating their own views,  
12 not just big political views, but their own views  
13 about what their districts should be.

14 So when a community like Rancho Cordova,  
15 just down the highway, where does Rancho Cordova  
16 belong in a district? When we talk about these  
17 districts, they are not just about big partisan  
18 issues. They are about which communities are  
19 able to work together to elect representatives  
20 that see them, that represent them. That's what  
21 the Commission was set up to do.

22 And so today we're asking through ACA 8  
23 for the opportunity for the voters to enact the  
24 maps that are in separate legislation, but that  
25 are referenced directly in this constitutional

1 amendment and, therefore, the ballot measure that  
2 would enact the -- the maps that the people --  
3 that the Commission itself would have enacted if  
4 it had been given the charge by the People of  
5 California to do what the Chair just said.

6 That is, if California voters came to the  
7 polls in November, or today, and said, we want  
8 maps that will fight back against Texas's efforts  
9 to rig the 2006 congressional election, to fight  
10 back against the efforts to undo the deep  
11 unpopularity that has been caused not just by  
12 HR 1 and the elimination of healthcare for  
13 millions of Californians, for the tax on our  
14 public universities, but also the unbridled  
15 enforcement actions and disappearances and  
16 kidnappings on our streets from ICE, the voters  
17 not just of California but of America are sick  
18 and tired of it and they want change.

19 That's what democracy is about. You can  
20 either change your policies, you can defend your  
21 policies. But one option that is not before us  
22 in a democracy is that you can change your  
23 voters. That you can change the rules.

24 And so fighting back is absolutely  
25 essential, and Californians want to fight. They

1 recognize that, as the largest state in the  
2 union, as the largest economy in the country,  
3 that we're obligated to stand up and protect our  
4 democracy.

5 And that's what this ACA would allow us to  
6 do, and it does that by putting the maps directly  
7 before the voters, and it does that by giving the  
8 voters the transparent option over these next  
9 several months to evaluate them and to vote. It  
10 also protects the Independent Commission.

11 And that process will return just as it is  
12 in the Constitution today. Nothing changes. The  
13 Constitution simply provides today that every ten  
14 years after the census, the Commission is  
15 convened and it draws our district lines for the  
16 Congress based on its testimony from thousands  
17 and thousands and thousands of Californians.  
18 Based on its own research. Based on letters that  
19 are received from every big city and small town  
20 and hamlet across the state. And they will  
21 continue to do that after the next census when we  
22 draw the new lines.

23 But I want to emphasize also that the  
24 lines that would be enacted by the voters under  
25 ACA 8 are the lines that the Commission would

1 have drawn if it could. How can we say that?

2 How do we know that?

3 Well, the map drawing which was done with  
4 our partners in the congressional delegation was  
5 done by reviewing the testimony, the files, the  
6 letters, the deliberations by the Commission just  
7 a couple of years ago that were heard from I know  
8 voters in my district, even in my own city, who  
9 urged the Commission to put West Sacramento in  
10 one place or another, or voters in Winters who  
11 testified, please don't put us with Davis, or  
12 please do put us with Davis.

13 That all of that testimony on the ground  
14 from Californians about what it meant to them in  
15 redistricting has been incorporated and heard in  
16 this process.

17 That this constitutional amendment will  
18 allow voters to enact maps that divide fewer  
19 communities, that protecting the Voting Rights  
20 Act. That's the essential. That's what the  
21 Constitution calls for. This is the most  
22 constitutional redistricting -- constitutionally  
23 oriented redistricting that we've ever done in  
24 California and it is absolutely necessary.

25 We will return to the Commission after

1 that. The constitutional amendment here today  
2 before you guarantees that.

3 And finally, I want to emphasize that the  
4 constitutional amendment assures that this is the  
5 right move or the right moment. It is triggered  
6 only if, only if another state at the behest of  
7 the White House decides to try to cheat and rig  
8 the election.

9 Texas is front and center. A couple of  
10 other states are looking at it as well. We have  
11 to be the last line of defense for our democracy  
12 in California. If those states stand down, then  
13 so will California.

14 We didn't ask for this fight. They  
15 brought this fight to us. And California cannot  
16 stand down if other states are attempting to  
17 cheat and rig the election in 2006 to maintain  
18 Republican control of Congress.

19 So I'm happy to answer any questions at  
20 the appropriate time.

21 Madam Chair, we have two witnesses here  
22 with us. First is Jodi Hicks from Planned  
23 Parenthood, and the second is Sara Sedwhani.

24 CHAIR CERVANTES: Thank you.

25 If the two support witnesses could

1 approach. You each have three minutes. Begin  
2 when you are ready.

3 MS. HICKS: Thank you, Madam Chair and  
4 Members. I am Jodi Hicks, the CEO and President  
5 of Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California,  
6 representing seven affiliates and over 100 health  
7 centers throughout the state.

8 And I'm here today in support, strong  
9 support, of ACA 8 and California's response to  
10 President Trump, to Texas Republicans and their  
11 plan to game the 2026 midterm elections and hold  
12 onto their party's power in Congress.

13 And why is Planned Parenthood in such  
14 strong support? I just want to remind this  
15 Legislature, all of you here today, all of the  
16 strong work that you have done to expand  
17 reproductive healthcare and access to that care  
18 here in California, to really strengthen any  
19 policies that have been done since Roe was  
20 overturned, and 67 percent, 67 percent of  
21 Californians voted to enshrine reproductive  
22 freedom into the California Constitution and  
23 ensure that here in California we have access to  
24 reproductive healthcare.

25 Despite that, this Congress in that bill

1 they love to call beautiful defunded Planned  
2 Parenthood here in California in their attempt to  
3 take away access to reproductive healthcare, in  
4 their attempt to shut down our footprint over a  
5 hundred health centers here in the state of  
6 California, despite the fact that one in four  
7 women rely on that care here in the state of  
8 California.

9           And what they know is that -- Congress  
10 Members know is that it is deeply unpopular to  
11 attack and undermine reproductive freedom. And  
12 when organizations like Planned Parenthood begin  
13 talking to Californians, educating them on the  
14 impact of what just happened, they know, those  
15 members know that they will be held accountable.

16           So to put it simply, the President and  
17 Republicans, they recognize that their majority  
18 in Congress hangs in the balance. And their best  
19 chance to maintain power is to rig this election  
20 before the voters even have a chance to voice  
21 their reaction.

22           ACA 8 is a proactive and principled  
23 response to undermine efforts that are happening  
24 across this country. The bill asks California  
25 voters to approve a policy that will push back on

1 this unprecedented power grab, and make it clear  
2 that we will only move forward with these efforts  
3 temporarily in response to another state's action  
4 first.

5           Planned Parenthood's mission is to fight  
6 and protect and expand access to sexual and  
7 reproductive healthcare. And if we don't fight  
8 back, federal attacks on reproductive healthcare  
9 will only get worse. They'll continue to  
10 escalate and a nationwide abortion ban is a  
11 possibility.

12           As a country's leading reproductive  
13 freedom state, California has no choice --

14           CHAIR CERVANTES: Ten seconds to close.

15           MS. HICKS: -- but to pursue every  
16 opportunity to push back on this. It is the  
17 right thing to do, and I ask for your aye vote.  
18 Thank you.

19           CHAIR CERVANTES: All right. Thank you.

20           MS. SEDWHANI: Thank you, Madam Chair and  
21 Members of the Committee.

22           Good morning. My name is Sara Sedhwani.  
23 I'm a political science professor and a  
24 Commissioner on the California Citizens  
25 Redistricting Commission.

1 In addition to these roles, I serve a few  
2 other roles. I serve as a Democracy Fellow at  
3 the Harvard Kennedy School's Ash Center for  
4 Democratic Governance and Innovation.

5 In Los Angeles, I've provided guidance to  
6 the LA City Council on the development of an  
7 Independent Redistricting Commission for the  
8 City, which passed overwhelmingly in 2024 at the  
9 ballot box.

10 And I also serve as an appointee of  
11 Supervisor Lindsey Horvath for the implementation  
12 of Measure G in Los Angeles County, which seeks  
13 to overhaul, the first overhaul in a century, of  
14 LA County's governance structure.

15 The through line of all of these hats that  
16 I wear is good governance and strengthening our  
17 democratic institutions.

18 It's an honor for me to be here today.  
19 I'm glad it's happening today, because next week  
20 I would be back in the classroom starting off the  
21 semester, where I will be teaching Introduction  
22 to American Politics.

23 Lecture one of Intro to American Politics  
24 for incoming undergraduate students is, what is  
25 democracy? One of the basic principles of

1 democracy, as I'm sure you all are aware, is that  
2 the -- is of popular sovereignty, and that is of  
3 free and fair elections. That citizens must be  
4 able to choose their representatives in a process  
5 that is transparent, impartial and equitable.

6 Yet, this principle, the very foundation  
7 of our democracy for our nation, has been  
8 repeatedly diminished by the actions of our  
9 President.

10 In 2020 he called the Georgia Secretary of  
11 State, Brad Raffensperger, asking him to find him  
12 12,000 votes. Raffensperger, a member of the  
13 Republican party, said no. He acted swiftly and  
14 decisively and stood up for free and fair  
15 elections for our nation.

16 The President also publicly attacked  
17 Philadelphia Elections Commissioner Al Schmidt,  
18 leading to threats against Schmidt and his  
19 family, who had to go into hiding. Schmidt, also  
20 a Republican, refuted the President's claims of  
21 election fraud. He, too, stood up for free and  
22 fair elections in our nation.

23 Our founding fathers put into place a  
24 Federalist system as a check on national power.  
25 And in 2020, that Federalist system held up with

1 proud Americans, like Raffensperger and Schmidt,  
2 who stood up for democracy and defended free and  
3 fair elections.

4 Upholding the basic principles of  
5 democracy is a responsibility that Democrats and  
6 Republicans alike share. We can disagree on any  
7 given policy, and I think that's where I'm -- my  
8 perspective here is somewhat different from the  
9 prior speakers.

10 We take turns being humbled at the ballot  
11 box. That's a part of our democratic system.  
12 But the rules of the game, the core  
13 constitutional principles should not be in  
14 dispute.

15 Fast forwarding to today, President Trump  
16 has now called upon Texas Governor Greg Abbott to  
17 bend the rules of the game yet again in his favor  
18 and to find him five seats in Congress so that  
19 his agenda can be rubberstamped by the House of  
20 Representatives.

21 But unlike Raffensperger and Schmidt, who  
22 stood up to the overreach of power, of executive  
23 power, Governor Abbott has gotten on his knees.

24 CHAIR CERVANTES: Ten seconds.

25 MS. SEDWHANI: These are extreme attacks

1 on our core democratic principles and these  
2 attacks must be met with decisive action.

3 It brings me no joy to see the maps that  
4 we passed fairly by the Commission to be tossed  
5 aside for this new set of maps. The Commission  
6 is an excellent process. I'm happy to talk more  
7 about in Q&A.

8 But I do believe this is a necessary step  
9 in a much bigger battle to shore up free and fair  
10 elections in our nation.

11 Thank you so much.

12 CHAIR CERVANTES: If we can now bring up  
13 the lead opposition witnesses. If you could  
14 approach.

15 Good morning. Please begin when you are  
16 ready. You each have three minutes.

17 MS. ARCHBOLD ROBINSON: Chair Cervantes  
18 and Members, I'm Connie Archbold Robinson,  
19 independent from Oceanside, speaking also on  
20 behalf of my fellow rotating chairs of the First  
21 Citizens Redistricting Commission, Democrats  
22 Jeanne Raya of San Gabriel, Democrat Cynthia Dye  
23 of San Francisco, Republicans Jody Folkins Weber  
24 of Riverside, and Peter Yao of Claremont.

25 Commissioners are chosen to be impartial,

1 to reflect the state's demographics, and to apply  
2 constitutional criteria to ensure fair electoral  
3 districts. We also cannot run for office in the  
4 districts that we draw.

5 As you may remember, Californians voted  
6 three times against gerrymandering, placing  
7 independent redistricting in our Constitution.  
8 Last week's Citrin Center poll confirms that  
9 Californians still support the CRC two to one.

10 YouGov's national poll shows, furthermore,  
11 that three-quarters of Americans think  
12 gerrymandering is unfair. Over two-thirds think  
13 it should be outright illegal.

14 The current CRC, which we fully support,  
15 considered over 35,000 public comments as they  
16 created and finalized their maps, and they made  
17 many difficult tradeoffs, as we did, to protect  
18 communities.

19 This new map was developed by legislators  
20 and their consultants behind closed doors. The  
21 CRC was prohibited from considering partisan  
22 interests. This map had only that goal, save  
23 seats.

24 All the CRC draft maps were posted for 14  
25 days to allow for thoughtful public input. These

1 maps, as you know, just came out. And yet, here  
2 we are voting.

3 Why are you not hearing from more good  
4 governance organizations in this process today?  
5 Because it takes time to inform members to engage  
6 in debate and dialogue and to form coherent  
7 positions.

8 This legislation is being touted as the  
9 only way to resist authoritarianism. This is a  
10 false choice.

11 Thanks to the CRC, California has some of  
12 the country's most competitive districts. Twice  
13 as many of our current districts are up for grabs  
14 as this new partisan gerrymander would result in.  
15 It means developing candidates and platforms that  
16 speak to what voters care about and getting them  
17 to the polls. That's what we believe democracy  
18 looks like, voters choosing their representatives  
19 and not the other way around.

20 At a minimum, if this moves forward, we  
21 would strongly urge you to release the data and  
22 rationale for these lines, as all of the CRCs  
23 have modeled. And better yet, you could do  
24 midcycle redistricting in the California way.  
25 Instead of spending over \$200 million on a

1 special election, you could invest a fraction of  
2 that in the CRC and have them engage the public,  
3 create updated districts and pass them --

4 CHAIR CERVANTES: Ten seconds.

5 MS. ARCHBOLD ROBINSON: -- with a  
6 cross-partisan super majority vote.

7 We urge you to serve your constituents by  
8 defending our independent process and rejecting  
9 this partisan gerrymandering. Thank you.

10 MS. RAYA: (Inaudible) and Members of the  
11 Committee. My name is Jeanne Raya. I am a  
12 resident of San Gabriel, which is in Los Angeles  
13 county. And I was privileged to serve on the  
14 first Independent Commission in 2010. That  
15 Commission was independent, was composed of a  
16 diverse array of citizens of California, and was  
17 an initiative brought to the ballot by good  
18 government advocacy groups who put voters first.

19 The approval of that Commission ended the  
20 backroom political gerrymandering that had  
21 characterized redistricting for decades. We drew  
22 new maps with full transparency, giving citizens  
23 access to the process through well over a hundred  
24 public meetings and the means to submit written  
25 comments.

1           Voters had the opportunity to describe  
2     their communities, their environment, their  
3     infrastructure and their economy so they could be  
4     placed in a district that would give them a fair  
5     chance of electing an accountable representative.

6           What were some of the results? In  
7     particular, the percentage of women in the  
8     Legislature doubled. AAPI representation  
9     tripled. Black representation nearly doubled.  
10    Latinos advantaged by eight percent.

11          The California Commission set a gold  
12    standard such that the Harvard Kennedy School of  
13    Government awarded us a grant to travel to other  
14    states that were severely gerrymandered where  
15    citizens were, like the people of California,  
16    trying to create independent commissions and  
17    repair their democracy.

18          If only Texas could learn from California.  
19    Their current attempt to rig the 2026 election in  
20    favor of Republicans represents the base  
21    self-interest of officials who are so fearful of  
22    losing their power, all they can think to do is  
23    cheat.

24          Their determination to stack the  
25    congressional deck in their favor has prompted

1 our Governor to threaten this retaliatory  
2 midcycle redistricting in an effort to elect more  
3 Democrats, but by sidelining the Independent  
4 Commission and holding a special election just  
5 this once.

6 I'm a registered Democrat. I have always  
7 been a Democrat. And I would celebrate replacing  
8 any congressional member who has forgotten his or  
9 her oath to serve their constituents and protect  
10 the Constitution.

11 But this can't be at the expense of the  
12 California Constitution, nor the California  
13 voters who mandated fair, nonpartisan  
14 redistricting.

15 Does the threat by Texas Republicans call  
16 for a retaliatory strike? We witness daily the  
17 chaos and mistrust created by revenge politics in  
18 Washington. That is not a model for the  
19 responsible government Californians deserve.  
20 It's not a model for spending millions of dollars  
21 on a gamble the different congressional districts  
22 will produce the sought-after change.

23 Does the Legislature want to risk losing  
24 incumbents in more competitive districts or --

25 CHAIR CERVANTES: Ten seconds.

1 MS. RAYA: -- or fail to elect the magic  
2 number needed to win this electoral war?

3 The maps presented and offered to voters  
4 are like a menu that only has steak, but you  
5 prefer fish. That's not a choice.

6 Please reconsider and consider the  
7 comments of my colleague in ways that this might  
8 be done at least to protect the independent,  
9 transparent process that voters approved in 2008.  
10 Thank you. And I'm happy to remain for questions  
11 if --

12 CHAIR CERVANTES: Yes, that would be  
13 wonderful if you all could remain for questions.

14 We would now like to move forward with  
15 public testimony, public comment. If you are in  
16 support, please come into the hearing room.  
17 State your name, affiliation and position only.

18 MS. SADHWANI: Go ahead and start bringing  
19 in support.

20 MS. FLOCKS: Madam Chair, Members, Sara  
21 Flocks, the California Federation of Labor  
22 Unions, in strong support of both of the bills.

23 MS. HINES-SHAIKH: Honorable Chair and  
24 Members, Amy Hines-Shaikh with UDW/AFSCME  
25 Local 3930, and Unite Here Local 11, in strong

1 support of both bills. Thank you.

2 MS. MOK: Tiffany Mok on behalf of CFT in  
3 support. Also doing additional support for CTA.  
4 Thank you.

5 MS. NIELSEN: Julie Nielsen, National  
6 Union of Healthcare Workers, in support of both.  
7 Thank you.

8 MS. GONZALEZ: Good morning. Genesis  
9 Gonzalez on behalf of Lieutenant Governor Eleni  
10 Kounalakis in support. Thank you.

11 MS. HEIDELBACH: Good morning. Kristin  
12 Heidelberg here on behalf of UFCW Western States  
13 Council in support.

14 MR. HANNA: Good morning. J.P. Hanna  
15 with the California Nurses Association in strong  
16 support. Thank you.

17 CHAIR CERVANTES: Seeing no additional  
18 witnesses in support, we will now move to  
19 witnesses in opposition. Name, affiliation,  
20 position.

21 MS. AGUILAR: Denise Aguilar, co-founder  
22 of Freedom Angels, opposed.

23 MS. THORNTON: Tara Thornton, co-founder  
24 of Freedom Angels, opposed.

25 MS. KARSTENS: Sofia Karstens,

1 Decentralize America, and on behalf of the  
2 LA County GOP, strongly opposed.

3 MR. GONZALEZ: Oracio Gonzalez on behalf  
4 of California's Business Roundtable in  
5 opposition.

6 MR. BUSSE: Nick Busse, Roseville,  
7 California, and on the behalf of the families and  
8 veterans leaving California, fairness of good  
9 governance and fiscal responsibility, I oppose  
10 this.

11 MS. ARIAS: Amber Arias, Calvary Chapel,  
12 Solano County, in strong opposition.

13 MS. LAU: Catherine Lau, Tracy,  
14 California, in strong opposition.

15 MS. BARBRO: Hi. Virginia Barbro, a  
16 native of California, Solano county resident, in  
17 complete opposition of this.

18 MS. NIXON: Twila Nixon, Solano county  
19 resident, opposed to it.

20 MR. STRICKLAND: Since we didn't get the  
21 opportunity to ask questions in an informational  
22 hearing, I'm going to come up here and say, Tony  
23 Strickland, State Senator, opposed because we  
24 need to keep the Citizens Redistricting  
25 Commission, power of the people.

1           SENATOR VALLADARES: Senator Suzette  
2 Valladares, representing the 23rd Senate  
3 District, over a million voters, and also the  
4 40 million voters in California saying do not  
5 dilute their power. Do not take their power away  
6 for politicians.

7           CHAIR CERVANTES: Thank you.

8           Seeing no additional -- would you like to  
9 approach, please?

10           MS. ANGELI: Olivia -- excuse me. Olivia  
11 Angeli from Elk Grove, strongly oppose.

12           MS. MINOR: Bella Minor from Stockton,  
13 strongly oppose.

14           Ms. ZEPEDA-BLANKENSHIP: Renee Zepeda-  
15 Blankenship from Fresno County, oppose.

16           MS. GONZALEZ: Debbie Gonzalez, Fresno  
17 County, oppose.

18           MR. CARRILLO: Jose Carrillo, Riverside,  
19 California, a constituent of Sabrina Cervantes,  
20 and I strongly oppose.

21           MR. ARELLANO: My name is Angel Arellano.  
22 I'm from Pomona, and I oppose.

23           SHAN K: Hello. Shan K. from Orange  
24 County, California, representing California  
25 Parents Rights Act Now, and I oppose.

1 MS. CARRILLO: Maria Carrillo, Riverside  
2 County, constituent of Sabrina Cervantes,  
3 strongly oppose.

4 MS. JONES: Emily Jones, resident of Shasta  
5 county, representing Home Tribe, and oppose.

6 MS. LEE: Good morning. Jennifer Lee  
7 representing Los Angeles. I strongly oppose.

8 MS. BAX: Gina Bax, president for the  
9 Chico Evening Republican Woman. I completely  
10 oppose this. Thank you.

11 MS. DI GENNARO: Florentina Di Gennaro  
12 from the Yuba Sutter area, oppose.

13 MR. KAUFMAN: Scott Kaufman, Howard Jarvis  
14 Taxpayers Association, in opposition. Thank you.

15 MR. CHRISTENSEN: Lance Christensen, vice  
16 president of the California Policy Center. We  
17 oppose these redistricting schemes. Thank you.

18 MS. MASTEN: Heather Masten, El Dorado  
19 County Republican Party, no.

20 MR. FRIEND: Michael Friend, California  
21 native, retired state employee, strongly opposed.

22 MS. LUCERO: Darcy Lucero, California  
23 native, strongly oppose.

24 MS. SHIVITZ: Rika Shivitz, Orange County  
25 resident, and I strongly oppose.

1 MR. AVILA: Oscar Avila, Fortuna,  
2 California, with the California Movement. We  
3 strongly oppose.

4 MR. BOLOG: David Bolog, a constituent of  
5 the 27th Senate District, representing Serving  
6 Family Values Alliance and Moms for Liberty. We  
7 are in opposition. Thank you.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER LACKEY: Good morning.  
9 Assembly Member Tom Lackey, strong opposition.

10 CHAIR CERVANTES: Seeing no additional  
11 individuals who'd like to step and offer support  
12 or opposition, I will now turn it back to the  
13 Committee Members on the dais.

14 We will start with Vice Chair Choi.

15 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Thank you, Chair.

16 Before I start asking questions, this  
17 being the public hearing non-voting item, we have  
18 a couple Senators in the audience. So can we  
19 extend invitation for them to sit on the dais,  
20 asking some questions?

21 CHAIR CERVANTES: This is only for Members  
22 of the Committee for this bill hearing.

23 You may proceed with your questions or  
24 comments.

25 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. This is, as you

1 have heard, a very important historic decision  
2 that we are hearing and the three different  
3 measures. A couple of them are just for hearing,  
4 and the later last item will be voted upon.

5 You can defend either side, but from my  
6 point of view, there are so many illegal and also  
7 unethical elements in this attempt by changing  
8 this ACA 8 in the Constitution.

9 And the reason is that we do have already  
10 chosen so-called Independent Citizens  
11 Redistricting Commission that had been already  
12 appointed and only based upon 2020 election.

13 On 2020, the population census data, the  
14 districts have been already drawn and that was  
15 from -- to me it was very decisive ballots.  
16 Rather than just a bare over 50 percent, was  
17 61 percent to my data. Was 61.3 percent voter  
18 approved of the Commission. So I have a total  
19 trust on the election Redistricting Commission.

20 And a 10-year cycle comes very quickly and  
21 the preparation for that. And then also the  
22 whole process of hearing the citizens' input into  
23 the process before the final map has been drawn,  
24 it takes a lot of time.

25 But this one is just for next three

1 election cycles in reaction -- as a retaliatory  
2 reaction to other states which you are  
3 condemning. And if you follow the same  
4 condemnable actions, then Californians should be  
5 condemned by other people. Why should we follow  
6 that same suit and we destroy our good model that  
7 we have chosen?

8           You are talking about defending the  
9 democracy. Which side is a better action, to  
10 defend the fair election redistricting that has  
11 been fairly and approved by citizens, and that  
12 cycle is going to be only applied next three  
13 election cycles? Who can guarantee that?

14           So with that statement, I have also some  
15 statements and then also some questions to ask to  
16 the, first of all, opposition witness.

17           Governor Newsom has said that this  
18 legislation and the ballot measure have the  
19 explicit goal of electing more Democrats to  
20 Congress. All right? That was his statement.

21           Do you agree that the main purpose of  
22 redrawing the maps is to elect more Democrats to  
23 the House of Representatives?

24           CHAIR CERVANTES: Is that a question for  
25 the author?

1 VICE CHAIR CHOI: No. To the opposition  
2 witness. So yes or no?

3 CHAIR CERVANTES: Yes.

4 MS. RAYA: Yes, that is the stated purpose  
5 is to elect more Democrats.

6 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. Now that leaves  
7 me --

8 MS. ROBINSON: May I add something to  
9 this? In all due fairness, none of us were --

10 CHAIR CERVANTES: Through the Chair.

11 MS. ROBINSON: Pardon?

12 CHAIR CERVANTES: Through the Chair.

13 MS. ROBINSON: Oh, I'm sorry. May I just  
14 add something briefly?

15 Because none of us were actually, as  
16 citizen commissioners, involved in this process,  
17 this would be within your power to request for  
18 the rationale and the data to be released so that  
19 we have a clear understanding.

20 With the commissions, it was very public  
21 and transparent what the drivers were. But this  
22 is what has been publicly said is that it is to  
23 elect more Democrats.

24 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. Thank you.

25 And then I'm going to ask the -- Senator

1 Cabaldon because you are right now speaking on  
2 behalf of the author.

3 It is my understanding that these new maps  
4 only take effect -- you stated the answer to  
5 that, but I want to reaffirm.

6 If some of the state's redistricts, in  
7 other words, our old effort, even if this passes  
8 will be nullified?

9 SENATOR CABALDON: That's correct,  
10 Senator. These only become effective at any  
11 stage in this process if another state adopts a  
12 new congressional district map that isn't  
13 required by a court order.

14 VICE CHAIR CHOI: So obviously, I'm the  
15 only Republican Member among the five Members of  
16 this Election Committee and Constitutional  
17 Amendment. A vote will be taking place.

18 But I am kind of worried that my single  
19 vote is not going to defend or win, so we'll see  
20 how it goes.

21 But if it passes and ACA 8 is placed in  
22 the ballot measure, and let's suppose that the  
23 citizens approve of that, that even then can you  
24 stop it?

25 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes. So the terms of

1 the constitutional amendment itself that the  
2 voters will vote on is what includes the trigger.  
3 And so the trigger -- if the voters approve it  
4 and the trigger isn't pulled, then it doesn't  
5 take effect.

6 VICE CHAIR CHOI: So that will be a  
7 condition that the other states will redistrict?

8 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes. And that's  
9 directly in the measure -- this measure that the  
10 people of California would vote upon themselves.

11 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. And then I will  
12 move on to, would that mean that these maps will  
13 go into effect next year even though no state  
14 redistricting this year? So you said that that  
15 is not the case, it's not going to trigger,  
16 correct?

17 SENATOR CABALDON: That's correct. So the  
18 plain language of the bills and what the voters  
19 will vote on is that these will become operative  
20 only if Texas, Florida or another state adopts a  
21 new congressional district map that takes effect  
22 after August 1st, 2025 and before January 1,  
23 2031, unless that redistricting is required by a  
24 court order in another state.

25 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. Then how long

1 does this condition last? If Texas decides to do  
2 the mid-decade redistricting because of the court  
3 order in two years, do these maps automatically  
4 take effect?

5 SENATOR CABALDON: I see that the  
6 committee chief consultant wanted to provide a  
7 clarification.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Member Cabaldon,  
9 you already answered this.

10 SENATOR CABALDON: Okay.

11 Yeah, so the period that this applies to  
12 is August 1st of this year until January 1st of  
13 2031. After that point, then the commission --  
14 the commission process that is in the current  
15 constitution and is undisturbed by this measure  
16 would recommence after the conclusion of the  
17 census.

18 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. Now, this leads  
19 to next question. Is this a condition triggered  
20 that if a Democrat run state redistricts? In  
21 other words, whichever city among the state that  
22 that may be, that will be in the ballot measure  
23 that the trigger clause will be embedded in  
24 there?

25 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes, that's correct.

1 The language of this measure is without regard to  
2 the partisan makeup of any of the other states.

3 It's important to note no democratic state  
4 has or has been considering independently rigging  
5 the elections or the congressional districts in  
6 this way.

7 So the practical effect certainly is only,  
8 quote, unquote, red states because it's only  
9 Texas, Florida and some of their colleagues that  
10 have been contemplating this aggressive action to  
11 attack the elections next year.

12 But, yes, the actual language of this  
13 measure that would be voted upon by the people  
14 would affect blue states and red states equally.

15 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. This question is  
16 also related. Is this condition triggered if an  
17 independent commission in another state  
18 redistricts and it results in a net gain of  
19 democratic congressional seats?

20 SENATOR CABALDON: As I understand it --  
21 and of the committee staff or others want to  
22 interject, that's fine -- but none of the other  
23 states that have independent commissions, that  
24 those commissions are not authorized to do mid-  
25 decade redistricting either, just as ours is not.

1 So that hypothetical cannot happen in the absence  
2 of a constitutional amendment in other states.

3 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. Under current  
4 law, the Legislature cannot draw the lines, draw  
5 them for the purpose of partisan gerrymandering,  
6 or draw them mid decade.

7 Shouldn't we be asking the people's  
8 permission first to do these things, rather than  
9 drawing the lines and then asking the voters to  
10 approve our unconstitutional actions? In other  
11 words, placing cart before the horse.

12 SENATOR CABALDON: Well, Senator, like  
13 you, I served as a mayor for quite a long time,  
14 and my experience has been that voters want us to  
15 get to the point. And sending them two or three  
16 different stages, when we all know what it is  
17 that we are attempting to accomplish, does not  
18 advance democracy.

19 That in this case, the voters will have  
20 all their choices at once to vote on, the  
21 authorization in the Constitution and the maps  
22 themselves. So they're able to vote on the  
23 abstract question with the actual maps that they  
24 can choose and look at themselves and evaluate  
25 them according to those criteria.

1           The Constitution -- let's be clear. The  
2 Constitution doesn't say what you said about the  
3 Legislature. What it says is that the  
4 Legislature can't intervene in the decennial, in  
5 the every-10-year process.

6           When the Commission is convened after the  
7 census and it draws the maps according to that  
8 process, the Legislature may not intervene in  
9 that process to do the things that you said, or  
10 to impose a party purpose on it.

11           The Constitution is silent with respect to  
12 mid-decade redistricting, and this measure allows  
13 the people to decide if, when and how that will  
14 proceed.

15           CHAIR CERVANTES: We have other Committee  
16 Members who'd like to ask questions and comments.

17           SENATOR CHOI: Yeah. Let me --

18           CHAIR CERVANTES: Senator Choi, we can  
19 move right back to you. Let me allow --

20           VICE CHAIR CHOI: One more question.

21           CHAIR CERVANTES: Let me come back to you.  
22 Let me allow Senator Umberg.

23           SENATOR UMBERG: Well, if he only has one  
24 more question --

25           CHAIR CERVANTES: Would you defer?

1 SENATOR UMBERG: Yeah, I'll defer.

2 CHAIR CERVANTES: Okay. Go ahead. Vice  
3 Chair Choi, you may ask your question.

4 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Yeah. Are the voters  
5 being given the opportunity to see each  
6 congressional map on the ballot, as well  
7 opportunity directly approve each congressional  
8 map as promised by the Governor?

9 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes. The voters have  
10 already the opportunities to see those maps.  
11 This is the first time ever.

12 So there was a decade, I don't remember  
13 the year, when the voters voted in a referendum  
14 on district maps previously once before. And I  
15 remember being a voter in that case, and I  
16 thought, how do I get this map? How do I know --  
17 how do I make sense of it?

18 This time there is an interactive map that  
19 has been up since last week already for those  
20 maps to be available. And I want to, you know,  
21 emphasize to this point because we also heard it  
22 in the opposition testimony.

23 In the Commission's normal process, there  
24 is a 14-day period by which those maps, before  
25 they are voted on by the Commission, are

1 available for public inspection.

2 In this case, the maps have been  
3 published. They have been on this Committee's  
4 website since Friday. And they will be available  
5 for 78 days for public inspection. And they are  
6 available in the most user friendly form, which  
7 is an interactive web-based map that we are --  
8 that all Californians are used to being able to  
9 inspect, as well in every other form possible,  
10 including the 300 page-bill that we had last  
11 night for those who love to look at census  
12 tracts.

13 But these are transparent maps so that  
14 voters can zoom in, see exactly where they live,  
15 what their communities of interest are, and  
16 evaluate them on their own when they cast their  
17 votes whether or not to approve these maps in  
18 November.

19 CHAIR CERVANTES: Thank you.

20 Senator Umberg.

21 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Thank you.

22 SENATOR UMBERG: Thank you, Madam Chair.

23 And I want to begin by congratulating my  
24 colleague from Irvine for your courage. As I  
25 understood what you said, you condemn what

1 they're doing in Texas. And I also condemn what  
2 they're doing in Texas.

3 And by extension, if you're condemning  
4 what they're doing in Texas, I assume that you  
5 condemn the President of the United States for,  
6 in essence, ordering the folks in Texas to redraw  
7 their maps mid decade.

8 And I think it's a bold move for a  
9 Republican basically to condemn both the process  
10 in Texas as well as the President of the United  
11 States, so I congratulate you for your courage.

12 VICE CHAIR CHOI: What I meant was let's  
13 don't become the bad one, just follow the bad  
14 actors. Well, if you are condemning them, I  
15 didn't criticize or evaluate their actions.  
16 Because you labeled it -- also in the beginning  
17 in the presentation, he labeled it in such a way.  
18 I took that word, and it was not my judgment or  
19 statement.

20 SENATOR UMBERG: Okay. Well, let me  
21 retract. If you didn't think that what they're  
22 doing in Texas is inappropriate, then I retract  
23 what you said. I thought you had actually  
24 condemned what they did in Texas and also  
25 condemned, by extension, the President of the

1 United States.

2 Let me direct some questions to  
3 Ms. Robinson and Ms. Raya.

4 First of all, thank you. Thank you for  
5 your service. Thank you for your service on the  
6 Redistricting Commission.

7 I realize it was in 2010 and 2011 and a  
8 very, very important process. And I think we can  
9 all agree that that process is absolutely  
10 essential.

11 And I assume -- Ms. Robinson, I read what  
12 you said in 2011 that -- or actually, it wasn't  
13 what you said. It was the President of La Sierra  
14 College said that you were committed to service,  
15 fairness, and bettering the community. And I  
16 assume that that's one of the reasons you applied  
17 to be on the Commission. Am I correct in that  
18 assumption?

19 MS. ROBINSON: Yes. I believe most  
20 commissioners share those lofty goals.

21 SENATOR UMBERG: Yes. Well, I thank you.  
22 I thank you.

23 And, Ms. Raya, I think you said back in  
24 2011, we must do all we can do to ensure that  
25 citizens maintain faith in representative

1 democracy.

2 Do you remember saying that in 2011?

3 MS. RAYA: I do. I do. And I've said it  
4 many times since.

5 SENATOR UMBERG: And you believe that  
6 today?

7 MS. RAYA: I do.

8 SENATOR UMBERG: Yeah. And I assume that  
9 both of you applied to be on the Commission  
10 because you wanted to improve the quality of life  
11 of Californians, that ultimately you thought you  
12 were bettering the community.

13 Is that right, Ms. Robinson?

14 MS. ROBINSON: I assume that's also what  
15 drove you to your service.

16 SENATOR UMBERG: Right.

17 MS. ROBINSON: And, yes, I think that's  
18 unilateral.

19 SENATOR UMBERG: Well, no, I appreciate  
20 that. Thank you.

21 Same thing with you, Ms. Raya?

22 MS. RAYA: Of course.

23 SENATOR UMBERG: Yes. I assume you didn't  
24 do it so you could sell watches, right? Or you  
25 could, for example, sell cryptocurrency, or get a

1 free airplane? You didn't do it for any of those  
2 reasons. You came to public service to improve  
3 the community; is that right?

4 MS. ROBINSON: Yes.

5 SENATOR UMBERG: Okay. Ms. Raya, you  
6 think so?

7 MS. RAYA: Yes. Came to serve, yes.

8 SENATOR UMBERG: Well, thank you. Thank  
9 you for that.

10 And I think you, Ms. Robinson, also said,  
11 as we can see from the experience of other  
12 states, when redistricting is not done well, it  
13 can have a really grave impact.

14 Do you agree with that today still?

15 MS. ROBINSON: Yes.

16 SENATOR UMBERG: And do you agree with the  
17 statement that not only that grave impact may  
18 impact the state in which the redistricting is  
19 done improperly, but the entire nation?

20 Do you agree with that?

21 MS. ROBINSON: In my capacity as both a  
22 commissioner and as someone who was supported by  
23 the Harvard Center to travel across the country  
24 and support many other states and advocates in  
25 those states to create other models in their

1 states, absolutely.

2 I've seen both the impact at the local  
3 level, at the state level and across the nation  
4 in other states. I don't know if you'd want to  
5 add anything on that.

6 MS. RAYA: No. I would share that,  
7 absolutely, The impact can be seen in many ways,  
8 I think, including by the statistics that I  
9 cited, What I think is improved representation in  
10 our Legislature as a result of the districts that  
11 have been drawn in the last two decades.

12 SENATOR UMBERG: I completely agree with  
13 your statement that what happens in other states  
14 can have a grave impact on the entire nation.  
15 And I assume both of you are following what's  
16 going on in Texas.

17 Are you following that, Ms. Robinson?

18 MS. ROBINSON: Yes, sir.

19 SENATOR UMBERG: Yes. And do you approve  
20 of what's going on in Texas?

21 MS. ROBINSON: I do not approve of what's  
22 going on in Texas. and I am a commissioner and a  
23 resident in California, and so that is my primary  
24 focus today.

25 SENATOR UMBERG: And, Ms. Raya, do you

1 approve what's going on in Texas?

2 MS. RAYA: I don't know that anyone other  
3 than the Republicans in Texas and the White House  
4 approve of what's going on.

5 But I would have to repeat what  
6 Ms. Robinson has said, that we're concerned about  
7 our state right now.

8 SENATOR UMBERG: All right. And going  
9 back to my earlier statement that whatever goes  
10 on in Texas actually impacts us here in  
11 California, Do you agree with that?

12 MS. ROBINSON: Yes, sir. We are all part  
13 of the same country.

14 SENATOR UMBERG: Right. No, I  
15 completely -- and one of the founders, James  
16 Madison, I'm going to quote him here, said the  
17 accumulation of all power, legislative, executive  
18 and judiciary, in the same hands may justly be  
19 pronounced as the very definition of tyranny.

20 So do you agree with me that basically  
21 that the Congress of the United States has, in  
22 essence, approved everything that this President  
23 has proposed?

24 Do you agree with that, Ms. Robinson?

25 MS. ROBINSON: I'm not here to comment on

1 Texas. I am here to comment on California. And  
2 there are ways that California's elected  
3 officials can have the national impact that we  
4 want and that we need through using the  
5 competitive districts that have been established  
6 through the citizen-approved independent  
7 Commission.

8 SENATOR UMBERG: So let me ask, Ms. Raya.  
9 You understand -- let me ask you if you share my  
10 understanding that the Republican Members of the  
11 California delegation have basically voted with  
12 the President on all things that the President  
13 has proposed that impact California.

14 Do you agree with me on that supposition?  
15 Ms. Raya?

16 MS. RAYA: I would say that that the  
17 results we're seeing in Washington come from --  
18 they're happening for many reasons. Some of that  
19 is perhaps how elected officials are actively  
20 responding to what this President wants. It may  
21 also be because there are not enough other strong  
22 voices to counter it. It may also be because the  
23 courts seem to have been sidelined to some extent  
24 in upholding the separation of powers, upholding  
25 the rule of law.

1 I think it's a complex issue that is  
2 really not what this proposed action in  
3 California is about. This action is about doing  
4 a partisan redistricting absolutely in conflict  
5 with California law. That's what I can speak to.

6 I'm not an expert on national politics. I  
7 don't know that anybody really cares what my  
8 opinion is on national politics. So, again, I --  
9 you know, I really would prefer that we're  
10 directing the conversation to what is going to  
11 happen here in California.

12 SENATOR UMBERG: And I agree with you  
13 100 percent that we should focus on what's  
14 happening in California and what impacts the  
15 Congress' action or inaction, whether they're  
16 supine or actually active as a check on the  
17 Executive, how it impacts California.

18 But I think you agree with me that the  
19 Congress has not been a check on the President  
20 whatsoever, including our Members, including our  
21 Republican Members in the House of  
22 Representatives. I think you agreed with me on  
23 that; is that right?

24 MS. RAYA: I would say that Congress has  
25 not acted responsibly in general.

1           SENATOR UMBERG: All right.

2           So in terms -- and I read the quote from  
3 James Madison that basically we no longer have an  
4 effective check on the President of the United  
5 States.

6           Do you understand that the President of  
7 the United States has, in essence, ordered Texas  
8 to reconfigure their congressional seats to add  
9 five Republican seats.

10           Do you remember the President saying that,  
11 Ms. Raya?

12           MS. RAYA: I do.

13           SENATOR UMBERG: You do.

14           And how about you, Ms. Robinson?

15           MS. ROBINSON: Yes, I do.

16           SENATOR UMBERG: And you understand that  
17 the balance of power in the House of  
18 Representatives is very narrowly divided; is that  
19 right --

20           MS. RAYA: Yes.

21           SENATOR UMBERG: -- Ms. Rya? Okay.

22 Ms. Raya says.

23           And Ms. Robinson, yes.

24           So you also -- I want to get your views on  
25 what the President has done here in California.

1 Are you familiar with AmeriCorps? Are you  
2 familiar with AmeriCorps, Ms. Raya?

3 MS. RAYA: Yes.

4 SENATOR UMBERG: You are.

5 And Ms. Robinson, you're familiar with  
6 AmeriCorps?

7 MS. ROBINSON: Yes.

8 SENATOR UMBERG: You understand the  
9 President has basically, by his action,  
10 eliminated 5,600 AmeriCorps public service  
11 workers and \$60 million.

12 Do you think that's a detriment to  
13 California, Ms. Robinson?

14 MS. ROBINSON: Absolutely.

15 SENATOR UMBERG: Absolutely.

16 Ms. Raya?

17 MS. RAYA: Of course.

18 SENATOR UMBERG: And also, I assume you're  
19 familiar with ICE raids here in California right  
20 now.

21 Are you familiar with that, Ms. Robinson?

22 MS. ROBINSON: Absolutely.

23 SENATOR UMBERG: And Ms. Raya?

24 MS. RAYA: Yes.

25 SENATOR UMBERG: And that, in fact,

1 71 percent of those who have been arrested do not  
2 have criminal convictions. There's been 57,861  
3 people detained and 71 percent of those had no  
4 criminal convictions.

5 Do you think that's appropriate,  
6 Ms. Robinson?

7 MS. ROBINSON: Absolutely not.

8 SENATOR UMBERG: No?

9 Ms. Raya --

10 MS. RAYA: No.

11 SENATOR UMBERG: -- how about you?

12 MS. RAYA: No.

13 SENATOR UMBERG: You don't think that's  
14 appropriate?

15 You understand that that's basically the  
16 initiative of the President of the United States,  
17 to basically do that.

18 You understand that, Ms. Robinson.

19 MS. ROBINSON: Yes.

20 SENATOR UMBERG: You understand that  
21 Congress has been absolutely supine in terms of  
22 acting as a check on the President of the United  
23 States?

24 MS. ROBINSON: Absolutely.

25 SENATOR UMBERG: And that the only check

1 that really exists today is the Congress of the  
2 United States, at least theoretically?

3 You know what, I don't know how long  
4 you've -- Ms. Raya, how long have you lived here  
5 in California?

6 MS. RAYA: My entire life.

7 SENATOR UMBERG: All right. Well, I'm not  
8 going to guess how old you are.

9 I'll tell you how old I am. I'm 69 years  
10 old. I came to California to go to UCLA a bunch  
11 of years ago, bunch of years ago. And when I  
12 came here, the air quality was horrible, was  
13 absolutely horrible.

14 And I don't know about you, Ms. Robinson,  
15 if you've lived here long enough to remember how  
16 horrible the air quality was.

17 And you understand the President of the  
18 United States has said California can no longer  
19 enact its own emission standards. That we now  
20 have to defer to Alabama and Mississippi in terms  
21 of our clean air.

22 Ms. Raya, do you think that's good for  
23 California's quality of life?

24 MS. RAYA: I think we have a lot of quality  
25 of life issues to address, and I think one way to

1 address them in California is to have  
2 representatives elected by the people who  
3 understand and represent the communities of  
4 interest that voters come from.

5 SENATOR UMBERG: So you agree with me the  
6 air quality is actually improved in -- you've  
7 been here your whole life -- actually improved in  
8 California? Do you agree with me on that?

9 MS. RAYA: Yeah, it's improved.

10 SENATOR UMBERG: All right. And that by  
11 reversing our emission standards, that we're  
12 going to basically go back to where we were 50  
13 years ago, do you agree with me on that?

14 MS. RAYA: I would guess that that's so  
15 not -- not a scientist either, so ...

16 SENATOR UMBERG: And you're familiar with  
17 the billion dollars that the President has tried  
18 to extort from UCLA.

19 Does that improve the quality of life here  
20 in California, you think, Ms. Robinson?

21 MS. ROBINSON: No, sir.

22 SENATOR UMBERG: No.

23 Ms. Raya?

24 MS. RAYA: No.

25 SENATOR UMBERG: And the same thing with

1 the \$584 million research grants that the  
2 President is trying to basically quash here in  
3 California.

4 I think you agree with me that does not  
5 add to the quality of life of Californians; is  
6 that right? Yeah.

7 MS. RAYA: Right.

8 SENATOR UMBERG: I think both of you are  
9 shaking -- Ms. Robinson, you agree with me,  
10 right?

11 MS. ROBINSON: I think there's more we're  
12 in agreement than disagreement.

13 SENATOR UMBERG: Right.

14 MS. ROBINSON: I think what we're here to  
15 speak on is the means to get to the end. And in  
16 my humble opinion, not as an elected official,  
17 not as a national political expert, but someone  
18 who is an engaged citizen, an engaged voter, and  
19 has been a volunteer commissioner, who skipped my  
20 children's first days of school to actually be  
21 here and express my voice to all of you, that we  
22 have competitive districts in California, we have  
23 excellent electeds and candidates in the pipeline  
24 across partisan lines.

25 I am speaking as an independent who

1 absolutely can address these issues without  
2 resorting to a partisan gerrymander that has no  
3 checks and balances, such as we suggested,  
4 including being fully transparent with the data  
5 that was used to develop these lines, empowering  
6 the very successful current seated Citizens  
7 Redistricting Commission to be able to play a  
8 role in that process, and to continue building on  
9 the trust and faith that has been created, not  
10 just with Californians.

11 But as I went and traveled and trained and  
12 educated people across the country, our citizens  
13 in other parts of the country, who are being held  
14 hostage by politicians who do not represent their  
15 interests, have been looking to California as the  
16 alternative, as the model.

17 If we gut our -- the great work that we  
18 have been doing there, then not only do we lose  
19 our credibility, those efforts actually get  
20 stalled and get reversed. That's what I'm here  
21 to express.

22 I understand that you are in a difficult  
23 position as our elected officials and as our  
24 leaders. There are no easy answers to any of  
25 this.

1 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER

2 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Madam Chair --

3 CHAIR CERVANTES: Senator Umberg, I'd like  
4 to just take a moment to see if there's any  
5 Members who want to provide --

6 SENATOR UMBERG: Okay.

7 CHAIR CERVANTES: -- comment or --

8 SENATOR UMBERG: Can I just ask one  
9 final --

10 CHAIR CERVANTES: Yes, please.

11 SENATOR UMBERG: -- or at least one  
12 interim final question, Madam Chair?

13 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Yeah. Madam Chair --

14 SENATOR UMBERG: Do you think --

15 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Yeah. Point of order.  
16 Point of order.

17 CHAIR CERVANTES: What is your point of  
18 order?

19 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Listening to cross-  
20 examining the witnesses as if they are sitting  
21 here in defense of the Donald Trump, we are  
22 discussing the bill right now, ACA 8. And we  
23 need to address to the bill content, not  
24 defending Trump administration policies. This is  
25 not quotable rules and cross-examining just like

1 the attorneys are doing.

2 And then I object that I hope that the  
3 Chair will stop his cross-examining style of  
4 questioning.

5 CHAIR CERVANTES: Point well taken. We  
6 will allow one more question at the moment.

7 SENATOR UMBERG: All right.

8 CHAIR CERVANTES: And then I will turn to  
9 Senator Limon, if she has any questions. If not,  
10 I will jump in. Thank you.

11 SENATOR UMBERG: So let me just ask the  
12 two opposite -- do you think we in California  
13 should do what we can within the bounds of the  
14 law to dissuade Texas from engaging in what I  
15 think you both characterize as inappropriate  
16 activity?

17 Ms. Raya, we'll start with you. Do you  
18 think we should do in California what we can,  
19 within the bounds of the law, to dissuade Texas  
20 from engaging in their gerrymanders?

21 VICE CHAIR CHOI: That's a point of order  
22 again. It is -- right now how can they say that  
23 in Texas or is -- they are doing whatever they  
24 think they are right. But we are not defending  
25 Texas or Trump administration.

1 CHAIR CERVANTES: Vice Chair Choi --

2 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Yeah.

3 CHAIR CERVANTES: -- we will maintain  
4 decorum on the item.

5 VICE CHAIR CHOI: So -- and --

6 CHAIR CERVANTES: (Inaudible.)

7 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Yeah, the Chair ruled  
8 the point was well taken and he keeps on  
9 continuing.

10 CHAIR CERVANTES: We will -- let me allow  
11 Senator Umberg to ask the question.

12 SENATOR UMBERG: That's the --

13 CHAIR CERVANTES: And allow --

14 SENATOR UMBERG: And I'll ask the last  
15 question.

16 Do you think -- let me -- I'll first ask  
17 Ms. Raya, then Ms. Robinson.

18 CHAIR CERVANTES: Answer if you'd like.

19 SENATOR UMBERG: Do you think we in  
20 California should do what we can, within the  
21 bounds of the law, to dissuade Texas from  
22 engaging in the partisan gerrymandering that  
23 they -- I think they're about to do? Ms. Raya?

24 MS. RAYA: What is happening in Texas is  
25 reprehensible, and I admire the Texas Democrats

1 who have resisted. But I think those people,  
2 those elected representatives in Texas, are  
3 capable of resolving this issue for Texas.

4 We're concerned about resolving a similar  
5 issue in California.

6 SENATOR UMBERG: Ms. Robinson, do you  
7 think we should do what we can, within the bounds  
8 of the law, to dissuade Texas from engaging in  
9 this partisan gerrymandering?

10 MS. ROBINSON: I have spent the last 15  
11 years of my life promoting independent  
12 redistricting, both in California and nationally.  
13 I have spent decades expanding democracy,  
14 partnering across the aisle on a number of good  
15 government initiatives in my capacity as an  
16 advocate, in my capacity as working with  
17 philanthropy, working with elected officials,  
18 working with registrars of voters.

19 I would continue -- I see this testimony  
20 today as part of that trajectory and absolutely  
21 continue to promote fair and equal playing field  
22 in terms of redistricting around the country.

23 SENATOR UMBERG: So I take that as a yes.

24 CHAIR CERVANTES: (Inaudible.) Yes,  
25 please.

1 MS. SADHWANI: Yes. Madam Chair, if I may  
2 just weigh in?

3 I just wanted to acknowledge my two  
4 colleagues here. We didn't serve on the same  
5 Commission, but I'm incredibly proud of you for  
6 the responses that you've given to the Senator's  
7 very difficult questioning, line of questioning.  
8 But I think that those are appropriate questions.

9 This is the kind of moral conflict that,  
10 if this goes to the ballot, that every California  
11 voter is going to be faced with, and these are  
12 not easy decisions.

13 And so I actually really appreciated this  
14 exchange and just wanted to acknowledge my  
15 colleagues here, because I know that that was  
16 difficult to be sitting here having to defend all  
17 of the ills that have come before California.

18 But I do think that this is the challenge  
19 that every California voter will have, and I  
20 think this is probably going to be going through  
21 the minds of so many voters over the next several  
22 months if this plan moves forward.

23 CHAIR CERVANTES: Thank you.

24 And if I may, I want to just say that how  
25 much I respect the work of the CRC. Thank you

1 for the time lost being here today. I understand  
2 what that means. Many of us do. So I want to  
3 make that clear.

4 There was a comment made that we're  
5 putting the cart before the horse. This is the  
6 cart with the horse. The voters get to decide  
7 who and what at the same time this November 4th.

8 We are proud of our state's Citizens  
9 Redistricting Commission. It is a gold standard  
10 for our country. In fact, we want to support  
11 policy for nationwide nonpartisan citizens  
12 redistricting commissions.

13 We are in a moment where we have to  
14 respond to an existential threat. Do you expect  
15 Californians to unilaterally disarm ourselves  
16 when the Trump Republicans are wielding their  
17 control of state governments like weapons against  
18 democracy?

19 MS. ROBINSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. My  
20 understanding is that there are twice as many  
21 competitive seats that can be mobilized as there  
22 would be seats that are created by the maps that  
23 have just been released in the recent days.

24 So, to me, this is not disarmament. This  
25 is being able to really organize the platform and

1 leverage what we already have within the  
2 parameters of our voter-approved constitutional  
3 amendments and the existing districts that our  
4 fellow commissioners on the current Commission  
5 worked so hard to and diligently to create.

6 If there is an interest and need, we  
7 understand that the context evolves. A lot can  
8 happen in 10 years, as we can see. There is the  
9 opportunity to go back to communities and to  
10 update the community of interest testimony and do  
11 some adjustments based on those lines, or release  
12 the information upon which these maps were  
13 drafted. And those types of provisions were not  
14 included in this bill and easily could be.

15 CHAIR CERVANTES: And again, I just want  
16 to reiterate that Texas is actively reducing  
17 their own competitive seat count. So then do you  
18 expect our communities to remain silent While  
19 their voices are being stripped away from  
20 Washington?

21 MS. RAYA: I never expect communities to  
22 be silent. In fact, I would encourage people to  
23 speak on to this very issue.

24 There isn't a day that goes by that I  
25 don't -- everybody in this room talks to people

1 who are terrified, who are living with extreme  
2 anxiety. When you talk about the raids, yes,  
3 we're in the middle of them in Los Angeles and in  
4 my area and people close to me. So, you know,  
5 we're living with that, and even despair that  
6 people have about the current political climate.

7 But I am not convinced, I can't be  
8 convinced that just putting up a map that's  
9 already decided is something that people can  
10 react to, other than if you're encouraging just a  
11 visceral reaction, let's get the national  
12 administration by approving this Bill.

13 That is not good government. That is not  
14 responsible government. That's not engaged  
15 government. That is not giving citizens the  
16 information they need.

17 Seventy-eight days to look at a map that's  
18 done, not a map that can be modified in the  
19 interest of the communities it's supposed to  
20 serve.

21 CHAIR CERVANTES: Given that we still have  
22 two additional measures on file today, I want to  
23 make sure that we can keep our questions concise.

24 But let me turn it over to Senator Limon.

25 SENATOR LIMON: Thank you. Thank you.

1           And I want to first start off by thanking  
2 all of you for being here. It's not often that  
3 we get to see a panel of all women to take on a  
4 very difficult issue.

5           This deliberation has been important for  
6 me, and it continues to be a very important  
7 conversation.

8           And in this deliberation, I have heard  
9 consensus around the importance of expanding  
10 democracy. And I'm actually using your words,  
11 Ms. Robinson, expanding democracy.

12           And I think about the fact that we are  
13 living -- and I'm using your words now,  
14 Ms. Raya -- we are living in moments of extreme  
15 anxiety and despair. And it is very important to  
16 serve the interest of the communities in many  
17 ways.

18           And I think that this clearly is part of  
19 this process where we are all asking ourselves,  
20 what is in the best interest of our communities?  
21 And yet, we are also trying to identify how we  
22 ensure that we expand democracy and not limit it,  
23 not inhibit it, and certainly not get rid of it.

24           What has prompted our state and us as  
25 legislators to be here are the real concerns that

1 we are limiting democracy, that we are inhibiting  
2 democracy, and that we are seeing a decline of  
3 democracy.

4 I have a question to the opposition.  
5 Under what conditions would you do something to  
6 stop the limit of democracy, to stop the decline  
7 of democracy? When would you act? Can you  
8 describe what those conditions would look like?

9 MS. RAYA: Well, as Ms. Robinson said, this  
10 is something we've been doing all our lives. I  
11 certainly have many years on most of you who are  
12 sitting up there, including Mr. Umberg. So, you  
13 know, the question for me is not what might I do  
14 in the future, what might happen.

15 I'm here right now because this is what  
16 I've done all my life. I come from generations  
17 of people who engaged in public service to assure  
18 justice in the electoral process, justice in  
19 education, in healthcare, in the legal system.  
20 So, for me, this is an ongoing thing.

21 This isn't something we take up because we  
22 happen to have somebody in the White House who  
23 has lost sight of the Constitution and the rule  
24 of law. This is something we do every day in any  
25 way that we can.

1           We just happen to have had the privilege  
2 of serving on the most innovative revolutionary  
3 election incident or vote in California, so we  
4 have the privilege of being part of really making  
5 democracy happen in the electoral process, of  
6 engaging citizens, drawing more people into the  
7 process. And maybe those people will continue  
8 day to day to continue to fight the good fight  
9 wherever they may find it.

10           So, you know, for me, this is not  
11 declaring -- you know, declaring an emergency and  
12 now what do we do. This is every day we need to  
13 be doing something to make the system work. And  
14 today what we need to do is to protect the  
15 independence, the nonpartisanship of drawing  
16 lines so that parties can go out and campaign on  
17 their message and elect representatives that will  
18 actually serve the people.

19           SENATOR LIMON: So I will say, I agree  
20 with you. For me, this is about what we do every  
21 single day to protect our communities, to ensure,  
22 as you said, justice in education, justice in  
23 healthcare space, justice in the legal space.

24           And I will add that I think that we have  
25 met the conditions in this country for California

1 to take a stand and say what you are describing,  
2 that you have done every day and that we continue  
3 to do every day, those conditions have been met.  
4 And today is the day that we have to decide how  
5 we move forward because we have the shared goal  
6 of doing everything we can every day for  
7 Californians, for our community.

8           And this is certainly an important piece  
9 that I consider into my decision-making, into how  
10 I deliberate about the issue. And I think it's  
11 also, as I heard the testimony and support,  
12 opening up classes -- and thank goodness we still  
13 have a class in California on democracy -- and  
14 ensuring that we have health centers that  
15 continue to open and continue to serve the people  
16 of California.

17           I appreciate, again, the robust  
18 discussion. And my line of questioning and the  
19 process was simply to say that, for me, I will  
20 speak for myself, the conditions have been met  
21 for us to take action. And we have the same goal  
22 in mind, which is doing everything we can.

23           There is no expanding democracy if  
24 democracy falls apart and we don't do anything  
25 about it.

1           Again, unbelievable gratitude to all of  
2 you, all women panelists here. I know we may not  
3 all be on the same side of how we land on this  
4 particular vote, but I have utmost respect and  
5 recognition for the work that all of you do to  
6 protect our democracy. Thank you.

7           CHAIR CERVANTES: Thank you.

8           We will go to our next item, but before we  
9 do, I will allow Senator Cabaldon to close.

10           SENATOR CABALDON: Thank you so much,  
11 Madam Chair, Members of the Committee, and to all  
12 of the witnesses on both sides of the issue.

13           Commissioner Sadhwani at the beginning  
14 said that the point of in a democracy we -- and I  
15 love this quote -- that we take turns being  
16 humbled at the ballot box, that that is how  
17 democracy works. But what if you have the cheat  
18 code, and you could say, well, I'm not taking my  
19 turn.

20           That's what's at stake here today. And I  
21 think part of what we're trying to accomplish  
22 here is that democracy is not slowly eroding.  
23 People aren't accidentally absentmindedly doing  
24 bad things. It is a crisis.

25           And we're trying to assure that

1 Commissioner Sadhwani's course on American  
2 government and democracy doesn't get moved to the  
3 history department as something that we used to  
4 have, but it is the fundamental course that every  
5 undergraduate must have in order to be an  
6 American citizen.

7           So I know in my own district, the number  
8 one question, the number one question that people  
9 ask is, what can I do? Not what -- not what can  
10 the Senator do? What can I do about what is  
11 happening to our democracy, which is in crisis,  
12 which is threatened like it has never been  
13 threatened before?

14           That's what ACA 8 is about. It is about  
15 giving it to the voters of California. They can  
16 say yes, they can say no, but it will be their  
17 choice, their action to fight back.

18           We heard, and I absolutely agree, that  
19 California is seen as a model here. But looking  
20 to other states, for example, the Texas  
21 delegation, they have been here twice. They and  
22 their constituents have been very clear.

23           We cannot -- when authoritarianism goes so  
24 far as this, our most valiant efforts cannot  
25 prevail. We need -- America needs California to

1 stand up and to be not just a model of what the  
2 policy should be, but to model democracy and in  
3 action.

4           My own view is that the best thing we can  
5 do for independent redistricting, which is an  
6 important innovation that the voters of  
7 California has created, and our commissioners  
8 have taken and curated so superbly over the last  
9 two cycles, the best thing that we can do to  
10 preserve independent redistricting is to make  
11 sure that redistricting doesn't become -- does  
12 not become a tool of holding onto power, of  
13 avoiding the humbling at the ballot box. That's  
14 the only way forward here.

15           When the ballot petition was up in 2008 to  
16 create the Redistricting Commission and it passed  
17 with 50.8 percent of the vote, the Sacramento Bee  
18 and I think the Bay Area Garden were the two  
19 papers that editorialized against it.

20           And they said, this is a great idea, but  
21 our worry is that what happens with the other  
22 states when they gerrymander like crazy and we  
23 have allowed our ethical orientation to lead when  
24 they are using their most base partisan  
25 instincts? The voters very narrowly said that

1 might be a good point, but we're going to do it  
2 anyway.

3 Well, it turns out they were right this  
4 year. They were wrong about the overall issue,  
5 but they were right this year. And the way to  
6 preserve redistricting in the future is to make  
7 sure that that doesn't become the case.

8 If California -- if a year from now or a  
9 month from now or if a week from now, if your  
10 cousin is kidnapped off the street, if UCLA  
11 closes down, if we announce that there won't be  
12 an election, if the census that we're relying on  
13 for the Commission's next stab at redistricting  
14 doesn't include 1.5 million Californians in it,  
15 if we have no democracy left and we look back and  
16 said, if only we could have done something, well,  
17 the nice thing about this is that we are in a  
18 time machine. We can do something.

19 We know what is coming because it's in  
20 Project 2025. It's been implemented in every way  
21 and most in the most base way possible. We must  
22 take action if we're going to save not just  
23 democracy, but the Commission itself in  
24 independent redistricting.

25 I know as a former city council member, we

1 would often fall into this what I think is a  
2 little bit of a trap. We would think, why would  
3 we want to put something on the ballot? The  
4 voters elected us to be the democracy. And we've  
5 heard that today, that the most democratic thing  
6 would be not to ask the voters, but to ask 14  
7 people on the Commission to have some hearings  
8 and they decide what the map should be based on  
9 testimony.

10 Well, far better than the testimony will  
11 be the votes of 40 million Californians and  
12 through a vigorous debate over the next several  
13 weeks and months leading up to that election.  
14 That is what democracy is in action.

15 I want just a couple of the smaller  
16 points. I want to emphasize the question that  
17 has been raised by the Vice Chair of the  
18 Committee about midcycle redistricting.

19 Since 1980, the Republican caucuses and  
20 the California Republican Party have submitted  
21 not one but more than 30 ballot measures to go to  
22 the people of California for constitutional  
23 amendments midcycle about redistricting. More  
24 than 30 times they've submitted ballot measures  
25 midcycle to the Secretary of State to amend the

1 Constitution for redistricting.

2           So there's no high ground here that it  
3 should only be every 10 years. This is all --  
4 redistricting has always been an issue before the  
5 public because they know that redistricting is  
6 essential to protecting our democracy.

7           Then, last, I want to emphasize what the  
8 Chair said, which is that the very first  
9 provision of this -- of ACA 8, this  
10 constitutional amendment, does what I think all  
11 of us agree. It calls upon the Congress to do  
12 its job and propose to the states a  
13 constitutional amendment, an amendment to the  
14 United States Constitution that does exactly what  
15 our Commission colleagues have said, which is  
16 redistricting nationwide in every state should be  
17 fair. It should be based on Committees  
18 (unintelligible) data and should not be partisan.  
19 That is the only way forward.

20           And this Constitutional amendment will ask  
21 Congress to do that. That is the test that we  
22 should be asking, not just of ourselves, not just  
23 by reputation and by intention, but be insisting  
24 that Texas, Florida, Ohio, every state in the  
25 nation plays fair, doesn't seek to cheat to win

1 elections, and that we preserve our democracy  
2 forever.

3 Madam Chair, Members of the Committee,  
4 thank you so much for the opportunity to present  
5 today.

6 CHAIR CERVANTES: Thank you, Senator  
7 Cabaldon, and thank you to each of you who  
8 participated today and all those in the hearing  
9 room as well.

10 We will move to the next item on file,  
11 which is SB280, that I will be speaking on.

12 And we will turn it to our Vice Chair.

13 The witnesses can stay. I believe we  
14 still -- yes.

15 Vice Chair Choi, I will turn it to you.

16 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. Thank you, Chair.  
17 Now, Chair is going to present next SB 280, and I  
18 will be presiding over.

19 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: Right now.

20 CHAIR CERVANTES: Okay.

21 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. This will be,  
22 again, hearing only, so -- okay.

23 Senator Cervantes, when you're ready.

24 CHAIR CERVANTES: Thank you, Mr. Vice  
25 Chair and Committee Members.

1           Today I'm proud to present Senate Bill  
2 280, which calls for a statewide special election  
3 on November 4th of this year.

4           The special election would allow  
5 California voters to consider a constitutional  
6 amendment, ACA 8, which would allow this  
7 Legislature to engage in a one-time, mid-decade  
8 redistricting of our state's districts in the  
9 U.S. House of Representatives.

10           The Citizens Redistricting Commission  
11 would then be able to engage in its regularly  
12 scheduled independent redistricting process after  
13 the 2030 census.

14           SB 280 also appropriates the funding  
15 necessary for the Secretary of State and our  
16 county registrars to administer the special  
17 election.

18           The bill also makes the necessary  
19 statutory changes to allow the June 2026  
20 statewide primary election to be held on time.

21           California did not start this  
22 redistricting fight. This fight was brought to  
23 us.

24           We are here because President Trump and  
25 Republicans in Congress know that their agenda is

1 deeply unpopular. They see the writing on the  
2 wall. They know that mass deportation that uses  
3 secret police to kidnap people off the streets  
4 and into unmarked vehicles goes against every  
5 American value.

6           They know that voters will hold them  
7 accountable for the spending cuts they jammed  
8 through Congress, stripping healthcare away from  
9 millions of Americans. They know that giving tax  
10 cuts to billionaires, while Trump imposes tariff  
11 taxes on essential goods like coffee and bananas,  
12 are raising the cost of living that will hurt  
13 working families.

14           What Trump knows is that the only path for  
15 Republicans to hold onto the House in the  
16 midterms is to change the rules in the middle of  
17 the game.

18           That is why in Texas and in other red  
19 states, Republican legislators are preparing to  
20 redraw their congressional map so that Republican  
21 politicians get to choose their voters instead of  
22 letting voters choose their representatives.

23           They want to silence the voices of Latino  
24 voters, Black voters, API voters, LGBTQ voters,  
25 and essentially, Trump wants to change again the

1 rules of the game in the fifth inning so that  
2 Republicans get four strikes and Democrats only  
3 get three.

4 Their goal is simple, to rig congressional  
5 maps in Republican states across the country to  
6 make it impossible for Democrats to retake  
7 control of the House of Representatives in 2026.

8 California cannot stand by while Donald  
9 Trump dismantles our democracy piece by piece.  
10 We will not let him determine the outcome of  
11 future elections years in advance before any  
12 votes are cast to prop up his authoritarian  
13 presidency.

14 And if you doubt that Trump is trying to  
15 become a dictator, remember that he sent armed  
16 federal agents to harass the peaceful press  
17 conference that we held last week with Governor  
18 Newsom in Los Angeles.

19 The truth of the matter is, if we let  
20 Donald Trump get away with rigging elections  
21 through gerrymandering, we will not have free or  
22 fair elections in the United States in the  
23 future. If Donald Trump pursues this partisan  
24 power grab, then California is ready to respond.

25 But let me be clear, only -- our plan will

1 only go into effect if Texas and other red states  
2 move forward. If Trump does the right thing and  
3 gives up on redrawing congressional maps in  
4 Republican states' red held seats, California's  
5 current districts will remain in place. Nothing  
6 changes.

7 And ultimately, this is our preferred  
8 outcome because we value California's Independent  
9 Redistricting Commission, as we all know, the  
10 gold standard in the country. And this crisis  
11 shows that we need to enact national  
12 redistricting commissions.

13 If every state followed California's  
14 example and adopted independent redistricting  
15 commissions, or if Congress required their  
16 creation, then we wouldn't even be facing this  
17 crisis today. Gerrymandering would be a thing of  
18 the past.

19 Finally, I want to address the  
20 Republicans, Members of Congress from California,  
21 you can all stop this from happening today. The  
22 power is in your hands. I appeal to your better  
23 angles. But if you refuse to listen to those  
24 angles, then I will rely on your ambition, your  
25 self-interest, and your desire to keep your House

1 seat and your paycheck.

2 You can ask President Trump to end this.  
3 You can tell him to call off these partisan  
4 gerrymanderings in Texas and in other states.  
5 But if he decides to move forward with his plan  
6 to steal Democratic seats, then Californians will  
7 be the firewall. We have defended  
8 authoritarians before and will do so once again,  
9 but with the power of our votes.

10 Today we have two individuals here to  
11 testify in support, Jodi Hicks, CEO of Planned  
12 Parenthood Affiliates of California, and  
13 Professor Sara Sadhwani, a member of the  
14 California Citizens Redistricting Commission.

15 MS. HICKS: Thank you. Thank you, Chair  
16 and Members.

17 And I am Jodi Hicks with Planned  
18 Parenthood Affiliates of California, representing  
19 all seven affiliates and over 100 health centers  
20 throughout the state, in strong support of this  
21 measure.

22 I think this Committee has heard a lot  
23 about the importance of the Commission.  
24 California is a model.

25 I am here to talk about the impact of

1 what's happening in California on the ground.  
2 I'm representing Planned Parenthood. I can talk  
3 about healthcare. But we've seen what's happened  
4 in our -- with education, with ICE raids that --  
5 I was also at that press conference where ICE  
6 raids were happening on the street, including  
7 arrests.

8 California is a model with our Commission.  
9 I'm not here to be an expert. I know there's  
10 other witnesses are. But California is also a  
11 model when it comes to our values. We are a  
12 model with diversity and our values around  
13 diversity, around inclusivity. Certainly, as a  
14 state that values reproductive freedom, that  
15 values access to healthcare.

16 This administration and this Congress  
17 continues to put economic sanctions, policies  
18 that disproportionately impact California,  
19 disproportionately impact our patients, people  
20 going to school, people trying to go to work.  
21 That is a fact.

22 And when people voted on this independent  
23 Commission, they voted on it without the facts of  
24 what's happening today, which is knowing that  
25 they have an opportunity in the midterm elections

1 to respond to what just happened with almost a  
2 million patients in Planned Parenthood alone that  
3 just got defunded trying to close down health  
4 centers throughout the State of California.

5 I heard a speaker earlier say, if only  
6 Texas could learn from California. If only Texas  
7 could learn from California. You can see the  
8 data on what's happening with their healthcare  
9 there in that state. Women have died. Women  
10 have died.

11 And those policies are now being imported  
12 into a state like California without an ability  
13 to fight back because they're rigging the  
14 elections right now and trying to change the  
15 rules.

16 And so, yes, California is a model, and  
17 we're also a model in fighting back and standing  
18 up for Californians when we have to. And that's  
19 what this measure does.

20 I implore you to vote yes and do what we  
21 have to do so that California does not become a  
22 state like Texas. So that we all stand up for  
23 the values that we all know is important, that we  
24 all know, that all of California agrees upon  
25 every single time they go to the ballot box.

1 Every single time they've had an opportunity to  
2 fight back and to vote on protecting reproductive  
3 freedom, they have done that in droves.

4 And this measure will go to the voters.  
5 Again, different than what's happening in Texas.  
6 And I implore you to vote yes. Thank you.

7 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Thank you.

8 Next witness. You have three minutes.

9 MS. SADHWANI: Thank you so much. There  
10 we go.

11 Again, my name is Sara Sadhwani. I'm a  
12 professor of political science. And as  
13 Commissioner on the California Citizens  
14 Redistricting Commission, I'm so overjoyed to  
15 hear all of the support for the independent  
16 redistricting process. I didn't always hear that  
17 level of support while the process was moving  
18 forward. So it's really warming my heart to hear  
19 broad support. And I hope that that continues as  
20 I see that it does continue in this measure being  
21 moved forward today.

22 Serving on the Commission was one of the  
23 highlights of my career thus far. I worked with  
24 some of the finest Californians coming from all  
25 different walks of life. Five independent,

1 five -- excuse me, five Democrats, five  
2 Republicans and four independents, we came  
3 together. We worked collaboratively. We  
4 received nearly 40,000 pieces of community  
5 testimony. We agreed to disagree in many parts  
6 of the state, as you no doubt have seen in the  
7 maps that we have here in California.

8 But at the end of the day, we did what  
9 many politicians have not often been able to do,  
10 we passed our maps unanimously on a very diverse  
11 body of individuals. And I couldn't be more  
12 proud of that.

13 We have received zero lawsuits against our  
14 maps. This is the kind of redistricting that we  
15 need to have nationwide.

16 It brings me no joy to see these maps  
17 being tossed aside. As I spoke earlier in my  
18 testimony, I have very real concerns about the  
19 state of our national democracy.

20 I think in my prior comments I talked  
21 about our Federalist system. But I think Senator  
22 Umberg's comments, of course, around checks and  
23 balances within the branches of government is  
24 absolutely direct and to the point. And I  
25 certainly agree with that as well.

1           That we have seen Republicans in Congress  
2 fail to stand up to the executive overreaches of  
3 power. We have seen the use of political  
4 violence and the encouragement of political  
5 violence. We've most certainly seen intimidation  
6 tactics and the deployment of the National Guard  
7 turning many of our cities across this nation  
8 into police states.

9           These are not actions that are consistent  
10 with a strong democracy. Quite the opposite.  
11 They are actions that reflect a democracy in  
12 peril. And so it's for this reason that I do  
13 feel like California needs to stand up in these  
14 times. We need to take strong, bold and concise  
15 action to be the check on Executive power because  
16 we're not seeing it anywhere else.

17           I'll leave my comments there. Happy to  
18 take questions. Thank you so much for having me  
19 here today.

20           VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. No other support  
21 witnesses.

22           I would like to ask the public in support  
23 of the measure, you can come up and state your  
24 name and just your position. Support or oppose.

25           MS. FLOCKS: Mr. Vice Chair, Members, Sara

1 Flocks, California Federation of Labor Unions, in  
2 strong support. Thank you.

3 MS. HEIDELBACH: Good morning. Kristin  
4 Heidelberg, here on behalf of UFCW Western States  
5 Council, in strong support.

6 MS. HINES-SHAIKH: Honorable Chair and  
7 Members, Amy Hines-Shaikh with UDW AFSCME Local  
8 3930 and UNITE HERE! Local 11 in strong support.  
9 Thank you.

10 MS. MOK: Honorable Chair and Member,  
11 Tiffany Mok in support of the bill on behalf of  
12 CFT, a union of educators and classified  
13 professionals, and also adding a support for the  
14 California Teachers Association. Thank you.

15 MS. GONZALEZ: Hello. Genesis Gonzalez on  
16 behalf of Lieutenant Governor, Eleni Kounalakis,  
17 in support. Thank you.

18 MR. BRENNAND: Mr. Chair and Members,  
19 Terry Brennand on behalf of SEIU California, in  
20 strong support of this and the entire  
21 redistricting package. Thank you.

22 MR. SCHOORL: Hi, Chair and Members.  
23 Daniel Schoorl on behalf of SEIU Local 1000 state  
24 workers, in strong support. Thank you.

25 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay.

1 MS. NIELSEN: Hi. Julie Nielsen with the  
2 National Union of Healthcare Workers, in support.

3 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Anymore?

4 Okay. Then we'll move on to opposition  
5 main witnesses. Each person will have three  
6 minutes. No, no.

7 Ms. Robinson, would you like to say in  
8 opposition?

9 MS. ROBINSON: I think that our position as  
10 former commissioners stands clear. We hope that,  
11 if this moves forward, that you, as our  
12 representatives, will put more transparency and  
13 public participation safeguards in place, even in  
14 light of the extraordinary circumstances that we  
15 all agree must be addressed.

16 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay.

17 Any other? Any other in the public in  
18 opposition? You can come forward and state your  
19 name and state your position.

20 Okay. I don't see anyone.

21 Then I will bring back to our Members on  
22 the dais. You can ask any questions.

23 No? Okay.

24 Senator Umberg.

25 SENATOR UMBERG: Thank you. Thank you,

1 Mr. Chair.

2 And thank you, Ms. Robinson. I know  
3 you're in a difficult position here, in essence  
4 asking us to vote no on what we believe, at least  
5 I believe, is a response to what the President is  
6 doing around the country.

7 I think that Senator Limon asked the  
8 critical question here. The critical question  
9 is, what conditions exist -- what conditions  
10 exist where we stand up and we do something that  
11 is extraordinary? And this is extraordinary. I  
12 think this is incredibly extraordinary.

13 I 20 years ago had my own when Governor  
14 Schwarzenegger proposed a redistricting  
15 commission that was comprised of retired judges,  
16 who volunteered for a year, which I thought was  
17 rather a skewed universe of those who should be  
18 the decision-makers. I had my own proposal,  
19 which was rejected both by my caucus, as well as  
20 by the Governor.

21 And so I am a strong proponent of exactly  
22 what we're doing here. I'm a strong proponent of  
23 citizens coming forward who have the same  
24 commitment to public service that you have to  
25 serve in this fairly thankless job.

1           And the conditions that exist, I think,  
2           are only those where there are massed federal  
3           agents picking up citizens or those who have not  
4           committed any crime and incarcerating them. I  
5           think those conditions exist when this  
6           administration has targeted our children here in  
7           California. Targeted them to reduce their  
8           healthcare. Targeted them to, in essence, reduce  
9           after-school care, even their 9:00-to-5:00  
10          education. Targeted our institutions here in  
11          California to -- in my view, to diminish if not  
12          destroy us as a state.

13           So when those conditions exist that we  
14          have to within -- again, within the bounds of the  
15          law, we have to respond. And this is an  
16          extraordinary response, but this is a response  
17          that we hope will dissuade other states from  
18          moving forward.

19           We wouldn't be in this position if other  
20          states, we wouldn't be in this position if the  
21          President of the United States wasn't using his  
22          extraordinary power and influence, which seems to  
23          be plenary, to change the dynamic.

24           And so I appreciate your testimony. I  
25          appreciate the awkward position you're in. But

1 these conditions have been met, at least for me.

2 So thank you, Mr. Chair.

3 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. Thank you.

4 Any other?

5 Okay. Seeing none, let me just ask a few  
6 questions and make some comments.

7 I'm so disappointed. Why? Presenter and  
8 also Committee Members and the witnesses, we are  
9 making this Committee meeting as a forum for  
10 attacking federal government and the President  
11 and other states' action.

12 We should be focusing on our matter, what  
13 is good for our state. We should administer and  
14 oppose any actions that we don't -- we don't  
15 believe that is the right action, then we should  
16 oppose.

17 And let me ask anyone, author or  
18 witnesses, opposing witnesses, support witnesses,  
19 does anyone can answer if political  
20 gerrymandering good or bad? Is it good or bad?

21 MS. ROBINSON: I mean, I think it depends  
22 whose interests you are advancing as a citizen.  
23 I'm not an elected official, so my answer to that  
24 might be different than yours.

25 As a voter, as a citizen, I want to pick

1 my representatives. I do not want my  
2 representatives to pick me. And the partisan  
3 gerrymandering and the perpetuation of it  
4 continues to get us into a race to the bottom  
5 that we've seen over recent years, and that will  
6 only continue with the route that we are going.  
7 Which is why the voters have a different model.

8 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Your sense it has a  
9 connotation of a negative connotation? Nobody  
10 likes to hear the election was a rigged because  
11 of the gerrymandering and the political  
12 gerrymandering by majority party, or whoever the  
13 party in power.

14 They want to draw to their own advantage,  
15 and that's the reason nobody wants to have that  
16 kind of gerrymandering to take place. That's the  
17 reason we elected to have our Independent  
18 Redistricting Commission.

19 And whether we support or not, that is our  
20 system we have set up, and was so glad to hear  
21 that the 2020 redistricting was unanimously voted  
22 by bipartisan way. I mean, that is a democracy.

23 So my understanding of this very map  
24 drawing was done -- okay. Let me ask that  
25 question. Who did that drawing of the map

1 supposedly on the website? Does anybody know?

2 CHAIR CERVANTES: This bill does not  
3 pertain to the map. This is the calling of the  
4 election.

5 VICE CHAIR CHOI: I know this is -- but  
6 just like you are saying, this is germane to the  
7 SB 280. But everybody went outside attacking the  
8 present administration, President and the current  
9 administration. So that is very well related, so  
10 that's the reason I'm asking that question.

11 So this bill, SB 280, is administering to  
12 allow that ACA to be on the ballot measure and  
13 properly that this bill will pass, and then  
14 allowing State Secretary to execute the election.  
15 So that's the whole process we are doing. But  
16 there's a lot of things related.

17 And let me ask a specific other question.  
18 How much time do counties normally have to  
19 prepare for an election, and how does the  
20 timeline proposed for this election compare? I  
21 would like to address that to the author.

22 CHAIR CERVANTES: There are many statutory  
23 changes that you can find in the Committee  
24 analysis that address what we needed to make  
25 happen based off of the conversations with the

1 Secretary of State and those are all outlined in  
2 pages 3 through 7.

3 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay.

4 Next question. So we are reducing the  
5 time the voters have to decide whether they want  
6 to amend to do this.

7 Is there concern that you are depriving  
8 the voters of adequate time to educate themselves  
9 on their major constitutional issues?

10 CHAIR CERVANTES: Again, the bill before  
11 us today is making sure we make the statutory  
12 changes to call for a special election on  
13 November 4th, and to ensure that there is a June  
14 primary.

15 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. Now, will the  
16 maps be on the actually -- will be physically on  
17 the ballot?

18 CHAIR CERVANTES: Again, that is a  
19 question you can ask the relevant author of the  
20 next item on file.

21 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Because if that is not  
22 visibly physically available for all those who  
23 will be voting on and if you refer to online,  
24 there are so many people who would not have any  
25 online access, no wi-fi. And that's what I hear,

1 that in remote areas, countryside, rural areas  
2 will not have access to internet.

3 So how are we going to compensate that --  
4 the lack of knowledge people will be asked to  
5 vote on?

6 CHAIR CERVANTES: Again, there has been a  
7 public portal for voters to look at for a number  
8 of days now. They'll have several months, two-  
9 and-a-half months before the election to take a  
10 very thorough review on what they will make a  
11 decision on on November 4th.

12 VICE CHAIR CHOI: The election portal that  
13 I mentioned, that not everybody -- I hear many,  
14 many times that the --

15 CHAIR CERVANTES: Vice Chair, there will  
16 also be a voter guide that goes out to every  
17 single voter in the state.

18 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Will that the voter  
19 guide have all the maps and the entire district,  
20 congressional district, 52 maps will be on the  
21 ballot voter guide?

22 CHAIR CERVANTES: The voter guide will  
23 have all the information as it pertains to the  
24 election.

25 VICE CHAIR CHOI: No. I'm asking the

1 maps.

2 CHAIR CERVANTES: Again, the voter guide  
3 will have all the information as it pertains to  
4 the election so a voter can make a very thorough  
5 decision November 4th.

6 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay.

7 CHAIR CERVANTES: Educated decision on  
8 November 4th.

9 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. Now --

10 CHAIR CERVANTES: It will have the  
11 detailed information on the maps that we are  
12 discussing and what will be up for discussion on  
13 the next file item.

14 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. Let me ask next  
15 question. The special election is estimated to  
16 cost the taxpayers upward of quarter billion  
17 dollars. With the state facing \$12 billion  
18 deficit, there is money -- where is the money  
19 going to come from to pay for this?

20 CHAIR CERVANTES: The election is going to  
21 cost as much as a new ballroom that Trump is  
22 proposing in the White House. That is  
23 \$200 million, approximately, that will be given  
24 to the Secretary of State and the county  
25 registrars to administer the election.

1 VICE CHAIR CHOI: So that is a good idea  
2 in the mid-decade special election when we face  
3 that kind of \$12 billion in the General Fund,  
4 quarter billion dollars will be spent for this,  
5 to me, unnecessary election?

6 CHAIR CERVANTES: Again, \$200 million we  
7 believe is a drop in the bucket in comparison to  
8 the federal funding that we would get back that  
9 we are losing today; 5 to \$10 billion in federal  
10 funding that we are losing in California.

11 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. And there will be  
12 quarter billion dollars -- to my data that I got  
13 was \$250 million. That's a quarter billion  
14 dollar, B -- with a B, billion dollar deficit,  
15 the expenses.

16 But if that quarter billion dollars will  
17 come from General Fund, that's what -- General  
18 Fund I read the cost will come from. When we  
19 unexpectedly use that amount of large sums of  
20 money, what programs do you plan to cut down that  
21 originally planned for?

22 CHAIR CERVANTES: Again, this bill is  
23 addressing the call of the election, the  
24 statutory changes that need to be made in order  
25 to have the election on November 4th and the

1 funding for that election.

2 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. I think we need  
3 to address all that preparations with the  
4 unexpected expenditure. What can we impact in  
5 General Fund exercising and how that will impact  
6 the state operations to me.

7 My last question is that, as you might  
8 have seen some polls, this redistricting idea is  
9 very unpopular. There's no guarantee just  
10 because you place it on the ballot measure it  
11 will pass.

12 To my -- some data that I heard was about  
13 68 percent of people oppose it. And that this  
14 franchise Democratic party, ruling party, are  
15 forcing this.

16 Just as in the beginning I asked how you  
17 view as political gerrymandering is a good idea,  
18 bad idea. General connotation I mentioned that  
19 the general people don't like that kind of idea.

20 So when you place that in the general  
21 election, there's a special election, there's no  
22 guarantee it will pass. There may be a  
23 retaliatory reaction that -- are you prepared,  
24 the Democrats, to accept that? You may lose more  
25 seats instead of gaining. You need to think

1 about it.

2 Okay. I will stop here and you may close  
3 your statement.

4 CHAIR CERVANTES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5 I do want to make a clarifying statement  
6 that there will be visual depictions of the maps  
7 created by AB 604 and will be on the voter guide.

8 In my closing, the bill before you today,  
9 SB 280, this is a response, a direct response to  
10 Trump's election rigging scheme, and this is an  
11 emergency for our democracy.

12 This bill today holds an election to give  
13 California voters a voice, to give California  
14 voters a voice that Texas Republicans are denying  
15 Texans.

16 Let's let California voters have a say at  
17 the ballot box. And SB 280 will call for the  
18 election and the administration of that election.  
19 And I respectfully ask for an aye vote.

20 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. As far as I know,  
21 that is not the vote today. That is --

22 CHAIR CERVANTES: I will ask for your  
23 support as it gets out --

24 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Yeah.

25 CHAIR CERVANTES: -- and onto the floor,

1 respectfully.

2 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Yeah. So far two bills  
3 we heard was for hearing purposes only. Next  
4 bill is going to be what the voted on after  
5 hearing, so that is AB 604.

6 Are you going to present that 604 or  
7 somebody else?

8 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

9 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. Chair will take  
10 over now.

11 CHAIR CERVANTES: Thank you. We will now  
12 adjourn the informational hearing and we will  
13 move on to the next file item, AB 604.

14 Committee Secretary, if we could establish  
15 a quorum, please call the roll.

16 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Senator Cervantes?

17 CHAIR CERVANTES: Here.

18 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Cervantes here.

19 Choi?

20 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Here.

21 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Choi here.

22 Allen?

23 SENATOR ALLEN: Here.

24 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen here.

25 Limon?

1 SENATOR LIMON: Here.

2 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Limon here.

3 Umberg?

4 SENATOR UMBERG: Here.

5 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Umberg here.

6 CHAIR CERVANTES: The Secretary notes a  
7 quorum has been established.

8 We have Assembly Member Aguiar-Curry, our  
9 Majority Leader, here with us, as well as Senator  
10 Gonzalez, our Majority Leader in the Senate.

11 You may begin.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: Good  
13 morning. Thank you for having us. Thank you,  
14 Madam Chair and Senators.

15 Let's not dance around the issue here. If  
16 California Democrats had our way, the midterms  
17 would continue as they are, with a map drawn by  
18 the state's independent California Citizens  
19 Redistricting Commission. But that's not good  
20 enough for this President or the Republicans  
21 following his commands in Texas and D.C.

22 We weren't planning on redistricting until  
23 they made attempts to rig the 2026 election by  
24 stacking the deck in other states. We did not  
25 start this, but we won't roll over.

1           This bill lays out the new Congressional  
2 districts only if voters pass ACA 8. If voters  
3 approve the new map, the Independent  
4 Redistricting Commission will continue its  
5 mission after the 2030 census.

6           If California voters approve the plan, the  
7 temporary maps only happen if D.C. Republicans  
8 and the Republican-led states push through mid-  
9 decade partisan maps first.

10           Unlike Texas, which is forcing maps on  
11 their voters, we are asking ours for an approval.  
12 There is nothing more Democratic than letting the  
13 California voters decide.

14           Unlike the map proposed in Texas, the map  
15 in AB 604 respects California's constitutional  
16 requirement for maintaining communities of  
17 interest. With this bill, there is less breakup  
18 of our local jurisdictions.

19           With this bill, we seek the public's  
20 input. The voters will decide.

21           So if our Republican colleagues in  
22 California want to stop this, they don't need us  
23 to do it. They can convince their Republican  
24 colleagues in Texas and D.C. to stop trying to  
25 rig the 2026 elections and these shenanigans.

1           And they can ask Congressional Republicans  
2 to pass the Republican proposal to make midterm  
3 redistricting illegal. To finally create a  
4 system where every state uses a fair, independent  
5 districting system.

6           Again, colleagues, their choice is to  
7 stand down or support a fair system in every  
8 state. That's how this ends.

9           Until the President and his followers stop  
10 trying to rig elections, we won't and can't sit  
11 on our hands. What happens next year is up to  
12 the President, it's up to the national  
13 Republicans and it's up to California voters.

14           So with me today to testify is Senate  
15 Majority Leader Lena Gonzalez. And speaking in  
16 support with me today will be Terry Brennand from  
17 SEIU and Tom Willis with Olson Remco to answer  
18 technical questions. Thank you.

19           SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam Chair  
20 and Members. As has been mentioned by Assembly  
21 Majority Leader, I'm here in partnership with her  
22 to AB 604. It represents a reasonable and  
23 rational response to the anti-democratic actions  
24 of the federal administration.

25           As has been mentioned, Californians and

1 all Americans are facing the endless cycle of  
2 worry under this reckless federal administration.  
3 Families have been separated. Immigrant  
4 communities have been literally traumatized.  
5 SNAP benefits for families taken away. Medicare  
6 at -- over nearly 4 million Californians will be  
7 potentially kicked off of Medicare. K through 12  
8 funding has been threatened. One billion dollars  
9 away from the UC system. The list goes on and on  
10 and on.

11 So if we're asking about urgency, that is  
12 the urgency as to why we need to do this and move  
13 this today.

14 And unlike in Texas, where Republican  
15 legislators are literally on a lockdown and the  
16 Governor is moving unilaterally on an  
17 undemocratic and partisan effort, here in  
18 California, we want to ensure, as has been  
19 mentioned by the Assembly Majority Leader, that  
20 California voters have the final word at the  
21 ballot box.

22 And I'm beyond saddened to see what is  
23 happening, as many of you have. And whether  
24 you're Republican or Democrat, you should be  
25 saddened to see Texas legislators that are being

1 locked -- you know, essentially locked up and  
2 being asked for a requirement to be followed by  
3 law enforcement to basically dismantle their  
4 communities and disrupt the Voting Rights Act.

5 This is how we fight back in California,  
6 though. We want to protect our democracy. And  
7 again, regardless of where you live, regardless  
8 of what party affiliation you pledge allegiance  
9 to, we want to restore democracy.

10 Here to testify in support of the bill, we  
11 have Tom Willis, an attorney at Olson Remco, and  
12 of course Terry Brennand with SEIU.

13 And I'm very proud to stand alongside my  
14 colleagues here today.

15 CHAIR CERVANTES: You may proceed. You  
16 have three minutes.

17 MR. BRENNAND: Madam Chair and Senators,  
18 Terry Brennand on behalf of Service Employees  
19 International Union, California.

20 SEIU Locals in California are made up of  
21 workers in the frontline, central roles across  
22 the state, including nurses, healthcare workers,  
23 janitors, social workers, security officers, in-  
24 home caregivers, school and university employees,  
25 court workers, airport workers, city, county,

1 state employees, all of whom are a target of this  
2 administration, the federal government.

3           On behalf of the more than 750,000 workers  
4 and 17 local unions, we're in strong support of  
5 this bill and the entire redistricting package.  
6 It represents a sensible and, in fact,  
7 potentially the only path for California to fight  
8 back against Trump's attempts to steal the next  
9 election.

10           As has been stated already, the bill only  
11 goes into effect if Trump and MAGA continue  
12 with -- are successful with their efforts in  
13 redistricting in other states. It will not  
14 happen if those are ended.

15           While SEIU wouldn't have chosen this path  
16 had the other states not acted to redistrict in  
17 the midterm. We are proud that California is  
18 responding. This isn't -- we are not just going  
19 to sit here and let Texas and Trump manipulate  
20 our democracy.

21           Unlike Texas, which obliterated their  
22 current congressional district in drafting their  
23 maps, California reinforces their commitment to  
24 our democracy and the vote for every California.

25           The maps proposed in Assembly Bill 604

1 build upon the work of the Redistricting  
2 Commission and keep the majority of districts  
3 established by the Commission intact.

4 The plan you will get to vote on and the  
5 voters will get to vote on in November was  
6 created using the traditional redistricting  
7 criteria consistent with the State Commission  
8 criteria and the Fair Maps Act, but with the  
9 additional criteria of improving partisan gains  
10 in response to the Texas and other states  
11 conducting mid-decade redistricting.

12 Using objective metrics, the districts  
13 maintain and even in some cases improve district  
14 compactness compared to the existing Commission  
15 maps. For people who are concerned about  
16 splitting up cities, it should be noted that the  
17 AB 604 maps split fewer cities than the  
18 Commission maps.

19 In contrast, Texan Republicans maximize  
20 their gains. They split 142 cities, more than  
21 double the number of cities compared to in the  
22 California map.

23 Not only does the California redistricting  
24 plan better represent the people of California,  
25 but the California plan leaves nine districts

1 untouched, 20 districts with fewer than  
2 10 percent of the residents impacted. This is in  
3 great contrast to Texas, which redrew all but one  
4 of their districts.

5 SEIU members and our communities have  
6 worked too hard to protect and strengthen  
7 democracy to stand by while President Trump  
8 attempts to silence our voice. We're ready to  
9 move forward, and stand by our authors of the  
10 entire redistricting package, legislative  
11 leaders, our Governor, and together we want to  
12 take this fight to Californians because they  
13 deserve to fight back if the Texas trigger is  
14 pulled.

15 Californians will get a chance to vote on  
16 our future, and every American's voice and their  
17 vote will be at stake. For these reasons, we ask  
18 you to vote aye on AB 604 and the entire  
19 redistricting package.

20 Thank you, Madam Chair.

21 CHAIR CERVANTES: Please proceed.

22 MR. WILLIS: Good morning. Tom Willis  
23 with Olson Remcho, and I've been involved in  
24 redistricting efforts for several decades now. I  
25 just have a couple of points that other speakers

1 have raised.

2 The importance of AB 604 is that the  
3 voters get to decide. These maps will be before  
4 the voters for 74 days if the election is called  
5 on November 4th. And the maps will be widely  
6 disseminated publicly.

7 And as some speakers have already  
8 mentioned, the SB 280 bill specifically requires  
9 the voter pamphlet to contain information about  
10 these maps.

11 So whereas in Texas it was a partisan  
12 redistricting that was not public, this is going  
13 to be a very public process, with the voters  
14 deciding ultimately, and the voters having these  
15 maps before them for 74 days.

16 Thank you. I'm happy to answer any  
17 technical questions you may have.

18 CHAIR CERVANTES: Thank you.

19 We will now bring up -- if we could have  
20 folks state their position, step up to the  
21 microphone support witnesses. Name, affiliation,  
22 position.

23 MS. GONZALEZ: Hello. Genesis Gonzalez on  
24 behalf of Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kunalakis in  
25 support. Thank you.

1 MS. PONTUS: Angela Pontus on behalf of  
2 Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California in  
3 support.

4 MS. HEIDELBACH: Kristen Heidelberg on  
5 behalf of UFCW Western States Council in strong  
6 support.

7 MS. FLOCKS: Sarah Flocks, California  
8 Federation of Labor Unions, in strong support.

9 MS. HINES-SHAIKH: Honorable Chair and  
10 Members, Amy Hines-Shaikh with UDW AFSCME Local  
11 3930 and UNITE HERE! Local 11 in strong support.  
12 Thank you.

13 MR. SCHOORL: Chair and Members, Daniel  
14 Schoorl on behalf of SEIU Local 1000 State  
15 Workers in strong support. Thank you.

16 MS. NIELSEN: Julie Nielsen on behalf of  
17 the National Union of Healthcare Workers in  
18 support. Thank you.

19 MS. MOK: Honorable chair and Members,  
20 Tiffany Mok on behalf of CFT, a union of  
21 educators and classified professionals, and also  
22 on behalf of CTA in support. Thank you.

23 CHAIR CERVANTES: We will now move on to  
24 our lead witnesses in opposition.

25 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: Good.

1 CHAIR CERVANTES: Okay. Well, then why  
2 don't we ask for any other additional witnesses  
3 in opposition in the hearing room or outside the  
4 hearing room.

5 SENATOR GONZALEZ: I know. Okay. We  
6 scared him. Well, there's 235 pages.

7 CHAIR CERVANTES: Okay, seeing none, let's  
8 bring this back to the Committee Members for any  
9 questions, comments.

10 Vice Chair Choi.

11 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. That's all  
12 connected to previous hearing items. This AB 604  
13 is actually to implement how the election will  
14 take place.

15 So let me ask following questions to the  
16 author. What was the Legislature's process for  
17 drawing maps? Can you explain?

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: We're in  
19 the process right now of drawing the map. So we  
20 have examples that are out there right now, and  
21 we just got the information out to everyone  
22 yesterday. And so we have 74 days to follow up.

23 VICE CHAIR CHOI: I understand that these  
24 amendments that we voted on on the floor  
25 yesterday -- I dare to try to understand this. I

1 took them, but these are all thousands of  
2 thousands of precincts and numbers.

3 Which one will be drawn into certain  
4 precincts that will be drawn into the map with  
5 this kind of information? I cannot understand  
6 how this -- who decided all these precincts would  
7 be in there? Was there any legislators involved?

8 So if you can specify who exactly was  
9 involved making the amendments for this current  
10 district maps to the amended bills that we have  
11 voted on yesterday.

12 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yes, we will certainly  
13 turn it over to our witnesses. But these maps,  
14 just to be clear, as has been reiterated by the  
15 former author and the other authors, is that  
16 these maps are available online.

17 So even though there's 235 pages of census  
18 tracts and precincts, these maps have been  
19 available both on the Assembly website, as well  
20 as the Senate website will be available. There  
21 will be a link in the sample ballot once folks  
22 are able in California to vote on this and have  
23 more information on what their exact neighborhood  
24 looks like.

25 But I will also kick it to our witnesses

1 to talk about how the maps were developed. And  
2 obviously respecting what we do here in  
3 California is we respect the Voting Rights Act.

4 And we also, I will say, as has been  
5 mentioned by one of our witnesses, the maps are  
6 really an adjustment of the existing Citizens  
7 Redistricting Commission drawn maps. About 10 of  
8 them are not touched at all. Another 12 have  
9 less than 5 percent change. And over -- about  
10 80 percent of them will -- of people in  
11 California will actually have their same  
12 congressional district.

13 The map changes -- the maps change  
14 58 percent of districts by less than 20 percent,  
15 and 37 percent by less than 10 percent. So  
16 wanted to give that data to you.

17 This is not a dramatic overhaul. These  
18 are, you know, a bit of changes, but very much  
19 respecting the good work of the Redistricting  
20 Committee.

21 With that, I will kick it to our witnesses  
22 for additional comments.

23 CHAIR CERVANTES: And before I turn to our  
24 witnesses, I do want to state that there is a  
25 legal description of the maps on our Committee

1 website.

2 But I will turn to Mr. Willis.

3 MR. WILLIS: Sure. Thank you.

4 Yeah, these obviously are a long set of  
5 census blocks, but those do end up being in  
6 interactive maps that anyone, anyone in the  
7 public can review and look up their address and  
8 see where they are.

9 And that will be, again, public  
10 information that I'm sure will be discussed  
11 widely throughout the state for the next 78, 74  
12 days.

13 So while AB 604 is a long list of census  
14 blocks, both that raw information is available,  
15 but also the maps themselves, which are so  
16 important to the public, are available.

17 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. Then, with that,  
18 do you agree that we have not had as many  
19 hearings as were held by the Citizen Districting  
20 Commission?

21 MR. WILLIS: Well, I would say that the  
22 Citizens Redistricting Commission, as I  
23 understand it, their final map is only shown -- I  
24 mean, obviously we are supportive of the CRC and  
25 the Redistricting Commission and what they did

1 historically. But ultimately, their final map is  
2 only publicly available for 14 days, and this map  
3 will be publicly available for 74 days.

4 So, again, this is a map that the voters  
5 will be asked to review and approve, not the  
6 Legislature, not the CRC. It's the voters that  
7 will have the right to look at this map and  
8 decide for themselves.

9 VICE CHAIR CHOI: But you do agree that we  
10 have not followed the same requirements in  
11 drawing the lines as the Redistricting Commission  
12 was required to under the California  
13 Constitution?

14 In other words, we had lots of inputs from  
15 the public before the line was proposed, but this  
16 one is already drawn with very limited data.

17 MR. WILLIS: Well, again, voters will have  
18 70 -- they will have a long period of time to  
19 review those very, very carefully and determine  
20 how important that is.

21 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Election processes are  
22 not adjusting the district. Either you vote or  
23 either give the blessing or not. That's about  
24 what the voters will have a choice.

25 I'm talking about the process, how this

1 proposed map was presented.

2 MR. WILLIS: Well, I think some of the --  
3 I think some of the speakers have already spoken  
4 to that issue, which is that the map that you are  
5 seeing today is in large part based on the good  
6 work from the congressional redistricting. I  
7 mean, from the Redistricting Commission itself.

8 And if I -- I don't have the exact figure,  
9 but I think it's about 75, 76 percent of the  
10 population has not been moved to different  
11 districts. So, in other words, the bones and the  
12 architecture of what the Commission itself did is  
13 really the fundamental basis for this map.

14 VICE CHAIR CHOI: So that really leads to  
15 next question. California's population has  
16 significantly changed, even though you are  
17 stating that not much does here since the 2020  
18 census.

19 What is the demographic data on which the  
20 Legislature -- this particular map proposal was  
21 relying to draw the final maps that you have  
22 placed on the web?

23 MR. WILLIS: The same data as the  
24 Redistricting Commission.

25 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Redistricting, you know,

1 that was the 2020 data?

2 MR. WILLIS: Right. But that's what Texas  
3 is doing, too. Everyone has to rely on the 2020  
4 Census.

5 VICE CHAIR CHOI: So you did not use any  
6 more modified population shift or (inaudible)?

7 MR. WILLIS: No. It's the exact same data  
8 as the Redistricting Commission.

9 VICE CHAIR CHOI: I see. Then who were  
10 the main architect of this bill? Who got engaged  
11 in this proposed bill?

12 MR. WILLIS: Well, I can't speak for  
13 everyone. My understanding is that it was  
14 publicly submitted, and then the Legislature  
15 reviewed it carefully and made sure it was  
16 legally compliant, and that's what we have today.

17 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Was there any outside of  
18 the Legislature? Did you consult for input on  
19 this lines should be drawn?

20 MR. WILLIS: Well, like I said, I think a  
21 version of this pap was publicly submitted to the  
22 Legislature first. So to that extent, yes, there  
23 was.

24 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Outside?

25 MR. WILLIS: Yes.

1 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Who were they?

2 MR. WILLIS: I can't speak to that.

3 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Why not?

4 MR. WILLIS: I wasn't part of that  
5 process.

6 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Does anybody know that?

7 Also, a lot of union Members a while ago  
8 testified in support of that.

9 Will the union representatives play any  
10 role in this drawing lines?

11 MR. WILLIS: Again, I --

12 MR. BRENNAND: I'm happy to answer that.  
13 There was nobody from my union or anybody else  
14 who drafted the lines here or presented them to  
15 the Legislature.

16 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Okay. Did you hold any  
17 public hearings to allow broad public input  
18 before the line was drawn?

19 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Again, with respect,  
20 Senator Choi, you know, this is 80 -- nearly  
21 80 percent of these maps are based on the 2020  
22 data from the Redistricting Committee, so that  
23 has been absolutely respected. And so, you know,  
24 there's no other additional sort of work being  
25 done. This is 80 percent here from the Citizens

1 Redistricting Committee.

2           Again, I'm going to reiterate to you, the  
3 maps change about 58 percent of districts by less  
4 than 20 percent, 37 percent by less than  
5 10 percent. Eight districts will be identical to  
6 the lines drawn by the Citizens Redistricting  
7 Commission. Twenty-one districts are exactly the  
8 ideal district size, the same number as the  
9 Citizens Redistricting Commission.

10           So I would say a lot of the effort had  
11 already been done in 2020. We're aligning with  
12 the Texas Legislature doing the same exact thing.  
13 This is a reaction to essentially what we've been  
14 saying is a big statement of saving our democracy  
15 here.

16           So we -- you know, we just want to make  
17 sure that you're very clear here that this is,  
18 again, going to be aligned with the work of the  
19 Commission and going to be in print for 75, 78  
20 days. Residents will have the ability to look at  
21 the information when they're voting. There will  
22 be a link in the sample ballot.

23           There's currently two on the Assembly and  
24 the Senate side, two platforms that voters now  
25 can take a look at and check out the map. So

1 there's lots of opportunity, and as mentioned by  
2 Mr. Willis, even more time, I would say seven  
3 times the more time, for the ability for  
4 California voters to look at the map.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: So as we  
6 said before is that these maps were constructed  
7 considering all of the work done by the Citizens  
8 Commission, all of the public testimony, all of  
9 the requirements in the Constitution based on the  
10 2020 census.

11 CHAIR CERVANTES: If I may ask other  
12 Committee Members --

13 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Yeah, I have --

14 CHAIR CERVANTES: -- give them the  
15 opportunity --

16 VICE CHAIR CHOI: a couple of -- let me  
17 finish up on my side.

18 SENATOR GONZALEZ: And as you know, the  
19 Redistricting Committee is a bipartisan effort.

20 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Yeah.

21 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Not Republican,  
22 Democratic, no party preference Members who sit  
23 on the Commission as well.

24 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Obviously, the final map  
25 was proposed and the architect of the -- is the

1 majority ruling party.

2 Before the legislators were revealed  
3 yesterday, what amendments, what the lines were  
4 drawn, who else has seen this, agreeable on your  
5 side the map has seen? Who has seen those maps  
6 before it was presented to the Legislature?

7 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Again, this was put  
8 on -- put forward by -- you know, by the -- based  
9 on the Redistricting Commission, and again put  
10 out to the public. And so the -- each of the  
11 chairs of the Election Committee (inaudible).

12 VICE CHAIR CHOI: So are you saying the  
13 Redistricting Commission was involved in this?

14 CHAIR CERVANTES: If I may, Dr. Choi. So  
15 we are respecting the work of the CRC and so we  
16 are building upon the Commission's work, as was  
17 stated by Mr. Willis, using the input that has  
18 been recorded by them, using their process,  
19 including information about communities of  
20 interest. Have gone through much of the  
21 testimony. Over 76 percent of the maps, the  
22 people end up in the same district, as was  
23 mentioned by the author.

24 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Yeah. My essence of the  
25 question was that the finalized agreed-upon map,

1 who has --

2 CHAIR CERVANTES: That will be to the  
3 voters approval.

4 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Yeah. Who has seen  
5 before we did, legislators have seen yesterday.

6 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: Yesterday at  
7 8:00 a.m.

8 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yes, we've all seen it  
9 the same time. And this was put online, again,  
10 on the public platforms, both in the Assembly and  
11 the Senate. And, again, I will reiterate, you  
12 know California voters will have 75 days or so to  
13 be able to review these maps.

14 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Was the --

15 SENATOR GONZALEZ: It's a very transparent  
16 process opposed to our Texas, you know,  
17 colleagues.

18 VICE CHAIR CHOI: In drawing the lines, so  
19 were there any nongovernment employees who got  
20 involved?

21 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Absolutely not. I  
22 don't know why you would infer that. That's not  
23 true. And this is --

24 VICE CHAIR CHOI: I'm just asking the  
25 question. So nobody else outside of the

1 government employees --

2 SENATOR GONZALEZ: This is going to be a  
3 very public process, transparent process here in  
4 California that respects Voting Rights Acts and  
5 ensures that people have all the information they  
6 need. The California voter makes the final  
7 decision at the ballot box.

8 VICE CHAIR CHOI: So yourself, when did  
9 you see this map first yourself? Yesterday?

10 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yes. Correct.

11 So we are putting this forward to the  
12 voter once again. And we will --

13 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Yeah. I want to see who  
14 were the main architects (inaudible).

15 CHAIR CERVANTES: Dr. Choi, you've asked  
16 the same question over and over.

17 If we can move to other Committee Members,  
18 give them an opportunity, if they like, to weigh  
19 in, provide comment.

20 To any of the -- those who are here,  
21 witnesses in support, you may do so at this  
22 moment.

23 SENATOR LIMON: Thank you.

24 CHAIR CERVANTES: Senator Limon.

25 SENATOR LIMON: Thank you.

1 And I just want to go for public record.

2 Madam Chair, the -- these bills were open to the

3 public as of Friday --

4 CHAIR CERVANTES: That is correct.

5 SENATOR LIMON: -- on our website?

6 CHAIR CERVANTES: That is correct.

7 SENATOR LIMON: Thank you.

8 And I will move --

9 CHAIR CERVANTES: The map was open Friday.

10 SENATOR LIMON: The map was open on

11 Friday. Thank you.

12 The map was open on Friday. It was on the  
13 website for both the Assembly and the Senate.

14 And we have had folks comment on the fact,  
15 I believe thousands of individuals in the state  
16 of California have commented, recognizing that  
17 they've seen the maps, correct?

18 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: Correct.

19 SENATOR LIMON: Thank you.

20 And I'm happy to move the bill when it is  
21 appropriate.

22 CHAIR CERVANTES: Senator Allen.

23 SENATOR ALLEN: Yeah. And I'll just  
24 remind everybody that these maps will be  
25 available for everyone to see for months as they

1 make their decision. As you rightly point out,  
2 Mr. Vice Chair, will be a controversial and  
3 difficult one for the population.

4 And so unlike what's happening in other  
5 states where these maps are being drawn, you  
6 know, behind closed doors without the benefit of  
7 all of the robust input that we used because of  
8 all of the information that had been utilized by  
9 the Commission in the past in the drawing up of  
10 the 20 -- the 2020 maps that we have for this  
11 cycle.

12 We will have an open map available to  
13 everybody to see. And then they'll ultimately  
14 make their decision as to whether they want to go  
15 forward with this or not. So it's going to be up  
16 to the voters.

17 And in that spirit, I'm certainly very  
18 pleased to support today.

19 CHAIR CERVANTES: And I would like to  
20 know, again, there is a hyperlink to the text of  
21 AB 604, as was mentioned in the opening, one or  
22 more visual depictions of the geographic map or  
23 maps of the congressional districts that were  
24 certified by the Citizens Redistricting  
25 Commission in 2021.

1 I also find it very interesting, given  
2 just Dr. Choi, your position on where we're at  
3 today. Because when we were colleagues in the  
4 Assembly, I did author a bill to create an  
5 Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission in  
6 my own home county of Riverside county, and which  
7 you voted against that bill twice and on the  
8 floor, not just in Committee.

9 And so, again, we're at a point where this  
10 is our response, and we're giving it to the  
11 people of California to make an ultimate decision  
12 on how we move forward. And there is trigger  
13 language in all of this, as you've heard, as the  
14 public has heard in all these three measures that  
15 were heard today.

16 But I want to turn it back over to the  
17 authors and allow them a moment to close.

18 VICE CHAIR CHOI: Before you do that, can  
19 I clarify my question? I think I was not clear.

20 My question was that the 2020 California  
21 Redistricting -- CRC decided the map, but there  
22 was a lot of process, community input, speaker  
23 after speaker. And then after listening those  
24 inputs, they finalized the map. But this one,  
25 okay, we have seen only yesterday.

1 But who were the architects? Before  
2 drawing, who decided how to draw that map? That  
3 was my question.

4 CHAIR CERVANTES: I would allow both of  
5 you to close at this moment. Thank you.

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER AGUIAR-CURRY: We go back  
7 to the Independent Redistricting Commission, and  
8 we took their information. The maps were  
9 constructed with them, considering the work done  
10 by them, all this public. There was tons of  
11 public testimony, all the requirements in the  
12 Constitution based on the 2020 census.

13 I -- can I just say -- yeah. I just want  
14 to make a comment real quick. We didn't pick  
15 this fight or the timing, but our process will be  
16 the most transparent in the nation, and we will  
17 let our voters decide.

18 SENATOR GONZALEZ: That I will say again,  
19 this Redistricting Commission, we greatly  
20 respect. It has Republicans and Democrats, no  
21 party preference, individuals from across the  
22 state of California that did the good work back  
23 in 2020. Nearly 76, 77 percent of the maps you  
24 see today do respect that work that was done back  
25 in 2020.

1           And I would say that, you know, again,  
2 what the urgency is for us today is the fact that  
3 we've got billions of dollars that are hanging  
4 over our heads to protect our Californians, the  
5 most vulnerable families, immigrant communities,  
6 children.

7           I mean, there's so many items that the  
8 Trump administration is dangling over our head in  
9 California targeting us just for being  
10 Californian.

11           And so for that, I respectfully ask for an  
12 aye vote on this bill.

13           CHAIR CERVANTES: Thank you.

14           The measure has been moved by Senator  
15 Limon. The motion is do pass to the Committee on  
16 Appropriation.

17           Secretary, please call the roll.

18           COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Senator Cervantes?

19           CHAIR CERVANTES: Aye.

20           COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Cervantes, aye.

21           Choi?

22           VICE CHAIR CHOI: No.

23           COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Choi, no.

24           Allen?

25           SENATOR ALLEN: Aye.

1 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Allen, aye.

2 Limon?

3 SENATOR LIMON: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Limon, aye.

5 Umberg?

6 SENATOR UMBERG: Yes.

7 COMMITTEE SECRETARY: Umberg, aye.

8 CHAIR CERVANTES: Four/one, that measure  
9 is out.

10 Thank you to all the individuals who  
11 participated today.

12 If you were not able to testify today,  
13 please submit your comments to the Senate  
14 Committee on Elections and Constitutional  
15 Amendments.

16 The Senate Elections Committee is now  
17 adjourned.

18 (Adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, MARY ANN SCANLAN, hereby certify that I transcribed the California Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments Committee meeting held on August 19, 2025, as completely and correctly to the best of my ability.

I further state that pages 1 through 127, inclusive, constitute an accurate and complete transcription of the video recording for the proceedings specified.

Dated: November 1, 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary Ann Scanlan', is written over a horizontal line.

Mary Ann Scanlan, CSR

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY

STANDING APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

AUGUST 2025

TRANSCRIBED BY: MARY ANN SCANLAN, CSR



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**EXHIBIT**

**7**

1 CHAIR WICKS: Good morning. Welcome to  
2 the August 2025 Assembly Appropriations Hearing  
3 Committee. We have 274 bills to consider this  
4 morning as part of our regular order hearing.

5 I encourage the public to write written  
6 testimony before the hearing by visiting the  
7 Committee website at [apro.assembly.ca.gov](http://apro.assembly.ca.gov).

8 Please note that any written testimony  
9 submitted to the Committee is considered public  
10 comment and may be read into the record or  
11 reprinted.

12 The hearing room is open for attendance.  
13 All are encouraged to watch the hearing room from  
14 its livestream on the Assembly website.

15 We will accept public comment on any bill  
16 placed on the suspense file by the Committee  
17 today and for which the author waived  
18 presentation before the close of the regular  
19 order hearing.

20 Testimony on any such bill will be limited  
21 to the statement of name, organization, if any,  
22 and position on the bill.

23 The Committee will allow no more than 40  
24 minutes of testimony in total.

25 And for each bill, each member will be

1 allowed five minutes of questions of witnesses  
2 only, and I will be timing that.

3 As you came into the hearing room today,  
4 the sergeants directed your attention to the  
5 rules for public attendance and participation  
6 which were posted outside the door. I encourage  
7 members of the public who are in attendance to  
8 observe those rules and follow them.

9 Please be aware that violation of these  
10 rules are violations of general courtesy or  
11 decorum and may subject you to removal or  
12 enforcement processes. And I will say it is our  
13 expectation that everyone acts like adults in  
14 this Committee. Thank you.

15 With that, I'd like to establish a quorum,  
16 if one is present. Please call the roll.

17 THE CLERK: Wicks?

18 CHAIR WICKS: Here.

19 THE CLERK: Wicks present.

20 Sanchez?

21 Arambula?

22 Calderon?

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER CALDERON: (Inaudible.)

24 THE CLERK: Calderon present.

25 Caloza?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER CALOZA: Here.

2 THE CLERK: Caloza present.

3 Dixon?

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER DIXON: (Inaudible.)

5 THE CLERK: Dixon present.

6 Elhawary?

7 Fong?

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER FONG: Here.

9 THE CLERK: Fong present.

10 Mark Gonzalez?

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GONZALEZ: Here.

12 THE CLERK: Mark Gonzalez present.

13 Hart?

14 Pacheco?

15 Pellerin?

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER PELLERIN: (Inaudible.)

17 THE CLERK: Pellerin present.

18 Solache?

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Present.

20 THE CLERK: Solache present.

21 Ta?

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TA: (Inaudible.)

23 THE CLERK: Ta present.

24 Tangipa?

25 Jeff Gonzalez?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GONZALEZ: (Inaudible.)

2 THE CLERK: Jeff Gonzalez present.

3 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you. We have a  
4 quorum.

5 First we would like to hear from Mr. Isaac  
6 Bryan, who is going to be presenting ACA 8. You  
7 are up.

8 We have a motion and a second.

9 And you can begin when you're ready.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Thank you, Madam  
11 Chair and Colleagues. I'm here to present ACA 8  
12 on behalf of Speaker Robert Rivas, Pro Tem  
13 McGuire, and over a dozen of us who are  
14 co-authors in this effort to protect democracy.

15 We're living through an unprecedented  
16 moment in American history where our democracy  
17 faces daily attacks from the White House and from  
18 this administration.

19 This constitutional amendment, along with  
20 the two companion bills, are a measured and  
21 thoughtful response to the power grab that is  
22 happening out of Washington, D.C. A power grab  
23 that seeks to further erase the rights of  
24 40 million Californians who are counting on us.

25 To be clear, this is not a fight that we

1 sought out, but this is a fight that we are  
2 prepared to fight and prepared to win.

3 ACA 8 exists because Trump and the  
4 Republican-controlled Texas Legislature and other  
5 states, like Indiana and Florida, are attempting  
6 to redraw congressional districts in the middle  
7 of a decade, pre census, with the explicit aim of  
8 diluting Black and Brown representation and  
9 power, and tilting next year's congressional  
10 elections in favor of the authoritarian in the  
11 White House.

12 Their maps are not about fair  
13 representation. Their maps are about retaining  
14 power at any cost without accountability, without  
15 transparency, without the voters of those states  
16 getting their say.

17 They want to retain control in Congress at  
18 any cost to continue their goals, to protect the  
19 wealthy, the President and his corrupt  
20 companions, while gutting the liberties of  
21 everyday people, working people and struggling  
22 families, especially here in California. We  
23 deserve better. Californians deserve better.  
24 The American people deserve better.

25 ACA 8, also known as the Election Rig

1 Response Act, is our defense against Trump's  
2 unprecedented power grab. It would implement the  
3 temporary use of the maps outlined in AB 604 if,  
4 and only if, the people of California approve it.  
5 The people of California will get the final say.

6 If ACA 8 and the companion bills in the  
7 Legislature are passed on a special election on  
8 November 4th, those district boundaries will be  
9 used. That's the main difference, by the way,  
10 here in California.

11 So here in California, unlike Texas and  
12 some of these Republican-led states, we respect  
13 the people. We respect the voters. And we  
14 believe that they have the autonomy and authority  
15 to make major decisions like this that have  
16 national consequences.

17 These maps will be used through the 2030  
18 congressional term only and -- only if Texas and  
19 other states enact their partisan gerrymandering,  
20 their power grab of their own congressional  
21 districts at the behest of the President. We  
22 will stand down if they stand down. But if they  
23 step forward, we are ready to fight fire with  
24 fire.

25 The trigger provision in ACA 8 is

1 carefully crafted to ensure that a mid-decade  
2 redistricting required by a federal court order  
3 doesn't result in California changing its map.  
4 This is only in response to an authoritarian  
5 power grab.

6 I'm joined by two incredible witnesses,  
7 Jodi Hicks, who is the CEO of Planned Parenthood,  
8 and Pastor Trena Turner, one of the current  
9 Commissioners of the 2020 independent California  
10 Citizens Redistricting Commission.

11 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

12 And each witness on both sides will have  
13 two minutes each, both for opposition and  
14 supporter. So four minutes total on each side  
15 for our main witnesses.

16 You can begin when you're ready.

17 MS. HICKS: Thank you. Thank you, Madam  
18 Chair and Members.

19 I am Jodi Hicks, the CEO and President of  
20 Planned Parenthood, Affiliates of California.  
21 I'm here to represent all seven affiliates and  
22 over a hundred health centers throughout the  
23 state of California.

24 And I'm here in strong support of ACA 8  
25 and California's response to Texas or any state

1 that is trying to game the 2026 midterm  
2 elections.

3 And I know this is the Appropriations  
4 Committee. I know that we have someone who will  
5 talk about the Commission.

6 I want to talk about the impact to  
7 California. And I think we heard yesterday a lot  
8 of why California would respond to what Texas is  
9 doing. And it's because the impact to California  
10 is so great.

11 And if we are not able to have a fair  
12 election, if we're not able to fight back in the  
13 way that we need to, we're not standing up for  
14 our values in California, and we're certainly not  
15 defending Californians.

16 You remember here in California 67 percent  
17 of voters voted to ensure that California is a  
18 reproductive freedom state. That our  
19 Constitution ensures that Californians have  
20 access to reproductive healthcare.

21 What just passed in Congress defunds  
22 Planned Parenthood on day one. So when we talk  
23 about the cost of what we're doing today just on  
24 that one piece of that bill alone is taking away  
25 \$300 million in federal dollars away from the

1 services that Planned Parenthood provides.

2 And we are not talking about abortion  
3 services. Those are already not federally  
4 funded. We are talking about every other service  
5 that one in four women here in California rely  
6 on, which is cancer screenings, birth control,  
7 oftentimes prenatal care.

8 The rest of that bill has three-and-a-half  
9 million folks in California that will be without  
10 healthcare in our state, not to mention the other  
11 economic sanctions.

12 CHAIR WICKS: You need to wrap up.

13 MS. HICKS: Thank you.

14 So it's imperative that we're able to  
15 fight back. We know if Planned Parenthood or  
16 anyone else talks about the impact of what just  
17 happened, Congress members will be held  
18 accountable. But we're not able to do that if  
19 Texas is rigging the election ahead of time.

20 So thank you.

21 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

22 And you will have two minutes.

23 PASTOR TURNER: Thank you.

24 I'm Trena Turner, Pastor, Executive  
25 Pastor. I'm also, though, here today as a

1 Commissioner for the 2020 Redistricting  
2 Commission. And I'll read so that I can make  
3 best use of my time.

4 I am proud to have served in the 2020  
5 California Citizens Redistricting Commission,  
6 following the will of the people to draw the fair  
7 maps that honor California's diverse communities  
8 of interest. Our work, you know, was rooted in  
9 independence, transparency, clear voter mandate  
10 that the politicians should not choose their  
11 voters.

12 But we have to be honest in the moment  
13 that we're in. There's a breach of trust in our  
14 democracy that has already happened and it's  
15 hitting Black and Brown communities hardest.

16 We've watched our current administration  
17 dismantle DEI programs, send in National Guard  
18 and Marines into LA, D.C., under false claims of  
19 keeping order or stamping out rampant crime.

20 The reality, crime has already been down  
21 in many of those areas. But the very programs in  
22 our communities, the one that has been proven to  
23 work, they're being cut, creating the very  
24 instability that will be used to justify more  
25 force and more control and fewer rights. So it's

1 shortsighted for California to only think about  
2 California.

3 I watched the hearings on yesterday and  
4 wanted to say that if we stand on principle while  
5 our nation disintegrates, we are part of the  
6 problem. And are we really thinking about all of  
7 California? Because I think the 3.1 million  
8 children, veterans and families in California  
9 that will lose food off of their tables would  
10 tend to disagree, California.

11 I think the 2.4 million Californians that  
12 will lose access to healthcare due to Medicaid  
13 cuts would disagree.

14 There's been a lot of discussion about  
15 protecting lines drawn by the will of the people,  
16 lines that I'm very proud of. However, the  
17 discussion is emphasizing the importance of  
18 independent redistricting. That's fair. But  
19 we're doing that at the cost of millions of  
20 Californians.

21 There are groups that I respect that says  
22 that they -- Newsom is dead wrong in this.  
23 Gerrymandering is a threat. However, I want to  
24 say that marginalized communities --

25 CHAIR WICKS: If you can wrap up.

1 PASTOR TURNER: -- is the exact reason why  
2 we need to move forward with ACA 8. I'm in total  
3 support of it and believe it's the right thing  
4 for our nation.

5 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you very much.

6 We will now turn to folks in the room who  
7 wish to express support for ACA 8. And for  
8 everyone who's wishing to express support or  
9 opposition, we are just doing name, organization,  
10 if any, and position.

11 MS. FLOCKS: Madam Chair, Members, Sara  
12 Flocks, the California Federation of Labor  
13 Unions, in strong support.

14 MS. CHOU: Annie Chou with the California  
15 Teachers Association in support.

16 MR. HART: Ian Hart on behalf of  
17 Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis in support.

18 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you. We will now go  
19 to our primary witnesses in opposition. If they  
20 could step up.

21 Is there only one primary witness in  
22 opposition, who we recognize here?

23 Since there's only one, we'll give you  
24 four minutes.

25 UNIDENTIFIABLE SPEAKER: I object.

1 CHAIR WICKS: And if you could turn your  
2 mic on, please?

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER LACKEY: Okay. Hopefully  
4 everybody can hear me.

5 I'm Assemblyman Tom Lackey and I'm the  
6 Republican Caucus Chair.

7 Assembly Member Gallagher is unable to be  
8 here, so I'd like to read his statement into the  
9 record, if I'm permitted to do so. I would love  
10 that.

11 CHAIR WICKS: Please.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER LACKEY: In California  
13 we've always claimed to be a state that does  
14 things better, cleaner government, more  
15 transparency, a stronger commitment to fairness.

16 More than a decade ago voters proved that  
17 very point by taking one of the most powerful  
18 political weapons out of politicians' hands.  
19 That is this issue of redistricting. They  
20 created the Citizens Redistricting Commission  
21 where everyday Californians, not career  
22 politicians, draw our political maps. No  
23 backroom deals, no party bosses, no lobbyists  
24 calling the shots.

25 The result? Maps shaped by public

1 testimony, not raw political muscle. Communities  
2 kept together. Comparative districts preserved.  
3 Trust in the process restored.

4 It wasn't a Republican idea or a  
5 Democratic idea. It was the people's idea, and  
6 it worked.

7 Now Sacramento politicians want to take it  
8 back. California Democrats, with Governor Gavin  
9 Newsom's support, are proposing to rip this power  
10 away from the Independent Commission and put it  
11 back under political control. Their goal?  
12 Protect a few moral -- I'm sorry, a few more  
13 seats in Congress. Their excuse? Texas is doing  
14 it. That's not leadership. It's abandoning our  
15 principles.

16 Redistricting has helped politicians  
17 decide who wins before voters get a say. It's  
18 the most brazen way to rig the system.

19 When district lines are drawn for  
20 political advantage, the first casualty is often  
21 fair representation. Rural communities, in  
22 particular, risk being carved apart and their  
23 voices diluted. Rural Californians lose the  
24 unified voice that ensures our unique needs and  
25 priorities are heard.

1           That's exactly why Californians stripped  
2 the Legislature of this power in the first place.  
3 Giving it back to the very people voters took it  
4 from isn't reform. It's raw power grab, and  
5 voters see through it.

6           A recent Politico poll possibly indicated  
7 that Californians opposing returning  
8 redistricting to the Legislature by nearly two to  
9 one. Only 36 percent support this scheme.  
10 That's not a debate. It's a public rejection.

11           This is bigger than party labels. Whether  
12 you're Republican, Democrat or Independent, you  
13 lose when politicians draw their own districts.  
14 Communities are carved up like a pie.  
15 Competitive races vanish. Politicians stop  
16 worrying about what voters think because their  
17 districts are locked up for years. Voters lose.  
18 Democracy loses.

19           California should be the model for the  
20 nation, not a state that tosses out reforms the  
21 minute they inconvenience those in power. We  
22 showed America that redistricting can be done  
23 openly, fairly and without partisan manipulation.  
24 Throwing it away now tells every voter that  
25 fairness only matters when it's political

1 convenience.

2 One [sic] partisan control is back in the  
3 game, it never leaves. Once partisan control is  
4 back in the game, it never leaves. And the  
5 people will lose their voice.

6 If Governor Newsom and the legislative  
7 Democrats think voters will quietly watch them  
8 dismantle one of the state's most important  
9 Democratic safeguards, they're in for a surprise.  
10 The outcry will be loud, bipartisan and  
11 unrelenting.

12 This isn't complicated. Our democracy  
13 works best when politicians have to compete for  
14 their votes, not when they manipulate the rules  
15 to keep themselves in power. That's why the  
16 voters passed redistricting reform and that's why  
17 they still will support it.

18 The message from the voters is simple.  
19 The power belongs to the people. Let's keep it  
20 that way, and we won't let them take it.

21 I'm also confused to some degree how  
22 redistricting bills are not being sent to  
23 suspense when it's been very publicly stated that  
24 these bills will result in a \$200 million cost to  
25 the state.

1 CHAIR WICKS: You're at four minutes.

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER LACKEY: Okay. Well, the  
3 last thing that I'd like to close with is I find  
4 it a little bit disturbing that I have someone  
5 sitting on this dais with me, Ms. Jodi, who is  
6 married to someone who it's been reported had an  
7 active role in this map making, and that would be  
8 Paul Mitchell. I find that to be a conflict of  
9 interest and I find it disappointing.

10 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you, Mr. Lackey.

11 We will now be going to primary witnesses  
12 in opposition. Name, organization, if any, and  
13 your position on the bill.

14 Okay. Seeing none, we will bring it back  
15 to Committee for questions.

16 Thank you, Madam Chair.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER DIXON: I will be voting  
18 on ACA 8, which is a proposed constitutional  
19 amendment that the voters will decide during an  
20 unnecessary, unbudgeted, expensive special  
21 election this December. And we've heard all the  
22 reasons why this is an, unfortunately, bad idea.  
23 But I'll speak to the cost as we are in  
24 Appropriations.

25 This unnecessary special election is

1 expected to cost California taxpayers more than  
2 \$230 million. According to the Orange County  
3 Registrar of Voters, in Orange county alone this  
4 special election to gerrymander congressional  
5 districts and split apart communities in my  
6 district and in my own city is anticipated to  
7 cost between 11 and \$13 million.

8 By voting to pass SB 280 -- or ACA 8,  
9 excuse me, you are voting to appropriate funding  
10 for a costly special election at a time when  
11 California faces painful budget cuts to  
12 healthcare, education, housing and other critical  
13 services.

14 And I take special note of Ms. Hicks, I  
15 believe is her name, who spoke earlier. And I  
16 just want to quote from her statement last May  
17 when the Governor announced a cut to Planned  
18 Parenthood in the state budget.

19 And her statement at the time was, with  
20 this May budget revision, Governor Newsom --  
21 Governor Newsom, the author of this effort to  
22 spend \$230 million, is effectively defunding  
23 Planned Parenthood in the state of California.

24 What I recall, your comments were related  
25 to the congressional efforts and the federal

1 budgeting. However, this \$230 million could go a  
2 long way to support your Planned Parenthood  
3 programs in California.

4 So I suggest maybe you also talk to the  
5 Governor. He's spending \$230 million that could  
6 better go for healthcare, mental health, housing,  
7 homelessness, all the long list of horrors in  
8 the state of California. Yet, he can find  
9 \$230 million out of a deficit-based budget to  
10 fund this election.

11 If we want to have an election, I don't  
12 support it. It should be tied into another  
13 election.

14 There's been no financial analysis -- I  
15 haven't seen any anyway -- to the cost of to the  
16 state general fund or to county budgets. No one  
17 has time to figure this out where the money is  
18 going to come from to provide for another  
19 state-mandated, unfunded, urgent item, which is  
20 an election in November.

21 I will be voting no and when it comes  
22 before me, and ask you to do the same. Thank  
23 you.

24 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you. Would you like  
25 to respond?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: May I respond to  
2 that?

3 CHAIR WICKS: Yes.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I just want to be  
5 very clear, because I think facts matter. The  
6 Governor's proposal was to cut that fund, and the  
7 Legislature rejected those cuts, and the final  
8 adopted budget restored all of that funding for  
9 healthcare, including funding to Planned  
10 Parenthood.

11 It should also be noted that California  
12 pays over \$80 billion in federal taxes that we  
13 don't get back. Seventy billion of that went to  
14 Texas. That's money that is also being cut from  
15 Head Start programs, education programs, veterans  
16 benefits.

17 And I find it horribly offensive that  
18 \$40 billion of our own money couldn't return home  
19 for disaster aid in Los Angeles, and not a single  
20 Republican in this Legislature is demanding that  
21 it come home.

22 So if we're talking about the cost of a  
23 special election versus the cost of our democracy  
24 or the cost that Californians are already paying  
25 to subsidize this corrupt administration, those

1 costs seem well worth paying in this moment.

2 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you, Mr. Bryan.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER DIXON: May I just respond  
4 to that?

5 CHAIR WICKS: Yes.

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER DIXON: Just briefly.

7 It's still -- \$230 million is nothing to  
8 blink your eyes about. It is money that could  
9 cost -- could be allocated for costs other than a  
10 special election. If it sits there in the  
11 budget, why not put it to healthcare? Why not  
12 put it to all these issues that are very  
13 important in California? But suddenly \$230  
14 million materializes as essential.

15 Democracy is not hanging by an edge. I  
16 think this is really overstated and it's  
17 hyperbolic, and it does not do respectable  
18 service to the people of California to engage in  
19 that kind of hyperbole. Thank you very much.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: The last thing I  
21 will say to that is just I wish we had this same  
22 conversation when we ran several pointless  
23 recalls in the last few years.

24 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

25 And we'll go to Mr. Tangipa now. And each

1 Member has five minutes to opine on this bill.

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you and  
3 good morning.

4 I've got some really fiscal-related  
5 questions. Is there anybody pointed to that I  
6 can --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Yeah, I'm ready.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. Yesterday  
9 there was a lawsuit filed in response to the  
10 pending legislation. There will be undoubtedly  
11 additional lawsuits filed against California.  
12 The Attorney General has already needed to  
13 request emergency funding to pay for the  
14 litigation.

15 Do you anticipate needing to come back and  
16 ask for additional funding for the litigation?  
17 And if so, do you expect that in this normal  
18 budget year -- or budget cycle, or is it going to  
19 be an emergency ask?

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I think similar to  
21 the funds we gave to the Attorney General during  
22 the special session at the beginning of this  
23 year, that if it turned billions of dollars back  
24 to California at the expense of only \$50 million  
25 dollars investment, investments that we spend

1 protecting ourselves from this hostile  
2 administration, pay back several times over.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So you believe  
4 that that funding will be used in the lawsuits to  
5 fight this?

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I believe --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And no more  
8 additional funds are going to be allocated  
9 towards that?

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I believe that the  
11 Attorney General's Office, both now and under the  
12 previous Trump administration, has been wildly  
13 successful fighting the unconstitutionality of  
14 this --

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I'm asking for  
16 the funds.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: May I --

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I'm asking for  
19 the funds.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: May I finish  
21 talking, Madam Chair?

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, I've only  
23 got five minutes. So I'm asking for the funds.  
24 I'm not asking how good they are.

25 CHAIR WICKS: Mr. Tangipa, I think if you

1 can let him respond, that'd be great.

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Reclaiming my  
3 time.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I've got five  
5 minutes.

6 CHAIR WICKS: Mr. Bryan.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I think we're on  
8 the opposite end. I have to reclaim.

9 I just need the funds portion. Do you  
10 believe that there's going to be a budget ask now  
11 or later?

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I believe that any  
13 investment we make in the Attorney General's  
14 Office yields back several times over more  
15 resources back to California.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I'm not talking  
17 about how good they are. I'm talking about, do  
18 they need more money?

19 CHAIR WICKS: Mr. Tangipa, I think he's  
20 answered your question.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay.

22 CHAIR WICKS: Next question, please.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Will litigation  
24 costs be tracked and reported separately so  
25 taxpayers can see the true costs of this measure?

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I think any time  
2 that public dollars spent, it is always in a  
3 transparent way. And the Attorney General's  
4 Office has been incredibly transparent in how  
5 they use those litigation dollars to fight to  
6 return dollars --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: -- back to  
9 California.

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: It's estimated  
11 that this special election will cost \$235 million  
12 to complete. Is the appropriation for the  
13 special election ultimately going to come from  
14 the general fund, all while the LAO has already  
15 highlighted to us structural deficits and a  
16 projected budget shortfall next year ranging in  
17 between 10 and \$30 billion?

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I can tell you  
19 it's not going to come from the \$80 billion that  
20 Californians pay to subsidize this corrupt  
21 administration that has been held hostage from  
22 the people of our state.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: The rural  
24 counties I represent are feeling heavy budget  
25 pressure. Our counties can't afford to foot the

1 bill up front for the special election. Is the  
2 plan to provide them full up-front costs of the  
3 election, or are we going to reimburse them post  
4 election?

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I imagine there's  
6 a lot of economic insecurity in rural counties,  
7 especially when a hundred billion dollars has  
8 gone into ICE enforcement that has destabilized  
9 our agriculture economy in many sectors of our  
10 state. I think those resources could definitely  
11 be spent in a better way.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Isaac, I've got  
13 a rural county that has three people that work  
14 (inaudible).

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Assembly Member  
16 Bryan, sir.

17 CHAIR WICKS: Please refer to him by  
18 Assembly Member Bryan, please.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Sorry.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Or the Member from  
21 Los Angeles.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Sorry about  
23 that. I'm still learning.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: I know.

25 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: The state has a

1 long history really of creating mandates that are  
2 supposed to be funded. My big worry on this is  
3 that there's so many unfunded mandates and money  
4 actually doesn't get back to them.

5 What guarantees do we provide that -- to  
6 make sure that this won't happen so those  
7 counties that are trying to operate in the state  
8 of California to make sure that they're made  
9 whole?

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: The only money  
11 that's not getting back to us, not to the  
12 fire-torn areas of Los Angeles, not to our Head  
13 Start programs, not to our healthcare  
14 infrastructure, not to our agriculture economy is  
15 the \$80 billion in federal taxes that we paid  
16 that we have asked for back in emergency times  
17 that the federal government has used as leverage  
18 and held hostage and subsidized their plans,  
19 including the plans that are happening in Texas  
20 right now.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I think it's sad  
22 right now that I'm asking very fiscally  
23 appropriate questions in the Appropriations  
24 Committee and I haven't gotten a single answer on  
25 how the money is going to get there, how much

1 money is actually needed, and where are the cost  
2 estimates.

3 All I'm asking for is, can we do this, and  
4 do we have funds with a projected deficit next  
5 year?

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: So --

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: And we're  
8 saying --

9 CHAIR WICKS: I'm sorry. We also have  
10 Department of Finance here who can weigh in as  
11 well.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Uh-huh.

13 MR. BELTRAN: Thank you, Madam Chair, and  
14 good morning, Members.

15 My name is Christian Beltran. I am with  
16 the Department of Finance.

17 And thank you, Assembly Member Tangipa,  
18 for the questions.

19 Just to clarify, the language does specify  
20 that the Department of Finance will continue to  
21 work with the Secretary of State's Office, as  
22 well as our county partners, to ensure that  
23 funding for this election will be made in advance  
24 to the election.

25 So we will continue to ensure that

1 counties, particularly your counties as well,  
2 will be made whole and not to have to cut any  
3 additional funding to public safety programs or  
4 any kind of healthcare programs.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Does the  
6 Department of Finance next year also expect an  
7 estimated and agree with the LAO's Office that  
8 there is a structural deficit next year?

9 MR. BELTRAN: I think we can all agree  
10 that we are not in the best budget situation  
11 given federal pressures and given other kind of  
12 hostile acts that we are seeing from the federal  
13 government. And therefore, we are continuing to  
14 plan for the worst, and we do have projections  
15 that are consistent with the LAO.

16 However, we would just encourage the  
17 Legislature to understand that the Department of  
18 Finance will continue to work with the partners  
19 that have, both on the state and federal levels,  
20 to ensure we are continuing to get as much  
21 funding as possible.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: So you --

23 CHAIR WICKS: And sorry, your five minutes  
24 is up. This is your last question.

25 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay.

1           We have in front of us many questions that  
2 need to be answered because it's fiscally  
3 responsible here in the state of California. We  
4 are elected in the state of California to get our  
5 budget right. That is not happening right now.  
6 We know that.

7           But we need to make sure that the right  
8 people are here, because that was my first  
9 question. Who should I point the financial  
10 questions to? And you said you were ready.  
11 Doesn't seem like it.

12           But what we need to know right now is who  
13 drew the maps, who got paid, who didn't go on  
14 vacation, who is involved in this, and who has a  
15 vested interest in all of this money being  
16 allocated? That is very important. That is the  
17 number one question everybody is asking.

18           Can somebody, somebody, anybody tell us  
19 definitively? Whether it's leadership, whether  
20 it's the DCC, whether it's Paul Mitchell, whether  
21 it's special interests, who got paid to draw the  
22 maps and who is doing this, and did they register  
23 under the State of California to make sure that  
24 they can do this? Answer the question.

25           CHAIR WICKS: Mr. Bryan, would you like to

1 address that? Then we'll move on to other  
2 members.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Sure, I'm happy  
4 to.

5 And I appreciate you still learning which  
6 committee does what. Because you started out  
7 understanding this is a fiscal committee and then  
8 went straight into your partisan B.S., and that's  
9 perfectly fine.

10 These maps were drawn in collaboration  
11 between many stakeholders, including experts who  
12 have been drawing lines for multiple  
13 municipalities for over a hundred different  
14 jurisdictions across California and beyond. It  
15 was in collaboration with the Legislature. It  
16 was in --

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Who are those  
18 many individuals and how much did they get paid?

19 CHAIR WICKS: We're allowing Mr. Isaac  
20 Ryan to (inaudible).

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: It was also in  
22 collaboration with the 10,000 comments that were  
23 submitted to the Independent Redistricting  
24 Commission, which is why nearly 80 percent of  
25 this map mirrors the map before.

1           Let's also be very clear, the person who  
2       drew this map is the authoritarian in the White  
3       House who called for destruction of the  
4       foundations of our democracy by clawing back five  
5       seats that don't belong to him in Texas, and  
6       forcing the people of California to respond.

7           The people of California will draw this  
8       map on November when they have their voice heard.  
9       The Legislature does not draw or implement these  
10      maps. The people get the final voice. And the  
11      maps will change not even a little bit unless  
12      they say so in November. And I believe strongly  
13      that they will.

14           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, we should  
15      know who paid --

16           CHAIR WICKS: Mr. Tangipa. Mr. Tangipa.

17           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: -- to prepare  
18      you, because that's all we got.

19           CHAIR WICKS: Mr. Tangipa.

20           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you.

21           CHAIR WICKS: Thank you. Thank you.

22      Okay.

23           ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Still learning  
24      those rules.

25           CHAIR WICKS: Any other -- any other

1 questions from Members on the Committee?

2 Mr. Gonzalez.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GONZALEZ: I know there's  
4 a lot of conversation about cost, and I think the  
5 budget figures were a hundred and something --  
6 what was it? \$230 million to taxpayers to have a  
7 special election. But I just want to ask the  
8 question to the Department of Finance if they can  
9 confirm.

10 There are many studies that are out there  
11 that say from mass arrests to detention to  
12 deportation, that California could cost the  
13 state's economy \$275 billion and eliminate  
14 \$23 billion in annual tax revenue. The loss of  
15 immigrant workers, including undocumented  
16 individuals and those losing lawful status would  
17 hinder projects like rebuilding Los Angeles after  
18 wildfires, reducing food supply, and increasing  
19 costs.

20 And in 2022 undocumented immigrants  
21 contributed \$8.5 billion in state and local  
22 taxes, a figure that would rise to 10.3 billion  
23 if they could work lawfully.

24 So if we're sitting here arguing about  
25 \$230 million, I wish there was this sort of

1 outrage when it came to the billions of dollars  
2 that are being lost as a result of people who  
3 look like me who are being detained, who are  
4 being held hostage. And we're sitting here  
5 arguing about, well, who drew the maps? Who held  
6 the pen?

7 Well, guess what? The California -- we  
8 were the ones who went out there and we were the  
9 ones who said that, you know, you're obsessing  
10 over who participated in the structure and how  
11 they did it. The public did it.

12 And in the comments that were mentioned,  
13 it said, abandoning principles, fair  
14 representation, mass power grab, losing when  
15 politicians -- I'm from Texas. I know what  
16 happens there. And they are not listening to the  
17 people. They're holding them hostage. In fact,  
18 their own legislature is stuck there and they can  
19 only get a police escort.

20 So there's all this talk and rhetoric  
21 about, oh, you know, who's drawing the maps and  
22 how are they doing this? And Republicans in  
23 Texas and Florida and across the country are  
24 actively rigging districts to silence voters and  
25 protect Donald Trump.

1 But we're figuring out where all this  
2 money is coming from while immigrants, who make  
3 us the fourth largest economy in the world, are  
4 suffering.

5 So the question is, if you can confirm  
6 that, as a result of these raids and all of the  
7 hostages that are being taken by this Trump  
8 administration, who are taking Brown people, the  
9 billions of dollars that it's costing California  
10 and why we have to have this election in the  
11 first place.

12 MR. BELTRAN: Thank you, Assembly Member  
13 Gonzalez, and appreciate the question.

14 You know, I would just like to say that we  
15 as the Department of Finance continue to track  
16 economic implications that are stemming from the  
17 federal government, whether it's through tariff  
18 policy or immigration enforcement, we continue to  
19 track our monthly cash receipts and will continue  
20 to do so, and will be able to report that to the  
21 Legislature as we have more information.

22 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

23 Do you have any other questions from  
24 Members?

25 We do have a motion and a second.

1 Oh, yes, Mr. Arambula.

2 ASSEMBLY MEMBER ARAMBULA: Thank you.

3 Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Madam Chair.

4 CHAIR WICKS: Your mic's not working?

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER ARAMBULA: Well, that's

6 one way to silence some voices.

7 Thank you, Madam Chair, for the

8 opportunity to ask questions.

9 I have great respect for my two colleagues  
10 who are here on the dais, but I'm going to start  
11 with a bit of being a fan boy, having watched so  
12 many of the Independent Redistricting Commission.

13 Trena, you were our Central Valley  
14 representative. You stood up for us. I watched  
15 you time and time again during those hearings  
16 making sure that you were standing up for  
17 community and protecting us.

18 And so I want to ask, with all real  
19 honesty, why we need to repeat this process that  
20 was so well-done back there just a few years ago.  
21 Can you help answer that to me?

22 Because I started my week meeting with my  
23 preacher, meeting with my faith leaders, wanting  
24 to be led in this moment, knowing that it's  
25 important for us to stand up for people of our

1 great state.

2 PASTOR TURNER: Yes. And thank you for  
3 the question and the opportunity to respond.

4 I think most of what we hear talks about  
5 numbers, figures, policy. There is an old saying  
6 in the church that talks about -- warns people  
7 against being so heavenly minded that you're no  
8 earthly good.

9 And in this case, I think in all of our  
10 appropriation meetings, we need to think about  
11 being so politically minded that we're no  
12 community good.

13 People are suffering as a result of what's  
14 already going on. And it's one thing to stand on  
15 policy and principle when you have beautiful,  
16 nonthreatened communities to go home to.

17 But for our Central Valley communities and  
18 other places in California that's seeing right  
19 now terror on the streets, separations of  
20 families, overreach by our administration, we  
21 cannot wait for another five years, six years,  
22 ten years. We need to take action now.

23 And when history is told, we need to be  
24 able to say that we stood on the right side of  
25 trying to stop this authoritarian government that

1 we have currently going on.

2 Numbers -- 230 million is not a lot of  
3 money. We can find it. And certainly it can be  
4 offset by some of the other things that's  
5 currently going on. I'm not an expert in that.

6 I'm an expert in facing people all day  
7 everyday that's living in real fear. And we  
8 still will have a fight because their voices are  
9 intentionally being muted now so they don't show  
10 up later.

11 The people will speak if they're allowed  
12 to speak, if we don't continue to face issues  
13 like trying to get rid of voting by mail, getting  
14 rid of the bail. All of that is a one-story,  
15 one-picture design to silence voices.

16 If the Congress didn't stand up against  
17 our administration and face that and speak out  
18 against it, and we expect people to do it without  
19 any cover and protection, I'm hoping that all of  
20 our elected officials will do what our people is  
21 counting on you to do. And you know that they're  
22 being impacted now by what's going on.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER ARAMBULA: Thank you for  
24 that answer. And thank you for being able to ask  
25 that question.

1 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you. Any other  
2 members have questions?

3 Mr. Bryan, would you like to close?

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER BRYAN: Absolutely.

5 I'd like to just address finally a few  
6 things that had been said.

7 Opposition witness, my colleague, said  
8 that stealing congressional seats is the most  
9 brazen way to rig the system. I could not agree  
10 more. That is exactly why in this moment we have  
11 to stand up and push back against the power grab  
12 that is happening from the authoritarian in the  
13 White House through the State of Texas.

14 My colleague also said that two-thirds of  
15 Californians don't believe that the Legislature  
16 should draw and implement new maps. I agree. I  
17 authored legislation two years ago calling for  
18 independent redistricting commissions at every  
19 level of California government, and it was  
20 opposed by every single Republican, including the  
21 gentleman, who I love, who's sitting right next  
22 to me.

23 That's why I also passed an update to the  
24 Fair Maps Act that was signed into law by the  
25 government that prevented us from drawing maps

1 around incumbency. Again, it was voted down by  
2 every single Republican in the Legislature. In  
3 fact, the leader of the Republican caucus spoke  
4 in opposition. Another Republican,  
5 Mr. Gallagher, spoke in opposition.

6           The public in this moment doesn't want us  
7 to bow down and roll over and allow for the  
8 foundations of our democracy to be eroded and  
9 taken away from us so that our country becomes no  
10 longer recognizable.

11           I also think the fiscal hypocrisy that  
12 I've heard today is mind blowing. The State of  
13 California was impacted by over \$10 billion from  
14 the haphazard tariffs that were coming out of  
15 Washington, D.C. The Governor spoke very clearly  
16 about it in the May revise.

17           I've said it many times in this hearing  
18 already. The State of California pays over  
19 \$80 billion in federal taxes that we do not get  
20 back. Money that Los Angeles, who was on fire in  
21 January, has desperately asked for in federal  
22 aid.

23           We have a \$1 billion extortion attempt on  
24 the number one public university in the country,  
25 UCLA. And I don't hear any Republican standing

1 up for those California tax dollars.

2 I didn't hear any Republican standing up  
3 to the big, beautiful scam that put trillions of  
4 dollars of national debt on the backs of the  
5 future generations of California children and cut  
6 billions of dollars in critical services,  
7 benefits, nutritional assistance, and the things  
8 that our children and families need to survive.

9 So to sit here and talk about the cost of  
10 a special election to save democracy being too  
11 high is unconscionable, hypocritical and  
12 unbecoming of anybody in this body.

13 The people of California have asked for us  
14 to stand up. That is why we are moving this ACA  
15 forward. And I respectfully ask for your aye  
16 vote.

17 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you, Mr. Bryan.

18 The motion before us is do pass. It was  
19 moved by Mr. Solache, seconded by Mr. Fong.

20 I also just want to add some closing  
21 comments as well. I appreciate the spirit of  
22 debate that we have had here in the  
23 Appropriations Committee.

24 I have deep respect for you, Mr. Lackey,  
25 so thank you for representing the opposition.

1 I do want to make a comment to one of your  
2 comments, though. You know, Ms. Hicks is here in  
3 her position as a leader of Planned Parenthood  
4 and not as the wife of someone who has  
5 participated in this. And she is a professional  
6 in her own right who is leading an organization  
7 that provides very critical services for millions  
8 of people across the state of California, and  
9 that is who she is here representing.

10 Planned Parenthood is an organization that  
11 I have benefited from myself when I did not have  
12 healthcare when I was younger.

13 And she has every ability to be here to  
14 speak on behalf of those who need those  
15 resources. So I just want to respectfully remind  
16 us why she is here and in which capacity she is  
17 here.

18 The other thing I would like to say is,  
19 since this is a fiscal committee, you know, the  
20 cost of an action is way too high right now on  
21 what is before us here in this body. The cost to  
22 our democracy is what we are talking about right  
23 now.

24 The cost to families, millions of whom who  
25 will lose healthcare because of what this Trump

1 administration is doing.

2 The cost to these wildfire victims who are  
3 not receiving the deserved resources that they  
4 need to rebuild.

5 The cost to our working class families who  
6 are losing their SNAP benefits. That is what we  
7 are talking about here.

8 None of us want to be in this situation,  
9 but our hand is being forced. And we will not  
10 unilaterally disarm. That is why we are here.

11 And we are doing this in the most  
12 transparent way possible by allowing the  
13 electorate to determine if they want -- if they  
14 want this or not. This is going to go to the  
15 ballot.

16 There's triggers on this. It reverts back  
17 to the Commission. This is the best case  
18 scenario for where we are at.

19 But we will not stop fighting in  
20 California. And I believe our electorate will  
21 respond to that as well. That is what we are  
22 moving forward today. That is what is going to  
23 be on the floor of the Assembly for debate  
24 tomorrow.

25 I deeply appreciate the conversation. But

1 with that, I am proud to move this bill forward.  
2 It is going to move out of this Committee today  
3 on a B roll call.

4 Thank you, Mr. Bryan, and everyone who  
5 participated.

6 CHAIR WICKS: And Ms. Cervantes, you are  
7 up next and you will be presenting SB 280.

8 And I just want to remind everyone,  
9 Members will each have five minutes for comments  
10 on the bill, and primary witnesses will each have  
11 two minutes for a total of four. Opposition  
12 witnesses will each have two minutes for a total  
13 of four.

14 And Members of the public will say name,  
15 organization, if any, and position on the bill.

16 We have a motion by Mr. Fong and a second  
17 by Mr. Pacheco.

18 And you can begin when you're ready.

19 SENATOR CERVANTES: Thank you, Madam Chair  
20 and Committee Members.

21 Today I'm proud to present Senate Bill  
22 280, which calls for a statewide special election  
23 on November 4th of this year.

24 The special election would allow  
25 California voters to consider Assembly

1 Constitutional Amendment 8, which would allow  
2 this Legislature to engage in a one time mid-  
3 decade redistricting of our state's districts in  
4 the U.S. House of Representatives.

5 This bill also makes the necessary  
6 statutory changes to allow the June 2026  
7 statewide primary election to be held on time.

8 California did not start this  
9 redistricting fight. This fight was brought to  
10 us. The truth of the matter is, if we let Donald  
11 Trump get away with rigging elections in Texas  
12 and other red states through partisan  
13 gerrymandering, we will not have free or fair  
14 elections in the United States in the future. If  
15 Donald Trump pursues this power grab, California  
16 stands ready to respond.

17 SB 280 appropriates the funding necessary  
18 for the Secretary of State and our county  
19 registrars to administer the special election.  
20 The amount needed to administer the election will  
21 be determined by the Director of the Department  
22 of Finance and appropriated from the General  
23 Fund.

24 The State Controller will then distribute  
25 monies to the SOS and the county registrar so

1 that they have the funding they need. This is  
2 done on the front end so the funding is available  
3 as we march toward the election in November.

4 Madam Chair, we have two witnesses who are  
5 here to testify.

6 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you. You will each  
7 have two minutes.

8 MS. HICKS: Thank you. Thank you, Madam  
9 Chair. Thank you, Members.

10 I am going to reintroduce myself. I am  
11 Jodi Hicks. I am the CEO and President of  
12 Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California.

13 I realize some of you I do not know. But  
14 before that, some of you I do know because I also  
15 have a 20-year history of being a healthcare  
16 advocate, particularly for our most vulnerable  
17 communities in California and advocating for  
18 patients on Medicaid. So that is why I am here  
19 today.

20 Planned Parenthood was the first action  
21 that happened with HR 1. So the defund happened  
22 day one. It was \$300 million.

23 Thank you for quoting me and acknowledging  
24 that I am holding folks accountable if they are  
25 making cuts to Planned Parenthood, to Medicaid,

1 to any section of our healthcare that affects  
2 patients in a deep way, which some of our own  
3 California budget proposals did.

4 We have advocated to ensure that people in  
5 our most vulnerable communities are able to get  
6 access to the healthcare that they need,  
7 including reproductive healthcare. What HR 1  
8 did, though, is decimate that, and it is  
9 \$300 million every year.

10 So the cost and the fiscal analysis for  
11 being able to fight back against a Congress that  
12 is attempting to hold onto power, to continue to  
13 have economic sanctions and hold California  
14 accountable for the values that we all share,  
15 which includes reproductive freedom, which  
16 includes diversity, inclusivity and equity in  
17 healthcare, has to be stopped.

18 Our Congress Members need to be held  
19 accountable. We want to be able to do that in  
20 the traditional way, but we're not able to if  
21 other states are rigging the system. And that's  
22 why I'm here today encouraging your eye vote.  
23 Thank you. Thank you.

24 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

25 MS. TURNER: Thank you. Trena Turner,

1 2020 Redistricting Commissioner.

2 I wanted to say that if we could balance a  
3 perfect budget, but we do it on the backs of  
4 people where it brings them harm, it is  
5 absolutely a problem for Californians.

6 California can't be seen centered in this  
7 moment irregardless to what else is going on in  
8 the nation.

9 The proposed districts aren't perfect as  
10 the current ones aren't, but it certainly should  
11 not elicit the critique and fear that some are  
12 going for.

13 This cost of 230, 235 million is well  
14 worth the money spent in order to be able to  
15 protect our communities.

16 The new maps, by the way, use most all of  
17 the same criteria, VRA included. And the almost  
18 40,000 community of interest testimony received,  
19 it was all used. Most districts that we focused  
20 on were actually kept intact. The proposed  
21 margin -- the proposed even -- the proposed maps  
22 even managed to split fewer areas than we were  
23 able to split.

24 There were some issues in that in that  
25 there were some communities that were split, but

1 we're talking about balancing what's going on.  
2 I'm not confused as a Commissioner that this is  
3 in this moment not about California. This has  
4 nothing to do with recanting or figuring out that  
5 independent redistricting was incorrect. It was  
6 great. It's wonderful. We need to do it across  
7 the nation.

8           Since that's not happening right now,  
9 California, we need to be able to stand up in  
10 this moment and we do need to -- I'm in total  
11 support of SB 280 for the election that needs to  
12 take place now. Because I think the work before  
13 us is to get our people to understand,  
14 Californians to understand why we're taking this  
15 approach in this moment that is different from  
16 what we did just five years ago.

17           The day is different, our time is  
18 different, our nation is different. Our  
19 congressional -- the representatives have not  
20 stood up for California. They have not voted in  
21 a way that protects all of our nation. And so we  
22 now have an opportunity to play a role in that.

23           The last thing I want to say is many of  
24 our people, a lot of times we have often said  
25 California was not a swing state, so we don't get

1 a lot of voice up front. But in this moment,  
2 California is centered in this conversation and  
3 we need to stand up now. In support of SB 280.

4 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

5 We will go now to folks in the room who  
6 wish to express support. Name, organization, if  
7 any, and position on the bill.

8 MS. FLOCKS: Madam Chair, Members, Sarah  
9 Flocks, California Federation of Labor Unions, on  
10 behalf of our 2.3 million members. We are in  
11 strong support.

12 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

13 MS. HINES-SHAIKH: Honorable Chair and  
14 Members, Amy Hines-Shaikh with UDW AFSCME Local  
15 3930 and their 200,000 IHSS providers who are  
16 funded by Medi-Cal largely, and would like to  
17 stand up and support that and this bill, in  
18 addition to UNITE HERE! Local 11 and their 32,000  
19 Members. Thank you.

20 MS. TURNER: Thank you.

21 MS. CHOU: Annie Chou with the California  
22 Teachers Association in support.

23 MR. HART: Good morning again. Kaden Hart  
24 on behalf of Lieutenant Governor Elani Kounalakis  
25 in support.

1 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

2 MR. GUSMAN: Good morning. Conor Gusman,  
3 on behalf of Teamsters California, in support.

4 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

5 We will now go to primary witnesses in  
6 opposition.

7 Do we have any primary witnesses in  
8 opposition?

9 Okay. We will have any additional folks  
10 in the room wish to express opposition, name,  
11 organization and position, if any. Anyone in the  
12 room wish to express opposition?

13 Okay. We will now bring it back to  
14 Committee.

15 We have DOF here to answer questions, if  
16 need be.

17 Ms. Dixon, you can go first.

18 And I want to remind Members they will  
19 each have five minutes.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER DIXON: Thank you very  
21 much, Madam Chair. I don't think I need five  
22 minutes.

23 I will be voting no. I will be saying  
24 much of the same that I said in the previous  
25 measure, on SB 280, which calls for a fiscally

1 irresponsible special election to be held on  
2 November 4th so voters can determine the fate of  
3 ACA 8.

4 This unnecessary, again, stated again,  
5 special election is expected to cost California  
6 taxpayers more than \$230 million. And according  
7 to the Orange County Registrar of Voters, this  
8 special election for Orange County alone to  
9 gerrymander congressional districts and split  
10 apart communities in my district is anticipated  
11 to cost between 11 and 13 million.

12 By voting to pass SB 280, you are voting  
13 to appropriate funding for a costly special  
14 election in a state that routinely spends money  
15 that it does not have.

16 In fact, we all know just this year  
17 California faced a budget deficit of over \$12  
18 billion. And you had to make -- we in the  
19 Assembly and the budget committees had to make  
20 painful cuts, as been referenced in healthcare,  
21 fire prevention, education, housing and other  
22 critical services.

23 I just have to ask how that -- the cost  
24 for the special election of \$230 million could  
25 have helped plug some of those gaps and those

1 costs that were mandated or made necessary  
2 because of overspending by the Legislature and  
3 the Governor. So there's a lot of budget fixes  
4 that need to happen, and here we're piling on  
5 another \$230 million.

6 When we talk about the vulnerable people,  
7 \$230 million on their healthcare benefits would  
8 have gone a long way. Wildfire mitigation.

9 My party side of the aisle recommended I  
10 think a billion dollars for wildfire mitigation.  
11 I think it came in at 200 million.

12 Another hundred million would have helped  
13 the people in California to mitigate on future  
14 wildfires.

15 We know there are significant priorities  
16 in this state to help people, to help us be  
17 providing the needs and the services of our  
18 communities.

19 And \$230 million to be spent before  
20 November 4th, where it comes from, where they  
21 found \$230 million. What is not going to be  
22 spent, whether it's on education.

23 I deal with educators all the time, K  
24 through 12, higher education. Their budget cuts,  
25 their research cuts, cuts all across the board

1 because of a budget deficit. Has nothing to do  
2 with the federal government. The federal  
3 government doesn't fund elections. The State of  
4 California funds elections. And where is this  
5 money coming from?

6 The cost of this special election  
7 unbudgeted by the counties and not provided for  
8 the state budget, passed only two months ago,  
9 make a mockery of the budget process and an  
10 independent redistricting process.

11 I think to hyper politicize this effort is  
12 shameful. And I will speak, all the references  
13 to the President United States, I'm not here to  
14 defend him, but the Governor of this state  
15 obviously has future interests in this one. He  
16 wants to mobilize national attention. I will  
17 make this as a statement.

18 And that is what's driving everyone to  
19 march in order to ensure that he is positioned to  
20 run for President of the United States. We all  
21 know what he's doing to get national attention.

22 But to hold hostage the taxpayers of  
23 California to fulfill his political goals is  
24 inappropriate. So I'm obviously strongly  
25 opposed.

1           For these reasons, I'll be voting no. And  
2 I encourage others to realize the folly of this  
3 entire exercise. Thank you.

4           CHAIR WICKS: Would you like to respond or  
5 answer in your close?

6           SENATOR CERVANTES: Madam Chair, happy to  
7 answer in my close.

8           CHAIR WICKS: Okay.

9           And we have Mr. Solache.

10          ASSEMBLY MEMBER SOLACHE: Thank you, Madam  
11 Chair.

12          I just want to respectfully to my  
13 colleague say that I do not plan a march in order  
14 to support anyone 2028 yet, but I will march in  
15 order to support democracy and support the  
16 constituents in my district who are being  
17 snatched by these agents without documentation.

18          I am every day fear for my community that  
19 I represent. So this is an investment to our  
20 Californians that we owe.

21          I truly understand that we have to ensure  
22 that we safeguard our budget and I appreciate  
23 that. But this is a time where dollars at the  
24 federal level are at stake.

25          And Medi-Cal, Medicaid, I plan supporting

1 health care for our Californians. So in this  
2 case, we will make that investment to protect  
3 democracy in California. Thank you. And  
4 throughout America.

5 Because this is not a Republican issue, a  
6 Democrat issue. This is an American issue.  
7 Thank you.

8 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

9 Any other question?

10 Mr. Gonzalez.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GONZALEZ: Just to the  
12 Department of Finance. How much was the, I think  
13 it was in 2021, the special recall election that  
14 we had?

15 And then out of curiosity, there also was  
16 an election for Assembly District 63 where a  
17 former colleague was promoted to this  
18 administration and left that vacancy, costing  
19 taxpayers dollars in a special election as well  
20 because they did not fulfill their term. How  
21 much is that costing us?

22 MS. YAN: Good morning, Madam Chair and  
23 Members and staff of the Appropriations  
24 Committee. Millie Yan with Department of  
25 Finance.

1           Thank you, Assemblymember Gonzalez, for  
2 your question.

3           My understanding is that in 2022, for the  
4 Gubernatorial recall, 100 -- or \$270 million was  
5 appropriated for the effort, and approximately  
6 200 million was spent for the state and the  
7 counties.

8           And in terms of the AD 63 election, I  
9 don't have that information offhand, but I am  
10 happy to go back and get that information for  
11 you.

12           CHAIR WICKS: Thank you.

13           Any other questions from Committee  
14 Members?

15           Mr. Tangipa.

16           ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Good morning.

17           I just again have some very important  
18 fiscal questions. I represent the second-largest  
19 district in the state of California in the  
20 Assembly. I have six very rural, very small  
21 counties. Some of them have only three elections  
22 workers. I'm just trying to make sure this moves  
23 to where we want it to be.

24           They need to be made whole. They are  
25 trying to keep up with the mandates on the state.

1 There is a very big divide in this state and it's  
2 mainly urban versus rural than it really is right  
3 versus left when it comes to the financial side  
4 of things, which is what I am trying to focus on.

5 I just need to know, with this bill, the  
6 amount that is appropriated to it, is this a  
7 blank check, or do we have the dialed-in approach  
8 to how much funding is going to all of our county  
9 elections clerks to perform their duties?

10 We just need to know, are the current cost  
11 estimates that were granted right now because the  
12 state has a track record of being over  
13 400 percent over estimates. We need to rein that  
14 in.

15 If the Department of Finance has already  
16 admitted that there is a structural deficit next  
17 year, that is our responsibility as legislators  
18 in the State of California to be very mindful of  
19 the dollars and taxpayers that they are giving  
20 us.

21 Do we have all of those dialed in, or is  
22 it a blank check, or when a county says I just  
23 need more for this, that they're just  
24 automatically going to get it? Are we just going  
25 to allocate money? What is the appropriation

1 limit?

2 MS. YAN: DOF?

3 Thank you, Assemblymember Tangipa. I  
4 appreciate your concern over the costs.

5 SB 280 includes an appropriation for the  
6 Secretary of State and allows the state  
7 controller to allocate resources to counties  
8 based on a schedule that we are currently in  
9 development with the Secretary of State. So it  
10 is a moving -- it's a developing issue right now,  
11 and we are working with the Secretary of State to  
12 develop a schedule.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Do we have a  
14 cap? Do we have a cap on how much can be spent?  
15 Because I just -- I had to run a bill to put a  
16 cap on other projects in this state.

17 Is there a cap there? So that way we  
18 don't go from 250 million to half a billion  
19 dollars. And that is more than reasonable to  
20 expect with the track record of projects in this  
21 state.

22 MS. YAN: Thank you. I appreciate your  
23 concern about the costs.

24 We do have benchmarks from past efforts  
25 that we would hew close to.

1 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Okay. Thank  
2 you.

3 And now I have -- I reached out to almost  
4 all of my county elections clerks asking them,  
5 what financial questions do you have? How can  
6 you implement?

7 There are a lot of rules in this that also  
8 require them. Covid era regulations, additional  
9 Voters Choice Act.

10 Some of my counties are not Voters Choice  
11 Act simply because they don't have the personnel  
12 to do it when you're asking three people to show  
13 up. The labor laws in the state of California  
14 are very conflicting with the Voter Choice Act  
15 and the amount of work that they can do and they  
16 can't onboard and hire for a temporary special  
17 election.

18 All of those costs are specifically for  
19 Inyo county, Mono county, Mariposa county,  
20 Calaveras county and Tuolumne county. I am here  
21 to make sure that they can make up for it.

22 Because some of my counties just this past  
23 year have had to reduce their budgets because  
24 they can't afford the state mandates by  
25 15 percent. They are struggling very heavily.

1           So the question that they are asking is,  
2           this proposition would require significant  
3           redistricting implementation, if this is passed,  
4           by counties.

5           Is there an appropriation for this  
6           unscheduled portion of it after the election is  
7           happening, the mandate that is mandated -- with  
8           this mandated work that must be completed after  
9           the certification of the election on December 2nd  
10          and prior to the opening of signatures in lieu on  
11          December 19th?

12          Because they've got about two weeks, two  
13          weeks to redo all the districts, to open the  
14          signatures in lieu for the primary election.

15          Is there additional funding after the  
16          election is done appropriated to them to make  
17          this happen?

18          MS. YAN: Thank you for your concerns.

19          The intention is to provide funding to  
20          county elections officials in advance of the  
21          election, and we are working with the Secretary  
22          of State right now

23          ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: After the  
24          election?

25          MS. YAN: And in terms of that, that

1 is --this is a very developing issue that we will  
2 continue to look at as developments occur.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: I think we  
4 should all worry to be fiscally responsible in  
5 this state, to do our job as state electeds.

6 And what we heard right now and what my  
7 counties are watching right now is you are asking  
8 them to do something, to have a Hail Mary from  
9 the 99-yard line.

10 I've got three people in an elections  
11 office. I have very urban area. I have the  
12 fifth largest city in the entire state of  
13 California and I have the smallest community as  
14 well.

15 Shouldn't they have some consideration?  
16 And if we are going to take all of these dollars  
17 and punt them away for it, they are struggling  
18 now. Do we not expect them to struggle in the  
19 future? And how can we say that we are fiscally  
20 responsible --

21 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you, Mr. --

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: --and taking  
23 care of those dollars?

24 CHAIR PELLERIN: Thank you, Mr. --

25 ASSEMBLY MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you. It

1 should worry everybody.

2 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you Mr. Tangipa.

3 Any other questions or comments from  
4 Committee Members?

5 Ms. Cervantes, would you -- did you--

6 Ms. Caloza, did you want to speak? No.

7 Ms. Cervantes, would you like to close?

8 SENATOR CERVANTES: Yes, Madam Chair.

9 You know, I find it interesting some of  
10 the fiscally responsible questions that were just  
11 asked. You know, just yesterday in Assembly  
12 Elections Committee you're worried about us  
13 spending too much money. Now, today, you're  
14 worried about not having enough money. I  
15 certainly -- or it was the opposite.

16 You know, I certainly want to just  
17 highlight that it was -- the cost that we're  
18 talking about in this fiscal committee today, the  
19 costs are going to be just as much as a failed  
20 recall that your party placed on Governor Newsom.  
21 That was irresponsible. That wasn't fiscally  
22 responsible.

23 The cost that this election is going to  
24 cost is as much as a new ballroom that President  
25 Trump is going to build at the White House. Is

1 that fiscally responsible?

2 It's also half the cost of the  
3 retrofitting of the Boeing 747 that President  
4 Trump is questionably accepting from Qatar to  
5 build to have as his new Air Force One.

6 And today I do want to highlight, as was  
7 mentioned by the Department of Finance, that the  
8 counties will be made whole. The counties will  
9 be made whole.

10 Voters have a vested interest. They have  
11 a vested interest to say no more to Trump's power  
12 grab. And today, we will continue to move  
13 forward collectively and stand up against this  
14 authoritarian presidency. I respectfully asked  
15 for an aye vote.

16 CHAIR WICKS: Thank you, Ms. Cervantes,  
17 and appreciate the conversation today.

18 That is out on a B roll call. Thank you.

19 (End of SB 280 hearing.)  
20  
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26

1  
2 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER  
3

4 I, MARY ANN SCANLAN, hereby certify that  
5 I transcribed the California Assembly  
6 Appropriations Committee meeting held on  
7 August 18, 2025, as completely and correctly to  
8 the best of my ability.

9 I further state that pages 1 through 66,  
10 inclusive, constitute an accurate and complete  
11 transcription of the video recording for the  
12 proceedings specified.

13  
14 Dated: November 1, 2025  
15

16   
17  
18 Mary Ann Scanlan, CSR  
19  
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24

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IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING

TRANSCRIPTION OF VIDEO RECORDING

August 21, 2025

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**EXHIBIT**

**8**

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
Transcription of Video Recording on 08/21/2025

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TRANSCRIPTION OF VIDEO RECORDING

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE

CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 2025

TRANSCRIBED BY:

JULIE THOMPSON, CET

P R O C E E D I N G S

1 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please  
2 call the roll.

3 THE SECRETARY: Allen, Alvarado-Gil,  
4 Archuleta, Arreguin, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon,  
5 Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo,  
6 Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limon,  
7 McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla,  
8 Perez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-  
9 Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab,  
10 Weber Pierson, Wiener.

11 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: A quorum is  
12 present. Would the members and our guests beyond the  
13 rail and in the gallery, please rise.

14 We will be lead in prayer this morning by  
15 Senator Durazo, after which, please remain standing for  
16 the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

17 SENATOR DURAZO: Thank you, Madam  
18 President.

19 Merciful and compassionate God, we ask you  
20 to abide with us in all the needs of our lives, enable  
21 our caring to be wise, our support honest, and our  
22 concerns thoughtful.

23 May our loves as well as our fears be  
24 accurate. May our spirits be so open to your guidance  
25

1 that we will become faithfully daring, expectantly  
2 patient and responsibly hopeful with each other and with  
3 your people in our neighborhoods, our state, and our  
4 nation. We ask this in your name. Amen.

5 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Members, please  
6 join me in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

7 (Pledge of Allegiance)

8 Majority Leader, you are recognized at  
9 your desk.

10 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam  
11 President. We'll be calling a Democratic caucus in the  
12 Maddie Lounge immediately.

13 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Seyarto,  
14 you are recognized.

15 SENATOR SEYARTO: The Republicans will  
16 caucus as well.

17 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senate will recess  
18 for caucus.

19 (Recess taken for caucus)

20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Members of Senate  
21 will now reconvene. We are back at privileges of the  
22 floor. There are none.

23 Messages from the Governor will be deemed  
24 read. Messages from the Assembly will be deemed read.  
25 Reports of committees will be deemed read and amendments

1 adopted.

2 Members, just a reminder, pursuant to our  
3 rules, we may not debate more than two times on one  
4 measure on the same day.

5 We will now move to motions, resolutions  
6 and notices.

7 Senator Gonzalez, you are recognized at  
8 your desk.

9 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam  
10 President. I move that Senate Rule 29.10(d) be suspended  
11 as it relates to Senate Bill 2AT.

12 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: This is not  
13 debatable.

14 Senator Jones, you are recognized.

15 SENATOR JONES: Thank you, Madam  
16 President. I object to the motion and ask for a roll  
17 call vote.

18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

19 Senator Jones is asking for a no vote.  
20 Senator Gonzalez is asking for an aye vote.

21 Secretary, please call the roll.

22 THE SECRETARY: Allen.

23 Alvarado-Gil.

24 Archuleta

25 Aye.

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5

Arreguin.

Aye.

Ashby.

Aye.

Becker.

Aye.

Blakespear.

Aye.

Cabaldon.

Aye.

Caballero.

Cervantes.

Aye.

Choi.

No.

Cortese.

Aye.

Dahle.

No.

Durazo.

Aye.

Gonzalez.

Aye.

Grayson.

Aye.

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6

1 Grove.

2 Hurtado.

3 Aye.

4 Jones.

5 No.

6 Laird.

7 Aye.

8 Limon.

9 Aye.

10 McGuire.

11 Aye.

12 McNerney.

13 Aye.

14 Menjivar.

15 Aye.

16 Niello.

17 No.

18 Ochoa Bogh.

19 No.

20 Padilla.

21 Perez.

22 Reyes.

23 Richardson.

24 Aye.

25 Rubio.

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7

1 Seyarto.  
2 No.  
3 Smallwood-Cuevas.  
4 Aye.  
5 Stern.  
6 Aye.  
7 Strickland.  
8 No.  
9 Umberg.  
10 Aye.  
11 Valladares.  
12 No.  
13 Wahab.  
14 Aye.  
15 Weber Pierson.  
16 Aye.  
17 Wiener.  
18 Aye.  
19 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please  
20 call the absent members.  
21 THE SECRETARY: Allen.  
22 Aye.  
23 Alvarado-Gil.  
24 Caballero.  
25 Aye.

Grove.

No.

Padilla.

Aye.

Perez.

Aye.

Reyes.

Rubio.

Aye.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please  
call the absent members.

Alvarado-Gil.

Reyes.

Aye.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes, 30. Noes 0.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: 9.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: 9. Sorry. That  
measure carries.

Senator Gonzalez, you are recognized.

SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam  
President. I move that Senate Rule 19 be suspended as it  
relates to Assembly Constitutional Amendment 8.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: This is not  
debatable.

Senator Seyarto, you are recognized.

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9

1 SENATOR SEYARTO: Thank you, Madam  
2 President. In an effort to minimize our lawlessness and  
3 rule breaking, we simply ask for a no vote on this.  
4 Thank you.

5 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

6 Senator Seyarto is asking for a no vote.  
7 Senator Gonzalez is asking for an aye vote.

8 Secretary, please call the roll.

9 THE SECRETARY: Allen.

10 Aye.

11 Alvarado-Gil.

12 Archuleta.

13 Aye.

14 Arreguin.

15 Aye.

16 Ashby.

17 Aye.

18 Becker.

19 Aye.

20 Blakespear.

21 Aye.

22 Cabaldon.

23 Aye.

24 Caballero.

25 Aye.

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
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10

1 Cervantes.

2 Aye.

3 Choi.

4 No.

5 Cortese.

6 Aye.

7 Dahle.

8 No.

9 Durazo.

10 Aye.

11 Gonzalez.

12 Aye.

13 Grayson.

14 Aye.

15 Grove.

16 No.

17 Hurtado.

18 Aye.

19 Jones.

20 No.

21 Laird.

22 Aye.

23 Limon.

24 Aye.

25 McGuire.

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11

1 Aye.

2 McNerney.

3 Aye.

4 Menjivar.

5 Aye.

6 Niello.

7 No.

8 Ochoa Bogh.

9 No.

10 Padilla.

11 Aye.

12 Perez.

13 Aye.

14 Reyes.

15 Aye.

16 Richardson.

17 Aye.

18 Rubio.

19 Aye.

20 Seyarto.

21 No.

22 Smallwood-Cuevas.

23 Aye.

24 Stern.

25 Aye.

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
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12

Strickland.

No.

Umberg.

Aye.

Valladares.

No.

Wahab.

Aye.

Weber Pierson.

Aye.

Wiener.

Aye.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes, 30. Noes,

9. The rules are suspended.

Senator Gonzalez, you are recognized at  
your desk.

SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam  
President. There is a resolution at the desk requesting  
that Joint Rule 10.5 be suspended as it relates to  
Assembly Constitutional Amendment 8.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, can you  
please read the resolution?

THE SECRETARY: Resolve that Joint Rule  
10.5 be dispensed with.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: This is also

1 non-debatable.

2 Senator Seyarto, you are recognized at  
3 your desk.

4 SENATOR SEYARTO: Thank you, Madam  
5 President. I'd like to make a substitute motion that ACA  
6 8, because of its costs, be referred to the Committee on  
7 Appropriations for a full hearing and vote since it was  
8 not done before.

9 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator, I  
10 apologize, but your motion is not in order. It does need  
11 to be approved by the Rules Committee.

12 SENATOR SEYARTO: I wish to appeal that  
13 ruling. It should be.

14 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: We will now appeal  
15 vote to appeal the ruling of the chair. I put the  
16 question to the body. Shall the ruling of the Chair be  
17 upheld?

18 Secretary, please read -- call the roll.

19 Senator Seyarto is asking for a no vote.  
20 I am asking for an aye vote.

21 THE SECRETARY: Allen.

22 Aye.

23 Alvarado-Gil.

24 Archuleta.

25 Aye.

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
Transcription of Video Recording on 08/21/2025

14

Arreguin.

Aye.

Ashby.

Aye.

Becker.

Aye.

Blakespear.

Aye.

Cabaldon.

Caballero.

Aye.

Cervantes.

Aye.

Choi.

No.

Cortese.

Aye.

Dahle.

No.

Durazo.

Aye.

Gonzalez.

Aye.

Grayson.

Aye.

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
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15

1 Grove.

2 No.

3 Hurtado.

4 Aye.

5 Jones.

6 No.

7 Laird.

8 Aye.

9 Limon.

10 Aye.

11 McGuire.

12 Aye.

13 McNerney.

14 Aye.

15 Menjivar.

16 Aye.

17 Niello.

18 No.

19 Ochoa Bogh.

20 No.

21 Padilla.

22 Aye.

23 Perez.

24 Aye.

25 Reyes.

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
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16

1 Aye.  
2 Richardson.  
3 Aye.  
4 Rubio.  
5 Aye.  
6 Seyarto.  
7 No.  
8 Smallwood-Cuevas.  
9 Aye.  
10 Stern.  
11 Aye.  
12 Strickland.  
13 No.  
14 Umberg.  
15 Aye.  
16 Valladares.  
17 No.  
18 Wahab.  
19 Aye.  
20 Weber Pierson.  
21 Aye.  
22 Wiener.  
23 Aye.  
24 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please  
25 call the absent members.

1 THE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil.  
2 Cabaldon.  
3 Aye.  
4 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes, 30. Noes,  
5 9. The ruling stands.  
6 We'll go back to the motion that was made  
7 by Senator Gonzalez.  
8 Secretary, please call the roll.  
9 THE SECRETARY: Allen.  
10 Aye.  
11 Alvarado-Gil.  
12 Archuleta.  
13 Aye.  
14 Arreguin.  
15 Aye.  
16 Ashby.  
17 Aye.  
18 Becker.  
19 Aye.  
20 Blakespear.  
21 Aye.  
22 Cabaldon.  
23 Aye.  
24 Caballero.  
25 Aye.

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
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18

1 Cervantes.

2 Aye.

3 Choi.

4 No.

5 Cortese.

6 Aye.

7 Dahle.

8 No.

9 Durazo.

10 Aye.

11 Gonzalez.

12 Aye.

13 Grayson.

14 Aye.

15 Grove.

16 No.

17 Hurtado.

18 Aye.

19 Jones.

20 Laird.

21 Aye.

22 Limon.

23 Aye.

24 McGuire.

25 Aye.

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
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19

McNerney.

Aye.

Menjivar.

Aye.

Niello.

No.

Ochoa Bogh.

No.

Padilla.

Aye.

Perez.

Aye.

Reyes.

Aye.

Richardson.

Aye.

Rubio.

Aye.

Seyarto.

No.

Smallwood-Cuevas.

Aye.

Stern.

Aye.

Strickland.

No.

Umberg.

Aye.

Valladares.

No.

Wahab.

Aye.

Weber Pierson.

Aye.

Wiener.

Aye.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes --

THE SECRETARY: Jones, no.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes, 30. Noes,

9. Joint rules are suspended.

Senator Valladares, you are recognized.

SENATOR VALLADARES: Thank you, Madam

President. I move to remove AB 1214 from the from the  
consent file at the request of the author.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: The desk will  
note.

Not seeing any other members wishing to  
remove anything from the consent file, we will now move  
to consideration of the daily file. We will begin with  
second reading file.

Secretary, please read.

THE SECRETARY: Assembly Bill 42 with  
amendments, 1255 with amendments, 1003 with amendments,  
696 with amendments.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Second reading  
will be deemed read. We will now move to assembly third  
reading file item 226 AB 604 by Senator Gonzalez.

Secretary, please read.

THE SECRETARY: Assembly Bill 604 by  
Assembly Member Aguiar-Curry. An act relating to  
redistricting and declaring the urgency thereof to take  
effect immediately.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Gonzalez,  
you are recognized.

SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam  
President and Senators. I rise today as a proud joint  
author to present AB 604, which is a reasonable and  
rational response to the anti-Democratic actions of the  
Republican party as they attempt to rig our congressional  
elections.

AB 604 contains the census block data that  
will define the temporary congressional districts that we  
are being forced to adopt through the actions of the  
President and his complicit party leaders.

Just yesterday, the Texas House passed an

1 aggressively partisan map giving President Trump the  
2 gerrymander he requested to produce five new Republican  
3 seats in the U.S. House next year. These undemocratic  
4 actions are a betrayal to the values of our great nation  
5 and to the people we all swore to represent, defend, and  
6 protect.

7 Unlike Texas' actions, the decision to  
8 approve the temporary maps outlined in this bill will  
9 ultimately be in the hands of California voters. This  
10 bill gives voters a choice. A choice to keep the current  
11 districts or adopt maps to counter the actions of MAGA  
12 extremists in Texas who are obediently working to tip the  
13 scales for President Trump.

14 Despite the minority party's hypocrisy and  
15 their attempts to confuse the narrative with sound bites  
16 and tweets, the truth is clear that the maps are based on  
17 the work, comments, and hearings of the Independent  
18 Citizens Redistricting Commission, which is a bipartisan  
19 commission.

20 In hearings over the last few days, I was  
21 actually very shocked to learn of the minority party's  
22 well-timed epiphany that independent redistricting  
23 commissions are actually beneficial to voters and  
24 democracy. Well, what do you know?

25 This timely awakening of the Republican

1 Party is actually very surprising given that members of  
2 the party have voted against redistricting bills and  
3 reform bills for independent redistricting on at least 30  
4 different occasions over the last 14 years in this state.

5 I'm hopeful that my colleagues across the  
6 aisle will use their newfound enthusiasm for  
7 redistricting reform to reach out to their colleagues and  
8 to the President in D.C. If you have his number in your  
9 phone book, please call him and demand that they adopt  
10 these commissions nationwide and stop the President's  
11 illegal gerrymandering efforts so we can shelf the bill  
12 and get back to serving our constituents and the daily  
13 needs that they have.

14 As this body is now on the same page on  
15 the value of the Independent Redistricting Commission, I  
16 think it's important to highlight how the temporary maps  
17 described in this bill are grounded in the Commission's  
18 work. The adjustments in the maps are as follows.

19 Again, they were supported by maps and  
20 testimony submitted by the public, commissioner  
21 testimony, and draft or completed commission maps. They  
22 also include eight districts that will be identical to  
23 the lines drawn by the Commission. And as I mentioned  
24 over and over again in committee, over 76 percent of  
25 Californians will actually be in their same congressional

1 district; 58 percent of the maps in this bill are changed  
2 by less than 20 percent, and 37 percent are changed by  
3 less than 10 percent.

4 The redistricting commission that  
5 completed the work and the maps that are rooted in this  
6 work was comprised of five Republicans, five Democrats  
7 and four no party preference individuals who did the hard  
8 work to create over 76 percent of the maps you see in  
9 this bill, demonstrating the real independence and non-  
10 partisanship that informed the original maps and guided  
11 these temporary maps.

12 Members, the greatest consequence for us  
13 today is inaction. Today, the decks are stacked against  
14 us, so what we have to do is fight back. We know that  
15 right now President Trump is gutting vital programs and  
16 increasing economic uncertainty and chaos to some of our  
17 most vulnerable Californians.

18 Medicaid cut \$1 trillion over the next  
19 decade with California at risk of losing 28 billion in  
20 federal funding. That puts 3.4 million Californians at  
21 risk. 3.1 families will lose SNAP food assistance  
22 benefits, mostly children. Billions will be cut from  
23 classrooms and institutes of higher learning. UCLA is  
24 being ransomed by President Trump now for \$1 billion.

25 This is what we're talking about here.

1 California stands to lose so much more. Over 7.8 billion  
2 in lost tax revenue due to the Trump tax tariffs. And  
3 the list goes on and on, and our communities absolutely  
4 deserve better.

5 What do we do? Just sit back and do  
6 nothing? Or do we fight back and provide some chance for  
7 our Californians to see themselves in this democracy?

8 And while the minority party will continue  
9 to misdirect and misinform the public today, with  
10 dramatic ties and cries about transparency, process, and  
11 rushed timelines, the truth is that they hold the power  
12 to stop all of this. It's very clear. You all hold the  
13 power to stop this today.

14 And again, actions do have consequences  
15 and if the Republican party truly wanted to stop these  
16 temporary maps, again, you have the power to do so. And  
17 by voting against this today, that means you are  
18 unwilling to stand up against a dictator, a leader that  
19 has taken so much from our most vulnerable constituents,  
20 regardless if they live in Republican or Democratic  
21 districts.

22 Again, I will close by sharing that AB 604  
23 is a temporary solution that provides California voters  
24 with the final say so that we don't tip the scales and  
25 allow this unchecked power to continue. This is how we

1 fight back and protect our democracy. I respectfully  
2 request an aye vote on this bill.

3 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

4 Senator Blakespear, you are recognized.

5 SENATOR BLAKESPEAR: Thank you, Madam  
6 President.

7 Members, we could debate many details here  
8 today, but here's the bottom line. Republicans are  
9 trying to cheat to win congressional midterm elections  
10 under their unpopular President, and Democrats are  
11 fighting back. This is about trying to level the  
12 national playing field so we can have something close to  
13 fair elections for Congress in 2026, period. Full stop.

14 Republicans are trying to corrupt  
15 democracy; Democrats are trying to honor it. Republicans  
16 can say what they want, but their party started this  
17 madness, racing to gerrymander in Texas and other  
18 Republican controlled states to stack the deck for  
19 themselves in next year's election.

20 Yes. It is lamentable that we are pausing  
21 California's superior process for drawing districts  
22 through a nonpartisan citizen commission that was started  
23 17 years ago, but that was a different political time,  
24 under different political circumstances; and it was a  
25 different electorate. We're giving the voters a choice

1 to be politically relevant. It would be naive and  
2 foolish to stick to an old model, an old set of rules,  
3 when Texas and likely other Republican states are  
4 rewriting the rules to rig the game.

5 The Trump Administration has made clear in  
6 all of its actions that it believes might makes right,  
7 that it has no respect for the U.S. Constitution, the  
8 separation of powers, the courts, or the democratic  
9 process. Corrupting our elections is the first step  
10 toward fake elections. Donald Trump is trying to remake  
11 America in Russia's image. Total control, no dissent, no  
12 democracy, fake news and fake elections.

13 What did we learn at the outset of the  
14 second World War? That aggressors and bullies take  
15 whatever you give them. There is no appeasing them. The  
16 only way to counter aggressors and bullies and wannabe  
17 autocrats like Donald Trump is to challenge them and to  
18 fight them straight up.

19 There are many decent people in this  
20 chamber, both Democrats and Republicans. All of us are  
21 committed to serving constituents and doing what's best  
22 for California. We do have our disagreements on policy  
23 and on politics, and we work through them as best we can  
24 to serve the people who elected us. But today's debate  
25 is not about California politics. It's about national

1 politics. It's about owning up to the realities of the  
2 national political landscape and a Republican President  
3 who will stop at nothing to consolidate power, including  
4 corrupting congressional midterm elections. And we in  
5 California cannot stand idly by and do nothing.

6 And with that, I am proud to be a strong  
7 aye for this measure.

8 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

9 Senator Strickland, you are recognized at  
10 your desk.

11 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Questions for the  
12 author.

13 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Will the author  
14 take a question?

15 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Absolutely.

16 SENATOR STRICKLAND: It was stated that  
17 Governor Newsom announced that this legislation and  
18 ballot measure has the explicit goal of electing more  
19 Democrats in response to Texas redistricting. Would you,  
20 therefore, agree with Governor Newsom that the  
21 predominant purpose why we're here today of this  
22 constitutional amendment is to redraw these maps to elect  
23 more members of the Democratic party to the House of  
24 Representatives?

25 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Through the President,

1 thank you, Madam President.

2 Thank you for the question. I would say  
3 again, Texas started this. It is very clear. And when  
4 our democracy is at stake, as been mentioned, when there  
5 are millions of people in California that will be kicked  
6 off of Medicaid and kicked off of SNAP benefits because  
7 of your party's control, we absolutely have to react.  
8 And that means doing this bill today, AB 604. And that  
9 means ensuring that the voters of California in November  
10 have a say. They will have a say ultimately.

11 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Okay. So it sounds  
12 like the answer is yes.

13 Another question for the author.

14 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.  
15 Excuse me.

16 Will the author take another question?

17 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yes.

18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: You may proceed.

19 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Did you use the 2020  
20 census to draw these maps?

21 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Through the President,  
22 thank you for the question again. Over 76 percent of the  
23 maps that you see here today are based off of the 2020  
24 Redistricting Commission, which is a bipartisan  
25 commission that we all like to praise. And I'm hopeful

1 that at the end of this that we actually get your side of  
2 the aisle to support a nationwide independent  
3 redistricting commission plan. Provisions of that are  
4 included in the ACA 8 which will be taken up later today.  
5 And that is the hope is that we can do that.

6 But yes, absolutely, over 77 percent.  
7 There's minor tweaks to this bill, as has been mentioned  
8 -- or to the to the previous maps, as has been mentioned.

9 SENATOR STRICKLAND: So it sounds like the  
10 answer is yes, they used the 2020 census. Because I  
11 found it interesting. I'll get to that later.

12 Another question for the author.

13 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Will the author  
14 take the third question?

15 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yes.

16 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Under current law the  
17 Legislature cannot draw the lines, but it's been reported  
18 this week that the Legislature draw the lines, but no  
19 member of either body of the Senate or Assembly has said  
20 they participated in drawing these lines.

21 One, did you draw these lines or had any  
22 influence on these lines? And two, what member of the  
23 Legislature participated in drawing these lines?

24 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: You may proceed.

25 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you. Again, the

1 Legislature has the constitutional right to send an  
2 amendment to the voters, which we will be doing later  
3 today. And the voters will have the ultimate say. The  
4 maps have been online since Friday evening. A very  
5 public process, which -- and the Assembly and the Senate  
6 both had portals. Thank you to the election chairs, the  
7 good senator from Riverside as well as the good Assembly  
8 member from the central coast providing a ton -- the maps  
9 online on Friday and soliciting thousands -- thousands of  
10 responses, which folks can do even today.

11 And in fact what was stated in the  
12 committee as well is that the voters now will have over  
13 70 days to actually, before they make a vote -- hit the  
14 ballot box on November 4th, will have over 70 days to  
15 view these maps, which is incredible. It's actually many  
16 times more than the current redistricting process we have  
17 through the Independent Redistricting Commission which  
18 only allows 14 days. So that is the current process as  
19 it stands now.

20 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Okay. Thank you for  
21 an answer because under the current constitution no  
22 member is allowed to adjust these lines. So my next --

23 A question for the author.

24 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Will the author  
25 take a fourth question?

1 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yes.

2 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Who has seen these  
3 maps in the Legislature before they were introduced in  
4 the Legislature and when did you see them the first time?

5 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Again, Friday they were  
6 all available publicly online. The Assembly, the Senate  
7 provided opportunity for the public to see these maps.  
8 And you have what we have now. There were slight tweaks  
9 made in amendments this past Monday, which we all  
10 debated, and now we're in the midst of continuing to view  
11 those maps and solicit input from the public. And again,  
12 ultimately, the California voters will vote on this.

13 SENATOR STRICKLAND: A follow-up question  
14 on that same. So is your testimony or your statement  
15 here today that no member of the Legislature saw these  
16 maps before they were public?

17 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Again, I will reiterate  
18 that these maps were available publicly on Friday and we  
19 had the ability, all of us, to solicit our residents and  
20 provide additional -- they had the ability to provide  
21 additional input. And so that's what we're doing today.

22 And what we're not talking about,  
23 unfortunately, is the fact that, you know, Texas has  
24 continuously gerrymandered mid-cycle. Texas has, every  
25 single year since 1965, violated the Voting Rights Act,

1 every single time. We're going down a rabbit hole here  
2 on transparency and all of the procedural matters. But  
3 what's not included here is the reaction that Texas,  
4 your colleagues in Texas, have continuously violated the  
5 Voting Rights Act, have continuously mid-cycle  
6 gerrymandered. It's unfortunate.

7 SENATOR STRICKLAND: So on my own time, it  
8 sounds like the statements today is that no member of  
9 this Legislature saw these maps before they were public.  
10 And we all know that's not true and I'm encouraging the  
11 media to follow up with every member of the Legislature  
12 because under current constitution, not one member in  
13 this body, on either house, is allowed to adjust a map.  
14 And it was reported that there was different members that  
15 adjusted these maps. And if you wanted to do it  
16 correctly, you should have gone to the people of  
17 California, get the authority, and then draw the maps.

18 So any member here -- let's be crystal  
19 clear, and I'm asking the media to follow up. Any member  
20 here that adjusted these maps violated the constitution  
21 today and is again -- evasive answers that we know that  
22 now, it just shows that there's no transparency because  
23 no one can answer one member on this floor that had  
24 participated in drawing these maps.

25 You say it's the Legislature. You're the

1 author, but you didn't have any participation in these  
2 maps. Again, that's not transparency and I'm urging The  
3 media to follow up with each and every one of these  
4 members as this moves forward -- if you get the  
5 two-thirds vote, which I believe you will -- to ask these  
6 questions.

7 Now, if I had the power, as was stated --  
8 and by the way, I don't know one member of the Texas  
9 Legislature. Not one. I was elected here in California,  
10 not Texas. And it was stated in the opening, "You have  
11 the power to shut this down." If I had the power to stop  
12 this, I would stop it. I'm telling the media right now,  
13 if the Republicans in California had the power to stop  
14 this, we would stop this today. And they are  
15 misrepresenting what is the actual truth moving forward.

16 Redistricting commission -- let's make it  
17 clear. The nonpartisan redistricting commission --

18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Excuse me.  
19 Senator Strickland, if you can please address the body  
20 and not the media when you're speaking.

21 SENATOR STRICKLAND: I'm looking around my  
22 other colleagues. I could look around my whole --

23 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Excuse me, Senator  
24 Strickland.

25 SENATOR STRICKLAND: I'm only allowed to

1 look forward?

2 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Please look at me  
3 while you are making your address. Thank you.

4 SENATOR STRICKLAND: That's a new rule  
5 that I haven't heard of before.

6 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: I would appreciate  
7 if you comply.

8 SENATOR STRICKLAND: I've been here over a  
9 decade.

10 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Everything is  
11 through the presiding officer. Thank you.

12 SENATOR STRICKLAND: It is through the  
13 presiding officer.

14 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Exactly. So you  
15 can direct your comments to me or if you have a question,  
16 you can direct it --

17 SENATOR STRICKLAND: So let's be clear --

18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Excuse me.

19 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Okay.

20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: If you have a  
21 question, you can direct it to that member. But if  
22 you're speaking, please direct it to the presiding  
23 officer. Thank you.

24 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Thank you.

25 Let's be clear. It was stated in the

1 opening that the Nonpartisan Redistricting Commission  
2 drew these lines and these maps. That's a false. They  
3 might have took it as a blueprint, but the Nonpartisan  
4 Redistricting Commission did not draw these maps as it  
5 was stated in the opening. Again, people are trying to  
6 be misled of what this actually is.

7 Members, this week's actions demonstrate  
8 why we need a Nonpartisan Citizens' Redistricting  
9 Commission, and why it was passed in the first place.

10 For my colleagues on the other side, who I  
11 deeply respect, sometimes I believe you think the ends  
12 justify the means. Let's go through what happened this  
13 week with no transparency, no input from the community  
14 across the state to draw these maps. And these maps were  
15 drawn behind closed doors with the Governor and, what I  
16 understand, legislative leadership. No one admits that  
17 they had any participation in these maps. They just came  
18 out with thin air.

19 But again, let's look what happened this  
20 week in terms of transparency. You violated your own  
21 rule, the 30 day rule, to push this through. No one will  
22 admit that they drew these maps.

23 And to the media, I'm saying you need to  
24 move forward as this moves forward, to the famous line,  
25 what did they know, and when did they know it? Which

1 lawmakers saw these maps and had influence on these maps?  
2 Who paid for these maps? And the lack of transparency  
3 keeps going on and on and on.

4 Let's see what we have here today,  
5 currently, before you go to the voters in November. What  
6 we have here today is the gold standard for redistricting  
7 nationally. It should be the national model and not  
8 thrown out. It's something that we should brag about  
9 here in the state of California. The fact that the  
10 people pick the lines, not the politicians.

11 We have full transparency. In fact, we  
12 have hundreds -- hundreds of hearings throughout the  
13 state of California, in every corner of the state of  
14 California, so citizens can participate in the drawing of  
15 these maps that keep communities together of whole cities  
16 and counties. And the lines are drawn in public in front  
17 of everybody, in front of the world.

18 Members, fair districts lead to fair  
19 representation, and if you pass this bill moving forward,  
20 and if it passes in November, which I don't believe it  
21 will, but if it does, what you're striving for is  
22 predetermined elections, meaning that there won't be one  
23 competitive race for Congress in California for the next  
24 three cycles. Members, that's not good for Democrats,  
25 Independents, and Republicans. You're taking the voice

1 away from Californians in terms of having fair  
2 representation and earning the trust of your voters. Not  
3 having a predetermined election.

4 Here in California, we have a system where  
5 citizens pick the representatives and not politicians  
6 picking the citizens. That's what you want to throw  
7 away. And what I heard from many of my colleagues on the  
8 other side, this is going to be temporary. From my  
9 experience, and I have over a decade of experience here,  
10 nothing is temporary when you do it. Former President  
11 Ronald Reagan said it best. "We have long discovered  
12 that nothing lasts longer than a temporary government  
13 program."

14 Even this week, the assembly elections  
15 chair stated that the Democrats should do what we're  
16 doing here today in 2030. It was quoted already. So  
17 when you say to the people of California, this is  
18 temporary, my experience is nothing's temporary here. I  
19 don't believe one second that this will be temporary and  
20 neither should the people of California.

21 Now, I do have a Joint Resolution 10.  
22 It's not up yet. I put it across the desk. But it says  
23 we should have nonpartisan redistricting districts and  
24 make it a model nationwide.

25 I do believe it is wrong for Texas to do

1 this. I do believe it's wrong for Illinois to do this.  
2 I do believe it's wrong for every other state where the  
3 politicians pick their citizens. It is wrong. Both on  
4 the Democrat and Republican side. We should be promoting  
5 what we do here in California, not throwing it away. And  
6 that's what you're going to do if this is successful.  
7 You're going to take what is the national model for  
8 redistricting and putting power in the people, and you're  
9 going to take it back to put in the power of the  
10 politicians; so you don't have to really earn the vote of  
11 your constituents because the election will be  
12 predetermined.

13 I also support Congressman Kevin Kiley's  
14 legislation that bans mid-decade redistricting  
15 nationwide. Members, I heard that Speaker Pelosi and  
16 other Democrats from the DCCC from California were here.  
17 What would be more constructive is that you jump on board  
18 to Kevin Kiley's bill, pass it on the national level, and  
19 therefore, we won't have mid-decade redistricting.

20 So members, again, going back to the  
21 census 2020, there's been massive population shifts since  
22 2020. And when you look at these maps, for example, Los  
23 Angeles has lost representation in the last five years,  
24 but under these maps, they pick up a seat. The Inland  
25 Empire has gained population over the last five years,

1 but they lose a seat.

2 And it's very clear in federal law that  
3 these districts have to be equal in representation. So  
4 if you use the 2020 census, as was stated here before us,  
5 this will be thrown out by courts because it is very  
6 crystal clear that the deviation that you have when you  
7 draw congressional districts is very, very small.

8 And members, you know this is wrong. You  
9 know what you're doing today is wrong. You know it's not  
10 good for democracy in California. And you weren't  
11 elected by anybody. You weren't elected by the people of  
12 Illinois. You weren't elected by the people of Texas.  
13 You weren't elected by the people of New York or North  
14 Carolina. You were elected by the people of California,  
15 and you were elected to defend the constitution. The  
16 Constitution -- again, I believe my colleagues, whether  
17 you knew it or not, violated the oath of the constitution  
18 that you swore to.

19 And I do believe -- I understand, but the  
20 ends don't justify the means. You know this is bad for  
21 Independents, Democrats, and Republicans throughout the  
22 State of California. I want you to look deep inside your  
23 soul and you know this is wrong moving forward. You know  
24 this is not good for democracy in California, and I'm  
25 urging your no vote. Thank you.

1 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you.

2 Madam President, may I respond?

3 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: So would you like  
4 to respond in your close?

5 SENATOR GONZALEZ: I can do that too, but  
6 I just wanted to make sure that it was known, if I may,  
7 just to refute some of the misinformation that had been  
8 put out.

9 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Can you hold on  
10 for just one moment?

11 SENATOR STRICKLAND: You're going to  
12 respond to every speaker?

13 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Gonzalez,  
14 unless someone has asked you a specific question, which  
15 there was not a question, we're going to have you use  
16 those in your close.

17 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Okay.

18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Niello,  
19 you are recognized at your desk.

20 SENATOR NIELLO: Thank you, Madam  
21 President.

22 Members, I hope you will indulge me for a  
23 moment for a bit of digression into some political  
24 history. No misdirection, just the facts, ma'am. In  
25 2008, Proposition 11 was put on the ballot to establish

1 the commission for redistricting for state legislators,  
2 and I think also the BOE. And my friend from West  
3 Sacramento was correct in the -- I think the assembly  
4 elections committee yesterday when he said that that bill  
5 barely passed. It was definitely a squeaker. Maybe less  
6 than 1 percent over 50 percent. That's correct. There  
7 is a rest of the story, though, which I'll get to in a  
8 moment.

9                   Importantly, one main opponent to that  
10 Proposition was the California State Democratic Party.  
11 Well, what do you know? Now, fast forward, 2010.  
12 Proposition 20 was placed on the ballot to perhaps  
13 correct an incompleteness of the previous Proposition 11 to  
14 add congressional districts to the commission's  
15 responsibility. That's what we're talking about here,  
16 congressional districts. Not what Proposition 11 did,  
17 only state offices, but congressional districts.

18                   Now, the rest of the story. That  
19 proposition passed overwhelmingly. Over 60 percent of  
20 the vote. Interestingly, there was very little  
21 opposition to that proposition. Now, this is important.  
22 There was a reason for that. What is the easiest way to  
23 defeat a proposition? That's where misdirection comes  
24 in. Confusion.

25                   There was also, on that ballot,

1 Proposition 27, which proposed to completely abolish the  
2 redistricting commission. Get rid of it. Not maintain  
3 it, which we're talking about supposedly here, but get  
4 rid of it. The ostensible proponent for that in the  
5 literature was UCLA professor and former chair of the  
6 Fair Political Practices Commission, Daniel Lowenstein.  
7 But he said the real sponsors were democratic members of  
8 Congress.

9 Well, what do you know? The contributors  
10 to that campaign, which ranged from 5000 to \$225,000,  
11 were Judy Chu, Anna Ashu, Zoe Lofgren, Nancy Pelosi,  
12 Doris Matsui. Our own colleague here from San Pedro who  
13 was in Congress at the time, Linda Sanchez, and Adam  
14 Schiff, as well as a number of others who are no longer  
15 in Congress.

16 The confusion didn't work. What was the  
17 result of that competing measure? It was defeated by  
18 almost an exact mirror image by which Proposition 20  
19 passed. It was defeated with 60 percent saying no. So  
20 now comes a convenient opportunity, very convenient  
21 opportunity. Governor Newsom wants five more democratic  
22 congressional seats.

23 And Democrats see an opportunity for  
24 California taxpayers to pay for what they could not get  
25 with Proposition 27 in 2010. It has, after all, been

1 reported that the DCC has been involved with the current  
2 effort.

3 A quarter billion dollars, or whatever the  
4 amount is to fund this partisan effort to thwart the will  
5 of the voters, is absolutely unacceptable. Members just  
6 history, not misdirection. Those are just the facts,  
7 ma'am. I urge a no vote.

8 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

9 Senator Grayson, you are recognized at  
10 your desk.

11 SENATOR GRAYSON: Thank you, Madam  
12 President. I do have a question to the author.

13 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Will the author  
14 take a question?

15 SENATOR GRAYSON: Thank you very much.  
16 First, I have two questions. I'll just ask them both and  
17 then answer all in one. The first one is the actions  
18 taken by Texas, are they permanent or temporary? And  
19 does Texas practice midcycle redistricting?

20 And then -- so that was a two part  
21 question on the first one. And the second question is,  
22 for redistricting bills, I believe there was some  
23 reference made to that. Could there be -- could the  
24 author elaborate on what was talked about as far as some  
25 redistricting bills that had been opposed?

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: You may proceed.

1  
2 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you for the  
3 question. And yes, first question, Texas' actions --  
4 their action yesterday is actually permanent. There is  
5 no temporary aspect to the gerrymandering they just  
6 approved yesterday through their House midcycle.  
7 Redistricting is a constant and there's no input for  
8 Texas voters to weigh in. Very opposite from what we're  
9 doing here. Ours is temporary until 2030. And of  
10 course, we are letting the voters decide whether to do  
11 this midcycle or not, which we are doing through a  
12 constitutional amendment. So we are absolutely doing  
13 that.

14 On the second piece, thank you for your  
15 question on redistricting. Now, as mentioned, just as of  
16 last year, there have been over 30 bills last year and up  
17 until going back to about 2014, where a number of bills  
18 had been presented in this body to support an independent  
19 redistricting commission in various parts of the State of  
20 California, in places like San Luis Obispo, and  
21 Sacramento and Orange County, Riverside, Fresno, Kern.  
22 And all of those bills and efforts to establish an  
23 independent citizens' redistricting committee in all  
24 parts of the state of California had been voted no by my  
25 colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

1 And so I'm not understanding what they're  
2 saying in terms of wanting now an opportunity to have an  
3 independent redistricting commission be the end all say  
4 all while we're sitting here getting attacked by  
5 President Trump on our democracy.

6 SENATOR GRAYSON: Thank you for that  
7 additional information. If I may, through the chair,  
8 would this -- and this is just a hypothetical question on  
9 my part or maybe not. Would this measure impact any  
10 other districts outside of congressional districts? The  
11 answer is no.

12 And another question is who will  
13 ultimately -- ultimately have the final say on this  
14 matter? And the answer is the voters of the state of  
15 California.

16 Senators, I rise in support of this  
17 measure. Throughout my life and throughout my career, I  
18 have been guided by some very simple and basic values.  
19 First and foremost among them, fairness and respect with  
20 commitment to be fair and respectful of my neighbors and  
21 also to respect the rule of law.

22 This is an impactful day, especially for  
23 all of us here in California, which is why the mid-decade  
24 redistricting efforts being conducted by other states  
25 certainly appear to undermine these values in pursuit of

1 power, simply for the sake of power.

2 And what is most troubling to me is that  
3 these efforts appear to be equivalent of changing the  
4 rules of a game after it has started. Imagine a football  
5 game that is tied at halftime and one team comes out for  
6 the second half declaring that for the rest of the game  
7 their touchdowns are worth twice as many points. Is that  
8 just. Is that justice? Is this not the situation we  
9 face here where a number of states have decided to change  
10 the rules of redistricting to at halftime?

11 Senators, we are literally at halftime in  
12 this redistricting match that we now find ourselves in; 5  
13 years into a 10-year cycle facing the same situation as  
14 the hypothetical football game that was just described.  
15 Fairness would dictate that either all the touchdowns are  
16 worth twice as many points or none of the touchdowns are  
17 worth twice as many points. Justice would dictate that  
18 we all abide by the same rules regardless of the game,  
19 which is exactly why we're here today. Thank you.

20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

21 Senator Choi, you are recognized.

22 SENATOR CHOI: Thank you, Madam and the  
23 Members.

24 I rise today in strong opposition to this  
25 proposal for special election to redraw our congressional

1 districts in California. Many points have been raised,  
2 and Texas has been described as a bad actor. Very  
3 interesting. And then also the regulations on the sports  
4 and halftime changing the rules. I would like to apply  
5 these two points. If Texas was a bad actor, are you  
6 supposed to follow the bad actor? If somebody runs  
7 through a red light or kills somebody, you do the same  
8 thing? I mean that's exactly what we are trying to do.  
9 And as a model for Texas, it's a model we now follow  
10 whatever Texas does. If you say that that action is  
11 wrong, just let's don't do that. Isn't it more common  
12 sense?

13 Now many points in this direction we can  
14 argue about but let me focus on this measures in another  
15 sense, not urgent item. It is not necessary. It is  
16 certainly not affordable. Let me focus on the financial  
17 aspect of that. In California, we have projected to face  
18 \$12 billion of deficit in the coming year. You all know  
19 that. Every dollar matters. Yet this proposal would  
20 drain an estimated a quarter billion dollars of general  
21 budget just to conduct a special election. This is money  
22 we do not have and the money that could be put to far  
23 better use.

24 Think about what a quarter billion dollars  
25 can do or represents. It could finance tens of thousands

1 of childcare slots for working families. It could  
2 support financial aid for thousands of college students  
3 struggling with tuition. It could keep after school  
4 programs and mental health services available for our  
5 children. It can fund public safety and wildfire  
6 prevention programs at a time when California depend on  
7 them most.

8 In order to help close the \$12 billion  
9 state budget deficit, the supermajority decided to cut  
10 California Peer-Run Warm Line in Orange County. A key  
11 program that has provided a free 24/7 mental health  
12 service to millions of residents. That was only \$5  
13 million. I was hoping that you would agree to that, but  
14 it was cut off. And here a quarter billion dollars is  
15 just pocket money to spend on this unnecessary special  
16 election special election and special redrawing in the  
17 mid-decade.

18 As a result of Orange County, where I  
19 represent the county warm line program, has a laid of 127  
20 staff members and is now facing to end operations  
21 completely. Think about the victims, the customers who  
22 have used this warm line and then also unburdened all the  
23 burdens that the 911 system is getting. And we know that  
24 the 911 system right now is -- answer so late because of  
25 a shortage of people with the shortage of staffing in 911

1 answering service.

2           Instead of funding critical programs like  
3 this, we are being asked to throw these dollars away on a  
4 political maneuvering. This is not about the fairness.  
5 This is not about the people. And this is certainly not  
6 about protecting democracy that you all say that we must  
7 keep the democracy fairness of fairness. This is a  
8 partisan power grab, and it comes at the expense of  
9 Californians we are here to serve.

10           So I ask you, my colleagues, will we tell  
11 Californians that their childcare, their education, their  
12 healthcare, their public safety programs don't matter as  
13 much as a rushed and unnecessary special election  
14 redrawing? Or we will stand with them and say no to this  
15 reckless use of taxpayer dollars.

16           Senators and colleagues, let us show some  
17 fiscal responsibility and common sense. Please vote for  
18 no on this wasteful proposal. Thank you.

19           SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

20           Senator Laird, you are recognized.

21           SENATOR LAIRD: Thank you, Madam  
22 President.

23           In 2021, a particularly egregious  
24 gerrymander was done in my district in San Luis Obispo  
25 County. It was for the board of supervisors' districts,

1 and it was proposed by one party. A party that was  
2 losing registration was no longer the party with the  
3 greatest plurality in that county and they passed a map  
4 suggested by one political committee to egregiously  
5 gerrymander that county. Under the census, minor tweaks  
6 to the existing districts would have been in order.  
7 Instead, it was jam the Democrats into one district, make  
8 the other four districts in a way that they likely could  
9 go the other way, and preserve a majority that didn't  
10 exist in the electorate at large.

11 And it was gross. There were some people  
12 that would vote in three -- every two years for three  
13 cycles for supervisor. There were some that were the  
14 opposite. There were -- thousands of people would have  
15 two supervisors at once. Thousands more would have no  
16 supervisor. It was a dislocation that was off the  
17 charts.

18 And so what happened? I introduced, last  
19 year, Senate Bill 977 to say we would have independent  
20 redistricting for San Luis Obispo County. We would have  
21 the commission. That egregious line drawing would never  
22 happen again for that county.

23 And then what happened in this body? In  
24 this body, nine senators thought that was just fine.  
25 That that egregious redistricting that would have been

1 rectified by commission is what they voted against. And  
2 it was said "Just the facts," on one speech, and then  
3 there were all the names that were given about those  
4 facts. Well, let me say in just the facts, it was  
5 senators from Jackson, Bieber, Bakersfield, San Diego,  
6 Sacramento, Yucaipa, and Murrieta that said, "We are fine  
7 with egregious gerrymandering. We do not want a  
8 commission. We do not want fairness in redistricting."  
9 Let's be clear about that.

10 So when it was said, "What is known and  
11 when did we know it?" in 2024 we knew that was an  
12 egregious redistricting and nine Senators said it was  
13 just fine with them. It was said fair districts lead to  
14 fair representation, but nine Senators said not in San  
15 Luis Obispo County. It was said that politicians should  
16 not pick their voters but was fine for nine Senators in  
17 San Luis Obispo County. It was said that we are  
18 witnessing a partisan power grab. We witnessed one there  
19 and it was fine for nine Senators in San Luis Obispo  
20 County.

21 So let's just call that what it is. We  
22 have born again commission lovers here. They had a  
23 chance to have the fair redistricting in different parts  
24 of the state, and it was rejected. And so I just think  
25 it's fair to expose that level of partisanship because

1 that's what's going on. And I think now we have a  
2 national crisis and we are responding and I asked for an  
3 aye vote on AB 604.

4 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

5 Senator Grove, you are recognized at your  
6 desk.

7 SENATOR GROVE: Thank you, Madam  
8 President.

9 Colleagues, I rise in opposition of this  
10 redistricting package, all three bills that are coming  
11 before us today to redraw congressional lines. The move  
12 undermines the will of the people and the voters of this  
13 state. I don't wholeheartedly agree with the actual  
14 commission, the people that are on the board of the  
15 commission. But I don't agree that legislators should be  
16 able to draw their own lines either. And I'm a  
17 legislator, and I don't think I should be able to draw my  
18 own lines. I think the people should be able to pick the  
19 people they want to have them represented, and it should  
20 be that a standard across the United States.

21 I listened to your comments, and I really  
22 wasn't going to speak, but I listened to all the comments  
23 and it's all about transparency, and this has been  
24 transparent. Colleagues, this bill -- this bill was put  
25 in print on Monday. We had a hearing on Tuesday. On

1 Tuesday, when the hearing took place, both election  
2 chairs in the Assembly and the Senate could not answer  
3 one question. Who drew the lines? The Assembly  
4 elections chair said it was a collaboration. The  
5 Assembly elections chair said it was leadership.  
6 Leadership? What leadership? Give us a name.

7 The individual who was providing technical  
8 assistance in that committee would not answer any  
9 questions about who they were, who they represented, who  
10 was paying them. It's a public process and you're asking  
11 from the dais, "Who do you represent?"

12 "I'd rather not answer that question."

13 "Who's paying you?"

14 "I'd rather not answer that question."

15 I mean, this is a public process where we  
16 got no answers and you're talking about transparency.  
17 They were asked, "Who drew the lines?" and in the  
18 Assembly, the response was, "It was a group of  
19 leadership. It was the same state Legislature." And the  
20 response was, "We're in the state Legislature, and we  
21 didn't participate in that process." And they said,  
22 well, "You're not in leadership." So then it fell on  
23 leadership.

24 I watched the interview on our own  
25 elections chair here in the Senate. "Who drew the

1 lines?"

2 "Well, the Rules Committee."

3 I'm the Vice Chair of Rules. We did not  
4 participate, that I know of, of drawing any lines. My  
5 colleague from Santa Cruz sits on rules. He did not  
6 participate in drawing any lines. It was not the Rules  
7 Committee. They also said that the Rules Committee  
8 placed this information and the maps on the website. We  
9 didn't do that. I went back through the last three  
10 hearings. We did not vote to do that.

11 No one is being truthful and transparent  
12 when we're just trying to ask questions. Who drew the  
13 lines? Did you know about the lines before it was -- you  
14 know, did you have input? And I know that's just a  
15 simple thing and it's just one thing that needs to be  
16 brought up. But if we're going to talk about  
17 transparency, this process put in print on Monday where  
18 lines were already drawn when the bill was put in process  
19 with no public comment because the first public comment  
20 went up on Tuesday during the hearing and the maps were  
21 already drawn. And it's supposed to be a public process.  
22 That's not what we're doing here and we're better than  
23 that.

24 And I know the rhetoric on the other side  
25 is about Texas. Let's talk about Texas for just one

1 second. Texas was sued by the Elias Group. The Elias  
2 Group --

3 Permission to read?

4 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Permission  
5 granted.

6 SENATOR GROVE: "The Elias Group is a  
7 mission driven firm committed to helping Democrats win  
8 citizens' votes and progressives make change." That's  
9 the Elias Group. The Elias Group won a lawsuit against  
10 Texas. Like it or not, constitution says we have three  
11 branches of government, the executive branch, the  
12 judicial branch, and the legislative branch. The  
13 judicial branch ordered the State of Texas to redraw  
14 their lines. The State of Texas complied with the  
15 judicial order -- the judge's order. That's it.

16 Now, because of the way the lawsuit was  
17 structured, Texas did take it in a way that, you know,  
18 nobody really expected it to happen, but they did. The  
19 bottom line is, is that the response that California is  
20 having because of a lawsuit from a Democrat activist  
21 lawyer group in D.C. and then California jumps on this  
22 bandwagon. We are not involved in that lawsuit. We are  
23 not involved in Texas legislation. Contrary to my  
24 colleague's statement, he knows no Texas legislators, I  
25 know several.

1                   They're under a judicial order to redraw  
2 the lines. For us to engage in that process, I think  
3 sends a bad message across the nation because that old  
4 adage, "So goes California, so goes the nation." There  
5 is no doubt in my mind that other states will look at  
6 what we are doing to offset Texas, which is a judicial  
7 directive, a judgment against Texas to redraw those  
8 lines.

9                   And looking at what we're doing -- and  
10 again, their policy is different. Legislators can redraw  
11 those lines. Our policy is separate. It's a  
12 constitutional amendment where we have a citizens  
13 redistricting committee and we as legislators can't draw  
14 the lines. And no one in this body will answer the  
15 question, including the author that's presenting or the  
16 presenter this morning, the majority floor leader. It  
17 was asked by my colleague three different ways, "Who drew  
18 the lines?" and there's still no response. Why is that  
19 such a hard question?

20                   If you look at what's happening, it's  
21 going -- "So goes California, so goes the nation." And  
22 I'm telling you, you guys have not thought this all the  
23 way through because you don't have the votes. You just  
24 don't have the leeway that we do on our side of the wild  
25 from a national experience.

1 Pritzker can't help you. He's got 3  
2 Republicans out of 17. Massachusetts has zero. New  
3 York, very few. This is not going to go well for your  
4 side of the aisle coming the midterm elections and I just  
5 don't think that you've thought that through.

6 I can tell you that, you know, if people  
7 did participate on the lines and you can make an  
8 assumption that you have forever congressional seats here  
9 in the state of California, and you're making those  
10 decisions because of the congressional lines that are  
11 going to benefit you for the rest of your life, it still  
12 doesn't help the voters in California, all of the people  
13 that we represent.

14 We have serious problems to solve in this  
15 state. have a potential of refineries closing. We've  
16 got a potential of cement businesses going out of  
17 business. We've got LA wildfires where only four permits  
18 have been issued. We don't need to get involved in this  
19 nonsense. The people of the state of California voted in  
20 a citizens' redistricting commission. I didn't like that  
21 idea either. I did vote against it. But that's what we  
22 have. And unless that is changed in a process that is  
23 not like this -- if you want to work on this next year,  
24 and I realize that probably run out of time for the  
25 elections.

1 But the bottom line is that this bill was  
2 put in print on Monday. The people of the state of  
3 California had Tuesday and one committee hearing to  
4 comment on it. That's not transparency. And in that  
5 committee hearing, no one would answer those questions.  
6 That's not transparency and that's not the way this body  
7 should operate.

8 I've been here since 2010. I came in in  
9 the Tea Party district, and I was that rant and raving  
10 individual on the Assembly floor that got my mic shut off  
11 several times. I get it. But there is a collegiality,  
12 whether you agree with policy or not, that you have on  
13 this floor and that we have to be 1 of 40, right? 40  
14 Representatives of the state of California.

15 And I'm just telling you that the way this  
16 is put together is not right for the voters, it's not  
17 right for California, and this thing is going to backfire  
18 on you. So, next year when all this goes down, I want  
19 you guys to say, just like you're saying right now,  
20 "Gosh, Groves has been screaming from the rooftops for 10  
21 years regarding our oil and gas prices going up and the  
22 avenues that we're taking." And next year, you're going  
23 to go, "Wow, Grove was saying this is going to backfire  
24 us." Mark my words, they will pick up almost 25 mid-  
25 state congressional seats.

1 The way this process is working is not  
2 good for us, our party, your party, or the people of this  
3 nation in this state. I support Kevin Kiley's bill that  
4 says no midterm redistricting -- no midterm  
5 redistricting, and that we should abide on the census  
6 every 10 years just like it's set in place.

7 Respectfully ask for a no vote based on  
8 the voters in this state and across our nation for this  
9 redistricting passage that has zero transparency. Zero  
10 transparency. And even if you did have a hearing, you  
11 won't answer anybody's questions.

12 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

13 Senator Valladares, you are recognized.

14 SENATOR VALLADARES: Thank you, Madam  
15 President.

16 And I too want to raise my mic in  
17 opposition. So I want to raise an issue that I think has  
18 been overlooked in this process, and that is communities  
19 of interest. Our Constitution is really clear. When we  
20 draw districts, we're supposed to keep communities  
21 together. Cities, neighborhoods, agricultural regions,  
22 aerospace hubs, working class communities, watersheds,  
23 school districts. These are groups of people with shared  
24 and social interests who deserve to have fair and  
25 effective representation. What we're not supposed to do

1 is draw maps around politicians, incumbents, political  
2 parties, or the partisan advantage or disadvantage of  
3 voters, yet that is exactly what these maps do.

4 To echo a lot of the sentiments from my  
5 colleagues on my side of the aisle, this process has been  
6 secretive from the very beginning. We don't know who  
7 drew these lines, or rather, it's difficult for those who  
8 were involved to name names, really at this point, but we  
9 all know it was politicians. It was consultants and D.C.  
10 insiders that are going to all benefit from these maps.

11 And the result, the result is truly  
12 unmistakable. Communities of interest were ignored, they  
13 were divided, and they were sacrificed for political  
14 gain. Take Modoc County. Farmers and ranchers, people  
15 who feed the world. They are now lumped in with wealthy  
16 Bay Area neighborhoods whose daily realities couldn't be  
17 further apart. Look at Lodi, an agriculture community  
18 split three ways. Some bundled into Sacramento suburbs,  
19 others into Bay Area commuter towns. Instead of one  
20 strong voice in Congress, their representation is now  
21 diluted and divided.

22 In my own district, the Antelope Valley,  
23 an isolated region with shared concerns of aerospace and  
24 defense. It's the nation's backbone for defense, for  
25 innovation. It's where America's most advanced aircraft

1 and space technologies are designed, built, and tested.  
2 It's carved into five different congressional districts.  
3 This means no single representative is fully going to be  
4 accountable to the needs of my community in the Antelope  
5 Valley.

6 And let's talk about Sonoma County,  
7 chopped into three districts, silencing the ability of  
8 that community to speak with one voice. This isn't just  
9 bad mapping. This scheme is bad governance. The voters  
10 of California created an independent redistricting  
11 commission precisely to prevent this kind of power grab.  
12 They voted for fairness, transparency, and independence.

13 The Constitution says maps are not to be  
14 drawn for politicians, for incumbents, or for parties.  
15 But here we are with maps engineered in secret, rushed  
16 forward, and designed to benefit a few select few. This  
17 is in clear conflict of interest, and it undermines  
18 public trust and our elections. It tells voters that  
19 their voices matter less than political insiders and it  
20 confirms every fear they already have about Sacramento.

21 Colleagues, this isn't about Democrats or  
22 Republicans. In my district, I represent more Democrats  
23 than I do Republicans. I want every single voter to be  
24 represented fairly. This is about the constitution.  
25 This is about transparency. It's about whether the

1 people of California get what they voted for, a fair and  
2 open process. Not maps drawn in back rooms for political  
3 convenience.

4 The people of California deserve better.  
5 They deserve fair maps. They deserve good government,  
6 and they deserve leaders who will honor California's  
7 constitution, not undermine it. I cannot support this  
8 plan. And I think it's ironic to hear, in response to my  
9 colleague from Santa Cruz, how history is repeating  
10 itself. How right now we're seeing that across the  
11 nation and even in California, that Democrats have lost  
12 2.1 million voters and Republicans have picked up 2.4  
13 million. And further makes me question this paragraph.  
14 Is history repeating itself?

15 I urge you to vote to uphold the  
16 constitution of California today. I urge you to be the  
17 voice -- to be the voice that your constituents elected  
18 you to be. To uphold their rights, their voices,  
19 respectfully ask for a no vote.

20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

21 Senator Umberg, you are recognized.

22 SENATOR UMBERG: Well, thank you, Madam  
23 President.

24 Let me speak to some self-evident,  
25 irrefutable proofs. Truth number one is that all 39

1 members of the California State Senate sitting here today  
2 are here because they want to improve the lives of  
3 Californians. Irrespective of whether they have a D or  
4 an R behind their name, they're here to improve the lives  
5 of Californians.

6 Truth number two, we would not be here but  
7 for the President of the United States ordering Texas to  
8 create five new seats. And why? Why? Because he's  
9 concerned about the Congress potentially being a check on  
10 his power.

11 Truth number three. Truth number three is  
12 that the \$811 million that the President has asked to be  
13 taken from California K-12 education, to include after  
14 school programs that were referenced by my colleague from  
15 Irvine, that that diminishes the quality of life of  
16 Californians.

17 Next truth, the billion dollars right now  
18 that is attempted to be extorted from UCLA diminishes the  
19 quality of life of Californians.

20 Next truth. The 57,861 individuals  
21 detained by masked agents, many unknown, that diminishes  
22 the quality of life in California and in particular, the  
23 47,000 plus who have not had a conviction for anything  
24 other than being of a certain race and having a certain  
25 occupation. That is the only criteria that was used to

1 detain those 47,000 individuals. That diminishes the  
2 quality of life in California.

3 The \$164 billion taken over the next 10  
4 years in terms of health care, that diminishes the  
5 quality of life here in California. And in terms of the  
6 cost-benefit analysis, whatever it costs for this  
7 election, if we can save but a small portion of the  
8 amounts that the President wishes to remove, to take, to  
9 punish California, it is a cost-benefit analysis that we  
10 should engage in.

11 Now, James Madison in Federalist 47 said  
12 look, here's what we do is we as our government, we  
13 create a government with checks and balances, and the  
14 Congress is supposed to be a check on the executive, a  
15 check on the -- but this Congress has been absolutely  
16 supine in terms of being a check, including the nine  
17 members of the Republican delegation from California have  
18 basically decided to disarm.

19 Now, what is the response? The response  
20 is to actually respond to what the President's trying to  
21 do. Again, we wouldn't be here but for that.

22 Now, let me also commend and congratulate  
23 those of the Republican party who have stood up to the  
24 President. I heard my colleague from Huntington Beach  
25 today talk about Texas, say that what they're doing is

1 wrong. That's hard. That's hard, and much harder for  
2 Republicans to say that than Democrats. Same thing with  
3 my colleague from Irvine who condemned what the  
4 President's doing in Texas. The same thing with Kevin  
5 Kiley who's saying, "Look, we should not be doing  
6 midterm, mid-decade reapportionment."

7 The same thing with Carl DeMaio, and  
8 you're never going to hear these words spoken again, is  
9 that I commend Carl DeMaio for citing his disdain for  
10 what's going on in Texas. But that is not sufficient.  
11 And by the way, I appreciate the humility of my  
12 colleagues here too. That's not a trait that's common to  
13 most of us who are elected. But their humility in saying  
14 that they have no influence. They have no influence on  
15 the President. They have no influence on Texas.

16 Well, I invite them to join with me in the  
17 letter that I circulated asking the Governor of Texas  
18 cease and desist, to stand down. If he stands down, we  
19 will stand down. The 9 members of the Republican  
20 delegation in the Congress are larger than 23 states in  
21 this union. Those 9 members, plus our colleagues here in  
22 the California Legislature, they have a very strong  
23 voice, and I urge them to use that voice. I'll go to  
24 Austin with them. I urge them to basically make sure  
25 that this crisis is averted.

1 If this crisis is not averted, then we in  
2 California must stand up. We in California must stand up  
3 for the quality of life of Californians as we see it  
4 being assaulted. We must stand up and vote aye on AB  
5 604. Thank you.

6 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

7 Senator Durazo, you are recognized.

8 SENATOR DURAZO: Thank you, Madam  
9 President.

10 Good morning, colleagues. Today's vote is  
11 not about us. Today's vote is not about politicians.  
12 Today's vote is about people. Working people living  
13 ordinary lives. Today's vote is about whether Texas and  
14 Trump have the right to water down what is right for the  
15 people who elect us.

16 California's average hourly wage is \$7 an  
17 hour more than Texans make. Our minimum wage is \$9 more  
18 than theirs. And before any of you knee jerk to "Yeah,  
19 but everything is more expensive in California," consider  
20 the facts for working people beyond wages. Texas  
21 families pay \$4,300 out of pocket for health insurance.  
22 Californians pay \$1,100 less. 16.6 percent of Texans  
23 don't have any health insurance at all. But only 6  
24 percent of Californians are without it. Retirees in  
25 Texas scrape by with \$600 less than California retirees.

1 Texas utility bills are about the same as Californians.  
2 And the median home price in Texas capital city of Austin  
3 is the same as Sacramento.

4 This issue and our vote today is about our  
5 right to live in a California that Californians control.  
6 Texas and Trump want to water down that right. That's  
7 what's at stake. 40 years ago, Texas state government  
8 came up with a famous anti-litter campaign slogan.  
9 "Don't mess with Texas." You know what? We aren't  
10 stupid. Don't mess with us either. Thank you.

11 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Seyarto,  
12 you are recognized.

13 SENATOR SEYARTO: Thank you, Madam Chair  
14 and -- or Madam President.

15 So today, members, I stand before you and  
16 this is going to be no surprise. I do not support what  
17 we are doing. There's a lot of reasons not to support  
18 this and I'm going to list a couple of them but I'm going  
19 to talk in chief about one thing in particular.

20 For one thing, I know we've been belittled  
21 for trying to bring it up or pretending that it's  
22 something that's not, but this does lack transparency.  
23 This effort is a week old for us, for the people out  
24 there that got to see, maybe if they knew to get on the  
25 thing. The reason it lacks transparency is because there

1 hasn't been an opportunity for the public to be able to  
2 get engaged enough to look and see what these three bills  
3 that we're going to be doing are doing.

4 A lot of the public -- there's a lot of  
5 people out there, they don't even know what a senator is.  
6 But they do pay attention, eventually, and that's why  
7 there's a 31-day waiting period usually before we can do  
8 these. But we've done what we always do with our super  
9 majority. We've waived that. Let's get rid of that. So  
10 yeah, there is a lack of transparency in this.

11 And then the second thing that I want to  
12 say is it also lacks integrity. You know, sometimes I'll  
13 ask a question that I know the answer to. You know why?  
14 Because I want somebody to either tell me the answer and  
15 I'll go, good, they're being honest with me. Or I'll  
16 watch them evade the answer when I know they're smart  
17 enough to -- and they know the answer, and they just  
18 won't do it. They're evading the question.

19 And, you know, when I see that happen, to  
20 me, that lacks integrity. We asked questions in the  
21 committee that were pretty easy. We know -- we know the  
22 answers to some of this. But they're kind of rumors, so  
23 you're just kind of trying to get the affirmation of what  
24 the answer is to who drew these. Was it a consultant?  
25 Was it staff? Was it a consultant to one of our

1 legislative offices? Because none of those are eligible  
2 under our constitution in California to be drawing maps.

3 And yet somehow, this map dropped out of  
4 the sky. Because I can tell you when we're told the  
5 Legislature drew the map -- that was one of the answers.  
6 The Legislature. The Legislature is not a human being.  
7 That's like saying the car drew the map. The car decided  
8 where to go. It did not. It's not a thing. I mean, it  
9 is a thing, but it's not a living thing. It can't think  
10 on its own.

11 So, we didn't get the answers that we  
12 wanted in our committee, and I was told "You already got  
13 the answer." No, I've asked the question, I just never  
14 got the answer. But I knew the answer, and I didn't get  
15 the answer, which means people are being evasive, which,  
16 in this body and what we do up here, that lacks  
17 integrity. It also flies in the face of the wishes of  
18 voters to make drawing of districts the sole  
19 responsibility of the Citizens' Redistricting Commission.

20 And the last thing I'll mention on this  
21 particular, reasons why we shouldn't even be doing this,  
22 as you know -- and I'm glad people brought this up.  
23 During the past few sessions, numerous bills have been  
24 introduced and passed by the Legislature, demanding that  
25 the citizen redistricting commissions be formed in

1 counties that do not have them. And the reason given by  
2 my colleague in Riverside -- and I remember her speech.  
3 The reason given was to preserve democracy. And yet,  
4 today we're told, "Hey, you know what? 30 of you voted  
5 against those redistricting."

6 You know why? You know why I voted  
7 against those redistricting efforts? Number one, I'm  
8 kind of a local control guy. I think counties, cities,  
9 they need to weigh in on how they operate. But more than  
10 that, it's because all of those reflected what a super  
11 majority will do when they're passing a bill. They set  
12 it up for their party to be successful in the  
13 redistricting effort. So what they did was they created  
14 a partisan makeup ahead of time. They created partisan  
15 results from a partisan commission.

16 So heck yeah, I am voting no on that. You  
17 want an independent? Don't tell us what the makeup is of  
18 it other than we have to find independent people to be  
19 able to be on a commission like that. If you're going to  
20 tell me it has to be this many Democrats and then two  
21 Republicans and the Republican votes don't count, we're  
22 not going to vote for that. That's why. That's why we  
23 voted against that. It's not because we are against the  
24 concept of an independent redistricting commission. It  
25 is because we are against the ability of a super majority

1 to put things in -- poison pills in there, to make it not  
2 so independent. So please, enough with that.

3 But those are just a few reasons we have  
4 to scrap this plan and move on to dealing with the real  
5 problems in California. Because guess what -- and you  
6 guys should be really proud of this -- we have a lot of  
7 real problems in California, and they are not getting  
8 solved. We have water problems, energy problems. We  
9 have affordability problems. We have housing problems.  
10 None of those are being solved, while we sit here trying  
11 to debate about what Texas did.

12 And I want to mention this. I do know  
13 Texas legislator. Congressman Carter, really nice dude.  
14 He really is. But you know what? I'm not going to call  
15 him and tell him, "Congressman Carter, this is Senator  
16 Seyarto, I need you to stand down." You know why?  
17 Because they have different rules than we have. That's  
18 their process. They don't have a constitution that says  
19 this is the process. Their process is, hey, if they're  
20 going to do it that way, they're going to do it that way.  
21 It's not for us to call them and tell them, "No. You  
22 have to do this because otherwise, California" -- I think  
23 my colleague from Bakersfield laid it out really well  
24 what's going to happen. You want to bite your nose to  
25 spite your face? Hey, whatever.

1 But here, you know, earlier we had some  
2 percentages, and I was thinking, man, if I start talking  
3 percentages, people are going to go to sleep. But since  
4 somebody already brought up percentages, I'm going to  
5 speak my percentages. Because what this deals with is  
6 this other issue I always hear from this body, and that's  
7 proportionality. Hey, when we're talking about crime  
8 stats, well, that's not in proportion to this.

9 So let's talk about proportionality. And  
10 here are some numbers. 46 percent of registered voters  
11 in this state are Democrats. Yes. That's a pretty  
12 dominant number. 25 percent of registered voters are  
13 Republican. But here's a little something. 29 percent  
14 are declined to states, no party preference, or other,  
15 which means they're registered as another party.

16 But you know what? The representation in  
17 the Legislature for the Republicans, yes, it's very, very  
18 proportional. We're 25 percent registered and we got 25  
19 percent membership. You know who isn't is the decline to  
20 states and the no party preference. And one of the  
21 reasons that that's important to remember as we go  
22 forward and talk about the congressional seats is because  
23 those folks don't like the Democrats, the Democratic  
24 platform, and they don't like the Republican platform.  
25 They are in the middle.

1 But you know what? They can't win a seat.  
2 They can't go out there and win an election. So it's up  
3 to us to try to make sure that we're representing them.  
4 And the only way to do that is to understand that half of  
5 them usually break to the right and half of them break to  
6 the left, which would mean six more seats for the Dems  
7 and six more seats for the Republicans.

8 An appropriate makeup for this body, if it  
9 were fair, is 24 Democrats, 16 Republicans. That way we  
10 would not have a super majority. And that also reflects  
11 the voting trends in California. We vote 60-40 on  
12 constitutional offices and things like that, right. And  
13 that's exactly what that breakdown is.

14 But let's look at what we're -- in the  
15 Legislature, it's 75 percent Dem. In other words, every  
16 single one of those people that are in the middle are  
17 actually represented by Democrats. And you know what?  
18 In this state -- sorry to break the news -- that means  
19 it's represented by progressive Democrats. And that is  
20 exactly what they don't like.

21 So let's move on to the Congress,  
22 congressional seats. We have 52 of them. So let's talk  
23 about democracy. 52 seats. You know how many are  
24 Republican seats? 9. We already have 43 percent.  
25 That's 83 percent is -- 83 percent of our population, our

1 voters in this state, are represented in the  
2 congressional level by Democrats. That means zero --  
3 zero people in the middle have representation other than  
4 from a Democrat.

5 And then, when you look at what we want to  
6 do, we want to push that number to 92 percent. Already,  
7 we got 17 percent -- we have 8 percent of Republicans at  
8 that point being represented by Democrats. That's your  
9 democracy is Democrats represent 93 percent of our  
10 population in Congress? You guys, that's absurd. That  
11 is absurd.

12 So this effort to save the nation at the  
13 expense of democracy in California, it doesn't make  
14 sense. And you know what? I have more confidence in you  
15 guys. I know you're smart enough to know that. And I  
16 know some of you don't like this bill and I know some of  
17 you would really like not to have to vote for it. But  
18 that's how it works in California. We've got a super  
19 majority. With the super majority comes a lot of power.  
20 And with that power comes no power for the other side.

21 So, this notion that somehow the 10  
22 Republicans are going to spring to this position of  
23 influence and power over all of the other states is  
24 absurd. We can't get anything done here and you know it.  
25 So this effort is reckless. This effort is ridiculous,

1 and it needs to be abandoned so we can start working on  
2 the real problems that California has. And maybe, just  
3 maybe, we can start working together to make some real  
4 bipartisan solutions. Not just one Republican vote on  
5 one of the bills. That's not bipartisan.

6 So I urge a no vote on this. I urge us to  
7 move on. And so thank you for indulging me today and  
8 allowing me to explore and talk about the real issues  
9 with democracy in California, not Texas. Thank you.

10 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

11 Senator Becker, you are recognized.

12 SENATOR BECKER: Thank you. Thank you for  
13 allowing me to speak on this important topic. And my  
14 colleague who just spoke said that he was not going to  
15 call the folks in Texas. Well, the folks in Texas called  
16 us. They called us and they said, "You are our 911  
17 call." And I got to tell you, I had chills. I mean, it  
18 was an incredible moment, and I have such respect for  
19 them. They said, "You are our 911 call. We are calling  
20 you in California. We need your help."

21 And, friends, I'm a history major, and  
22 history teaches us that we must stand up to bullies. I  
23 love the point by my colleague from Encinitas. We must  
24 stand up to bullies or face incalculable damage. And  
25 that is what we're doing here today. We are standing up.

1 When the bully and chief in the White House called up the  
2 Governor of Texas, he said, "Find me five seats," the  
3 Governor of Texas said, "Yes, sir."

4 And so now it's our chance to stand up.  
5 And to my friends on the other side of the aisle, and  
6 usually, you know, we are very cordial here, but I've  
7 heard a lot of hypocrisy. If you want to fight for  
8 independent redistricting, then fight for independent  
9 redistricting. I know many of you have been to the White  
10 House. Go to the White House. Call the White House.  
11 Call out the White House and tell them you want  
12 independent redistricting. Tell them to back off, and we  
13 will back off, but we will not unilaterally disarm.

14 So, I stand here today as a father deeply  
15 concerned about the future of our country. I stand here  
16 as a patriot, as the grandson of immigrants who came, who  
17 came through Ellis Island.

18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Becker,  
19 I'm sorry, can you please address your comments to me as  
20 the presiding officer.

21 SENATOR BECKER: Oh, thank you. You mean  
22 turn around?

23 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Yes, thank you.

24 SENATOR BECKER: Okay. I often do it this  
25 way for the cameras.

1 Thank you. I say I stand here as a father  
2 deeply concerned for the future of my children. I stand  
3 here as a grandson of immigrants who came through Ellis  
4 Island through the Statue of Liberty. And I stand here  
5 as an elected official serving the people. And today, I  
6 stand up for democracy. And it's been said that  
7 democracy is not a spectator sport, and we need every  
8 American engaged now.

9 It's like when you go to the Airport and  
10 they say, "If you see something, say something." So we  
11 need every American. I need my Republican colleagues.  
12 We need our Republican legislators in Congress. If you  
13 see the President doing something wrong, you need to call  
14 it out. And this is wrong. We know what he's doing is  
15 wrong. And we know that we must stand up. And  
16 California is standing up. It's about time. I've never  
17 been prouder of our state. And we need each American to  
18 act as though democracy depends on them because we know  
19 ultimately, it does. Thank you.

20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

21 Senator Ochoa Bogh, you are recognized.

22 SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: Thank you, Madam  
23 President.

24 California deserves a redistricting  
25 process that is fair, transparent, and free from

1 political gatemanship. It was mentioned the fact that as  
2 Republicans, we haven't supported such measures in the  
3 past. But unfortunately, many a times when measures are  
4 placed forward in this body, because of the  
5 supermajority, many of the times we're not included to  
6 give feedback and input on these measures and therefore,  
7 these measures don't necessarily become equitable or  
8 fulfill the full intent of that bill. And it's one of  
9 the reasons why we could not support the measure that was  
10 mentioned earlier by my dear colleague from Santa Cruz.

11 I looked up the analysis for that  
12 particular bill right after you mentioned it, and we'll  
13 have conversations after the -- of the session.

14 But going back to this particular bill,  
15 weakening and discarding the independent commission, even  
16 temporarily, temporarily, betrays the trust of the voters  
17 placed in us and undermines the integrity of our  
18 democracy. California has long set the standard for fair  
19 redistricting outfitted with a voter-established  
20 independent commission.

21 Question of the author, ma'am?

22 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Will the author  
23 take a question?

24 Will the author take a question?

25 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yes.

1 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: You may proceed.

2 SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: Through the  
3 President. Does the state of Texas have an independent  
4 commission on redistricting voted by the voters of Texas?

5 SENATOR GONZALEZ: They do not.

6 SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: Okay. The Citizens'  
7 Redistricting Commission was created to end decades of  
8 political gerrymandering. Rolling back the progress for  
9 short term gains, risk undoing years of hard fought  
10 reforms. Californians deserve leaders that will protect  
11 the independent system voters demanded and preserve it  
12 for generations to come. Unlike Texas, we have this.  
13 They do not. And it falls --

14 Oh, question of the author?

15 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yes.

16 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Will the author  
17 take a question?

18 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Absolutely.

19 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: You may proceed.

20 SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: Does the Texas  
21 Legislature have the purview to redraw their lines?

22 SENATOR GONZALEZ: They do. They don't  
23 have the purview to violate the Voting Rights Act and  
24 disenfranchise their voters, but that is what they're  
25 doing.

1 SENATOR OCHOA BOGH: So as mentioned  
2 earlier by my colleague from Bakersfield, the state of  
3 Texas was sued and was obligated to redraw their lines.  
4 Checkpoint.

5 Before the commission's creation, district  
6 lines were developed in secrecy through insider deals,  
7 often protecting incumbents or political insiders.  
8 California voters ended that in 2008 with Proposition 11,  
9 the Voters First Act, which established the Commission.  
10 Two years later, Proposition 20 expanded its reach to  
11 include congressional districts. Since then, the  
12 commission has consistently delivered maps through open,  
13 publicly reviewed processes, even successfully adapting  
14 during the pandemic-delayed 2020 cycle. Earning praise  
15 for transparency and efficiency.

16 If signed into law, today's proposed  
17 legislative package would strip the commission's  
18 authority "temporarily," granting lawmakers control over  
19 congressional redistricting for the 26th, 28th, and 30th  
20 election cycles. While framed by some as reactive to  
21 nationwide redistricting trends, critics warn that it  
22 compromises California's voter approved safeguards and  
23 damages its leadership and electoral fairness.

24 This proposal undermines the voters' trust  
25 since the commission was created by the voters to ensure

1 fairness, transparency, and accountability. Repealing it  
2 would feel like repudiating the voter intent. AB 604 was  
3 drafted without constitutional safeguards intended to  
4 promote fair and representative district maps.

5 Stated that these maps are intended to  
6 elect five additional Democrat congressional seats.  
7 Let's register that. This mid-cycle redistricting plan  
8 undermines the state's constitution by seeking a voter  
9 approved amendment that would temporarily waive the key  
10 provisions of the California State Constitution's Article  
11 21, allowing politicians to redraw lines for partisan  
12 gain rather than adhering to established democratic  
13 principles.

14 First, the plan ignores the constitutional  
15 mandate that redistricting occur only in the year  
16 following the year in which the national census is taken  
17 under direction of Congress at the beginning of each  
18 decade. By pushing for changes mid-decade outside the  
19 post-census window, this proposal disrupts the every 10  
20 year rhythm that's designed to ensure districts reflect  
21 accurate, updated population data. This could open the  
22 door to arbitrary manipulations where the political winds  
23 shift.

24 Second, it waives the rigorous criteria  
25 outlined in the state constitution that prioritizes

1 geographical and social considerations to promote  
2 fairness. These include requiring districts to be  
3 geographically contiguous, criterion three; respecting  
4 the integrity of cities, counties, neighborhoods, and  
5 communities of interest by minimizing their division,  
6 criterion four; and ensuring compactness where  
7 practicable, criterion five.

8 And I know that it was stated that 76  
9 percent of these congressional districts fit the  
10 redistricting commission's criteria, meaning these, but  
11 the additional and the remaining do not. Therefore  
12 violating the very intent and the guidelines of the  
13 Constitution.

14 The Legislature's secretive -- and  
15 secretive meaning no one can divulge one where they came  
16 from -- and rushed map drawing processes discards these  
17 standards. And secretly meaning that no one knows how  
18 they were drawn, but yet they've appeared secretly by an  
19 unknown hand online. And now, they're transparent  
20 because they're there, but no one knows who placed them  
21 there and who drew them in the first place. Potentially  
22 fracturing cohesive communities and creating convoluted  
23 districts that prioritize electoral outcomes over logical  
24 boundaries, as stated on this body, in this floor, today.

25 Finally, the plan flouts the

1 Constitution's explicit prohibition against partisan  
2 gerrymandering, which states that districts shall not be  
3 drawn to favor or discriminate against an incumbent  
4 political candidate or political party. And yet, once  
5 again, on this floor, today, it was mentioned that it was  
6 due to the reasoning of electing five Democrat  
7 congressional districts, stated on this floor.

8 By suspending the Citizens' Redistricting  
9 Commission and empowering the Legislature to redraw these  
10 maps, this legislation invites blatant favoritism,  
11 eroding the impartiality voters enshrined -- voters  
12 enshrined in the constitution to prevent self-serving  
13 power grabs.

14 Folks, this is serious. Ladies and  
15 gentlemen, this is very, very serious. When we are  
16 elected, we swear an oath to uphold both the U.S. and the  
17 California Constitution. Regardless of what any other  
18 state does, that is what we do when we stand on this  
19 floor, this red carpet, and we raise our hand. Two  
20 wrongs don't make it right. And when it says to join our  
21 colleagues in repudiating other states for what they're  
22 doing, folks, we were elected to represent the state of  
23 California.

24 I had a podcast I was listening to just  
25 this morning talking about whether or not term limits

1 should exist and one of the arguments that were stated in  
2 this podcast was whether or not, you know, we should have  
3 term limits, and the gentleman speaking said, "Well,  
4 people get what they elect and if we have an electorate  
5 that is uneducated and they continue to pick someone to  
6 be elected, then that's what they get."

7 If Texas has not changed their  
8 constitution, if they have not created a redistricting  
9 commission, then, folks, who are we to direct the  
10 autonomy of the Legislature of that state? What  
11 authority do we have to influence another state's  
12 Legislature elected by their people? I think it's  
13 humbling to think that we should do that.

14 If we have relationships, great; have  
15 those conversations. But as a body, to go to another  
16 state as elected and think that we have the authority to  
17 tell them how to run their state, I think it's  
18 ridiculous. I think it's disrespectful to them and to  
19 the people who elected those to represent them. I  
20 respectfully ask for a no vote.

21 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

22 Senator Caballero, you are recognized.

23 SENATOR CABALLERO: Thank you, Madam  
24 President.

25 It's been interesting listening to the

1 comments today. Senators, California didn't start this  
2 fight. We've always had an amicable relationship with  
3 our President. Amicable because the President  
4 understands that California is a donor. A donor state to  
5 this great country, and we've lived with it for years.  
6 We pay more in taxes than we get back. We all know that.

7 So why come after California? Why make us  
8 an example to the rest of the country by attacking our  
9 immigrants, by putting tariffs that have hurt our farmers  
10 and that now is going to start to hurt our residents? By  
11 taking away benefits that are really important in our  
12 state as we've tried to meet the needs of our country?  
13 So California didn't start this fight, and my party  
14 didn't start this fight either.

15 Let me be clear: I don't shy away from a  
16 good competition. I love sports--soccer, football,  
17 baseball. I love it all. In my family, we have our  
18 favorite teams that we watch, and we follow, and that we  
19 support, and I can tell you, they are raucous games when  
20 we have people on different sides supporting different  
21 teams. So I don't have a problem with opposition or with  
22 conflict, but what I do insist on is that the game be  
23 fair.

24 I do insist that everybody know what the  
25 rules are at the beginning of the game and then it's not

1 changed. We all know how the game is played. We all  
2 need to expect that the refs are going to be fair, and,  
3 you know, we have our arguments about whether that call  
4 was right or not, but we want everybody to be treated  
5 with respect and that everyone will follow the rules,  
6 including the players.

7 Folks, that's not what's happening in our  
8 country today. The President knows that what he's doing  
9 is hurting people, and it is. It is. It's hurting every  
10 day, average Americans, and that hurt is real. The  
11 prices have gone up. There's uncertainty in the market.  
12 It's hard to get a loan. Housing isn't selling. That's  
13 not because of what we've done. That's because of the  
14 pressure of tariffs and messing around with the market.

15 So the President's afraid he can't win.  
16 He's afraid he can't win an election in two years to  
17 ensure that he maintains control, control over everything  
18 that's going on in the country. So he's taken an action  
19 to rig the election. It won't be a fair competition.  
20 It's playing dirty. It's cheating. It's cheating and  
21 it's making sure that he continues to be in charge even  
22 if the voters want change. Even if the voters want  
23 change, he's rigging it.

24 It's a power grab. We didn't pick this  
25 fight, but my residents have asked me to take action, to

1 do something to relieve the pain caused by the  
2 President's attack on California and on our families.  
3 And some of that attack won't be felt until after the  
4 midterm elections, which is really cynical.

5 Look, it didn't have to be this way. We  
6 all could have worked together, all of us on this floor,  
7 across party lines, to denounce and condemn the  
8 President's attempt to rig the next election. We could  
9 have done it together to put public pressure as leaders  
10 and as elected officials to say we want a fair game, no  
11 shenanigans, no cheating, no dirty games.

12 But listen, my good friends on the other  
13 side of the aisle, you haven't said a peep. You've said  
14 nothing to condemn the President's attacks on California  
15 and on our residents. Nothing, nothing, nothing. And I  
16 get it. You don't want to contradict your President, and  
17 so you've taken sides. Well, I choose the people in my  
18 district. I choose to defend Californians. I choose to  
19 fight for a fair election. I choose to listen to the  
20 people who say, "We need you to take action." So I ask  
21 you for your aye vote today.

22 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

23 Senator Cervantes, you are recognized.

24 SENATOR CERVANTES: Thank you, Madam  
25 President and members. As we know, the proposed maps in

1 this bill are not wholly new. They build upon the  
2 year-long process undertaken by the California Citizens'  
3 Redistricting Commission after the 2020 census. About 75  
4 percent of Californians will remain in the same district  
5 that they reside in currently today.

6 These maps do a better job of avoiding  
7 splitting counties and cities than those created by the  
8 commission. And let me just say, how is it okay when  
9 their party adopts redistricting, but when it's the other  
10 party, it's a problem? Please. Spare us the hypocrisy.

11 That said, I am puzzled by the admiration  
12 that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are  
13 showing for independent citizens' redistricting  
14 commissions. Except for our colleague from Huntington  
15 Beach who has not been present for any of these bills,  
16 every Republican of this Senate body has voted against  
17 bills creating county citizens' redistricting  
18 commissions.

19 The Legislature is entitled to propose  
20 amendments to the state constitution, and unlike Texas,  
21 we are taking it to the voters. We are acting now to  
22 save our future. I respectfully ask for an aye vote on  
23 AB 604.

24 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

25 Senator Jones, you are recognized.

1 SENATOR JONES: Thank you, Madam President  
2 and members. A couple of fine points. First, Madam  
3 President, regarding the comments from our colleague from  
4 Santa Ana mentioning that if Texas goes forward with  
5 their redistricting, we will continue with our  
6 redistricting, my understanding is that the  
7 constitutional amendment has been amended to take that  
8 language out and California is moving forward regardless,  
9 but I will clarify that when the ACA comes over and ask a  
10 question of the author on that.

11 On this particular bill, AB 604, I do have  
12 a quick question of the author, if she would be willing  
13 to take it.

14 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Will the author  
15 take a question?

16 SENATOR JONES: Are you familiar with or  
17 can you cite for us any lawsuit in California of somebody  
18 suing the redistricting commission for the lines that  
19 they drew either in 2012 or 2022, arguing that those  
20 lines were unconstitutional?

21 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: You may proceed.

22 SENATOR GONZALEZ: I am not personally  
23 familiar with any lawsuits.

24 SENATOR JONES: Great. Thank you.  
25 Neither am I, and that's because our process isn't

1 unconstitutional. Now, many of us had problems with the  
2 lines with 2022 when they came out. Both Democrats and  
3 Republicans got a little gripey about some of the lines,  
4 legitimately, I believe so. But we didn't sue. We kind  
5 of, you know, went with it and made the best of it that  
6 we could.

7 One of the things I want to share this  
8 morning is I'm very proud of my Republican colleagues for  
9 their demeanor this morning and their professionalism in  
10 their comments, regardless of the incendiary and  
11 accusational comments of the open on this bill, AB 604,  
12 and I will share that compliment with my Democrat  
13 colleagues as well. I think that the debate has been  
14 very professional and moving us along.

15 One of the things I'm very concerned about  
16 in the debate this morning that I want to raise attention  
17 to is some terms that were used this morning on the  
18 floor. "Rigged," "dictator," "unchecked power."  
19 "Period, full stop." That one cracks me up when you all  
20 use that one because I know the Governor uses that all  
21 the time. So I don't know if you're trying to get in his  
22 good graces by imitating him or whatever. Period, full  
23 stop. There's usually a lie behind that, by the way.

24 "Bully," autocrats."

25 Permission to read, Madam President?

1                   SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Without seeing any  
2                   objection, it is granted.

3                   SENATOR JONES: While this was all going  
4                   on, a term came to mind, "projecting" or "projection."  
5                   So I looked it up to make sure that I had it right.  
6                   Projecting refers to a psychological defense mechanism  
7                   where an individual unconsciously attributes their own  
8                   unacceptable feelings, thoughts, or traits to another  
9                   person.

10                  Why did this come up in my mind today, as  
11                  you've been standing on this floor, railing against  
12                  Republicans in Texas? Railing against Republicans in  
13                  Washington, D.C. for not having any courage to stand up  
14                  to the dictators of the Governor of Texas and the  
15                  President of the United States. Where's the courage for  
16                  the Republicans?

17                  Let me ask you this. Every single year,  
18                  we pass off this floor and the assembly floor a handful  
19                  of bills that pass on unanimous votes. Unanimous. Every  
20                  Republican, every Democrat votes for these bills. Some  
21                  of these bills are authored by Democrats, and some of  
22                  these bills are authored by Republicans.

23                  One bill in particular comes to mind is a  
24                  very simple bill authored by the incoming pro tem. She's  
25                  attempted to pass this bill -- has passed the bill four

1 times, and it's been vetoed four times. Where is the  
2 courage when a bill has unanimous votes to conduct a veto  
3 override? You don't even need us for a veto override.  
4 You can do it by yourselves.

5 But we've come to you over and over and  
6 over and over every single year. We will support you in  
7 a veto override. We will help you in a veto override on  
8 a simple bill. Just pick the simplest one. Let's just  
9 do it and prove that you have the courage that you're  
10 accusing us of not having.

11 I will share with you there are examples  
12 of Republicans in supermajority Republican states of  
13 doing that exact same thing on a Republican governor. I  
14 encourage you to have that courage.

15 SENATOR CORTESE: Point of order, Madam  
16 President. This dialogue has nothing to do with what's  
17 before us here, and I'd ask you to rule in that way and  
18 ask the speaker to stick to the matter that's on the  
19 floor before us. Thank you.

20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Point is  
21 well-taken. If Senator Jones could please stick to the  
22 merits of the bill before us.

23 SENATOR JONES: Thank you, Madam President.  
24 I appreciate our colleague standing up and recognizing  
25 that my comments might be incendiary and accusational,

1 similar to the opening remarks of the author.

2 The important thing that I think to share  
3 here is I rise in strong opposition to AB 604. The  
4 gas-lighting that has been -- or Gav-lighting, if you  
5 prefer that term better -- that's been going on this  
6 morning is just -- the mental gymnastics that you have to  
7 do to come up with these arguments that you're making for  
8 what we're trying to do here on the floor in the State of  
9 California, it's just amazing to me how you do that.

10 And I want to share -- and again, other  
11 Senators have said -- I appreciate every single one of  
12 you. I count every single Senator on this floor a  
13 friend, all 30 Democrats. I honor you. I admire you.  
14 This is not an easy job, but sometimes we have to call it  
15 like it is. We have to call balls and strikes according  
16 to the gamesmanship analogies that were used earlier.

17 What's happening here is simple: Gavin  
18 Newsom and Democrat politicians are trying to ram through  
19 a corrupt redistricting scheme to rig California's  
20 elections. This scheme is unconstitutional. It's  
21 undermining both the letter and the spirit of the  
22 California Constitution. It ignores the principles of  
23 germane law, election integrity, twisting the rules to  
24 benefit one party.

25 It tramples on the will of California

1 voters. California voters, the same people that elected  
2 all of us to office. Those voters created an independent  
3 redistricting commission precisely to keep politicians  
4 from drawing their own lines. And those voters, it was  
5 so important to them, they put it in the Constitution.

6 This effort slices up communities,  
7 connecting desperate areas and splitting apart regions  
8 with common interests, violating the very standard the  
9 redistricting is supposed to uphold. Democrats are  
10 rushing this through under the guise of urgency. There  
11 is no emergency that justifies this abuse of process. It  
12 discards years of work by the Citizens Redistricting  
13 Commission and replaces it with raw, partisan power  
14 plays.

15 Importantly, Democrat legislators continue  
16 to refuse to answer the one simple question that's been  
17 asked dozens, if not hundreds of times, and I'll ask one  
18 more time on this floor: who drew the maps? They claim  
19 it's a transparent process, yet fail to answer the most  
20 transparent question, and it comes at an outrageous cost.  
21 It has been mentioned more than \$250 million for a  
22 special election at a time when California is facing a  
23 \$20 billion deficit, and you all are cutting vital  
24 services.

25 The result is the maps that destroy

1 representative proportionality are rigged for partisan  
2 gain, not fair representation.

3 Senate Republicans are united against this  
4 abuse of power. We're standing together to defend  
5 Californians, to uphold our Constitution, the California  
6 Constitution, and to fight for fair and honest elections.

7 And let's make two more points before I  
8 close. The interesting thing is you all keep bringing up  
9 Texas. Texas right now -- the Republicans in Texas right  
10 now have an effort afoot to make it easier for the  
11 Legislature to override -- do a veto override in Texas.  
12 Republicans are trying to make it easier in Texas to  
13 conduct a veto override. I'm asking you just to try.

14 Now, the other interesting thing about  
15 this effort is we all know this is going to fail on the  
16 ballot. This is a loser from the beginning. So what's  
17 the win? What's the upside for all of us here on the  
18 Senate floor to go blindly along with the Governor's plan  
19 here? It's going to fail, and what's the only gain?

20 I'll tell you what the only gain is.  
21 Governor Gavin Newsom is getting more headlines. He's  
22 getting more name ID, and he's creating a brand across  
23 the country so that he can run for President; and you're  
24 helping him.

25 To my colleagues across the aisle, I

1 strongly encourage you to stand against this self-serving  
2 Governor with courage rather than acting like a march of  
3 the lemmings. I urge a no vote on AB 604.

4 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you. Seeing  
5 no further discussion or debate, Senator Gonzalez, would  
6 you like to close?

7 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yes. Thank you so  
8 much, Madam President, and I do want to say to my  
9 colleagues on both sides of the aisle, thank you so much  
10 for this very robust debate.

11 This is exactly what democracy means and  
12 what we want the public to see, the discourse, even if we  
13 agree to disagree or we disagree and disagree beyond  
14 measure, that is exactly what we're here for. We were  
15 all elected to take an oath to defend our democracy and  
16 to ensure that the folks that we support and represent  
17 all can see a better quality of life, and that's why  
18 we're here today.

19 And as my colleagues on the other side of  
20 the aisle, except for one, I think of one missing member  
21 from Jackson, you know, what I will say is, I hear you on  
22 integrity. I hear you on transparency. I hear you on  
23 all of that.

24 And this is where I'm really confused  
25 because, with all due respect, it is very hypocritical to

1 say that you believe in all this. But yet when you've  
2 been offered the opportunity to talk about what is the  
3 egregious actions by this federal government, the  
4 egregious actions by Texas legislators to disenfranchise  
5 voters, to additionally split counties and cities, to  
6 continue to violate the Voting Rights Act, to just  
7 completely ignore communities of interest and to continue  
8 to safeguard the Trump presidency because guess what? It  
9 doesn't just stop after 2028. Let's be real here. He  
10 wants a third term.

11 So what does that mean for Californians if  
12 we don't do this? Well, I'll tell you what it means. It  
13 means that, again -- it means that there's going to be  
14 unconcern for a ransom of a billion dollars to our UC  
15 system. There's going to be silence when it comes to  
16 SNAP benefits for children when are disabled. It means  
17 there's going to be additional unconcern for the kids  
18 that won't have afterschool programs and school lunches.

19 And it means that every budget that we put  
20 out here because we've continued to put state budgets out  
21 here, and everyone's talking about wildfires. If we're  
22 so concerned about wildfires, why didn't the other  
23 party -- why didn't you all support the wildfire package  
24 relief of \$2.5 billion for Altadena and Pacific Palisades  
25 residents? Why didn't you do that?

1 So we can't sit here and talk about  
2 transparency and integrity and we want democracy. And  
3 all of a sudden now we have an epiphany about an  
4 independent redistricting commission, and we're going to  
5 stand, you know, strong for that.

6 Well, let's do that today. And today,  
7 again, AB 604 is an urgency measure, contains the new  
8 proposed congressional maps that will ultimately be the  
9 decision of California voters on November 4th. This bill  
10 will be in print for over 70 days. The maps will be  
11 available for insight from our voters. And ultimately,  
12 they will have the say.

13 And would remain in effect only until the  
14 Citizens Redistricting Commission certifies a new map of  
15 congressional districts after 2030's census maps. So  
16 these maps are temporary. Again, for the elections of  
17 2026, 2028, and 2030. Then the redistricting commission,  
18 which is still in effect, will then take effect -- will  
19 then take the helm in 2032 to continue the good work that  
20 they've done.

21 Again, the hypocrisy remains. Why are you  
22 so unconcerned? Why are you so unwilling? Why have you  
23 remained silent during this egregious overreach when  
24 Latino communities across California have been kidnapped?  
25 Why?

1 All our democracy is being dismantled, and  
2 you want us as California legislators to just sit by on  
3 the sidelines and do absolutely nothing. Well, that's  
4 not good enough. And if you want to support my  
5 Republican minority leader, if you'd like to support a  
6 diversity, equity, and inclusion bill by the incoming pro  
7 tem, we are happy to provide that opportunity for you to  
8 do that again.

9 So again, Californians will have the final  
10 say. I appreciate all the debate here. I respectfully  
11 ask for an aye vote.

12 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.  
13 Secretary, please call the roll.

14 THE SECRETARY: Allen?

15 Aye.

16 Alvarado-Gil.

17 Archuleta.

18 Aye.

19 Arreguin.

20 Aye.

21 Ashby.

22 Becker.

23 Aye.

24 Blakespear.

25 Aye.

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
Transcription of Video Recording on 08/21/2025

101

1 Cabaldon.

2 Aye.

3 Caballero.

4 Aye.

5 Cervantes.

6 Aye.

7 Choi.

8 No.

9 Cortese.

10 Aye.

11 Dahle.

12 No.

13 Durazo.

14 Aye.

15 Gonzalez.

16 Aye.

17 Grayson.

18 Aye.

19 Grove.

20 No.

21 Hurtado.

22 Aye.

23 Jones.

24 Laird.

25 Aye.

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
Transcription of Video Recording on 08/21/2025

102

1 Limon.

2 Aye.

3 McGuire.

4 Aye.

5 McNerney.

6 Aye.

7 Menjivar.

8 Aye.

9 Niello.

10 No.

11 Ochoa Bogh.

12 No.

13 Padilla.

14 Aye.

15 Perez.

16 Aye.

17 Reyes.

18 Aye.

19 Richardson.

20 Aye.

21 Rubio.

22 Aye.

23 Seyarto.

24 No.

25 Smallwood-Cuevas.

1 Aye.

2 Stern.

3 Aye.

4 Strickland.

5 No.

6 Umberg.

7 Aye.

8 Valladares.

9 No.

10 Wahab.

11 Aye.

12 Weber Pierson.

13 Aye.

14 Wiener.

15 Aye.

16 SECRETARY: No.

17 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please  
18 call the absent members.

19 THE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil.

20 Jones.

21 No.

22 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes, 30. Noes,  
23 9. That measure passes.

24 Members, we are now going to take a very  
25 brief 20-minute recess for lunch. Stay in the building.

1 We will come back in 20 minutes. We are now on recess.

2 (Recess taken)

3 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: The Senate will  
4 now come back to session. We have a message from the  
5 Assembly. Secretary, please read.

6 THE SECRETARY: Madam President, I am  
7 directed to inform your honorable body that the Assembly  
8 on this day adopted Assembly Constitutional Amendment 8,  
9 Sue Parker, Chief Clerk of the Assembly.

10 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: We have a referral  
11 for Rules. Secretary, please read.

12 THE SECRETARY: The Committee on Rules has  
13 ordered the following bill to third reading. Assembly  
14 Constitution Amendment 8.

15 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: We will now move  
16 to supplemental file number 1, which is file number  
17 262ACA8. Secretary, please read.

18 THE SECRETARY: Assembly Constitutional  
19 Amendment 8 by Assembly Member Rivas, an act relating to  
20 redistricting.

21 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Pro tem  
22 McGuire, you are recognized.

23 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Thank you so much, Madam  
24 President, and good afternoon, members. I stand with  
25 Senator Cabaldon who will complete the presentation on

1 Constitutional Amendment 8.

2 I got to say, it does pain me a bit to say  
3 what I'm about to say. And I want to also take a moment  
4 to acknowledge Brian Jones. I have deep respect for  
5 Leader Jones, and I know this has been a tough week on  
6 all sides. And I do want to acknowledge him and say  
7 thank you for the partnership.

8 And I also want to say I take this very  
9 seriously. I think that all folks know I don't really  
10 care if you have an R or D behind your name. It's about  
11 representing California. And as I said last night,  
12 people don't know us if we're a Republican or Democrat.  
13 They know us as Californians, and that's what we need to  
14 remember as we make our way through this and come back  
15 next week.

16 I'm really honored to represent one of the  
17 most rural districts in the State of California. Third  
18 of the California coastline. There are four counties in  
19 the district of seven that voted for Kamala Harris.  
20 There are three counties in the district that supported  
21 President Trump.

22 What I know when I go into Weaverville or  
23 High Palm, Crescent City, or Fort Bragg in rural  
24 California, no matter if you're a Democrat or a  
25 Republican, you want a few key things for your family.

1                   You want quality healthcare. You want to  
2 keep your hospital open, that rural health center open  
3 for your kids and your grandparents.

4                   You want a good job so you can stay in the  
5 community that you love. You want to send your kid to a  
6 good public school. You want to be able to live in that  
7 community you love and afford a home.

8                   And in rural California, you don't want to  
9 use dial up internet anymore. You want to have access to  
10 high-speed broadband.

11                  You know, there isn't a single one of us,  
12 not one, who wouldn't be here today if we hadn't put our  
13 faith in the voters of California. Put our faith in  
14 fellow Californians to walk into the voting booth or sit  
15 at their kitchen table and do their best for all of us to  
16 do the right thing.

17                  And that's really what this is all about  
18 today. All we're asking is allow the voters to do their  
19 thing, to pass this constitutional amendment. We need to  
20 put our faith in the voters to do the right thing, the  
21 way we have countless times over the decades, initiative  
22 after initiative. It's ultimately up to the voters.  
23 There's nothing more transparent than that.

24                  Now, we're here today for one reason: the  
25 nefarious actions of the Republican leadership in Texas.

1 California didn't pick this fight. This was not on our  
bingo card six weeks ago, let alone six months ago.  
2 Actions of Republicans in Texas, compounded by the  
3 inaction of some Republican leaders here in California,  
4 that's why we're here today. All of this could have been  
5 avoided. To be able to stop this, talk to Texas. Talk  
6 to our President.

7 I have been astounded this week. I've  
8 seen Republican colleague after Republican colleague go  
9 on television, hold press conferences, go live on the  
10 social media, expressing outrage about California. But  
11 what about Texas? What about Donald Trump, who started  
12 all this, who started this circus?

13 You know, sometimes in life, I'm a firm  
14 believer that you just got to stand for the greater good,  
15 and you got to tell your boss no. You got to tell your  
16 boss no.

17 Today, I hope that we can do something  
18 constructive. We should do everything in our power to  
19 ensure free and fair elections. But let me be very  
20 clear. This action about redistricting, we all know  
21 this. We talk behind the scenes. We have a beer  
22 together. We go out to coffee. When I talk to folks  
23 when are on the other side of the aisle, they know why  
24 we're here. Can't say it publicly, but we all know why  
25

1 we're here.

2 And we also know that this is just the  
3 beginning. Mail-in ballots. It's now a predominant way  
4 folks votes in the United States. Mail-in ballots. Our  
5 President wants to end mail-in ballots. Make it harder  
6 to vote.

7 You know why he wants to be able to upend  
8 the census here? To rig it. In the United States  
9 Constitution, it says, "Count all persons." The reason  
10 why Donald Trump doesn't want to count all persons is  
11 because it hurts Republicans.

12 So then I hear Members of Congress, some  
13 in the Legislature, say, "I support independent  
14 redistricting." So I got three pages of votes on  
15 independent redistricting bills that have come through  
16 this Legislature over the past several years. Three  
17 pages right here. Let me just tell you what the  
18 predominant theme is. Republicans voted no. They voted  
19 no. All public votes.

20 Now, why is it? Why? All of a sudden,  
21 you all have seen the light? I would hope that we could  
22 do more than file frivolous lawsuits, which, by the way,  
23 within 48 hours, the Supreme Court just tossed out. I  
24 would hope that we could do more than just file bunk  
25 court action. When there are Republican leaders in this

1 country that are having state troopers follow Democratic  
2 legislators, when the Attorney General of Texas and the  
3 Governor say we need the FBI to track elected members of  
4 a state house, what the hell is happening and where is  
5 the outrage?

6 You're outraged that California is  
7 responding? The only reason -- the only reason we are  
8 here today is because of Texas.

9 And by the way, two nights ago on live  
10 television, state troopers drug out a Democratic female  
11 legislator out of the bathroom. Out of the bathroom  
12 because she did not have a pass to go.

13 And I hear about how unfair California is.  
14 Can you imagine if the Democratic majority said to the  
15 California Highway Patrol, "Follow Republican leaders in  
16 the Assembly and the Senate"? Yet today, nothing about  
17 that. Nothing. Fake outrage about what California is  
18 doing.

19 You know, we've seen this story play out  
20 in history. And hypocrisy today won't save your hide  
21 tomorrow when the secret police and the Mar-a-Lago goons  
22 find a reason to come after you. We are in a flashpoint  
23 in history if we do not stand up, if we do not shout out.  
24 This has to stop.

25 I've always supported independent

1 redistricting. I've supported independent redistricting  
2 on the local level here in California. I support  
3 national redistricting. Sounds like now that it may be a  
4 bipartisan bill.

5 What I do not support, what we cannot  
6 support in California, is unilateral disarmament when the  
7 fairness of the 2026 elections is being threatened. And  
8 yes. Donald Trump wants to rig the damn election. Other  
9 states want to play games. California is the only state  
10 committed to fairness whose potential redistricting goes  
11 away the minute others drop theirs. In Texas, it's  
12 permanent.

13 One of our colleagues in the Assembly said  
14 the other day, "When I go to a restaurant, I don't have  
15 to meet the chef." You all saw that. Senators, I also  
16 don't believe we need to meet the chef, but we do need to  
17 meet this moment. And the stakes are so high, and I want  
18 to end it right here.

19 Here's what's at stake. Millions of  
20 Californians are going to lose their health care next  
21 year. Millions. Tens of millions of Americans are going  
22 to lose their health care next year because of Donald  
23 Trump.

24 I've never seen a President come after  
25 fire aid and assistance like this President has

1 threatening to be able to cancel cleanup and recovery  
2 because he doesn't like our Governor or doesn't like the  
3 politics of the state.

4 I never thought I had to explain to my  
5 four-and-a-half-year-old who saw on a friend's television  
6 why someone was being thrown in a moving van. This is  
7 what we're fighting for today.

8 One of the main reasons I believe that we  
9 should be voting for this constitutional amendment will  
10 be waiting for me this evening at our kitchen table to  
11 tell me about his first week in school.

12 As much as some want to say this is about  
13 politics, this vote today is about people. It's about  
14 standing strong for people who are under assault by an  
15 authoritarian who's coming for our jugular. All we have  
16 now, the only choice, is to fight. This is a cynical  
17 ploy, and it's just the start. First, they come for the  
18 districts. Then they come for your ballots. Next, it  
19 will be your family.

20 Today's vote is about the future. It's  
21 about fairness. It's about trusting voters. I would  
22 respectfully ask for an aye vote, and I yield my time to  
23 Senator Cabaldon.

24 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Cabaldon,  
25 you are recognized.

1 SENATOR CABALDON: Thank you, Madam  
2 President.

3 This bill, this package of bills has been  
4 among the three most heavily reported bills in the  
5 California and in the country. The notion --

6 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Cabaldon,  
7 can you address the presiding officer, please?

8 SENATOR CABALDON: For a point?

9 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Can you address  
10 the presiding officer, please?

11 Oh, I usually stand there. Okay. All  
12 right. Thank you, Madam President.

13 This package of bills has been among the  
14 most heavily reported. It's widely known across the  
15 State of California that this effort is underway, which  
16 is odd, because when I talk to my own constituents and I  
17 mentioned the word "redistricting," a glazed look goes  
18 over their eye.

19 Very few Californians spend their time or  
20 their worries or their concerns or their hopes thinking  
21 about redistricting. They are thinking about food on the  
22 table, and rent, and public safety, and their ability to  
23 walk free on the streets of this state.

24 But I hear about it constantly in my own  
25 district, and I hear about it in places that you might

1 not expect. And it reminds me of one of my favorite  
2 parts of the year -- and I know I share this with many of  
3 my colleagues from both parties -- Little League opening  
4 day.

5 The parade goes down the neighborhood on  
6 Meadow Road, turns the corner. We all end up at Memorial  
7 Park for the first day of the Little League season. And  
8 once the ceremony is over, the certificates have been  
9 presented, then the teams go onto the field.

10 And you sit -- for me as a mayor, now as a  
11 Senator. You sit with the parents, ready to watch the  
12 game. And the first inning comes up, and the other team  
13 keeps striking out. And the second inning, they've  
14 stricken out every time. When they pitch, sometimes they  
15 intentionally hit our players, and you're starting to get  
16 a little worried.

17 By the fifth inning though, something  
18 weird happens. You see that on their side -- on the  
19 other team's players, the first base is now been taken  
20 over by one of the dad's. One of the mom's is subbed in  
21 at second base. Another mom is at shortstop. Another  
22 dad is at third base and another at catcher.

23 And you look at the field. You say, this  
24 is not -- this is Little League. Where are the kids at?  
25 You can't just sub in five adults to play a Little League

1 game. That's not fair. It's also not safe. What you've  
2 created is a Little League I would never be a part of.

3 We don't sit in the stands in that moment  
4 and argue with each other, you know what I'm going to do  
5 about this? I'm going to go to the next Little League  
6 board meeting in two months to complain because what we  
7 really need is a policy that prevents this from  
8 happening. You don't pen a harshly worded letter to the  
9 other team.

10 You stand up. You do something. In that  
11 moment, most likely, what most Americans would do is  
12 we're sending five of our parents out there. We're  
13 pulling our kids off the field. We are taking action to  
14 ensure that that cheating, that endangerment, does not  
15 happen.

16 If, when the Olympics are at the Rose Bowl  
17 here in California -- I'm sorry -- yeah -- the Rose Bowl  
18 in California and the soccer team come on the field and  
19 we're playing against Russia, and they sub in five  
20 people, five additional players onto their team, you can  
21 be damn right we'll be calling for our team to be doing  
22 the same. We won't be waiting to file a complaint after  
23 the game is over that we lost because someone cheated  
24 right in front of our eyes, right in broad daylight.

25 That's why Californians every day, more

1 and more Californians are like, I don't know that much  
2 about redistricting, but this ain't right. This cannot  
3 happen, and California cannot stand for it. That's what  
4 this is all about.

5 And so what's different here is it's not a  
6 trophy that's on the line. What is on the line is  
7 everything that we've heard described by the pro tem and  
8 others on this floor. The HR 1 cuts, the massive cuts  
9 that will hit California, but many of them that won't  
10 take place until after the congressional election. So we  
11 have a shot to stop them from happening. What's on the  
12 line is our freedom on the street and the terrorism  
13 that's happening with ICE. The attacks on UCLA, on our  
14 very elections, and reproductive freedom across the  
15 board, we have a chance to do something about it.

16 Because right now, everyone at the Little  
17 League game is always asking me, "What can I do as an  
18 American? What can I do to prevent the erasure of our  
19 democracy, the decline of our institutions and our  
20 protections?"

21 Now, until we have to both fix the rules,  
22 we do have to go to that Little League meeting, and  
23 that's exactly what ACA 8 does. It's first provision is  
24 California calls upon the Congress of the United States  
25 to place a constitutional amendment before all of the

1 states for a national independent redistricting system.

2 That is number one in ACA 8. And so we are doing that.

3 And we must also get on the field and protect our kids  
4 and our families and our communities.

5 Now, it's ironic because we stand here  
6 today, 99 years after the very first redistricting  
7 initiative went on the ballot here in the California.  
8 Redistricting is one of the most contested ballot  
9 initiatives over and over and over again that  
10 Californians typically face. And we've been doing it now  
11 for a century.

12 And that ballot measure, which created an  
13 independent Citizens Commission in Redistricting was  
14 rejected almost two to one. When it was proposed again a  
15 decade and a half later, it was rejected by 10 points.  
16 It was rejected and rejected and rejected and rejected  
17 and rejected.

18 In the 1980s, it was rejected four times,  
19 four times. And then in the 2000s, it was rejected right  
20 before it barely passed.

21 And so when we talk about that the voters  
22 have enshrined this in the constitution as something that  
23 can never change, the voters have been changing their  
24 minds about redistricting almost since the admission of  
25 this state into the union.

1 And in fact, in 2008 when the voters  
2 passed the initiative that the senator from Fair Oaks  
3 noted, there were two other ballot measures on that 2008  
4 ballot that are noteworthy here.

5 One was the voters' overwhelming support  
6 for high-speed rail, which we've heard previously on this  
7 floor. Senators from the other side of the aisle,  
8 Republican senators saying we should toss that out. We  
9 should throw that one out. But this one that passed by  
10 less is somehow divinely inspired and can never be  
11 changed by the voters themselves.

12 The second measure that was on that ballot  
13 was Proposition 8, the infamous Proposition 8, which said  
14 that we were amending the Constitution to prevent folks  
15 from marrying the person that they loved, marriage  
16 equality. That's what happened in 2008 by a larger  
17 margin through this commission. And yet, last year, the  
18 voters of California overwhelmingly reversed that  
19 decision.

20 Democracy is an everchanging progress.  
21 It's a book that we are writing together, and the only  
22 ones that can tell us to respect the will of the voters  
23 are the voters. And the only way we can know what their  
24 will is in this critical time for the preservation of our  
25 democracy is by passing this constitution to let the

1 voters decide.

2 I want to speak briefly to the notion of  
3 this mid-decade redistricting that we've heard about  
4 repeatedly this morning as well and the outrage over the  
5 idea that we might do redistricting in the middle of the  
6 decade, as though this were the first time this idea's  
7 been considered.

8 Republicans and their agents submitted  
9 mid-decade redistricting initiatives nearly every single  
10 year in the 1980s, and then again in the 90s, and the  
11 2000s. The outrage -- the hypocritical outrage here is  
12 palpable. The only folks who proposed mid-decade  
13 redistricting before today have been the Republicans of  
14 California. And so the outrage that this is  
15 unconstitutional, how can it be unconstitutional to ask  
16 the voters of California if they choose to, if they  
17 decide to, if they elect to amend the Constitution to  
18 accomplish this?

19 And also, Texas did not consider the 2020  
20 census data or any updates. In fact, the Chairman of the  
21 Election Committee in Texas said, "Well, I don't have  
22 that census data. I haven't looked at it."

23 This process, on the other hand, has  
24 examined every available data source. That census from  
25 2020 and all the data since, all of the testimony in

1 relevant areas in California where the lines are changing  
2 to look to see what did regular people say about their  
3 communities of interest to the Redistricting Commission.

4 And then finally, the notion that this is  
5 expensive. Another example of fake outrage because we  
6 heard no outrage about the cost -- the annual petitions  
7 to the Secretary of State for a recall of the Governor or  
8 someone else. Every single year, we've had these  
9 petitions submitted with zero, dead silence, about the  
10 cost of that election, which is exactly the same as the  
11 cost is this.

12 So please spare me the sanctimony about  
13 the cost of the election when you've remained silent  
14 every single time that another recall election has been  
15 proposed.

16 Now, I also represent Sonoma County, just  
17 as a response to the senator from Santa Clarita, and many  
18 other communities that have constantly been shifted from  
19 district to district over time. And Sonoma County will  
20 be doing just fine under this map. I can speak to my  
21 constituents. We can handle -- we can handle having  
22 three members of Congress. It's a feature, not a bug.

23 But let's not think that today's  
24 redistricting map, it comes from a commission that did  
25 outstanding work, but it ain't -- it's not from some

1 divine text, right. Let's go up to one of the closest  
2 districts from here. Maybe stop in Citrus Heights at the  
3 Jolly Cone and just head up the freeway. You've now met  
4 about five percent of the voters in this congressional  
5 district.

6 Head up the Highway 50 a little bit.  
7 You'll end up in Folsom. Maybe stop at the auto malls or  
8 maybe the old town. Then head over to Roseville and to  
9 Rocklin and Placer County. You've now met half the  
10 voters -- over half the voters of this district.

11 But you got to keep on going. Because in  
12 that district, you got to keep driving on Highway 80 up  
13 all the way to almost Mount Lassen. And then you have to  
14 turn around, get back on the freeway, get back on 12  
15 freeways in order to get to Death Valley, Death Valley.

16 So please, don't tell me about, you know,  
17 splitting Lodi, which is a fan community of mine just  
18 nearby here in three when the current map places hundreds  
19 of thousands of people in Sacramento County, steps away  
20 from this building, in the same congressional district as  
21 Death Valley itself.

22 And so these maps represent a step forward  
23 for representation. They respect communities of  
24 interest. They fully comply with the Voting Rights Act.

25 But most importantly, they meet the moment

1 that we are here because of Trump, and we're  
2 here -- President Trump, and we're here because of what  
3 Texas is doing, seeking to cheat and steal the game. We  
4 are doing this not in response to Texas alone but to  
5 parry Texas, to neutralize and to nullify their illegal  
6 actions to cheat this congressional election and undo the  
7 will of the voters in 2026.

8 California, we are the fourth largest  
9 economy. We are the most populous state in the country.  
10 It is our duty to America to be the last line of defense,  
11 and I ask for an aye vote on ACA 8.

12 Thank you, Madam President.

13 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

14 Senator Valladares, you are recognized.

15 SENATOR VALLADARES: Thank you, Madam  
16 President. And I do believe I have amendments at the  
17 desk.

18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please  
19 read the amendments.

20 THE SECRETARY: Amendments by Senator  
21 Valladares, set one.

22 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: You may proceed.

23 SENATOR VALLADARES: Thank you. Members,  
24 ladies and gentlemen of the Senate. I rise to present  
25 important amendments to ACA 8.

1 If this body insists on moving forward  
2 with stripping power away from the voter-approved  
3 redistricting commission, then the very least that we can  
4 do is we owe Californians meaningful safeguards against  
5 corruption.

6 This amendment simply provides that any  
7 legislator that votes yes on ACA 8 will be prohibited  
8 from running for elected office for 10 years. That is  
9 not a radical idea. It merely extends to members of this  
10 Legislature the same 10-year moratorium that already  
11 applies to the citizen volunteers who serve on the  
12 independent redistricting commission.

13 The people of California demanded ironclad  
14 guarantees that those who draw district lines never place  
15 personal ambition above the voters. If this is good  
16 enough for the citizens who volunteer their time, it  
17 should be good enough for politicians seeking to reclaim  
18 power. Let's be clear, you cannot demand that ordinary  
19 citizens give up the right to run for office for a decade  
20 and then exempt politicians from the same rule. That  
21 would be hypocrisy.

22 If you truly believe that ACA 8 is about  
23 fairness, if you truly believe that this isn't about  
24 creating career opportunities for members of this body or  
25 those who influence these maps, then you should have no

1 problem supporting this amendment. Because if everything  
2 is above board here, then what do you have to object to?

3 Sixty percent of Californians voted to  
4 give redistricting power to an independent commission  
5 because they were tired of tortured lines drawn to serve  
6 those in power. The current process is transparent.  
7 It's independent, and it's accountable to the people.  
8 They said clearly, we do not want politicians drawing  
9 their own lines.

10 Today, this body risks turning its back on  
11 that mandate. But if we're going to press forward, then  
12 we must at least bind ourselves to the same ethical  
13 standards that we demand of our citizens. This amendment  
14 is a test, a test of whether or not this body values  
15 integrity over expediency, fairness over partisanship,  
16 and accountability over ambition. I respectfully ask for  
17 your aye vote.

18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

19 Senate Gonzalez -- Senator Gonzalez,  
20 you're recognized.

21 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam  
22 President, members. Again, ACA 8 is very clear. It's in  
23 response to what colleagues in Texas are doing, and this  
24 is absolutely egregious. I'm wondering where the outcry  
25 is against the Texas officials that are continuously

1 disenfranchising voters in Texas. And it also requests

2 --

3 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Excuse me. Point  
4 of order.

5 SENATOR VALLADARES: If the majority  
6 leader could please speak to Germanists of the  
7 amendments.

8 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Your point is well  
9 taken. Can you please limit your comments to the  
10 amendments that we are hearing at this moment?

11 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yes. And I am  
12 absolutely going to do that. And so, ACA 8 also  
13 represents a reasonable and rational response to this  
14 overreach. And the amendments specifically, what I will  
15 say is I would love an outcry for the fact that there is  
16 going to be -- if we're going to talk about corruption  
17 and transparency, why aren't we talking about the fact  
18 that President Trump has already said he wanted to run  
19 for a third term, a third term, and become the next king  
20 of the United States of America?

21 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Again --

22 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Point of order.

23 SENATOR GONZALEZ: So, I will ask that --

24 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.  
25 Excuse me. Just a moment.

What is your point of order?

SENATOR STRICKLAND: The speaker is not addressing the amendments directly before us in this body. I believe the amendments have no -- nothing written about the President of the United States. So --

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

Just a moment, please.

SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yeah.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Gonzalez, the amendments that we have before us are dealing with whether or not the members of the Legislature will be able to run as a candidate for 10 years. Your comments must stick to the amendments that we are voting on or that have been --

SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: -- presenting before us. Thank you.

SENATOR GONZALEZ: I think the floor is yours.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Valladares, would you like to respond?

SENATOR VALLADARES: Thank you. Again, to clarify, this is a really simple amendment. It is three lines. This is about fairness. This is about holding ourselves, elected members of a Legislature, to the same

standards that we require of our Citizen Redistricting Commission. Again, if this ACA is to really be about fairness, then you should have no problem supporting this amendment.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

Senator Gonzalez, you are recognized.

SENATOR GONZALEZ: Madam President, I ask that we lay the amendments on the table asking for an aye vote.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Gonzalez has requested that we lay the amendments on the table. This is not debatable. Senator Gonzalez is asking for an aye vote. Senator Valladares is asking for a no vote.

Secretary, please call the roll.

THE SECRETARY: Allen.

Aye.

Alvarado-Gil.

Archuleta.

Aye.

Arreguin.

Aye.

Ashby.

Aye.

Becker.

Aye.

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
Transcription of Video Recording on 08/21/2025

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1 Blakespear.

2 Aye.

3 Cabaldon.

4 Aye.

5 Caballero.

6 Aye.

7 Cervantes.

8 Aye.

9 Choi.

10 No.

11 Cortese.

12 Aye.

13 Dahle.

14 No.

15 Durazo.

16 Aye.

17 Gonzalez.

18 Aye.

19 Grayson.

20 Aye.

21 Grove.

22 No.

23 Hurtado.

24 Aye.

25 Jones.

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No.

Laird.

Aye.

Limon.

Aye.

McGuire.

Aye.

McNerney.

Aye.

Menjivar.

Aye.

Niello.

No.

Ochoa Bogh.

No.

Padilla.

Aye.

Perez.

Aye.

Reyes.

Aye.

Richardson.

Aye.

Rubio.

Aye.

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1 Seyarto.

2 No.

3 Smallwood-Cuevas.

4 Aye.

5 Stern.

6 Aye.

7 Strickland.

8 No.

9 Umberg.

10 Aye.

11 Valladares.

12 No.

13 Wahab.

14 Aye.

15 Weber Pierson.

16 Aye.

17 Wiener.

18 Aye.

19 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes 30, noes 9.

20 The amendments are laid at the table. We will continue  
21 our debate.

22 Senator Wiener, you are recognized.

23 SENATOR WIENER: Thank you very much,  
24 Madam President. Because this is really about California  
25 punching back against Donald Trump. Donald Trump has

1 been punching down at everyone for a long time, punching  
2 down at states, punching down at trans kids, punching  
3 down at immigrants. We are punching back to protect our  
4 democracy against this fascism.

5 This is about California checking Donald  
6 Trump. And -- and I wanted to say with respect to Trump,  
7 there was some reference to corruption before. I hope if  
8 people are going to talk about corruption, we can talk  
9 about the corruption in the White House, that Donald  
10 Trump is accepting all sorts of bribes, these scam meme  
11 coins that people use to funnel cash to him. The -- the  
12 plane that he received from the Qatari government, the  
13 bribe that he received from Paramount to settle that  
14 bogus defamation lawsuit. So let's talk about that  
15 corruption.

16 And we're seeing corruption here as well  
17 in terms of Donald Trump trying to seize control of our  
18 government in perpetuity. And that's what's happening in  
19 Texas and what we are responding to. So, when I say that  
20 California is checking Donald Trump, it's because not  
21 that many institutions are actually stepping up to check  
22 this aspiring dictator. The Republicans in Congress are  
23 not checking him. They just give him whatever the heck  
24 he asks for.

25 The Republicans in Congress voted to kick

1 their own constituents off of healthcare and food  
2 assistance and to close hospitals in their own district  
3 at the request of Donald Trump.

4 The Supreme Court is not checking him.  
5 The Supreme Court basically rubber stamps whatever the  
6 heck Donald Trump wants to do, whether it's illegally  
7 deport immigrants or tear down the government illegally;  
8 the Supreme Court just rubber stamps it.

9 It's not red states because Donald Trump  
10 called up the Governor of Texas and said, hey, I want  
11 five more seats in Congress. Can you do a scam  
12 redistricting? And instead of saying, you know what,  
13 Mr. President, like mind your own business. We're going  
14 to handle our own stuff here in Texas, the Governor of  
15 Texas just said, yes, sir. Whatever you want, sir.  
16 We'll do whatever you need, sir.

17 Universities aren't doing it. They're  
18 caving in one after the other, adopting his MAGA  
19 policies. Most recently, even Harvard, which it was so  
20 depressing. Harvard was standing up, and then even  
21 Harvard caved in.

22 It's not the media. Some media are  
23 standing up like the AP, which is still banned from a lot  
24 of things because it refuses to say the Gulf of America,  
25 but other media are even paying bribes to this President.

1 So California is not going to do that. We are going to  
2 check this fascist overreaches. We're going to check  
3 him. We're not going to back down.

4 We are the fourth-largest economy in the  
5 world. We are the largest state by far. We have the  
6 wherewithal to be able to fight back and punch back  
7 against this despicable human being who is trying to tear  
8 down so much of what is good in this country. And Trump  
9 knows that we have the ability to punch back and that we  
10 will punch back.

11 And that's why he is targeting California  
12 so severely. Why he is demanding a billion dollars in  
13 extortion from UCLA. Otherwise, he'll kill off  
14 Alzheimer's and cancer research at UCLA. He's doing it  
15 by targeting, especially Southern California, with these  
16 horrific immigration raids, grabbing people from their  
17 front yards, and from bus stops, and from work sites --

18 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Point of order.

19 SENATOR WIENER: -- and disappearing them.

20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.

21 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Point of order.

22 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.

23 What is your point of order?

24 SENATOR STRICKLAND: I deeply respect my  
25 colleague from San Francisco and his passion about a lot

1 of different issues throughout the state of California.  
2 But I would encourage this body to talk about the bill  
3 that's before us. And I gave a lot of leeway before my  
4 point of order, but it seems like it's going into a lot  
5 of different issues. And I would hope that my --

6 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you so much,  
7 Senator Strickland. You've stated your point of order.  
8 Just a moment.

9 SENATOR WIENER: Madam President, it's  
10 directly relevant.

11 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you so much  
12 for -- for waiting. We have allowed during this debate  
13 for people to give outside context on both sides to their  
14 arguments for whether or not they support or oppose the  
15 measure that is before us. And therefore, your point is  
16 not well taken.

17 Senator Wiener, you may continue. Thank  
18 you.

19 SENATOR WIENER: Thank you very much.  
20 Madam President.

21 In addition to targeting UCLA, in addition  
22 to these horrific fascist secret police immigration  
23 raids, he is directly targeting California with his  
24 unconstitutional plan to upend the census and to do a new  
25 scam census so that he can move even more seats out of

1 California and other states that don't support his  
2 fascism.

3 So on so many levels, he is targeting  
4 California, and he is targeting so much that is good  
5 about this country. And California is not going to take  
6 it sitting down. We are going to punch back. And that's  
7 what we are doing today.

8 I wanted to say one final thing. I  
9 supported the creation of the Independent Redistricting  
10 Commission. I have been an admirer of the work of this  
11 Commission, and I understand that there are some folks,  
12 people I know and respect, who want us to keep the  
13 Independent Redistricting Commission, and we are keeping  
14 it.

15 But we also have to be clear that this is  
16 about so much more than whether we are taking a  
17 particular approach to redistricting. That all becomes  
18 irrelevant if we lose our democracy because we have a  
19 fascist who freezes himself in power and continues to  
20 tear down people's access to healthcare and destroy civil  
21 rights for so many communities, and destroy our ability  
22 to engage in scientific research.

23 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Wiener,  
24 let's --

25 SENATOR WIENER: Yes.

1 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: -- go back to the  
2 -- the bill before us.

3 SENATOR WIENER: Yes.

4 And so it's about the bill. It's about  
5 the Independent Redistricting Commission. And so as much  
6 as we all want to have the best redistricting possible,  
7 this is the right approach right now in response to what  
8 Texas is doing and what this President is trying to do to  
9 our country. And I respectfully ask for an aye vote.

10 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

11 Senator Reyes, you are recognized.

12 SENATOR REYES: Thank you, Madam  
13 President.

14 My mother has often told me, and I'll say  
15 in Spanish (Spanish). My mother says, if it is unjust,  
16 it is incorrect. And if it is incorrect, it is your  
17 responsibility to correct it. Not because it affects  
18 you, but it's because it affects others and because it  
19 affects society.

20 The actions of this administration have  
21 terrorized our communities. Sometimes it is direct, and  
22 sometimes it is not only direct in our -- in our  
23 districts, but also throughout California. In San  
24 Bernardino County alone, 155,000 children rely on SNAP,  
25 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. They're going

1 to -- many of them are going to lose this. That is an  
2 injustice.

3 We are seeing armed masked men stopping  
4 and kidnapping people right off the street, putting them  
5 in unmarked cars, and sending them to unknown countries.  
6 Just last week, we had a young man who was stopped by  
7 these unmasked -- or by these masked armed men. He  
8 wouldn't roll down his window. He asked them to identify  
9 themselves, asked for a warrant. They could not provide  
10 anything. They broke his windows. He immediately fled.  
11 They fired at his vehicle. And on his way home, he  
12 called 911 and asked San Bernardino PD to please come and  
13 help.

14 We've lost due process, which is a  
15 fundamental right of Americans. We have lost it under  
16 this administration. The fear in our country is  
17 unacceptable, especially for our children who are no  
18 longer going to school. We have -- we have  
19 superintendents now concerned in sending the teachers out  
20 to welcome the students to make sure the students feel  
21 that they are protected in their schools.

22 This Trump big, ugly bill has taken \$1  
23 trillion that was for Medicaid. In every one of our  
24 counties, every one of our districts, our people, our  
25 people, our constituents are losing their benefits. And

1 who benefited under that big, ugly bill? Billionaires.  
2 They can write off their jets now under this bill in  
3 addition to so many other things.

4 Because of the President's failure, he  
5 went to Texas, as has been talked about. He went to  
6 Republican states to do what failures do best when they  
7 don't get their way - cheat, found a way to cheat. He's  
8 cheating because he knows that he will have to fairly  
9 answer to the consequences of his actions, and to the  
10 American people, who will wholeheartedly reject him.

11 This is why we're here on the floor, to  
12 hold him and others accountable. And to show that when  
13 you pick a fight with California, California will fight  
14 back. It's been mentioned so many times, we didn't start  
15 this fight, but we cannot back away from it.  
16 Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures.

17 That is why we are doing this the right  
18 way. We are taking this fight to the voters to ask them  
19 to join us in offsetting the partisan, hostile acts of  
20 the Trump administration.

21 If California truly leads a nation, as is  
22 often said on this floor, then it has to be us that shows  
23 the rest of the country, democracy is what is at stake.  
24 We are witnessing injustices under this President and  
25 this administration. These injustices are incorrect, and

1 we have a responsibility to correct what is wrong.

2 If it is unjust, it is incorrect. We are  
3 here to protect democracy. And I've got to tell you that  
4 we take this responsibility -- I take this responsibility  
5 very seriously. And I am so proud to have returned to  
6 this floor at this time to exercise my right to join with  
7 my colleagues in exercising this responsibility and to  
8 correct something that is so wrong and so unjust. Thank  
9 you, Madam President.

10 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.  
11 Senator Strickland, you are recognized.

12 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Thank you,  
13 Ms. President, members. I would like to bring it back to  
14 the bill that's before us instead of rehash the  
15 Presidential campaign. And I also -- I want to point out  
16 on the open of this debate, Mr. Leader, who I have deep  
17 respect for, said we had fake outrage.

18 I'm here to say there's nothing fake about  
19 our outrage on our side of the aisle. I hear a lot of  
20 different terminologies being used by the other side.  
21 The word "authoritarian" came up very, very frequently.  
22 Well, it's authoritarian to have a predetermined  
23 election, and that's exactly what will happen if we pass  
24 and the people pass ACA 8. We will have predetermined  
25 elections where there's no competition in California, and

that is authoritarian.

1 I do trust the voters of California. And  
2 a lot of the members here say, well, why don't you just  
3 trust the voters of California, because they get to  
4 decide the final say in November? I do trust the voters.  
5 However, I don't trust the truth in advertising. We need  
6 to have truth in advertising. And when you look at  
7 what's going to be called the title and summary with the  
8 Attorney General, the first lines are going to be, do you  
9 want to keep the non-partisan Citizens Redistricting  
10 Commission?

11 Members, you know, that's not true. You  
12 know, that's not truth in advertising. And I'm glad one  
13 of my colleagues called out the high-speed rail because  
14 at the time when that came forward, I said there was no  
15 truth in advertising to that bill. Because they said it  
16 won't be \$33 billion, and it won't go from San Francisco  
17 to Los Angeles.

18 SENATOR CORTESE: Point of order.

19 SENATOR STRICKLAND: By the way --

20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.

21 SENATOR STRICKLAND: -- I'm responding --

22 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.

23 Just a moment.

24 SENATOR STRICKLAND: -- to --

25

1 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.

2 What is your point of order?

3 SENATOR CORTESE: Point of order. There's  
4 nothing on the floor before us today that has anything to  
5 do with high-speed rail and the arguments that a  
6 colleague from Huntington Beach has made in the past  
7 about high-speed rail. And I just ask that he stick to  
8 the matters on the floor. Thank you.

9 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Madam President, I'm  
10 responding to a member.

11 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.  
12 Just a moment.

13 SENATOR STRICKLAND: It's truth in  
14 advertising.

15 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you. So  
16 seeing that a senator did mention high-speed rail  
17 earlier, we are going to allow for latitude to allow  
18 Senator Strickland to include those in his remarks.  
19 However, please try to keep your remarks as close to --

20 SENATOR STRICKLAND: I will.

21 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: -- the measure  
22 that we are debating as close as possible. Thank you.

23 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Thank you, Madam  
24 President.

25 Again, I have faith in the California

1 people and the California voters, but when they're misled  
2 in terms of what they're actually voting for, like the  
3 high-speed rail and like what's before us here today,  
4 when you're telling the people of California, you're  
5 preserving the non-partisan Citizens Redistricting  
6 Commission, you're not being truthful to the people of  
7 California.

8 And again, we've done this without  
9 transparency. We haven't done it in the light of day,  
10 but again, I firmly believe when it comes down to it, the  
11 people of California -- if this bill moves forward, the  
12 people of California will fight to preserve what is the  
13 non-partisan Citizens Redistricting Commission, a gold  
14 standard, because they don't want the authoritarian  
15 politics to have predetermined elections.

16 They want to have a voice, and they will  
17 not have a voice in California if this bill moves  
18 forward. And instead of people in Congress earning the  
19 votes of their citizens, the elections will be  
20 predetermined. And I can't think of anything more  
21 authoritarian than having predetermined elections. And  
22 for that reason, I urge a no vote on ACA.

23 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

24 Senator Padilla, you're recognized.

25 SENATOR PADILLA: Thank you very much,

1 Madam President and colleagues. I rise in support.

2 You know, to be honest, Madam President,  
3 I'm reminded of a famous line from a classical movie  
4 we're all familiar with, The Wizard of Oz. Pay no  
5 attention to the man behind the curtain.

6 The question before the Senate on this  
7 amendment is first whether we should adopt its content,  
8 what it does, and whether we should submit it to the  
9 voters of California for their good judgment to decide  
10 whether or not to adopt it and to put it into operation.  
11 But really, Madam President, this is a conversation about  
12 the why and not the what.

13 I think we know the what, what a contrast  
14 it presents. Sitting President of the United States  
15 phones up the Governor of Texas with their time-honored  
16 tradition of gerrymandering and being in court defending  
17 that they don't violate the Voting Rights Act,  
18 disenfranchising voters, doing it their way, which  
19 they're entitled to do. But in this case, having a  
20 sitting President ask that they do it now, mid-census,  
21 with an eye towards the next midterm elections for  
22 representation in the United States House of  
23 Representatives.

24 And so here we are with this question in  
25 response to that, but doing it slightly differently. Not

1 because a President called us up and said, can you find  
2 me some more districts? But putting the question before  
3 the people enfranchising and empowering the voters of  
4 California to make this critical decision and paying them  
5 the respect and honesty as to the why.

6 And we should think about the why. Why is  
7 it important in the midterms for the US House of  
8 Representatives that there be an even exchange of debate  
9 and ideas, and opportunity for the people of this country  
10 to decide what that house looks like instead of giving  
11 greater weight to one point of view before the game is  
12 even played and diminishing the voices of another point  
13 of view? The why is pretty obvious. It's to continue  
14 the trajectory and the policies of regression, and  
15 reduction, and undoing that we are witnessing in this  
16 time at a level we've never seen in modern American  
17 history.

18 That's why it's important to balance the  
19 equation so that all voices in our congressional midterms  
20 have an opportunity to be heard. Not for its own sake,  
21 but because of what is at stake.

22 There was a young democratic President in  
23 January of 1961 named John Kennedy, who talked about  
24 being part of a generation of leaders, new leaders that  
25 were not and were unwilling to witness or permit the slow

1 undoing of the basic human rights for which this nation  
2 has always been committed here at home and around the  
3 world.

4 And two decades later, a Republican  
5 President named Ronald Reagan, upon taking his oath,  
6 talked incredibly and articulately well about the fact  
7 that freedom and the dignity of the individual must be  
8 and has been more available and assured here in this  
9 country than in any other place on earth.

10 The question is really about the why. Why  
11 did President Trump ask Texas to act? Why is it  
12 important that they rigged the game before it's played?  
13 It's not for its own sake. It's for what they want to  
14 continue to do, the slow undoing. The slow undoing that  
15 we've witnessed in the undoing of individual liberties  
16 and protections, ignoring courts of law. The snatching  
17 of persons by unidentified masked agents off the streets,  
18 something people haven't seen since behind the Iron  
19 Curtain during the Cold War in the most oppressive states  
20 in the world, pushing millions out of the social safety  
21 net. Those who can least afford it, and those who are  
22 most vulnerable.

23 The undoing that is the biggest tax  
24 giveaway in American history to the wealthiest Americans  
25 at the expense of the most vulnerable. The retreating

1 from American leadership abroad in the world. The  
2 failure to defend territorial integrity, sovereignty, and  
3 democracy. To stand for something that we pledge  
4 allegiance to every day, the slow undoing.

5 And the question today, colleagues, are we  
6 -- are we part of a new generation of leaders in 2025 who  
7 are unwilling to witness or permit that continued slow  
8 undoing of everything we hold dear? Are we going to be  
9 part of a generation of leaders that are determined to be  
10 sure that the freedom and dignity of the individual must  
11 be available and assured here in America, more so than in  
12 any other place on earth? That's what this debate is  
13 really about. We must be that generation of leaders.  
14 And I respectfully ask for aye vote.

15 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.  
16 Senator Rubio, you are recognized.

17 SENATOR RUBIO: Thank you, Madam  
18 President, ladies and gentlemen of the Senate.

19 Today, I rise first and foremost as a  
20 teacher, just thinking about what this moment means to my  
21 students, as a former council member, just thinking of  
22 how this moment is going to impact my community, and as a  
23 formerly elected city clerk who ran elections, what this  
24 means to democracy. And I rise in strong support of ACA  
25 8, and now, of course, as a state senator, caring very

1 much about what happens in this beautiful state to the  
2 beautiful people of California.

3 But I want to be clear. I've been hearing  
4 over and over from my colleagues their outrage about the  
5 money that's being spent in this election. And really, I  
6 think the outrage is hollow. One of the things that  
7 keeps running through my mind constantly is that, you  
8 know, we have a President, Donald Trump, who has wasted  
9 millions and millions of dollars, of our tax dollars, in  
10 his own luxury, and we haven't heard any outrage about  
11 that spending.

12 He has spent millions of dollars  
13 retrofitting a private jet that he received from a  
14 foreign country no less. He is currently spending  
15 millions of dollars on a grand ballroom so that he can  
16 continue to have his lavish parties. And he continues to  
17 spend money gold-plating a White House that was meant to  
18 be white.

19 And yet we have so many of our seniors  
20 whose lives are being threatened, healthcare being cut  
21 back, and their Social Security also threatened. We have  
22 our students, our children, our community members who now  
23 are going to be impacted by the cutbacks in SNAP and food  
24 assistance. And it always happens to the most  
25 vulnerable. But let's not talk about the millions in

1 that ballroom that's going to have gold plating.

2 And then we don't think about the millions  
3 that were spent deploying our military on American soil  
4 on Americans. While college students are not going to be  
5 able to afford to go to college because their grants were  
6 frozen. I don't remember the outrage over those tax  
7 dollars, and never mind that his children and himself  
8 continue to make billions. He didn't divest, and I  
9 believe he has continued to violate the Emoluments  
10 Clause. Again, where is the outrage? They're making  
11 billions.

12 The truth is that the outrage is not over  
13 the spending. It's about accountability. It's about  
14 democracy itself. And that is why ACA 8 matters so much  
15 because we need to give Californians the power to decide  
16 if it matters to them as well. And I believe that the  
17 way this is set up, it does. We're giving Californians  
18 the power to decide in November for themselves if this is  
19 fair, and it's in the hands of the voters.

20 And if we don't protect democracy now,  
21 then when? When it's gone and history is looking back?  
22 History will look back on us. Future generations will  
23 look back on us, and I think this is the right time to do  
24 the right thing.

25 Government should always be about service

1 and not self-indulgence, as we have seen from our  
2 President. It's about feeding children, not feeding  
3 egos, as we have seen from the President. It's about  
4 protecting seniors, not protecting golf outings, as we  
5 have seen from the President.

6 ACA 8 is our chance to say enough, to put  
7 power back where it belongs, and that is in the hands of  
8 our Californian people.

9 The maps are already online. They will be  
10 printed on official voter guides. Voters will have  
11 plenty of time to review them and cast their vote. The  
12 people will decide. All Californians will decide, and it  
13 doesn't matter what side you're on. So with that, I  
14 respectfully ask for your aye vote. Thank you.

15 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

16 Senator Smallwood-Cuevas, you are  
17 recognized.

18 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Thank you,  
19 Madam President and colleagues. I rise in strong support  
20 of ACA 8.

21 Today's conversation just reminded me of  
22 something that my grandmother said, and that is, if you  
23 don't know your history, your children will be doomed to  
24 repeat it. When our people marched across the Edmund  
25 Pettus Bridge, facing dogs, and fire hoses, and the

1 terror of Jim Crow and racial violence, we were not only  
2 demanding the right to vote for ourselves, we were  
3 expanding the promise of democracy for the nation. And  
4 out of that sacrifice came the Voting Rights Act of 1965,  
5 the most important civil rights law in our history.

6 And yet every year since the act was  
7 passed, Texas has found ways to violate it. A reminder  
8 that progress is never permanent, and vigilance is always  
9 required. And Californians know, and what today's vote  
10 on ACA 8 is about, is that this fight is not over. The  
11 same forces that tried to stop us in Selma are still  
12 working today to silence our voices through voter  
13 suppression and this Texas gerrymandering.

14 In fact, we must honor the Voting Rights  
15 Act, not just with memory but with action. And we must  
16 protect the right to vote and ensure that we are  
17 strengthening all communities of interest, ensuring  
18 people who have saved our democracy can never be shut out  
19 again. ACA 8 is about one thing - defending our  
20 democracy from being rigged by a tyrant.

21 Texas and other Republican-led states are  
22 rushing through a mid-decade redistricting scheme  
23 designed to steal seats in Congress. In Texas, what this  
24 looks like is that black Texans will lose much of their  
25 power, being reduced to about a fifth of what their power

1 was before this gross attack. This is not just a power  
2 grab. It is a direct attack on communities of interest,  
3 on young voters, and on anyone who stands for equity, and  
4 justice, and due process of law.

5 Californians, we understand that we cannot  
6 sit back while these extremists tilt the balance of power  
7 under this hand of Donald Trump and unchecked control of  
8 Congress. We cannot let this happen. And ACA 8 provides  
9 a safeguard. It states that if Texas gerrymanders their  
10 maps, California will temporarily adjust ours to level  
11 the playing field. And we understand we always need to  
12 work at leveling the playing field.

13 Time and time again, when our nation's  
14 future was on the line, this history of the black vote is  
15 key because it's carried us forward. ACA 8 offsets  
16 partisan gerrymanders in Texas. It protects vulnerable  
17 communities here in California. And it's not maps alone  
18 that safeguard our future. Let's remember our history,  
19 and let's take a closer look at Texas history.

20 Texas once saw black political power rise  
21 during reconstruction, as it had across much of the  
22 country, only to be stripped away by the black codes, and  
23 Jim Crow, and racial terror, poll taxes, white-only  
24 primaries that cut black voter rolls in Texas from over  
25 100,000 to just a few thousand. The Voting Rights Act of

1 1965 reclaimed that. But today's gerrymandering in  
2 Texas, the voter suppression, shows that Texas is now  
3 sliding back, a reminder that every generation must fight  
4 to keep democracy alive. And that is what we are  
5 stepping up to the plate to do here in California.

6 This is bigger than what we are doing on  
7 this floor, and it's bigger than what our voters will  
8 have to do this November. This is about sending a clear  
9 message to the nation and the world that we will not  
10 allow Donald Trump and MAGA Republicans to steal  
11 elections from the people. We know what happens when  
12 Trump has power.

13 Many of my colleagues have described the  
14 painful and cruelty of it - denying disaster relief to  
15 fire victims, imposing illegal tariffs that is destroying  
16 our economy and threatening hundreds of thousands, if not  
17 millions, of workers. He's hurting working families by  
18 rolling back over 60 years of hard-fought labor  
19 protections. He's ordered the mass arrest, deportations,  
20 racial profiling, and terrorizing of families and  
21 children.

22 He's criminalizing diversity, dismantling  
23 DEI programs that protect equity in our schools and in  
24 our workplaces, and that allows us to grow and be  
25 innovative by bringing new voices, and ideas, and thought

1 partners to the table. If given unchecked control, we  
2 know that Trump will roll back decades of human civil,  
3 women, workers' rights.

4 ACA 8 is California, once again, standing  
5 up to defend democracy, just as we have led on climate  
6 resiliency, just as we have led on workers' rights, on  
7 women's rights, on equity. Today, we will lead on  
8 protecting free and fair elections. Let's make sure the  
9 voice of California and all Californians will not be  
10 silenced by partisan power grabs at the hands of a  
11 dictator. And with that, I respectfully urge an aye vote  
12 on ACA 8.

13 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

14 Senator Arreguin, you are recognized.

15 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Thank you, Madam  
16 President.

17 Senators, I rise in strong support of ACA  
18 8, a bill that is vital to the preservation of our  
19 democracy, that is under assault by President Trump.

20 And first, let me address the question of  
21 whether it is legal for us to take this action today.  
22 The Legislature and the voters often put constitutional  
23 amendments on the ballot. And what we are doing today is  
24 putting this question to the voters and giving them the  
25 opportunity to decide whether to allow for the temporary

1 implementation of these congressional boundaries if the  
2 voters approve this measure.

3 In today's debate, my colleagues on the  
4 other side of the aisle have failed to address what I  
5 think is the elephant in the room: their party's leader,  
6 President Trump, and the Republicans in Texas who are  
7 gerrymandering democratic and minority -- majority  
8 districts to give Trump five new Republican seats in  
9 Congress. And why? The President is afraid that he  
10 can't win an election in a fair fight. So he has to rig  
11 the process to give his party an unfair, partisan  
12 advantage. That is not fairness.

13 So we wouldn't be here today if it wasn't  
14 for the President's actions, and the actions of the  
15 Governor of Texas, and the Texas Legislature. I wish we  
16 weren't here today, but we are.

17 And I would agree with my Republican  
18 colleagues, we have a lot of important business to  
19 address for our state, but this is probably just, if not  
20 more important than that business that we have to take up  
21 over the next few weeks because the impact of Trump and  
22 the Republican Congressional majority have had in our  
23 state has been so significant. So much of what has  
24 impacted our state over the last eight months has been  
25 directly in response to the devastating policies of this

administration.

1 I've also heard concerns about the cost of  
2 this special election, but let's put this in the context  
3 of what's at stake. Potentially billions of cuts to  
4 state grants and funding by the Trump administration.  
5 Within the first month, the Trump administration tried to  
6 freeze federal funds to California. And let's also  
7 remember that we are the largest donor to the federal  
8 government. One in four taxes are paid by Californians.

9 Thanks to the actions of Democrats in this  
10 Legislature by providing emergency funding and the  
11 actions of our Attorney General, we unfroze \$168 billion  
12 in federal funds, approximately a third of our state's  
13 budget. We also took action to prevent 11 billion in  
14 health and human services cuts, and 7 billion in  
15 transportation cuts.

16 That doesn't even account for the  
17 devastating cuts that will be realized by the passage of  
18 HR 1 to our federal Medicaid budget, which will kick  
19 millions of Californians off of healthcare coverage, the  
20 cuts to SNAP, which will mean that children and families  
21 will starve in our state, the threatened cuts to  
22 education funding, and other essential programs. This  
23 will further crater our state's budget.

24 What's at stake is also our state's  
25

1 economic prosperity. This administration's trade  
2 policies are having a direct impact on our state's budget  
3 and are wreaking havoc on our state's economy.

4 So when we talk about budget deficits,  
5 where do we think they come from? My constituents in  
6 Senate District 7 in the East Bay and people across the  
7 nation are outraged seeing the federal government  
8 destroying their livelihoods. From dismantling our  
9 safety nets, eliminating healthcare coverage, reversing  
10 the progress that we've made on civil rights and on  
11 environmental protections, and the kidnapping of our  
12 hardworking immigrant neighbors.

13 Our constituents call on us to take  
14 meaningful action during these unprecedented times. And  
15 ACA 8 is that action to give voters an opportunity to  
16 take a stand.

17 Now, I'm a proud supporter of independent  
18 redistricting, something that our state will retain, even  
19 if the voters approve this map. And I believe that all  
20 states should have independent commissions, something  
21 that congressional Republicans have long opposed.

22 And so as the author had mentioned, ACA 8  
23 specifically calls on Congress to adopt legislation and  
24 to put on before all the states a constitutional  
25 amendment to allow for independent commissions

1 nationwide. But why have Republicans in Congress opposed  
2 these efforts? Why are they afraid of giving power to  
3 redistrict to the people? Do they not believe in free  
4 and fair elections? To me, the answer is simple.  
5 Because if the people had their way, Congress would  
6 actually reflect the will of the people.

7 So Trump's solution is to push our 250-  
8 year experiment in democracy to the brink in order to  
9 hold on to power.

10 So the question before us is a simple one.  
11 Will we enable this assault on our democracy, a necessary  
12 step to continue the President's attacks on immigrants,  
13 the LGBTQ plus community, on reproductive rights, on  
14 anyone who dares to stand against authoritarianism? Or  
15 will we say enough is enough and take action to counter  
16 these attacks?

17 During this critical moment, I urge you to  
18 stand on the side of democracy. Colleagues, the country  
19 is watching what we are doing here today, and history  
20 will remember what we do. With that, I respectfully ask  
21 for your aye vote on ACA 8.

22 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

23 Senator Cortese, you are recognized.

24 SENATOR CORTESE: Well, thank you, Madam  
25 President. I rise in support of ACA 8.

1 We are here today because our democracy is  
2 under attack, as we've heard over and over and over  
3 again. But what does that really mean in specifics?  
4 We've seen the dangers of unchecked power. What does  
5 that really mean today in this context? You know, after  
6 the last national elections, the President of the United  
7 States was able to consolidate power to the executive  
8 branch in the House and the Senate, and he has a very  
9 favorable judicial branch.

10 Most of us are taught in eighth-grade  
11 civics that those three branches of government are  
12 supposed to check themselves, but democracy was in play.  
13 The American people voted, and we are where we are. But  
14 when you talk about trusting the voters, what I've seen  
15 over and over and over again in my lifetime, especially  
16 my voting lifetime, is that the American people are the  
17 other branch of government.

18 The American people will check and will  
19 swing the pendulum back when they see the three branches  
20 of government become too extreme. And that's happened.  
21 And the President of the United States was surrounded by  
22 his own advisors, who said that your extreme policies are  
23 going to cost us the midterm elections. And when you  
24 cost us the midterm elections, you cost us the  
25 consolidation of power. This, as my colleague from

1 Berkeley and others have said here today, you're going to  
2 cost us unified power for the Republican Party in this  
3 country, but more importantly, for our extreme policies.

4 Why? Because the one thing that can check  
5 all three branches of government are the sanctity of the  
6 vote, the franchise of the vote. And that's when the  
7 President of the United States said, unless we can  
8 disenfranchise those voters; then we've got them too.  
9 And that's a decision that was made.

10 And that's why this President and this  
11 administration is such a powerful threat to democracy  
12 because he's no longer consolidating power among three  
13 branches of government. He's disenfranchising and  
14 literally taking away the right to vote for whom people  
15 want to vote.

16 That's manipulation of democracy and the  
17 vote, but we're doing it differently here under ACA 8.  
18 Here in California we're saying, as our Governor has  
19 said, we can counter what's going on in Texas. We can  
20 counter what's going on in the administration. But here,  
21 because of the way that we operate, we're going back to  
22 the people of California. We're respecting the sanctity  
23 of the vote. And we ask the voters of California, what  
24 do they choose?

25 Do they choose the methodology that we

1 have in place now for selecting our Congressional  
2 representatives, or in light of what's going on in  
3 Washington and Texas, do they want to change the rules?  
4 They get to decide. They get to decide. And so here in  
5 California, the sanctity of the vote is paramount. In  
6 Washington DC, it's not. That's the difference. That's  
7 why ACA is not a power grab. Quite the opposite. It's a  
8 safeguard. It's a temporary safeguard.

9 In California, voters, not politicians,  
10 will decide whether we should use this temporary  
11 safeguard to keep the playing field level and whether we  
12 should protect our democracy from a power grab by our  
13 President, not just of three branches of government. ACA  
14 puts the choice squarely in the hands of the people. Why  
15 do we call this authoritarian overreach? Think about it  
16 for a moment. This President has gone to an autonomous  
17 state, Texas, a self-governing state, Texas, a  
18 freestanding state, Texas, a sovereign state within the  
19 United States of America, and said, you'll do what I tell  
20 you to do.

21 ACA 8 is the only thing we have in our  
22 toolbox to counter that. But we have tools, and we'll  
23 use those tools. Thank you. And I urge your aye vote.

24 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

25 Senator Grove, you're recognized.

1 SENATOR GROVE: Thank you, Madam  
2 President.

3 Again, I wasn't going to speak on this  
4 because I wanted to voice my opinion on the previous  
5 bill, and they're all considered a package. But I do  
6 want to set the record straight and make some comments  
7 with some leeway from Madam President regarding some of  
8 the comments that were made on the floor.

9 Again, if you look at the lawsuit between  
10 Petteway versus Galveston County, the court, the three  
11 branches of government that were just mentioned by my  
12 good colleague, that the court ordered Texas to redraw  
13 the lines. President Trump did not order Texas to redraw  
14 the lines. This is an independent judge. He said,  
15 redraw the lines based on a lawsuit filed by the Elias  
16 Commission, which I described earlier.

17 It's absurd to stand. And again, I just  
18 love my good colleague. I mean, he's only right 10  
19 percent of the time, but when he is right, I agree with  
20 him; but he's right -- or wrong a lot of the times. My  
21 good colleague from San Francisco made the comment that  
22 UCLA was being punished by a mean dictator because they  
23 were being fined \$1 billion by President Trump.

24 UCLA is being fined by the President  
25 because they failed to protect Jewish students. Where

1 Jewish students were attacked, threatened, locked in  
2 rooms, refused to allowed to go to class. They won a  
3 \$600 million lawsuit against the university system, and  
4 President Trump fined the UC -- UC system, \$1 billion for  
5 not protecting Jewish students. Nobody wants to relive  
6 history in the 1940s and that era, that timeframe of  
7 World War II. And the President is standing up for  
8 Jewish students. That's why he fined them \$1 billion.

9 So just a point of clarification to my  
10 good friend and my colleague from San Francisco, and the  
11 co-chair of the Jewish -- Legislative Jewish Caucus.  
12 That was a justification, and we should all stand behind  
13 the fact that people who hurt and harm our Jewish  
14 communities should be punished in some way. And I  
15 applaud the President for doing this.

16 Again, read Galveston versus -- read  
17 Petteway versus Galveston County. That's what started  
18 this whole thing. It was not President Trump. It was a  
19 court case that required Texas to redraw the lines, which  
20 triggered your response, which is going to trigger a lot  
21 of other responses.

22 And as I made in my comments earlier,  
23 Maryland Democrats occupy 7 out of 8 seats even though 40  
24 percent of votes were Republican. Massachusetts, all 9  
25 seats are Democratic despite President Trump getting 40

percent of the vote.

1  
2 It continues down the line, and this ACA  
3 to gerrymander even further, the seats that you have in  
4 California, where Republicans got 40 percent of the vote  
5 and we occupy 17 percent of the congressional seats. And  
6 to allow these maps with no other choice other than the  
7 voters to say no for this to happen, based on the  
8 rhetoric that is coming out of this body, that it's  
9 President Trump.

10 It's a court case. The documents are  
11 right there. I'd be glad to send it all to you. Most of  
12 you are attorneys. I barely have a high school diploma,  
13 and I was able to read that and determine where the  
14 lawsuit came from. Respectfully ask for a no vote.

15 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

16 Senator Perez, you are recognized.

17 SENATOR PEREZ: Thank you, Madam  
18 President.

19 I'm proud to rise in support of ACA 8 as  
20 well as a co-author of the Election Rigging Response Act.  
21 You know, I think it's really important that we  
22 articulate why we are here today and why we are even  
23 taking up ACA 8.

24 Over the last several weeks, we have seen  
25 Texas Republicans, along with Governor Greg Abbott, take

1 actions to try to redraw their maps to add an additional  
2 five Republican seats. In addition to that, they have  
3 threatened Texas Democrats, enforcing police force  
4 against them to go searching for them, threatening to  
5 utilize the FBI, and in one case, even locking a Texas  
6 legislator in the chambers, refusing to allow her to  
7 leave unless she signed and agreed to have 24-hour  
8 surveillance.

9 We have Texas members of the Legislature,  
10 democratic members that are being followed by police  
11 officers in the grocery store. This is complete  
12 absurdity and complete madness. And while I heard  
13 clearly from my Republican colleagues that they do not  
14 believe that President Donald Trump reached out to  
15 Governor Greg Abbott, we have seen otherwise. That the  
16 President has reached out to Texas Governor Greg Abbott  
17 to ask him to deliver these five Republican seats. That  
18 he's reached out to the states of Missouri, Florida,  
19 Ohio, Indiana, and possibly even Kansas in order to  
20 redistrict the maps so that he can turn the 2026 election  
21 in his favor.

22 Now, why is this happening? That is  
23 because the President has moved forward a set of policies  
24 that is wildly unpopular. We have seen the cost of  
25 living skyrocket. We have seen ICE raids across our

1 community.

2 We had a man die in Camarillo. Mr. Alanis  
3 (phonetic), who died while running from an ICE raid, fell  
4 more than 30 feet to his death. Just a few days ago, a  
5 man died in my district. Roberto Carlos Montoya Valdez  
6 was killed when he was running from an ICE raid and was  
7 struck by a vehicle. This is unacceptable, and I want to  
8 emphasize this, that lives are on the line. That is what  
9 is on the line.

10 We are not just talking simply about  
11 funding. We talk a lot about numbers in this House and  
12 the millions of dollars that have been cut from  
13 education, from healthcare, from food programs, the  
14 millions of dollars that are being spent on additional  
15 ICE raids, on surveillance, and policing of our  
16 communities.

17 But what has that ultimately resulted in?  
18 That has ultimately resulted in people dying. People  
19 losing access to critical healthcare. Less people  
20 showing up to their doctors' appointments. Less people  
21 having access to healthy and nutritious food. And  
22 ultimately, that is going to have an impact on the 2026  
23 elections because voters know, Americans know, regardless  
24 of party, they are seeing that these policies are not  
25 yielding results for them. That this is an

1 administration that is more interested in investing in  
2 billionaires, in trillionaires, and their interest in  
3 giving them huge tax breaks than everyday working people  
4 like you and me, and it is utterly unacceptable.

5 Now, what we have done here today in  
6 introducing ACA 8 is allow us to neutralize what is  
7 happening in Texas so that we can create an additional  
8 five Democratic seats to stop this mess and stop this  
9 chaos.

10 But what does it also do? It protects our  
11 independent redistricting commission. Something that was  
12 approved by the voters, and it was not easy to get it  
13 approved. It was put on the ballot several times. We  
14 finally earned the support of the voters. You have both  
15 Democrats and Republicans that serve on that Commission.  
16 They will be redrawing the lines come 2030 again. And  
17 that is important. That is critical.

18 And I want to highlight that it is  
19 Democratic states that have independent redistricting  
20 commissions. It is not Republican states. In fact, here  
21 in the United States, the five most gerrymandered states  
22 are Republican states. And we need to call that out to  
23 continue to pretend as if partisan gerrymandering was  
24 just something that came up, as if California created  
25 this. To watch the Vice President, JD Vance, continue to

spread this misinformation is utterly unacceptable.

What do we know? That back in 2021, when Democrats introduced a measure to ban partisan gerrymandering, it was Senate Republicans who killed it. And we could have stopped this mess then, but they have refused to allow such a measure to pass.

And we know that come 2026, voters are going to turn out, and they're going to send a message. They're going to send a message that they do not support cuts to food stamps. That they do not support cuts to Medicare programs. That they do not support ICE raids in their communities, robbing their neighbors in broad daylight and causing deaths left and right of hardworking people - farm workers, day laborers, blue collar workers that look like my father and my grandfather. That they do not support Republicans leaving session early in Congress to prevent the release of the Epstein files.

We are going to hear loud and clear come 2026, and that's what this moment is about. California is stepping up. We did not want this battle. And I want to make very clear, and folks that have worked with me know, I have been very invested in independent redistricting. We have moved measures like this forward at the local level. But unfortunately, this is a moment that requires us to respond. California didn't pick this

1 battle, but we can end it. And that is our job here  
2 today. I urge an aye vote on ACA 8, and I'm so proud to  
3 be supporting and co-authoring this message. Thank you  
4 so much.

5 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

6 Senator Niello, you are recognized.

7 SENATOR NIELLO: Thank you, Madam  
8 President.

9 With regard to some final comments of my  
10 friend from Pasadena relative to who supports and doesn't  
11 support redistricting, at least in this state, I would  
12 just make reference to my past historical notes when I  
13 spoke to the previous bill.

14 But I have a question of the author.

15 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Will the author  
16 take a question?

17 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes, Madam President.

18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

19 You may proceed.

20 SENATOR NIELLO: And in connection with  
21 that, I'd like permission to read.

22 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Seeing no  
23 objection, you may proceed.

24 SENATOR NIELLO: I am reading from Article  
25 21, Redistricting of the State Constitution,

1 Redistricting of Senate Assembly Congressional and Board  
2 of Equalization Districts. This is Section 2J.

3 "If the Commission does not approve a  
4 final map by at least the requisite votes or" -- and this  
5 is the relevant section -- "if voters disapprove a  
6 certified final map in a referendum, the Secretary of  
7 State shall immediately petition the California Supreme  
8 Court for an order directing the appointment of special  
9 masters to adjust the boundary lines of that map in  
10 accordance with the redistricting criteria and  
11 requirements set forth in three other previous  
12 subdivisions. Upon its approval of the master's map, the  
13 court shall certify the resulting map to the Secretary of  
14 State, which map shall constitute the certified final map  
15 for the subject type district."

16 Now, within the allowance of ACA 8 and the  
17 issues we're speaking today, it does ask the voters to  
18 disapprove the certified final maps, but with other maps  
19 being substituted, which is in direct conflict with that  
20 specified by this constitutional requirement. So my  
21 question is: how does that not make this  
22 unconstitutional?

23 SENATOR CABALDON: Thank you, Madam  
24 President. First let me emphasize that the Senate has  
25 paid close attention to each word and each provision of

1 the constitutional amendment in the construction of this  
2 bill, along with our colleagues in the assembly but also  
3 to point out what might be the obvious - that this is  
4 Assembly Constitutional Amendment Number 8, and  
5 therefore, its provisions already being not inconsistent  
6 with the constitution will amend the constitution, and  
7 they will be, by definition -- if the voters choose to  
8 enact them, they will be constitutional.

9 SENATOR NIELLO: So in other words, you  
10 are actually amending Article 21.

11 SENATOR CABALDON: No. So Article 21 --  
12 Article 21 of the constitution will be -- remains in  
13 place as a result of ACA 8. ACA 8 adds new provisions to  
14 the constitution and an alternative procedure that is  
15 temporary and for this one purpose and this one time, an  
16 alternative that the voters have the ability through  
17 their votes to enact. And the Senate has complied in  
18 every respect with the entire constitution in the  
19 drafting of this measure.

20 SENATOR NIELLO: So this also amends or  
21 basically eliminates Section 2J.

22 SENATOR CABALDON: Now, Section 2J  
23 remember --

24 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Excuse me.

25 SENATOR CABALDON: -- let us --

1 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Excuse me.

2 SENATOR CABALDON: Oh sorry, Madam  
3 President.

4 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Will the Senator  
5 take another question?

6 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes, Madam President.

7 Section 2J -- as you know, my colleague  
8 from Fair Oaks, Section 2J exists in the article that  
9 describes the procedure by which the commission  
10 constructs the maps each -- after each decennial census.  
11 And in fact, that is the first line of that article is  
12 each 10 years after the census this -- the following is  
13 about what is to occur.

14 This ACA 8 creates a different provision  
15 of the constitution, this alternative procedure that  
16 would be temporary for this one-time purpose. And so as  
17 long as it's not inconsistent with other provisions of  
18 the constitution, this measure gives the people the power  
19 to design the proper approach for this one time temporary  
20 measure. So it is not inconsistent with it. It fully  
21 complies with the constitution.

22 SENATOR NIELLO: Well, thank you for that.

23 On my own time, all of the testimony here  
24 by everybody that we believe we have an excellent system  
25 for redistricting after each census. And we will most

1 certainly go back to that after 2030. Nonetheless,  
2 again, referring back to my little history dissertation  
3 earlier today and the involvement, reported involvement  
4 of the DCCC in this action that is going on that has been  
5 developed behind the scenes. One has to be awfully  
6 suspicious of significant changes to this process and  
7 whether, indeed, the intent or the power to continue on  
8 our previous track after 2030 is of great concern to me,  
9 and I think should be of great concern to everybody who  
10 votes in favor of this ACA and the other two bills that  
11 we have, and of great concern to the voters of California  
12 once this goes on the ballot.

13 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

14 Senator Wahab, you are recognized.

15 SENATOR WAHAB: Thank you.

16 I first just want to state that I try  
17 really hard to represent my entire district, both  
18 Republicans, Democrats, as well as independents, non-  
19 voters, new immigrants, and anybody that lives in my  
20 district. And I believe that is the role of when we  
21 create policy, it is for the entire State of California  
22 representing all people, just as when we do a census.  
23 It's about all people.

24 And it was referenced about lawsuits. In  
25 2023, the Supreme Court ruled in Abbott versus Perez,

1 that Texas's redistricting plan violated the voting  
2 writers -- the Voting Rights Act, mandating that voters  
3 of color be placed in districts with more opportunity to  
4 select their preferred candidates. And continuously we  
5 have seen that Texas has been violating the Voting Rights  
6 Act since 1965, and even this most recent action in  
7 August of this month, of 2025, we are seeing violations  
8 being made.

9 And I heard multiple times today a number  
10 of things - that you know it's wrong, what's being done;  
11 and there's zero transparency; and it's a power grab.  
12 And I call that into question. So when President Trump  
13 calls for Texas to do a partisan mid-decade redraw, which  
14 handed themselves plus five GOP seats behind closed  
15 doors, is that okay? Shutting down Democrats in these  
16 rushed maps? Is that okay? The fact that California is  
17 different. We're giving voters the final say and  
18 opportunity to use their voice by voting on this effort.  
19 The highest form of transparency for all voters.

20 We hear that it's unconstitutional or  
21 overturning the will of the voters. And the US  
22 Constitution does not forbid mid-decade redistricting.  
23 In fact, California's constitution requires voter  
24 approval, which is exactly what we are doing. We are  
25 following the rules and going to the voters. The

1 Commission remains in place even after this. This is a  
2 temporary safeguard until 2030. And again, it's up to  
3 the voters, not politicians deciding whether to authorize  
4 this action; that's respecting the will of the people.  
5 We are going to the voters.

6 So I've heard Democrats are hypocrites,  
7 but the real hypocrisy, I will say, is claiming to  
8 support housing, childcare, and healthcare, but voting no  
9 consistently on funding those items. Calling themselves  
10 the party of law and order but excusing President Trump's  
11 attempt to overturn the 2020 election and pardoning the  
12 January 6th rioters. Claiming to care about women and  
13 children, but blocking the release of the Epstein files  
14 of sexual abuse of children and women.

15 Call for the release of the Epstein files.  
16 I want to see the Epstein files. I'm sure many of my  
17 colleagues, as much as we talk about it, as much as we  
18 talk about human trafficking, children, women, women of  
19 color, and the abuse of power, call for the release of  
20 the Epstein files. And he died under President Trump's  
21 administration with a failure of cameras, dereliction of  
22 duty of guards, and much more, and the other party is  
23 silent.

24 And then people want to say, especially in  
25 California, especially at the national level, that

1 Governor Newsom is just raising his profile. Well, guess  
2 what? America is getting engaged, and this nation is  
3 just now seeing what Californians already know. When  
4 others are scared to act, Governor Gavin Newsom shows the  
5 courage to lead. As a woman, a daughter of immigrants, a  
6 former foster youth, the actions at the federal level  
7 have been a direct attack on each of us. For every  
8 identity and ideal we hold dear, I'm proud to heed  
9 Governor Newsom's call to defend our democracy. Finally,  
10 a leader willing to boldly take on what is happening in  
11 this country.

12 And so with this vote is giving the choice  
13 back to the voters of California. I trust the voters and  
14 for the greater good, I respectfully ask for an aye vote.  
15 Thank you.

16 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

17 Seeing no further discussion or debate,  
18 Senator Cabaldon, would you like to close?

19 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes. Thank you, Madam  
20 President.

21 Let me first remind us of what is in ACA  
22 8. The first and critical provision is a call to the  
23 Congress of the United States to put an end to this  
24 madness that has consumed the country, thanks to Donald  
25 Trump and Texas, and submit a constitutional amendment to

1 all of the states for nationwide redistricting reform.

2 Number two, the authorization for the  
3 people of California to approve this temporary set of  
4 maps that will allow us to fight back, push back and  
5 preserve democracy across the country. And third, to  
6 make it very clear that the Independent Registering  
7 Commission is undisturbed by this constitutional  
8 amendment, and it will be back in 2031 for the drawing of  
9 the new lines after the census as is its constitutional  
10 responsibility.

11 Now, we've heard said that Texas isn't  
12 meaning to do anything devious or untoward here. They're  
13 simply complying with a court order. Well, in this  
14 country, a strongly worded letter from Attorney General  
15 Pam Bondi at the urging of President Donald Trump,  
16 following up one of his phone calls, demanding that you  
17 serve up five seats on a silver platter, is not a legally  
18 binding court order that requires emergency action on  
19 this timeframe. That is a ruse that even they don't even  
20 say that in Texas, the chair of the Texas Elections  
21 Committee and the author of the new maps has made it very  
22 clear - this is a partisan map that we are doing in order  
23 to increase Republican power at the urging of President  
24 Donald Trump.

25 Now, in the elections committee hearing

1 led by our outstanding elections chair from Riverside,  
2 one of the witnesses, a former member of the Independent  
3 Commission, said that democracy means that we -- that  
4 each political party, each idea takes turns being humbled  
5 at the ballot box by the people.

6 That is the essence of what democracy is,  
7 that we have our policy programs, our ideas, our  
8 accountability, and our results. And we go to the  
9 voters, and sometimes they applaud and reelect us.  
10 Sometimes they say, no, thank you. That is ultimately  
11 the essence of democracy, not Article 2J, not something  
12 else. It is that notion that all of us, even if we  
13 actually have the key or the card key to the capitol  
14 building or to the Governor's office, we have the keys.  
15 Our name is on the door. That we do not own that. That  
16 we serve at the likelihood that we will, at one point, be  
17 humbled.

18 What's happening in Texas, what's  
19 happening as a result of the proposed changes to the  
20 census and mail-in balloting is an attempt to immunize,  
21 to end that cycle so we will never have accountability  
22 and democracy again. And you heard this in our debate  
23 today as it was said that I -- you know, one of my  
24 Republican colleagues said, "I have faith in the voters.  
25 I have faith in the voters, absolute faith in the

1 voters." Except, except, and let me point -- you know,  
2 turn back to the ballot measure that shall not be named,  
3 but except when they get it wrong because they've paid  
4 too much attention to advertising, and when they get it  
5 wrong because they listen to a governor, right. You  
6 know, when the campaign is not exactly balanced, then we  
7 can't listen to the voters in that case.

8 And fundamentally that is what's going  
9 wrong with our democracy. The idea that democracy is  
10 only real if it bolsters our power, if it agrees with our  
11 ideology and with our issues. And so this measure  
12 protects the power of the people to assure that they can  
13 hold us, the Congress, and the President of the United  
14 States accountable for all of the things that have been  
15 said today.

16 And it is the case that millions of  
17 Californians are asking themselves in the face of all of  
18 these threats to democracy, to safety, to healthcare, to  
19 everything: what can I do about it? The fear, the  
20 resolute anger of Californians about this. And all of us  
21 hear this every single day. What can I -- what are you  
22 doing and what can I do? And this is our answer. We  
23 Californians, California voters have the opportunity, not  
24 just to raise our voices, but to cast our votes. The  
25 most fundamental way of rescuing democracy is by casting

1 our votes if this measure allows the ACA to go on the  
2 ballot.

3 And it still matters because HR 1 and the  
4 census changes, everything else is still pending in terms  
5 of implementation. And so let us not in a year when one  
6 of our residents says, "I'm not getting my Social  
7 Security" and none of the helplines -- they've all been  
8 turned off. DOGE fired everybody. Let us not say, well,  
9 you know, what about the cost of that special election  
10 when somebody says, my hospital in the rural parts of my  
11 district is gone. Who's going to stand up and say, but  
12 did you know that that one bill had an urgency clause in  
13 it?

14 When my Navy son has been abducted off the  
15 streets in LA, who of us is going to say, but the  
16 amendments really weren't germane? When we lose our  
17 votes, either directly through the mail or our seats in  
18 Congress, which of us is going to say, well, you know,  
19 the voters might have gotten it wrong if we gave them  
20 their voice. When Marines and National Guard are  
21 ordered, against their will, to occupy, I don't know,  
22 West Sacramento, San Diego, Murrieta, any other part of  
23 California as they have -- already doing in DC and as  
24 they started here in California, will we say that the  
25 voters just couldn't be trusted to make a hard

1 complicated decision like this? No. This is what this  
2 vote is about.

3 Let the voters make the decision. We've  
4 heard them, and we are responding. And they are the  
5 ultimate judges of whether this is the right way forward.  
6 The voters of California are sovereign. Regardless of  
7 Article J, they are sovereign. They have the authority.  
8 They have the legitimacy. And with ACA they will have  
9 the power to make this right.

10 Madam President, I urgent aye vote.

11 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

12 Secretary, please call the roll.

13 THE SECRETARY: Allen.

14 Aye.

15 Alvarado-Gil.

16 Archuleta.

17 Aye.

18 Arreguin.

19 Aye.

20 Ashby.

21 Aye.

22 Becker.

23 Aye.

24 Blakespear.

25 Aye.

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
Transcription of Video Recording on 08/21/2025

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1 Cabaldon.  
2 Aye.  
3 Caballero.  
4 Aye.  
5 Cervantes.  
6 Aye.  
7 Choi.  
8 No.  
9 Cortese.  
10 Aye.  
11 Dahle.  
12 No.  
13 Durazo.  
14 Aye.  
15 Gonzalez.  
16 Aye.  
17 Grayson.  
18 Aye.  
19 Grove.  
20 No.  
21 Hurtado.  
22 Aye.  
23 Jones.  
24 No.  
25 Laird.

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
Transcription of Video Recording on 08/21/2025

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1 Aye.  
2 Limon.  
3 Aye.  
4 McGuire.  
5 Aye.  
6 McNerney.  
7 Aye.  
8 Menjivar.  
9 Aye.  
10 Niello.  
11 No.  
12 Ochoa Bogh.  
13 No.  
14 Padilla.  
15 Aye.  
16 Perez.  
17 Aye.  
18 Reyes.  
19 Aye.  
20 Richardson.  
21 Rubio.  
22 Aye.  
23 Seyarto.  
24 Smallwood-Cuevas.  
25 Aye.

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING  
Transcription of Video Recording on 08/21/2025

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1 Stern.  
2 Aye.  
3 Strickland.  
4 No.  
5 Umberg.  
6 Aye.  
7 Valladares.  
8 No.  
9 Wahab.  
10 Aye.  
11 Weber Pierson.  
12 Aye.  
13 Wiener.  
14 Aye.  
15 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please  
16 call the absent members  
17 THE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil.  
18 Richardson.  
19 Aye.  
20 Seyarto.  
21 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes 30, noes 8.  
22 That measure passes.  
23 Members we have messages from the  
24 Assembly.  
25 Secretary, please read.

1 THE SECRETARY: "Assembly chamber August  
2 21, 2025. Madam President, I am directed to inform your  
3 honorable body that the Assembly amended and on this day  
4 passed as amended Senate Bill 280 and respectfully  
5 request your honorable body to concur and send amendments  
6 to Parker, Chief Clerk of the Assembly above bill order  
7 to unfinished business.

8 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

9 Members, we will now move to Senate  
10 supplemental file number two.

11 Secretary, please read.

12 THE SECRETARY: Senate Bill 280 by Senator  
13 Cervantes in equating to elections, making an  
14 appropriation, therefore, and declaring the urgency  
15 thereof to take effect immediately.

16 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Cervantes,  
17 you are recognized.

18 SENATOR CERVANTES: Thank you, Madam  
19 President and members.

20 Today I am proud to present Senate Bill  
21 280, which calls for a statewide special election on  
22 November 4 of this year. This special election gives  
23 Californians the power to decide whether we redraw our  
24 congressional districts to protect fair representation  
25 through Assembly Constitutional Amendment 8.

1 SB 280 also appropriates the funding  
2 necessary for the Secretary of State and our county  
3 registrars to administer this election. The bill also  
4 makes the necessary statutory changes to allow the June  
5 2026 statewide primary to be held on time.

6 Members, this is not politics as usual.  
7 This is a rigged game. We are here because the federal  
8 administration and Republicans in Congress know they are  
9 losing. They see the scoreboard. They know their  
10 playbook is unpopular and instead of competing fairly,  
11 they are changing the rules of the game. Think about it.  
12 They send mass federal agents into our community,  
13 snatching people up because their skin tone looks like  
14 mine.

15 They slashed healthcare from millions  
16 while handing billionaires a tax break and slapping  
17 working families with tariff taxes on everyday essentials  
18 like coffee and bananas. They know voters will hold them  
19 accountable. So what do they do? They redraw the field.

20 Just yesterday in Texas, Republicans have  
21 redrawn congressional maps so that instead of voters  
22 choosing their representatives, politicians get to choose  
23 their voters.

24 Let's be clear, the goal is to lock in  
25 power, but in California we aren't just spectators in the

1 stand, we are stepping up to the plate. California is  
2 ready to defend fairness, to defend representation, and  
3 to defend democracy.

4 Now, some of our colleagues will ask: why  
5 the urgency? Why the special election? Because this is  
6 a five alarm fire blazing in our democracy. And if you  
7 don't see that, it's because you're choosing to ignore  
8 it. And let's not pretend that this timeline is unusual.

9 Republicans were more than happy to rush  
10 through the failed recall of Governor Newsom in 75 days.  
11 The clock ran then, and it can run now. Yes. This  
12 election will cost money, but let's be clear, the price  
13 tag is less than President Trump's golden White House  
14 ballroom.

15 What's the cost of protecting fair play in  
16 America? It's nothing compared to letting President  
17 Trump cheat the country. We will not let him move the  
18 goalpost. The truth is a republic where people fear  
19 practicing their beliefs or worry their vote won't be  
20 counted, is no republic at all. That is not a democracy.

21 On November 4th, the voters of California  
22 can punch back. They can say no more to power grabs.  
23 They can say no more to cheating. They can take back  
24 their agency. Take it back at the ballot box. Take back  
25 your power on November 4th. Take it back for California

1 and for our country. Californians aren't going to quit  
2 in the fourth quarter. We will not fold in extra innings  
3 because this is our spirit; this is our fight. And when  
4 the dust settles, California will remain standing. I  
5 respectfully ask for aye vote on SB 280.

6 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

7 Seeing no further discussion or debate,  
8 secretary, would -- Senator McNerney, would you like to  
9 -- you are recognized.

10 SENATOR MCNERNEY: Madam President and  
11 colleagues, I rise in strong support of SB 280 because  
12 it's logical. Yes.

13 It's logical to adopt the new  
14 congressional districts here in California, and here's  
15 why. First, this President's policies are hurting  
16 California and the country. For example, the  
17 deportations are decimating our workforce and terrorizing  
18 our families. The tariffs are taxes. Yes, the tariffs  
19 are taxes and they're slowing our economy. Defunding our  
20 universities are robbing our future. He is throwing  
21 military into our cities, incredibly dangerous. He's  
22 throwing millions of people off healthcare across this  
23 country.

24 Now, the Republicans in Congress have not  
25 and will not put any breaks on this President. He can do

1 anything he wants. This is what dictators do. If the  
2 Republicans retain the majority in 2026 in the House of  
3 Representatives, the President will continue to degrade  
4 our country and make us a banana republic.

5 But the Democrats can win a majority in  
6 the House in 2026 and will put breaks on the President  
7 unless he manages to rig the election. The President and  
8 the Texas Republicans are rigging the election by having  
9 adopted gerrymandered congressional districts, just  
10 yesterday, to replace five Democrats with five  
11 Republicans. They are trying to rig the national  
12 election.

13 California is the only state in the union  
14 that has the people and the will to stand up to the  
15 President. This is our duty to fight fire with fire and  
16 approve new congressional districts that satisfy the  
17 Voting Rights Act. And unlike Texas, we will ask the  
18 voters to judge the new districts. Democrats did not  
19 want this fight. We did not ask for this fight, but we  
20 will not run away from it. We will fight for our economy  
21 and for our values.

22 Therefore, it's logical to put this  
23 question of adopting new congressional maps before the  
24 California voters on November 4th. California voters  
25 must have the right to decide if the state should respond

1 to the President's efforts to rig the elections. If you  
2 think America needs more authoritarian government, then  
3 give up these five seats. I sure don't. I ask my  
4 colleagues -- no. I implore my colleagues with respect  
5 to vote aye on Senate Bill 280.

6 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

7 Senator Jones, you're recognized

8 SENATOR JONES: Madam President and  
9 members, I rise in opposition to SB 280.

10 This bill is an unwanted, unnecessary, and  
11 expensive distraction. This measure would redirect,  
12 scarce state resources and attention to an unnecessary,  
13 unwanted, and expensive legislative democrat fabricated  
14 distraction.

15 With the state facing a \$12 billion  
16 deficit, an unemployment rate higher than any other  
17 state, a housing crisis, the highest poverty and  
18 homelessness rates among the states, and ongoing massive  
19 crime problem, and continued fire recovery needs, the  
20 last thing that this Legislature should be doing is  
21 creating a massive distraction while also wasting scarce  
22 taxpayer funds on an unnecessary. The special election  
23 will cost alone -- are estimated at a quarter of a  
24 billion dollars, a quarter of a billion dollars for this  
25 unnecessary partisan power grab. I ask for a no vote.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

Seeing no further discussion or debate,  
Senator Cervantes, would you like to close?

SENATOR CERVANTES: Thank you, Madam  
President.

On November 4th, Californians have a  
choice. Let Trump cheat or punch back. Take back your  
agency. Take it back at the ballot box. Take it back  
for California and for the country.

SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

Secretary, please call the roll.

THE SECRETARY: Allen.

Aye.

Alvarado-Gil.

Archuleta.

Aye.

Arreguin.

Aye.

Ashby.

Aye.

Becker.

Aye.

Blakespear.

Aye.

Cabaldon.

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Aye.

1

Caballero.

2

Aye.

3

Cervantes.

4

Aye.

5

Choi.

6

No.

7

Cortese.

8

Aye.

9

Dahle.

10

No.

11

Durazo.

12

Aye.

13

Gonzalez.

14

Aye.

15

Grayson.

16

Aye.

17

Grove.

18

No.

19

Hurtado.

20

Aye.

21

Jones.

22

No.

23

Laird.

24

Aye.

25

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1 Limon.  
2 Aye.  
3 McGuire.  
4 Aye.  
5 McNerney.  
6 Aye.  
7 Menjivar.  
8 Aye.  
9 Niello.  
10 No.  
11 Ochoa Bogh.  
12 No.  
13 Padilla.  
14 Aye.  
15 Perez.  
16 Aye.  
17 Reyes.  
18 Aye.  
19 Richardson.  
20 Aye.  
21 Rubio.  
22 Seyarto.  
23 Smallwood-Cuevas.  
24 Aye.  
25 Stern.

1 Aye.  
2 Strickland.  
3 No.  
4 Umberg.  
5 Aye.  
6 Valladares.  
7 No.  
8 Wahab.  
9 Aye.  
10 Weber Pierson.  
11 Aye.  
12 Wiener.  
13 Aye.  
14 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please  
15 call the absent members.  
16 THE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil.  
17 Rubio.  
18 Aye.  
19 Seyarto.  
20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes 30, noes 8 on  
21 the urgency. Ayes 30, noes 8 on the amendments.  
22 Assembly amendments are concurred in.  
23 Members we are going to move back to  
24 motions and resolutions. There are floor amendments to  
25 AB 40 at the desk.

1 Senator McGuire, are you prepared to make  
2 these amendments?

3 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Thank you so much, Madam  
4 President and members.

5 Amendments on AB 40 are at the desk. It's  
6 clear that the State of Texas is now pulling their own  
7 trigger as the State House voted last night to be able to  
8 advance redistricting. We anticipate the Senate will be  
9 acting tonight or tomorrow morning. And the bill will be  
10 signed in the law by the end of the week. In order to  
11 keep the ballot and initiative crystal clear, we're  
12 moving the trigger from the ACA. But in AB 40 will  
13 remain in case something miraculous happens in Texas, and  
14 everyone comes to their census.

15 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.  
16 Senator Jones, you are recognized.

17 SENATOR JONES: Thank you, Madam  
18 President. I have come to my senses, and I object to  
19 this motion and ask for a roll call vote.

20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

21 Seeing no further discussion or debate,  
22 Secretary, please call the roll.

23 THE SECRETARY: Allen.

24 Aye.

25 Alvarado-Gil.

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1 Archuleta.  
2 Aye.  
3 Arreguin.  
4 Aye.  
5 Ashby.  
6 Aye.  
7 Becker.  
8 Aye.  
9 Blakespear.  
10 Aye.  
11 Cabaldon.  
12 Aye.  
13 Caballero.  
14 Aye.  
15 Cervantes.  
16 Aye.  
17 Choi.  
18 No.  
19 Cortese.  
20 Aye.  
21 Dahle.  
22 No.  
23 Durazo.  
24 Aye.  
25 Gonzalez.

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1 Aye.  
2 Grayson.  
3 Aye.  
4 Grove.  
5 No.  
6 Hurtado.  
7 Aye.  
8 Jones.  
9 No.  
10 Laird.  
11 Aye.  
12 Limon.  
13 Aye.  
14 McGuire.  
15 Aye.  
16 McNerney.  
17 Aye.  
18 Menjivar.  
19 Aye.  
20 Niello.  
21 No.  
22 Ochoa Bogh.  
23 No.  
24 Padilla.  
25 Aye.

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1 Perez.  
2 Aye.  
3 Reyes.  
4 Aye.  
5 Richardson.  
6 Aye.  
7 Rubio.  
8 Aye.  
9 Seyarto.  
10 Smallwood-Cuevas.  
11 Aye.  
12 Stern.  
13 Aye.  
14 Strickland.  
15 No.  
16 Umberg.  
17 Aye.  
18 Valladares.  
19 No.  
20 Wahab.  
21 Aye.  
22 Weber Pierson.  
23 Aye.  
24 Wiener.  
25 Aye.

1 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes 30, noes 8.  
2 The amendments are adopted.

3 There are additional floor amendments at  
4 the desk. If there are no objections, they will be  
5 deemed adopted. Seeing no objection, they are deemed  
6 adopted.

7 Are there any other motions, resolutions?

8 Anyone else want to remove an item?

9 Senator Hurtado, you are recognized.

10 SENATOR HURTADO: Under motions and  
11 resolutions. Thank you, Madam President.

12 At the request of the author, please pull  
13 file item 250 AB 1069 bans off the consent calendar.  
14 Thank you.

15 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: The desk will  
16 note.

17 Senator Allen?

18 SENATOR ALLEN: Thank you, Madam  
19 President. I'd like to request the author remove file  
20 item 231 AB 290 by Bower K. Hahn (phonetic) from the  
21 consent calendar for amendments.

22 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: The desk will  
23 note.

24 Senator Cervantes?

25 SENATOR CERVANTES: At the request of the

author, I'd like to pull item 1511, AB 1511.

1  
2 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: The desk will  
3 note.

4 Senator Umberg?

5 SENATOR UMBERG: Thank you, Madam  
6 President.

7 Please remove file item number 238 AB 515  
8 from the consent calendar at the request of the author.

9 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: The desk will  
10 note.

11 Senator Cervantes, were you removing that  
12 bill from the consent calendar?

13 SENATOR CERVANTES: Calendar, yes.

14 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Okay. Thank you.

15 Okay. All right.

16 If there is no other business, Senator  
17 McGuire, the desk is clear.

18 SENATOR MCGUIRE: First of all, Madam  
19 President, I want to take a moment to say thank you.

20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: I'm sorry, Senator  
21 McGuire.

22 Senator Grove, you are recognized.

23 SENATOR GROVE: Thank you. I apologize  
24 Mr. Pro tem. I had requested a point of personal  
25 privilege. They didn't call me. I apologize deeply.

1 Colleagues, on a lighter note after today,  
2 for those of you that are Raiders fans or Saints fans,  
3 Derek Carr would be here on the floor on Monday. Please  
4 wear appropriate attire. Thank you.

5 Sorry Erica -- Ms. Contreras.

6 Only team colors.

7 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

8 Now there is no other business.

9 Senator McGuire, the desk is clear.

10 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Thank you so much, Madam  
11 President.

12 I want to take a moment to say thank you,  
13 first and foremost to our presiding officers of the week,  
14 Madam President and, of course, to Mr. Senator. Can we  
15 please give them a round of applause. Thank you to the  
16 good doctor and of course to Mr. Grayson who did a  
17 phenomenal job as well. This has been one heck of a week  
18 for presiding officers.

19 Number two, I want to take a moment to say  
20 thank you to the senators who are in this chamber. We  
21 had some passionate, intense, and at times spicy debate  
22 today, but I think once we leave these chambers, we  
23 recognize, again, we are Californians first. Yes. We're  
24 going to have to fight the election rigging, but we also  
25 know that we have a lot to fix. And over the next three

1 weeks, we're going to continue to focus on where  
2 California voters also want us to be - making life more  
3 affordable for them and their home. Lowering the cost of  
4 electricity bills, lowering the cost of housing, making  
5 sure that we continue to invest in strong public schools  
6 and making our communities more wildfire safe. That is  
7 where I think that we can all come together as  
8 Californians to be able to move this great state forward.

9 I'm incredibly appreciative of the  
10 senators in this room. If you take a look at bodies like  
11 this across the nation, across the world, debates like  
12 this can get physical. And we are so lucky to be able to  
13 live in a country where we can have these discussions,  
14 have these discussions and debates and go home, still  
15 holding hands together on several issues that are in  
16 front of us. And I just want to say thank you to Leader  
17 Jones, to the Republican Caucus, the Democratic Caucus,  
18 for their incredible work. I hope that you get some rest  
19 this weekend.

20 We have a long three weeks. We're going  
21 to jam about six months into the next three weeks. So  
22 gear up, drink some coffee. The next floor session is  
23 scheduled for Monday, August 25th.

24 Madam majority leader into our floor team,  
25 thank you so much as well for all of the hard work.

1 We'll see you next Monday.

2 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.

3 The Senate is in recess until 3:30, at  
4 which time adjournment motion will be made. We will  
5 reconvene Monday, August 25, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

6 (MEETING ADJOURNED)  
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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPTIONIST

I certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the digital recording provided to me in this matter.

I do further certify that I am neither a relative, nor employee, nor attorney of any of the parties to this action, and that I am not financially interested in the action.

Date: 11/1/2025

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Julie Thompson', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Julie Thompson, CET-1036

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IN RE CA ASSEMBLY FLOOR SESSION

TAPE TRANSCRIPTION OF AUDIO RECORDING

August 21, 2025

CERTIFIED COPY

**EXHIBIT**

**9**

IN RE CA ASSEMBLY FLOOR SESSION  
Tape Transcription of Audio Recording on 08/21/2025

TAPE TRANSCRIPTION  
IN THE MATTER OF:  
CA ASSEMBLY FLOOR SESSION  
August 21, 2025.  
Sacramento, California.  
10:18 a.m.

**CERTIFIED COPY**

REPORTED BY:  
CHARLES GOLDING,  
Certified Shorthand Reporter

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IN RE CA ASSEMBLY FLOOR SESSION

Tape Transcription of Audio Recording on 08/21/2025

2

10:18 a.m.

1

2

MR. SPEAKER: The assembly is now in session.

3

Assembly member Wallace notices the absence of a

4

quorum. Sergeant at arms will prepare the

5

chamber and bring in the absent members. Clerk

6

will call the roll.

7

CLERK: Addis, Aguiar. Curry. Ahrens.

8

Alanis. Alvarez. Arambula. Aylon. Fadias.

9

Baines. Bauer. Cahan. Bennett. Berman.

10

Berner. Bonta, Brian. Calderon. Coloza,

11

Carillo. Castillo. Chen. Connolly. Davies.

12

Demaio Dixon. El Hawari. Ellis, Flora. Fong.

13

Gabriel. Gallagher. Garcia. Gibson, Jeff.

14

Gonzalez, Mark Gonzalez, Hadwick Haney,

15

Arabidian, Hart. Hoover, Irwin. Jackson,

16

Kara. Krell. Lackey, lee. Lowenthal, Macedo.

17

McKenna, Mersucci. Quinn. Ortega, Pacheco.

18

Pappin. Patel. Patterson. Pellerin, Petri.

19

Norris. Quirk, Silva. Ramos, Ransom, Celeste

20

Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez. Rogers, Budio

21

Sanchez, Chiavo Schultz. Sharpe, Collins,

22

Solace Soria, Stephanie Ta Tongipa. Valencia.

23

Wallace. Ward, wicks, Wilson, Zabur. Mr.

24

Speaker, members of quorum is present. Decorum

25

please. Assembly members board, you are  
recognized members. Democratic caucus of the

IN RE CA ASSEMBLY FLOOR SESSION  
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3

1 members lounge right now. Members, we will  
2 caucus for. We will be meeting for 15 minutes.  
3 We'll be. Excuse me. Suspending for 15  
4 minutes on recess. We'll gavel back in 15  
5 minutes.

6 ( Brief recess )

7 MR. SPEAKER: Members, we are back in  
8 session. We ask our guests and visitors in the  
9 rear of the chamber and in the gallery to  
10 please stand for today's prayer. Reverend  
11 Oshta will offer today's prayer. Reverend  
12 Oshta.

13 REVEREND OSHTA: Please join me in a moment of  
14 reflection. We concluded our recent trip to  
15 Japan. In the city of Kyoto, we were able to  
16 visit with a dear teacher and friend who impacted  
17 Bob's life nearly 60 years ago. And being much  
18 younger, maybe 30 for me, we were quietly feeling  
19 our age and how quickly so many decades have  
20 passed. Later that day, Bob and I stepped into a  
21 small shop to escape the heat. We felt ourselves  
22 surrounded by beautiful things from another era.  
23 We chatted with the owner about how much we  
24 enjoyed the traditional music of the Gion Summer  
25 Festival that was concluding. Laughing, he told  
us that hearing that music only reminds him of

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4

1 the sweltering Kyoto summer heat. Bob then asked  
2 him, how long has his shop been here? It looked  
3 very well established. The owner said, Since  
4 1603. Then, with a smile, he added, But I'm not  
5 422 years old. He shared that he was the 17th  
6 generation of the Nakanishi family to operate  
7 their family business. While talking, he went  
8 online and found where we could order a CD of the  
9 unique Kyoto Summer Festival music that he would  
10 never play. It was a delightful meeting that  
11 gave us a fresh outlook on the passing of time  
12 and also on the responsibilities we have in life.  
13 Like Mr. Nakanishi, who is the 17th generation  
14 caretaker of his family's tradition, we are all  
15 momentary caretakers of a dream that has been  
16 unfolding for 249 years, since 1776. It is the  
17 dream of creating a nation with liberty and  
18 justice for all. A dream that has been a beacon  
19 of hope for oppressed people everywhere. Let us  
20 continue to try our best to keep this dream alive  
21 and the beacon that is America shining bright.  
22 Namo mi daotsu. Let us live with kindness and  
23 gratitude beyond words.

24 MEMBER CHEN: We ask our guests and  
25 visitors to remain standing to join us in the  
flag salute. Assembly member Chen will lead us

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5

1 in the Pledge of allegiance.

2 MEMBER CHEN: Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

3 Please put your right hand over your heart.

4 Ready? Begin. I pledge allegiance to the flag

5 of the United States of America and to the

6 Republic for which it stands. One nation,

7 under God, indivisible with liberty and justice

8 for all, may be seated. To our guests and

9 visitors. Today, state law prohibits persons

10 in the gallery from interfering with

11 legislative business. Legislative proceedings

12 are disrupting the orderly conduct of official

13 business. Persons disrupting legislative

14 proceedings are subject to removal, arrest or

15 other appropriate legal remedies. Members, I'd

16 further like to. State quorum, please.

17 Further like to state that our House rules

18 require us to follow Mason's Manual Sections

19 120 to 126 as it relates to words and tone we

20 use in debating public policy. On this floor.

21 MASON Section 120 and 121 state in part.

22 Freedom of speech involves obedience to all the

23 rules of debate. The language used by members

24 during debate should be temperate, decorous and

25 respectful. No member may indulge in  
personalities. No member may impugn the

IN RE CA ASSEMBLY FLOOR SESSION

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6

1 motives of other members or use indecent or  
2 profane language. Members, if you choose to  
3 stray from these rules, I will admonish you.  
4 And if the violation continues, I will mute  
5 your mic and you will forfeit your time. We're  
6 going to be moving on to a vote stage. Point  
7 of order, Mr. DeMaio.

8 MEMBER DEMAIO: Mr. Speaker, in reviewing  
9 the file for today, there are three pieces of  
10 legislation that are on the file that are in  
11 direct violation of the California State  
12 Constitution, rendering it impossible for this  
13 body to take up these items. My point of order  
14 pertains to Senate Bill 280, which violates  
15 Article 21, Section 2 of the Constitution,  
16 which only permits an election on  
17 redistricting, on the ones this matter, on the  
18 ones of every decade. The second bill is ACA  
19 8. The third bill is AB 604. Both of these  
20 bills violate section Article 21, section 2G,  
21 which expressly prohibits the legislature from  
22 taking any action on redistricting as well as  
23 adopting any maps. Finally, a point of order  
24 to Assembly Bill 604, which violates Article  
25 21, Section 2E, which says, quote, districts  
shall not be drawn for purpose of favoring or

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1 discriminating against an incumbent political  
2 candidate or political party. It is my  
3 understanding that both the governor and  
4 members of the legislature have said that they  
5 have partisan goals behind these maps. For all  
6 three of these bills. I ask they be removed  
7 from the file immediately and that this body  
8 cease violating the state constitution.

9 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. DeMaio. It's a  
10 lot of information. If you give me just a  
11 moment, please. Thank you for your patience, Mr.  
12 DeMaio. Your point of order is not well taken,  
13 Mr. DeMaio. It's -- let me explain my ruling  
14 first and then you are more than welcome to  
15 appeal. All the measures that you've raised are  
16 properly before the house pursuant to the  
17 constitution. Do you wish to -- It's been moved  
18 and seconded to appeal the ruling of the chair.  
19 Clerk will open the roll. The chair is asking  
20 you for an I vote to sustain his ruling. Mr.  
21 DeMaio is asking for a no vote. All members vote  
22 who desire to vote. All members vote who desire  
23 to vote. All members vote who desire to vote.  
24 Clerk will close the roll. Tally the votes.  
25 Eyes, 58. Nose, 18. The chair is sustained.  
Assistant majority leader Garcia, you are

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8

1 recognized.

2 MR. GARCIA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we  
3 move the call, there is no item before, so we  
4 will recognize you once we do that.

5 MR. SPEAKER: Okay. We're going to be  
6 moving to a vote on the consent calendar at the  
7 request of the author. Items 151, SP 482,  
8 Weber Pearson has been removed. Does any  
9 member wish to remove an item from the consent  
10 calendar? Seeing hearing none, the clerk will  
11 read the second day consent calendar. Assembly  
12 Concurrent Resolution 105 by Assembly member  
13 McKenna and others relative to the music  
14 industry in California. Clerk will open the  
15 roll. In the consent calendar, all members  
16 vote who desire to vote. All members vote who  
17 desire to vote. All members vote who desire to  
18 vote system. Majority leader Garcia, you are  
19 recognized. Move the call -- Madam majority  
20 leader, you are recognized.

21 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: I request  
22 unanimous consent to suspend Assembly Rule 69B  
23 to adopt late amendments on ACA 8 revis.

24 MR. SPEAKER: We're going to dispense with  
25 one item at a time. I'm going to recognize  
leader Gallagher. Leader Gallagher. Mr.

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1 Speaker, the member moved the call. I don't  
2 believe. There's your point of order, Mr.  
3 Gallagher.

4 MEMBER GALLAGHER: The member moved the  
5 call. I Don't believe anything before us. The  
6 second day consent calendar that you yourself  
7 voted on.

8 MR. SPEAKER: Okay, but what we're going to  
9 move on. I've made the ruling. This point of  
10 order is not well taken.

11 MR. GALLAGHER: Point of parliamentary  
12 inquiry.

13 MR. SPEAKER: State your point, Mr.  
14 Gallagher.

15 MR. GALLAGHER: We voted on the consent  
16 calendar, correct? That's what approves it. So  
17 I'm confused by what is the --

18 MR. SPEAKER: Burke did not close the role.  
19 Mr. Gallagher. Okay, Mr. DeMaio, you are  
20 recognized.

21 MEMBER DEMAIIO: I withhold consent from the  
22 motion.

23 MR. SPEAKER: Okay, mis -- Mr. DeMaio has  
24 requested withholding consent on the majority  
25 leader's motion. We will now open the roll. A  
majority leader's motion. All members vote who

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1 desire to vote. Majority leader is asking for a  
2 aye vote. Mr. DeMaio is asking for a no vote.  
3 Motion was seconded by Mr. Garcia. All members  
4 vote who desire to vote. All members vote who  
5 desire to vote. Clerk will close the roll.  
6 Tally the votes. Ayes, 58. No's 19. The motion  
7 carries it. Okay. Pursuant to Assembly Rule 69,  
8 the amendments were approved by the committee  
9 chair and the bill has been amended, is out to  
10 print and back on file. All other amendments on  
11 this item that were pending at the assembly desk  
12 are no longer in order as they are not drafted to  
13 the current version of the measure. Madam  
14 Majority Leader, you are again recognized for  
15 your procedural motions.

16 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Thank you. I  
17 request unanimous consent to suspend the rules to  
18 allow Assembly member Berman to take up ACA 8  
19 Revis as amended without reference to file for  
20 the purposes of adoption.

21 MR. SPEAKER: Has been moved and seconded by  
22 Mr. Garcia. Assembly member Gallagher, you are  
23 recognized.

24 MEMBER GALLAGHER: I will have my own  
25 motion after this motion is dispensed with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Gallagher.

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1 Assemblymember DeMaio, you are recognized.

2 MR. DEMAIO: Withhold consent.

3 MR. SPEAKER: Okay. Consent has been  
4 withheld. We will move to a vote. The clerk  
5 will open the roll. All members vote who desire  
6 to vote. Majority leader is asking for an aye  
7 vote. Mr. DeMaio is asking for a no vote. All  
8 members vote who desire to vote. All members  
9 vote who desire to vote. Clerk will close the  
10 roll. Tally the votes. Ayes, 57, nose 20. The  
11 measure carries.

12 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Gallagher.

13 MR. SPEAKER: Assembly member Gallagher, you  
14 are recognized. Yeah.

15 MEMBER GALLAGHER: Mr. Speaker, being that  
16 this bill was ACA was just amended, I  
17 respectfully request that we re refer ACA 8 and  
18 SB 280 to the Judiciary Committee so we can have  
19 further vetting of these measures.

20 MR. SPEAKER: Just a moment. Okay. Members,  
21 it has been moved and seconded. Moved by  
22 assembly member Gallagher. Seconded by Assembly  
23 member DeMaio. Clerk will open the roll. Mr.  
24 DeMaio is asking for an aye vote. Majority  
25 leader is Asking for a no vote. All members vote  
who desire to vote. All members vote who desire

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1 to vote. Majority leader is asking for a no  
2 vote. Mr. Gallagher is asking for an I vote.  
3 Clerk will close the roll tally. Votes ayes, 19  
4 no's, 58. Motion fails. Mr. Demaio, you are  
5 recognized. Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I move that  
6 we immediately take up AJR 21. Independent  
7 Redistricting Commission Constitutional amendment  
8 without regard to file. There's been. There's  
9 been a motion to suspend the rules by Mr. DeMaio  
10 to suspend the constitution without reference to  
11 file. Seconded by assembly member Wallace.  
12 Clerk will open the roll. All members vote who  
13 desire to vote. Majority leader is asking for a  
14 no vote. Mr. DeMaio is asking for an I vote.  
15 All members vote who desire to vote. All members  
16 vote who desire to vote. Clerk will close the  
17 roll tally. Votes ayes, 19. Nos. 58. Motion  
18 fails. Assembly member Tungapa, you are  
19 recognized.

20 MEMBER TUNGAPA: Thank you. I move to  
21 suspend the rules to allow ACA 15 to be taken up  
22 without reference to file. Prove you don't have  
23 a vested interest. State your point. State your  
24 point. Assembly member Ransom.

25 MEMBER RANSOM: Point of order. It seems  
that that is out of order, Mr. Speaker. I

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1 believe earlier when you gave instructions that  
2 our comments are not supposed to be directed at  
3 anyone's intention.

4 MR. SPEAKER: Members, we are not in the  
5 portion of motions and resolutions. It is out of  
6 order overall to be making motions on items that  
7 are not before us. We have made a motion without  
8 reference to file to bring ACA 8 to the floor.  
9 You may make points of order and motions on the  
10 items that are before this body and nothing more.  
11 Assembly member Gallagher, you are recognized.

12 MEMBER GALLAGHER: Again. Point of  
13 parliamentary inquiry. I believe we were in  
14 motions and resolutions. That's why the majority  
15 leader was making motions. And the only place  
16 that you can make motions like the one that was  
17 just passed to bring ACA 8 to the floor is during  
18 motions and resolutions now, albeit you haven't  
19 put it up there on the screen, which is curious  
20 to me, but the only place that we could ever do  
21 these kinds of motions is during motions and  
22 resolutions. So I find it unbelievable that  
23 you're saying we're not in motions and  
24 resolutions right now. Your point of order is  
25 the unbelievability of this. Yes, that's your  
point of order, that we are actually in motions

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1 and resolutions and resolutions. Otherwise.

2 Just a moment, Mr. Majority Leader could not have  
3 made her motion.

4 MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Gallagher, once the  
5 majority leader's motion was voted on and  
6 approved, and that was. Consent was withheld and  
7 we voted on it as a body. We are then in the  
8 portion where we are dealing with ACA 8 and we  
9 must first dispense with ACA 8 before we take up  
10 any other bills before this House. Your point of  
11 order is not well taken. The Clerk will read  
12 Assembly Constitutional Amendment 8 by Senate  
13 Rebus and others in accolade to redistricting.  
14 Assembly member Berman, you are recognized.

15 MEMBER BERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I  
16 rise to present ACA 8. On behalf of Speaker  
17 Rivas, Let me be crystal clear. We don't want  
18 this fight and we didn't choose this fight. But  
19 with our democracy on the line, we cannot and  
20 will not run away from this fight. We're here  
21 today because President Trump and Republicans in  
22 Texas and other states are attempting to redraw  
23 Congressional districts mid decade in an effort  
24 to rig the upcoming election. Just last night  
25 the Texas House passed their plan to rig the 2026  
election. Earlier yesterday, Florida Governor

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1 Ron DeSantis demanded that his state is owed an  
2 extra Congressional district right now. And you  
3 know that Trump will do everything he can to  
4 fulfill this outrageous request. Americans and  
5 Californians deserve better. And ACA 8, the  
6 election rigging response act is our response to  
7 these undemocratic and un American power grabs.  
8 ACA 8 allows for the temporary use of voter  
9 approved Congressional district boundaries  
10 contained in AB604. Unlike Texas where  
11 Republican politicians ram through maps after  
12 assigning law enforcement to trail their Democrat  
13 colleagues every movement.

14 MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, Mr. Berman.

15 MEMBER BERMAN: By all means.

16 MR. SPEAKER: Summit member Patterson, stage  
17 point of order.

18 MEMBER PATTERSON: Yes. Hi the -- Thank  
19 you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning. State your  
20 point of order, sir. Yes, we have been  
21 admonished for mentioning parties on. Mr.  
22 Patterson, state your point of order. There's no  
23 explanation needed. What is the rule that is  
24 being violated? Your rule that a person speaking  
25 may not mention political parties? I ask that  
the author no longer do that. That is not a rule

1 of this body. That is a rule of decorum. The  
2 issue with this particular measure is affects  
3 political parties. We're going to allow that  
4 today. What I spoke with earlier was simply that  
5 you should not impugn the motives of your  
6 colleagues. Mr. Berman, you may continue.

7 MEMBER BERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As  
8 I was saying, unlike Texas where Republican  
9 politicians ramp through maps after assigning law  
10 enforcement to trail their Democrat colleagues  
11 every movement, it is California voters who will  
12 have the final say whether or not these new  
13 district boundaries get used. Because here in  
14 California, we respect the will of the voters.  
15 After the 2030 census, ACA 8 returns all  
16 congressional district line drawing powers back  
17 to the Citizens Redistricting Commission. In  
18 addition, ACA 8 calls on Congress to pass  
19 legislation and propose a constitutional  
20 amendment to the US Constitution to require the  
21 use of fair, independent and nonpartisan  
22 redistricting in every state across the country.  
23 Now, here are some of the arguments we'll hear  
24 from our colleagues from across the aisle today.  
25 First, this was decided by voters who were  
eligible to vote in 2010, and we don't need to

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1 revisit it. At least half of the voter  
2 registration file is totally new in 2025. Over  
3 10 million California voters who did not have the  
4 chance to vote on this and have their voices  
5 heard in 2010. Now, you might be wondering, who  
6 does that include? We got a couple of people on  
7 the floor today. My Republican colleagues from  
8 Tulare and Clovis, my Democrat colleagues from  
9 San Jose and la. None of them were old enough to  
10 vote on this in 2010, and I think they should get  
11 the chance to vote on it this year. They will  
12 claim that this costs too much money. First,  
13 there is no cost too high to save our democracy.  
14 Second, the return on investment of this election  
15 is off the charts. Something that would make the  
16 VCs in my district blush. Trump and his cronies  
17 have terrorized our communities. They have  
18 targeted our world class institutions trying to  
19 extract \$1 billion from UCLA alone. They have  
20 decimated local economies. They've even extorted  
21 California grown businesses like Nvidia. And I  
22 have not heard one complaint from any colleague  
23 from across the aisle to these actions that have  
24 cost California billions and billions of dollars.  
25 They'll argue that there's no urgency to act.  
Wake up. The crisis is here and our democracy is

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1 under attack. President Trump is taking advice  
2 on our democracy from Vladimir Putin, someone who  
3 literally kills his political opponents. And  
4 he's not even trying to be quiet about this.  
5 He's bragging about this on national television  
6 as if it's something to be proud of. This is the  
7 same guy who called elections officials in  
8 Georgia and demanded they find him 12,000 votes  
9 so he could win the state and stay in the White  
10 House. This is someone who earnestly talks about  
11 the possibility of serving a third term as  
12 President of the United States and now realizing  
13 that his policies are terribly unpopular and that  
14 voters will have a chance to express their  
15 opposition next year. He's now trying to rig the  
16 election to inoculate himself from the will of  
17 the voters and hold on to power. Now, this  
18 wouldn't be a problem if any Republican elected  
19 officials had a spine like the Georgia elections  
20 officials did in 2020 to say, no, Mr. President,  
21 this is un American, this is undemocratic, this  
22 is wrong. And we will not participate in your  
23 steamrolling of democracy. But that Republican  
24 elected official no longer exists when it comes  
25 between standing up for your constituents, saving  
their health care, saving their food assistance,

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1 saving their fathers or daughters from being  
2 snatched off the streets by masked and  
3 unidentified thugs and flown to torture chambers  
4 in foreign countries, or basking in the orange  
5 glow of Mar A Lago. Republican politicians in  
6 California don't give it a second thought. They  
7 drop to their knees and they do whatever Donald  
8 Trump tells them to. There is currently no check  
9 on Trump in Washington, only sycophants who clap  
10 like seals at the circus. Please, somebody.  
11 Member Gallagher, you were recognized. The  
12 gentleman is, if I can call him a gentleman, is  
13 impugning the character of people on this floor,  
14 which you already admonished him and everyone in  
15 this room not to do. So maybe somebody will  
16 regulate that decorum. Assembly Member  
17 Gallagher, your point is well taken. Members,  
18 please be careful in your speech not to impugn  
19 the motives of other members. Mr. Berman, you  
20 may continue. Thank you. Mr. Speaker, there is  
21 currently no check on Donald Trump in Washington,  
22 D.C. only people who do whatever he demands that  
23 they do. But not here. Not in California.  
24 California is responding to this emergency by  
25 empowering our voters with transparency, with  
respect for our independent commission, but with

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1 an unwavering will to act. I respectfully  
2 request your. I vote on ACA 8. Thank you,  
3 Assemblymember Berman. Assemblymember Lackey,  
4 you are recognized.

5 MEMBER LACKEY: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I  
6 appreciate the privilege to share with you a very  
7 powerful perspective. What we're spending time  
8 on at this particular moment, to me, is a bit  
9 disappointing. I will tell you that right now,  
10 what this body needs is to build trust with its  
11 constituency. Polls have overwhelmingly  
12 indicated that there's a lack of trust. And what  
13 we're considering on doing is feeding that lack  
14 of trust. You know, I had a very respected  
15 colleague that I spoke with just recently who  
16 told me that this is all political. You can  
17 define it as you wish. But I can tell you, no  
18 matter what your position is on this thing, and  
19 we're going to be talking a lot about it, and  
20 there's going to be a lot of blah, blah, blah.  
21 But I'm telling you, when it comes down to it,  
22 does this enhance trust with our people? We all  
23 admit that gerrymandering is controlled by people  
24 who have something to benefit. That is not what  
25 our people want. That's been very clearly stated  
by their vote. So why, no matter what the

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1 justification is, why would we engage in behavior  
2 that we know is considered unacceptable by those  
3 who elect us? I would Ask for you to please  
4 reflect on that, because it's very meaningful.  
5 And I know that we can be distracted by a lot of  
6 influencers in this institution, a lot of people  
7 that we admire and respect. But when it comes  
8 down to it, it's a mirror that we have to respond  
9 to. Please think about that. Please think about  
10 is what we're doing building trust with our  
11 constituency. I think you know what the answer  
12 to that is. When we engage in supporting  
13 gerrymandering, please resist it. And please  
14 think about what you're doing. Thank you. Thank  
15 you. Assemblymember Lackey. Assemblymember  
16 Wallace, you are recognized.

17 MEMBER WALLACE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
18 Members. I rise today in strong opposition to  
19 ACA 8, not simply because of what it does, but  
20 because of what it represents. ACA 8 represents  
21 a tit for tat strategy. It's a reactive move  
22 that erodes our credibility, not just here at  
23 home, but on the national and international  
24 stage. If we abandon the independent  
25 redistricting process that Californians created,  
we don't just lose a tool, we lose trust. Our

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1 citizens. Redistricting Commission was born from  
2 voter demand for fairness and transparency.  
3 While drawing our current maps, the commission  
4 held hundreds of public meetings, reviewed tens  
5 of thousands of comments, and drew maps that  
6 reflect people and communities, not politicians  
7 and their preferences. That's not just good  
8 governance. It's a model for the nation. Some  
9 point to Texas as a justification for this  
10 proposal. But California doesn't follow. We  
11 lead. We don't. Mere dysfunction. We set the  
12 standard. Former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger  
13 called gerrymandering the cancer of politics. He  
14 championed the commission because he believed in  
15 a system that puts voters first. That belief  
16 still matters. I urge you. No vote.

17 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Thank you,  
18 Assemblymember. Assemblymember Lowenthal, you're  
19 recognized from the majority Leader's desk.

20 MEMBER LOWENTHAL: Thank you, Madam Speaker.  
21 I love you, dad. I've been deeply torn by the  
22 national redistricting debate that has engulfed  
23 California. Beyond its vastly consequential  
24 political implications, this issue has profoundly  
25 impacted me personally, because indelibly seared  
in my consciousness is the memory of my father

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1 working tirelessly over decades to create the  
2 independent redistricting system about which we  
3 now debate. By way of background, my dad, a  
4 community psychologist, was elected to the  
5 California state assembly in 1998. He ran for  
6 public office with the principal goals of  
7 restoring public trust in political institutions  
8 and ensuring that elected officials listened to  
9 their constituents. To effectuate those ideals,  
10 he believed that the independent redistricting  
11 system was necessary. So in 2002, on this very  
12 floor, he introduced a constitutional amendment,  
13 ACA 19 to create an independent redistricting  
14 commission. But his attempt received no support,  
15 and it died. Undeterred, he reintroduced the  
16 independent redistricting commission concept once  
17 again in the Assembly. But that effort, too  
18 failed. And then, in 2006, as a state senator,  
19 he reintroduced the concept as SCA3, and for the  
20 first time ever, the concept of independent  
21 redistricting passed one of our bicameral bodies.  
22 However, as described by Common Cause quote,  
23 somewhere in the one minute walk from the Senate  
24 clerk's office to the assembly clerk's office,  
25 SCA3 was lost for just long enough to miss key  
deadlines to keep the bill alive. The SCA's

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1 failure was devastating, but my dad's unwavering  
2 effort paved the way for the electorate to adopt  
3 an independent redistricting commission two years  
4 later. But his work did not end there. Upon  
5 going to Congress in 2012, the first piece of  
6 legislation he introduced was HR 2978, the let  
7 the People Draw the Lines Act. This legislation  
8 would have required that all states establish  
9 independent redistricting commissions.  
10 Tragically, the legislation was met by political  
11 headwinds and died. But despite that, my dad  
12 pressed forward on his quixotic request to  
13 establish reform on a national level because he  
14 knew that a system in which some states had  
15 districts drawn independently and others don't  
16 was fundamentally unfair. Because Congress  
17 refused to hold a vote on his measures, he  
18 commenced advocating for reform in the courts.  
19 In 2015, he led an amicus brief in support of  
20 Arizona's right to form an independent  
21 commission. And then in 2017, he led an amicus  
22 brief in Gill v. Whitford, which he asked the  
23 Supreme Court to declare political gerrymandering  
24 to be unconstitutional, although the Court did  
25 not do so, Justice Kagan, in an opinion by  
Justices Ginsburg, Breyer, and Sotomayor, cited

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1 my dad's brief writing, the congressional brief  
2 describes a cascade of negative results from  
3 excessive partisan gerrymandering, indifference  
4 to swing voters and their views, extreme  
5 political positioning designated to placate the  
6 party's base and fend off primary challengers,  
7 the devaluing of negotiation and compromise, and  
8 the impossibility of reaching pragmatic,  
9 bipartisan solutions of the nation's problems. I  
10 vigorously agree with the evils of gerrymandering  
11 described in my dad's brief and cited by Justice  
12 Kagan. That notwithstanding, because Texas has  
13 now shamelessly affected the national balance of  
14 power, our nation's democracy is faced with the  
15 exigency of existential dimensions. If  
16 unaddressed Texas actions which occurred without  
17 the vote of its populace will disenfranchise  
18 Californians and we must not allow Californians  
19 voices to be silenced. It is imperative that  
20 Californians have a voice in selecting the  
21 political party that controls Congress in 2026.  
22 The most fundamental concept in our democracy  
23 upon which the collective value system is  
24 predicated, is fairness. Californians vote in  
25 2026. Our votes must be made on a level playing  
field. This constitutional amendment ensures

1 that we have that balanced field. We must all  
2 continue to press Congress to create a national  
3 system that eliminates unconstrained political  
4 redistricting. But until that occurs, fair  
5 representation for Californians cannot exist  
6 without this measure. So today I proudly join  
7 with my father, the architect of this commission,  
8 in urging its temporary suspension. I  
9 respectfully ask for your I vote on ACA 8.

10 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Thank you,  
11 Assemblymember. Assemblymember Cork Silva, you  
12 are recognized.

13 CORK SILVA: Thank you, Madam speaker and  
14 members. I also stand in support of ACA 8.  
15 Colleagues, we are living through a dramatic and  
16 historic moment, a moment to stand up for a  
17 democracy, one that will shape our future. For  
18 generations across the country, we have witnessed  
19 efforts to manipulate district lines, not to  
20 represent people, but to cling to power, to  
21 silence communities and to steal representation.  
22 We saw this in Georgia, where three congressional  
23 seats were taken midterm through redistricting.  
24 We see it again in Texas, where five seats were  
25 carved out at the request of President Trump,  
all without giving voters a voice. But here in

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1 California, we have chosen a different path. Not  
2 to steal, not to rig, not to silence. We have  
3 chosen to let the people decide, to let them vote  
4 on the California maps. The California  
5 redistricting plan is about fairness. It's about  
6 trust. So when critics cry power grab, let us be  
7 clear. The plan is not a power grab. It is a  
8 power return, returning power back to the  
9 citizens of California. We did not start this  
10 fight. We did not force this issue. It was  
11 forced upon us by a president who has threatened,  
12 cheated, and tried to steal congressional seats  
13 to cling to power. Do not waste your breath  
14 scolding those of us who refused to roll over for  
15 partisan maps that divide our communities. A  
16 bully. And yes, our president acts as one, uses  
17 power to intimidate, to harm, and to cheat. He  
18 has shown a pattern of refusing to accept the  
19 results of free and fair elections in 2020. He  
20 falsely claimed victory. When he does not get  
21 what he wants, he shouts, he insults, and lashes  
22 out like a spoiled child. If you claim to care  
23 about justice and fairness, then answer this.  
24 Where is your outrage when states silence voters  
25 by carving up districts for partisan gain? Where  
is your outrage when working families, seniors,

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1 veterans, and marginalized communities are pushed  
2 to the sidelines and as they will be with the  
3 President's new executive order just this week to  
4 prohibit mail in ballots. My colleague from San  
5 Diego says actions speak louder than words. On  
6 this point, we agree. California's action is  
7 clear. We are showing the nation how to rise  
8 above partisan bickering and to stand for  
9 democracy. We are showing that the people, not  
10 the politicians, should choose their  
11 representatives. We will not stand idly by as a  
12 bully screams and threatens. We will fight every  
13 step of the way to protect our democracy. Why?  
14 Because this is what our nation was founded on.  
15 History will remember that when democracy was  
16 tested and California chose fairness,  
17 transparency and the people's voice. You can  
18 whine and complain or you can stand with  
19 democracy, but you cannot do both. As President  
20 Lincoln reminded us, elections belong to the  
21 people. It's their decision. As Justice Ruth  
22 Bader Ginsburg said, real change, enduring  
23 change, happens one step at a time. And as Dr.  
24 Martin Luther King Jr. Taught us, the time is  
25 always right to do what is right. Today,  
California is drawing a line in the sand. We are

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1 standing boldly with the people. And today I ask  
2 for your support for ACA 8.

3 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember Cork  
4 Silva. Assemblymember top. You, you are  
5 recognized.

6 MEMBER TOP: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise  
7 in opposition to ACA A. ACA A seek to destroy  
8 democracy and violating California constitution.  
9 I think you all heard about my personal story. I  
10 left the country in 1982 at the age of 19 and I  
11 came here with my family for freedom. And until  
12 today the country that I Left more than 30 years  
13 ago doesn't have any fair election. The country  
14 had been ruled by one party and that party, they  
15 make their own laws and they been violated all  
16 lost over time. And it hooked me and my family  
17 and my community for what happening here in  
18 California. I still remember two and a half  
19 years ago when I took an old office with all of  
20 you, my first office here. We are blessed that  
21 we follow California State constitution. I  
22 understand a lot of you have different opinions  
23 from the current federal administration and other  
24 state. However, what did we have in our office?  
25 We may have different opinions, different ideas,  
but at the end of the day we have one goal, to

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1 serve the people in California. California has  
2 been very proud of independent citizen commission  
3 for the last 15 years. And for the last several  
4 days we have built about election and we didn't  
5 have even 30 days for community inputs. That is  
6 outrageous. Unbelievable. A lot of president  
7 and community members in my district, they've  
8 been calling me. They feel they really  
9 frustrated. They didn't know what to do. They  
10 Asked me what is going on here. And you all know  
11 that in my semi district, heavily, heavily  
12 immigrant communities and a lot of us, we came  
13 here for freedom. So we really honor the  
14 fairness because the country that we left has no  
15 fair election whatsoever. So I urge you, I urge  
16 you all to listen to the will of the people that  
17 the people that we've been serving. Why do we  
18 need to follow other state? We elected by the  
19 people who live in California. We are elected by  
20 the people of California. 30 seconds. With that  
21 I ask you to have a no vote on asa.

22 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you assembly member T.  
23 Assembly members Bore, you are recognized.

24 MEMBER BORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

25 Members, I rise today to express my full throated  
support for ACA 8 members. We must act today

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1 with an unfaltering commitment to our democracy.  
2 Let's be clear. Today we are responding to a  
3 serious emergency for our country. Today's vote  
4 is an act of patriotism. The vote today is about  
5 protecting health care for millions of our  
6 people. It's about making people feel safe  
7 again. All our people feeling safe again instead  
8 of fearing that they'll be snatched off the  
9 street with no warning. It's about protecting  
10 reproductive choice and safeguarding our planet.  
11 And it's about standing up and fighting an  
12 unprecedented and exigent march towards  
13 dictatorship. You know, my dad fought for this  
14 country in the Korean War. He fought and had  
15 rheumatic fever and spent his life with health  
16 care issues because of that and died an early  
17 death. He enlisted in the Air Force because of  
18 his love for our country and his love for our  
19 democracy. He would be turning in his grave and  
20 if he understood what Donald Trump was doing  
21 today. When I look into my kids eyes, and  
22 hopefully my grandkids eyes in the future, I  
23 don't want to regret that we didn't fight hard  
24 enough for them. I want them to know that today  
25 was an important day for our country, an  
important day for our democracy, an important day

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1 for the United States of America that we love so  
2 much. I want them to know that we fought for  
3 them, we fought for their future. We did  
4 everything in our power to assure that they could  
5 live in a democracy in the same way that we have  
6 lived in a democracy for over 250 years, that we  
7 fought for our family, we fought for freedom. We  
8 must give the next generation and the generation  
9 after that the same benefits of our democracy  
10 that we have had. So on behalf of my father, of  
11 my kids, my future grandkids, of all of our kids,  
12 of all of our future grandkids, I respectfully  
13 ask for an I vote on ACA 8. Thank you, assembly  
14 members. Boar leader Gallagher, you are  
15 recognized.

16 MEMBER GALLAGHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
17 And I want to start by saying I thank your father  
18 for his righteous fight. And they culminated in  
19 the vote of the people that created our  
20 Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.  
21 And it's in that spirit that I really want to  
22 encourage everybody that we should stick with  
23 that. And I want to start by saying what this is  
24 not about. It is not about Texas. And actually,  
25 you all just conceded that by your vote this  
morning when you amended ACA 8 to take out Texas

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1 as a condition, and that this bill that you are  
2 voting on right now doesn't have Texas as a  
3 condition and commits California to going back to  
4 gerrymandering. And you should really think  
5 twice before you go ahead and. And do that  
6 today. It's about power. We know that. It's  
7 about power on both sides, rigging congressional  
8 districts to get partisan results. That's what a  
9 gerrymander is. Now, the governor says it's  
10 about fighting with. Fighting fire with fire.  
11 And what I want to submit to you all today is  
12 that fighting fire with fire is the problem.  
13 It's not the solution. President Trump is  
14 fighting fire with fire. He saw how government  
15 was weaponized against him with a Democratic  
16 majority in Washington, D.C. in his first term.  
17 He saw how states like Illinois and  
18 Massachusetts, Hawaii, have severely  
19 gerrymandered their congressional districts in  
20 ways that ensure more Democratic members are  
21 elected. And he seeks to do the same thing in  
22 Texas. He is wrong to do so. Let me repeat  
23 again, he is wrong to do so. Gavin is fighting  
24 fire with fire. So now he's pushing this  
25 redistricting plan, this Gavin Mander, illegally  
against the Constitution, as we pointed out time

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1 and time again in the committee hearing. Well,  
2 the one committee hearing we had on policy  
3 grounds. He's violating the Constitution and the  
4 clear will of the voters who've already spoken  
5 twice. We really don't need to ask him a third  
6 time, guys. Twice they told us they want  
7 independent redistricting, fair representation.  
8 But where does it end? You move forward today  
9 and you have the power to do so. You can do  
10 that, and Gavin can move forward. He's a  
11 governor. He has the power. Greg Abbott has the  
12 power. In Texas. You move forward fighting fire  
13 with fire, what happens? You burn it all down.  
14 And in this case, it affects our most fundamental  
15 American principle, representation. Wasn't that  
16 the battle cry of our founding forebears? No  
17 taxation without representation. But the  
18 people's right to representation is exactly what  
19 will be sacrificed when we continue down this  
20 road. When after you do it Missouri does it or  
21 Indiana does it. Colorado is talking about doing  
22 it. At the end of that, the parties will  
23 determine who represents and the people will be  
24 powerless to elect their own representatives.  
25 And we've already seen evidence of that in how  
some of these districts are proposed to be drawn.

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1 There's really only one way to stop it. Someone  
2 has to refrain from striking back and show a  
3 better way. And with that, I would like  
4 permission to read some very wise words that I  
5 think will be without objection. Without  
6 objection. You have heard it said, an eye for an  
7 eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you,  
8 do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone  
9 slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the  
10 other also. 30 seconds. You have heard that it  
11 was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate  
12 your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies  
13 and pray for those who persecute you, so that you  
14 may be the sons of your Father who is in heaven.  
15 For he makes the sun rise on the evil and the  
16 good, and he sends rain on the just and the  
17 unjust. You, therefore, must be perfect, as your  
18 heavenly Father is perfect. Today I'm submitting  
19 to you, Let us turn the other cheek. Let us show  
20 the better way. What more powerful statement  
21 will we have if Republicans and Democrats  
22 together said, enough is enough? We're not going  
23 to do this. And Texas, you shouldn't do it  
24 either. Thank you, Leader Galvan. One last  
25 point. I'm sorry. Our democracy will persist as  
long as we fight back. And if there is one

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1 weakness that we have right now in our republic  
2 is that legislators are not standing up to  
3 executives of their own party. Thank you, Leader  
4 Gallagher. And that's what we need to do. Thank  
5 you, Leader Gallagher. Assemblymember Carrillo,  
6 you are recognized.

7 MEMBER CARRILLO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and  
8 members. I rise in support of ACA 8. This is a  
9 rough position that our country and our democracy  
10 is in these days. Leaders in D.C. and across  
11 the country have time and time again proven that  
12 they are willing to bend, stretch, and outright  
13 break the law if it means they are gaining more  
14 power. They are unashamedly trying to change the  
15 rules in the middle of the game, undermine our  
16 institutions. And chess flat cheat because they  
17 know that is what it will take for them to have a  
18 chance to win. I urge you to support this  
19 measure to give our constituents and our state a  
20 chance to fight with even odds. If at halftime  
21 one team decides they're going to play the second  
22 half with 15 players instead of 11, we can  
23 disagree and cry foul all we want, but we will  
24 Play the second half by the same old rules. With  
25 11 players, we put our team and the people we're  
playing for at a huge disadvantage. And for

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1 what? Pride? Principle? No members. There is  
2 far too much at stake. They have made that  
3 painfully clear. Obviously, all of us on this  
4 floor would rather not be spending our time on  
5 this issue. There is certainly no shortage of  
6 pressing issues our constituents need us to  
7 address. But the unfortunate reality is that  
8 this president has manufactured this issue. And  
9 I would argue that there is no issue more  
10 pressing than ensuring Californians get the  
11 opportunity to play by the same rules as the rest  
12 of the country, even if we don't like what those  
13 rules are. Members, I urge you. I vote on AC8A.  
14 Thank you. Thank you, Assembly member Carrillo.  
15 Assembly member Mark Gonzalez, you are  
16 recognized.

17 MEMBER GONZALEZ: Thank you. Mr. Speaker  
18 and members, I rise today in strong support of  
19 ACA 8, the map that leads to you. Because this  
20 is not just about redistricting. It is about the  
21 survival of our democracy. I was born in  
22 McAllen, Texas, where voter suppression wasn't  
23 theory, it was reality. I saw neighbors turned  
24 away at the polls. I saw families silenced. I  
25 saw entire communities erased from the map. As a  
Latino, I know exactly what it looks like when

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1 politicians draw racist maps to hold power. When  
2 they decide some voices count and others do not.  
3 That memory never leaves you. And now I see  
4 Trump and his allies running the same playbook  
5 across Texas, across Florida, across this  
6 country. They cannot win on ideas. They cannot  
7 win on compassion. They cannot win on the  
8 merits. So what do they do? They change the  
9 rules. They rig the lines. And as our Texas  
10 Democratic colleagues said yesterday, they shield  
11 their racism with their party line. That is not  
12 patriotism. That is oppression with a ballot in  
13 its hand. This is an emergency. Trump has  
14 already shown us the length he will go. He sent  
15 ICE agents to the schools where our children  
16 learn, the churches we pray, the fields where we  
17 work to intimidate, to divide, and to silence  
18 dissent. He weaponized fear against immigrant  
19 families because he knows cruelty is cheaper than  
20 compassion. He tore families apart not to keep  
21 our country safe, but to score political points.  
22 California protects families. We do not divide  
23 them. And look at health care. Trump's big,  
24 ugly bill ripped \$900 billion out of Medicaid  
25 just to line the pockets of the wealthy few.  
That is not reform. That is robbery. It

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1 threatens coverage for 3 million Californians,  
2 puts our seniors at risk, and sends rural  
3 hospitals to to their graves. Seniors, children,  
4 working families left with nothing. That's not  
5 policy. That is punishment. This is life and  
6 death. And yet, while they strip our people of  
7 health care while they weaponize immigration  
8 raids, while they tilt the scales of democracy.  
9 What they fear most is not us. What they fear  
10 most is the people. This is why ACA matters.  
11 This measure does not force maps on anyone. It  
12 gives California a choice. It lets the people  
13 hold the pen and draw their future. So I ask,  
14 why are Republicans so afraid of the people? Why  
15 are they so afraid of democracy itself? Every  
16 state in America should have independent  
17 redistricting. Every voter should have a choice.  
18 But until they do, California cannot and will not  
19 play the by rigged rules. If Texas wants to  
20 carve up districts to keep their wannabe dictator  
21 in power, we will not bow. If Florida wants to  
22 silence voters of color, we will not sit quietly.  
23 Because when democracy is attacked, silence is  
24 surrender. And California has never been and  
25 will never be a state that surrenders.  
California will fight back. Because this is not

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1 just about the maps. This is about dignity.  
2 This is about whether a Latino child in Texas, a  
3 black family in Florida, or an immigrant  
4 community in California has a voice in their own  
5 democracy members. History is watching. Our  
6 communities are watching. And they will remember  
7 not just what we said in this chamber, but  
8 whether we had the courage to act. ACA 8 is that  
9 act. It's not just a bill, it's shield. A  
10 shield against racist maps, a shield against  
11 voter suppression, A shield for democracy itself.  
12 It's not just a policy. It's a promise. A  
13 promise that democracy in California will not be  
14 dictated by the hand of tyranny, but written by  
15 the will of the people. I did not come to this  
16 floor, like many of you, with the polite request.  
17 I came with a call. A call to conscience, a call  
18 to courage and a call to history. Democrats  
19 fight to survive. Republicans fight to dominate.  
20 And when you fight to dominate, you stop at  
21 nothing. You cheat, you rig. You kill democracy  
22 in the process. Because democracy may bend, but  
23 here in California, it will not break. Not on  
24 our watch. Not on this floor, not in this state.  
25 Sisas Puesta, I respectfully ask for your. I  
vote. Thank you, Assemblymember Mark Gonzalez.

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1 Assemblymember Banta, you are recognized.

2 MEMBER BANTA: Thank you. Mr. Speaker and  
3 members, I rise today on behalf of the  
4 Beautiful people of 8018 of Oakland, Alameda  
5 and Emeryville, and as a proud co author of  
6 AC88, which would allow each and every  
7 Californian the opportunity to weigh in on our  
8 very future. The President and the  
9 Congressional majority have been so focused on  
10 implementing the deeply unpopular policies of  
11 Project 2025 that they forgot about the will  
12 and needs of the people that they serve. Since  
13 the policies of the federal administration and  
14 that majority are so incredibly unpopular, they  
15 decided they needed to rewrite the rules to  
16 win. From Texas to Florida to Indiana, this  
17 administration is pressuring governors to  
18 create new red districts to silence Americans  
19 nationwide. ACA 8 is a direct response to the  
20 life threatening policies that Trump and this  
21 majority Congress have taken. And this AC8 is  
22 our opportunity, the people's opportunity to  
23 empower Californians to neutralize that threat.  
24 Californians are witnessing for the firsthand  
25 the very devastating effects of this  
presidency. That's why we must treat this like

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1 the emergency that it is now. Illness and  
2 suffering have no party preference. And the  
3 lives of people in these districts are our  
4 collective responsibility. So I want to remind  
5 you, as chair of the Assembly Health Committee,  
6 what is at stake. Just this week, our  
7 committee has gotten to hear from the public,  
8 from our agencies, from health care facilities  
9 across the state, from our advocates, what HR1  
10 Trump's big ugly bill will have, what kind of  
11 impact that will have, how it will ensure that  
12 \$900 billion in Medicaid funding to pay for tax  
13 breaks for the ultra wealthy. How these tax  
14 cuts will take care of out of reach, take care,  
15 out of reach of many of our seniors, children  
16 and families. How over 3 million Californians  
17 could lose their medical coverage under the new  
18 Republican provisions passed. How over 100  
19 Planned Parenthood clinics across the state may  
20 be forced to close their doors, robbing 22,000  
21 people a month, a month of reproductive care,  
22 STI testing, cancer screenings of women's  
23 health care, and put out of reach for decades,  
24 for the first time, over 1 million Californians  
25 who rely on those services annually. Let's be  
reminded of the fact that our hospitals are

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1 rural hospitals as well. Kern Valley  
2 Healthcare District, Oroville Hospital,  
3 Fairchild Medical center, and the countless  
4 other healthcare facilities that are scraping  
5 by as the Trump cuts away at crucial funding  
6 for them. How this impacts every single one of  
7 our health care systems, decimating our ability  
8 to provide care for millions of Californians.  
9 So when we talk about what is at stake today,  
10 what is at stake is the very lives of our  
11 constituents. We cannot be mistaken about  
12 that. So today we must ensure that every  
13 Californian has the ability to be protected, to  
14 be represented in Congress, and to continue to  
15 stand up against the attacks on our democracy  
16 wherever they may rise. And I just have to say  
17 this as a woman, the never ending executive  
18 orders, the insistence on basically taking us  
19 back to a time when women have no voice, when  
20 our people have not the ability to love who  
21 they want to love and marry who they want to  
22 marry and have that be recognized and be able  
23 to have the care that they need, whether that  
24 be abortion care or basic health care. That is  
25 the world that this majority Congress is trying  
to turn us back to. And I absolutely refuse to

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1 stand here on this green carpet and let  
2 Congress and this Trump administration do that  
3 to us, do that to Californians, do that to this  
4 country. So make no mistake. We are taking  
5 these actions because we are in unprecedented  
6 times.

7 MR. SPEAKER: 30 seconds.

8 MEMBER BANTA: Absolutely. And we must  
9 take protective action with that. I  
10 respectfully ask for your. I vote on ACA 8.

11 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember  
12 Banta. Assemblymember Di Maio, you are  
13 recognized.

14 MEMBER DI MAIO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
15 Gavin Newsom's corrupt redistricting scheme is  
16 worse than snake oil. It's arsenic to our  
17 democracy. You stand here, he's out there  
18 pontificating that in order to save democracy, we  
19 must destroy it. In order to empower the people,  
20 we must silence them and strip power from the  
21 Citizens Redistricting Committee. No one is  
22 going to fall for this. The voters want citizens  
23 to draw the lines, not politicians. You sit here  
24 and say, let the voters decide. They have  
25 already decided in 2010 over your objection, over  
the political class's objection. They gathered

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1 signatures and they put an initiative on the  
2 ballot that said, enough is enough. No more  
3 gerrymandering. They saw the ill that  
4 gerrymandering represents to our democracy. They  
5 saw the corruption. They saw the lack of  
6 transparency. They saw the bribery, the vote  
7 rigging, politicians carving out communities,  
8 silencing voices. And they said, enough. No  
9 more gerrymandering. In California, our voters  
10 are just. Well, they're more advanced than other  
11 states voters. They got it right a lot earlier.  
12 They gave us a gold standard in the Citizens  
13 Redistricting Commission. And what you're doing  
14 is saying, no, we don't care what they said in  
15 2010. We are not listening to them. What they  
16 voted for, to strip this body of the power that  
17 you are now apparently exercising in violation of  
18 the state constitution. The fact that we're even  
19 talking about redistricting on this floor today  
20 is a violation of the oath to uphold the state  
21 constitution. The fact that we're voting on a  
22 map today purportedly drawn up by the  
23 legislature, it's in violation of Article 21.  
24 You don't possess the authority to do this.

25 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: The voters already  
decided and took you..

1 MR. SPEAKER: Out of the process. But here  
2 we are today. Here we are today violating the  
3 state constitution by even voting on these three  
4 items. You know what we've witnessed in the last  
5 three weeks? This circus is exactly underscoring  
6 the wisdom of the voters in 2010. Let me go  
7 through the differences between what they created  
8 with the independent citizen redistricting  
9 commission and what all of you have shown you're  
10 capable of in the last three weeks. Citizens  
11 draw the map under the citizens redistricting  
12 process. Under this process, politicians are  
13 manipulating the lines under the redistricting  
14 commission that the citizens created. All of  
15 their meetings are open meetings. Under their  
16 rules, the commissioners are barred from having  
17 any conversation ex parte. You lawyers in the  
18 room know what that means. You're not allowed to  
19 take proposals or talk about lines or draw maps.  
20 All the map drawing occurs in real time on  
21 camera, in open session. We know that these maps  
22 were drawn behind closed doors by a bunch of  
23 political consultants and yet none of you are  
24 willing to put your names or reveal the names of  
25 who drew the maps. The citizens commission has  
to do it on a nonpartisan basis. You are openly

1 admitting you're doing it for partisan advantage.  
2 Citizens on the Assembly Member DeMaio. Assembly  
3 Member DeMaio, you're out of order. Please do  
4 not impugn the motives of members. Thank you.  
5 Citizens on the redistricting commission are  
6 barred for 10 years for seeking from seeking any  
7 election, county, state or federal. We know that  
8 legislators that are involved in this process are  
9 actively preparing campaigns to run for these  
10 districts. The citizens process created  
11 competitive districts where voters voices are  
12 paramount and determine the outcome of the  
13 election. The maps that you're trying to impose  
14 are not competitive. And in fact, you take rural  
15 voters and you shove them in with urban voters to  
16 dilute their voice. How undemocratic. You want  
17 to talk about stripping people of their voice? I  
18 heard my colleague from Los Angeles and many of  
19 you say we're doing this to protect health care.  
20 30 seconds. We're doing this because California  
21 is losing money. I wish you fought harder to  
22 solve the problems of this state. As hard as  
23 you're fighting for some of these congressional  
24 districts for yourself and your colleagues. I  
25 wish you would fight to actually solve real  
problems happening here in California that

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1 actually matters. Look, the voters are  
2 ultimately going to be forced to decide this  
3 again. I think that once they understand what's  
4 going on, they will vote you down. Now, I know  
5 you're trying your hardest with a dishonest  
6 ballot title. Thank you, Assemblymember. To  
7 deprive them of a Fair office. Assemblymember  
8 DeMaio.

9 MEMBER DEMAIO: Thank you, Assemblymember  
10 Summit. Member Schultz, state your point of  
11 order. Yes, I would strongly encourage my  
12 colleague to adhere to the rules of this body. I  
13 have a copy of those rules if you'd like to Read  
14 it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.  
15 Assembly Member Schultz. Point is well taken.  
16 Assembly Member Bryan, you are recognized.

17 MEMBER BRYAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and  
18 colleagues, I rise in strong support of ACA 8.  
19 And like at least 2/3 of you in this room, I read  
20 the constitutional amendment which makes it very  
21 clear that we are not approving any maps in this  
22 body. We are giving the voters the decision.  
23 Something that isn't happening in Texas. And  
24 even doing that was something we had to debate  
25 fiercely. California's responsibility to  
Californians and Californians responsibility to

1 this country. We didn't want to be in this  
2 situation. The authoritarian in the White House  
3 put us in this situation when he used House  
4 Republicans in Texas to disenfranchise vulnerable  
5 people. After those maps in Texas are approved.  
6 A Latino voice in Texas is worth one third of the  
7 representation as a white voice. A black voter  
8 in Texas is worth one fifth of the representation  
9 of a white voter in Texas. I didn't say three  
10 fifths. There was no compromise. I said one  
11 fifth. That is the kind of gerrymandering, that  
12 is the kind of theft that they are perpetuating.  
13 And we can't just sit by and let it happen. We  
14 won't just sit by and let it happen. But that  
15 doesn't mean we lose ourselves. That's why when  
16 I was chair of the Elections Committee, I  
17 authored an update to the Fair Maps act that  
18 prevented incumbency from being a consideration  
19 in map drawing. And every single Republican on  
20 this floor voted against it. That's why I  
21 authored legislation calling for independent  
22 redistricting commissions on school boards and  
23 counties and special districts all throughout the  
24 state. And every Republican in this House voted  
25 against it. How convenient to switch your tone  
when you are now on the line. When we are

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1 stepping up and speaking the way Californians  
2 deserve for us to stand up and fight. Because we  
3 are tired of of being the punching bag of this  
4 country. When we freely give. When North  
5 Carolina is on fire, we show up. When a  
6 hurricane hits Florida, we show up. When Texas  
7 is flooding, we show up. We don't wait for  
8 Canada and Mexico to show up first like Texas did  
9 supporting Los Angeles this year, we come  
10 immediately. When we pay \$80 billion more in  
11 federal taxes than we get back, we don't  
12 complain. We know our role is to support others.  
13 And when the biggest disaster to ever hit our  
14 state hits and we ask for a portion of our own  
15 dollars back and you withhold it, we have to  
16 change our tone. We have to step up. Because  
17 your silence is deafening. When they took health  
18 care and food and veterans assistance and they  
19 made it harder for students to go to college and  
20 they put trillions of dollars in national debt.  
21 And you said nothing. That forced us to step  
22 into the void when they held our number one  
23 public university hostage for a billion dollars  
24 of California tax dollars. And you have said  
25 nothing. We had to step into that void. You  
talk about fighting fire with fire and how we

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1 shouldn't do that, while simultaneously a member  
2 of your own caucus just yesterday asked the  
3 Department of Justice and Pam Biondi to  
4 investigate us criminally. I took that  
5 personally that you didn't say anything. We are  
6 not just going to sit by and let our democracy  
7 crumble here in California. We're standing on  
8 business. And I respectfully ask for your I vote  
9 Assemblymember Bryan. Assemblymember Gibson, you  
10 are recognized.

11 MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you very much, Mr.  
12 Speaker. That was a mic drop. I wasn't going to  
13 say anything, but two of my colleagues just said  
14 something about being silent that caused me to  
15 reflect on what I said on this floor over the 11  
16 years that I've been on this floor. And let me  
17 just say, and just repeat what I said since I've  
18 been on this green carpet from Dr. Martin Luther  
19 King Jr. Life begins in life. Life begins the  
20 moment you start being silent about the things  
21 that matter. In the end, you will not remember  
22 the words of your enemies, but the silence of  
23 your friends. So being on this floor today, I  
24 cannot sit by and be silent on the things that  
25 matter. This is a defining moment in history in  
California. So I know we referenced our governor

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1 multiple times on this floor, but I am proud of  
2 Gavin Newsom, who had the courage to stand up and  
3 be bold when a lot of governors refuse to stand  
4 up and be bold to stand up and let California to  
5 stand up and be bold and be courageous in this  
6 moment, saving democracy. Understand this, that  
7 our democracy in the United States is on life  
8 support right now. And it takes courage, courage  
9 to stand up and be counted. We are in a defining  
10 moment in America. And I am so proud to be a  
11 member of the California state legislature right  
12 now that no other state is being. Is standing up  
13 and being counted. When this president, I am  
14 embarrassed. I am embarrassed to even call him  
15 president. Picking on the most vulnerable people  
16 among us, sending in ice ages to snatch our  
17 students wearing masks. That's what happened in  
18 third world countries. How can we not stand up  
19 and do what we're doing? It's about a third  
20 term. Doing something that no other president  
21 dared to do. It's about taking back. It's about  
22 changing the Constitution of the United States of  
23 America and make no mistake about it, they didn't  
24 hide what they were trying to do. Right now,  
25 it's about Project 2025. And it's been said time  
and time again, if California do not do this, we

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1 are just handing over the Constitution of the  
2 United States of America. And it started with  
3 the United States Supreme Court. It is about our  
4 human rights. So to my colleague who's not here,  
5 who talks about the phone calls that he received  
6 and it's about him coming to this country, well,  
7 it's about the little old ladies who fought in  
8 the 60s and the 50s in order to get human rights,  
9 civil rights, women's rights, LGBTQ rights in  
10 this country, who can right now be taken away  
11 from us in this country, in the United States of  
12 America. It's about the next generation that we  
13 may not even have any black people serving in  
14 office to have representation. It's about 10  
15 African American members of Congress that could  
16 be wiped away in Congress if we don't stand up  
17 and be counted. And California stands in the way  
18 of that happening. So we cannot afford not to do  
19 anything. So I'm proud of Speaker Revis standing  
20 up and being counted and being bold and being in  
21 this time, making sure that California is  
22 counted. It's about making sure that, that we  
23 stand in the way of this man and his power. So,  
24 yes, it's about ACA 8. It's about us walking out  
25 of this room today and holding our head up high  
for the next generation. 30 seconds. We can

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1 make a difference, and we shall make a  
2 difference, making sure that we save the  
3 democracy for not only for the next generations  
4 who will sit in this seat, stand on this floor,  
5 but it's about our grandchildren and the legacy  
6 that we will leave behind. So I'm asking for the  
7 54 courageous Democrats because we already know  
8 what the other side won't do with a strong I  
9 vote. Thank you, Assemblymember Gibson,  
10 Assemblymember Dixon, you are recognized.

11 MEMBER DIXON: Well, a lot has been said.  
12 It's been a very emotional morning, I think, to  
13 bring the temperature down. I'm struck by what  
14 we're trying to do today with HC8, and I  
15 respectfully am opposed to it. A lot of things I  
16 was going to say have already been said just to  
17 remind everyone, the independent, and thanks to  
18 your father, Mr. Speaker, the best words were  
19 said about the independence of a citizen driven  
20 committee to decide to draw the lines of the  
21 vote. So all this talk today about democracy  
22 does not do honor to Congressman or state Senator  
23 Lowenthal and Congressman Lowenthal, who fought  
24 for the rights of the people to have a voice in  
25 our democracy. What strikes me is in yesterday,  
if I may read a portion of an editorial on the

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1 Wall Street Journal, Mr. Speaker.

2 MR. SPEAKER: Without objection.

3 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: I'm a real  
4 practical, pragmatic person, so I'm seeing where  
5 problems happen and how we can fix problems. So.  
6 So the supermajority in this legislature is  
7 speaking in loud terms, often rude, about  
8 democracy. You have democracy in your hands.  
9 You are in the super majority. It's the minority  
10 that is concerned about democracy and the signs  
11 of a lack of democracy. When commissions are  
12 being ignored, the voters are being ignored, the  
13 people are being ignored, the people who. Who  
14 want their voices heard in an independent way.  
15 Yesterday's Wall Street Journal said, and I  
16 quote, the real House. This is the House of  
17 Representatives, Congress. We were just making  
18 reference to democratic nightmare. This is all  
19 about numbers. Democrats could lose 10 seats in  
20 2030 because voters are fleeing the blue states.  
21 Remind us all, California is a blue state. So  
22 let me give you the numbers. Start with the  
23 numbers. Between 2020 and 2024, California lost  
24 1.4 million people. And where did they go? They  
25 may have gone to Kansas. That is larger than the  
population of Kansas have left California. And

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1 that resulted in 2020 in the loss of four  
2 congressional seats in California. So you're  
3 fighting, the super majority is fighting to  
4 protect seats that you think are going away.  
5 You've already lost them. Why did you already  
6 lose those four seats? And why are you  
7 continuing? Why is the other party continuing?  
8 Why is California losing population? Why is that  
9 affecting California? And the projection is in  
10 2030, California will lose four more seats.

11 MR. SPEAKER: Why?

12 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: And also an  
13 additional fact I did not know. Between 2020 and  
14 2024, California's population under the age of 18  
15 shrank by 523,000 people. We have to ask  
16 ourselves, why are people leaving California?  
17 It's because of laws that have been enacted in  
18 this state in the last 15 years that have driven  
19 out business, that driven out people for reasons  
20 related to education, the quality of education,  
21 quality of safety in our communities. They have  
22 left the state. They're going to other states,  
23 whether it's Texas, whether it's Ohio, whether  
24 it's Florida, whether it's Nevada, they're going  
25 to other states because they do not like the  
policies that are coming out of this state. So

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1 until California and its representatives in this  
2 body begin to realize what is not connecting with  
3 the laws that are being passed and the people,  
4 the voters of California, all this histrionics  
5 today, all this, the sky is falling. Chicken  
6 Little. Democracy is failing.

7 MR. SPEAKER: 30 seconds.

8 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Democracy is Being  
9 saved by people who realize it's not being  
10 represented by, by the super majorities that have  
11 been holding power in this state for the last 10  
12 or 15 years. Look at our policy. But we can  
13 find \$250 million for a special election when  
14 health care, when community safety, Prop 36,  
15 wildfire management wiped off out of the budget.  
16 But \$250 million magically appears to protect  
17 democracy. Democracy starts here. Keep people  
18 in California, keep our businesses in California,  
19 keep our families in California, and you know  
20 what? You'll have more votes probably, and more  
21 congressional representation.

22 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember  
23 Dixon.

24 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Thank you very  
25 much.

MR. SPEAKER: Assemblymember Jackson, you are

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1 recognized.

2 MEMBER JACKSON: Thank you very much. Mr.  
3 Speaker. Permission to have a prop. Mr.  
4 Jackson, we are not going to allow props today.  
5 Not a problem. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to rise  
6 because it's hard to have a thorough discussion  
7 or debate in which today has been a very good  
8 debate. When we talk about the role of  
9 democracy, it simply cannot happen without a real  
10 consideration and a real review of our U.S.  
11 constitution and the Federalist Papers themselves  
12 to understand the real wisdom of our founders and  
13 just how much thought they put into all the  
14 different checks and balances that were necessary  
15 to ensure that this democracy can hold. And one  
16 of those things is found in the Federalist Papers  
17 number 10, where Madison specifically talks about  
18 the roles of the state. And over 200 years ago,  
19 Madison said that there will be a time where a  
20 fractious leader will emerge and that fractious  
21 leader will begin to do things to consolidate  
22 power. There will be a time when the executive  
23 and the legislative and the judiciary fail their  
24 constitutional responsibility to properly provide  
25 a check and balance. So Madison says, therefore  
is now up to the states to provide yet another

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1 stopgap to begin to hold on to slow down this  
2 fractious movement until the next election cycle.  
3 So there is something special that we are doing  
4 today. There is something very constitutional  
5 that we are doing today to ensure that we do our  
6 part of having the most fair election process as  
7 possible given the circumstances of the nation.  
8 And then in the Federalist Papers number 16,  
9 Hamilton says that at the end of the day, when  
10 our three branches of government may fail, even  
11 the actions of states may fail. But Hamilton  
12 says something beautiful. He says when it all  
13 else fails, that the number one protector of our  
14 democracy he calls the natural guardians. And  
15 those natural guardians are the people  
16 themselves. And so an assembly constitutional  
17 amendment says the legislature has a  
18 recommendation for you natural guardians that we  
19 believe is important enough for you to consider.  
20 But at the end of the day, this democracy is not  
21 ours. We are only your representatives. At the  
22 end of the day, the democracy and the  
23 preservation of this democracy lies in your  
24 hands. 30 seconds. Therefore, there's nothing  
25 more democratic, there is nothing more  
constitutional, there is nothing that fulfills

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1 both the letter and the spirit of our democracy  
2 than to allow the people of California to make  
3 the final say. I respectfully asked for an I  
4 vote. Assemblymember Jackson, Assemblymember  
5 Bennett, you are recognized.

6 MEMBER BENNETT: Thank you very much, Mr.  
7 Speaker. There have been many powerful, logical,  
8 cogent arguments made today. And so I hope my  
9 humble comments can just add a little bit. I  
10 would like to direct my comments to those  
11 democratic advocates in our state who are  
12 questioning whether this is the right move for us  
13 to make, who are wondering whether this political  
14 effort to counter Texas is the appropriate thing.  
15 But I'd like to say to them, let's put this  
16 moment in national perspective, let's put it in  
17 global perspective, let's put it in historical  
18 perspective, and that is that there's always been  
19 a fundamental question, how do you transfer  
20 power? How do governments transfer power? And  
21 it can be done by violent brute force or it can  
22 be done by democratic actions. And our founding  
23 fathers, to their great credit, and I wish there  
24 were mothers there also, right, they sent us down  
25 on a path where we transfer power peacefully by  
following certain democratic rules and norms as

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1 we move on. And following those rules has been  
2 essential for us as we move. But today, in the  
3 world, in this country and in the world, we have  
4 autocrats that are desperately trying to  
5 consolidate their power by weakening democracy,  
6 by changing the rules of the game. And so to my  
7 friends out there that are questioning whether  
8 this is the right move, I want to say autocrats  
9 are counting on you to stand by and say, you  
10 know, I like the old rules. I want to play by  
11 the old rules. I don't like the new rules. And  
12 they're counting on you to do that while they  
13 consolidate power with their new rules. And it's  
14 a false scenario to say that we can defeat that,  
15 that we can win by holding onto the old rules  
16 while somebody consolidates power. A few decades  
17 ago, Russians had a democracy, but Russians lost  
18 that democracy as autocrats and the oligarchs  
19 consolidated power. They only have to get enough  
20 to be at a tipping point. And now, today, and I  
21 want to compliment my colleague across the aisle  
22 who admitted that what Texas is doing is wrong.  
23 I really admire that. But turning the other  
24 cheek is not the way to fight this particular  
25 situation. Russians turn the other cheek and  
they no longer have the ability to fight back.

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1 Today, Texas is changing the rules in a way that  
2 weakens California's ability to have input on who  
3 controls the vast powers of the federal  
4 government. If Californians don't take this  
5 opportunity to block Texas's action, we come one  
6 step closer to losing our ability to block the  
7 autocrats and the oligarchs out there. We come  
8 one step closer to becoming a country dominated  
9 by those oligarchs. One step closer to letting  
10 intimidation, deceit, and false outrage that's  
11 paid for by the oligarchs with media outlets that  
12 put daily false outrage that appeals and confuses  
13 the voters of the United States. And we come one  
14 step closer to that kind of society if we don't  
15 take this very important step to counter this.  
16 Because once you lose, once you cross that  
17 critical threshold, you may never be able to go  
18 back to what we had. So, to my dear friends that  
19 are out there that have contacted me and say, I  
20 don't know, I hope you will remember and keep in  
21 mind the historical moment that this is here  
22 today. 30 seconds. Thank you very much. I'll  
23 cede my 30 seconds and respectfully ask for the.  
24 I vote on AC8. Thank you. Thank you, Mr.  
25 Bennett. Members, the drilling that you hear is  
not inside your head. It's actually taking place

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1 in the construction. I want to remind all  
2 members that is not picked up on your  
3 microphones. Please continue. Assemblymember El  
4 Hawari, you are recognized.

5 EL HAWARI: Good morning, Mr. Speaker and  
6 members. I rise in support of ACA 8 because the  
7 only reason we're here today is Donald Trump.  
8 And Republicans are terrified of voters. They  
9 know people aren't buying their lies, so they're  
10 trying to rig the rules and cheat the game. At  
11 the same time, Trump has weaponized immigration  
12 to create fear. And what did Republicans in  
13 Washington do? They responded by giving ICE more  
14 money to tear even more families apart. In my  
15 district, that means neighbors who are being  
16 racially profiled, American citizens who are  
17 picked up by federal agents just for the color of  
18 their skin. It means families who are too scared  
19 to leave their homes. Families like my own, my  
20 Guatemalan mother and my Mexican stepfather, both  
21 American citizens who are afraid to leave their  
22 home because this is not about democracy. It's  
23 about intimidation and it's unconstitutional.  
24 And now Trump is repeating some of the ugliest  
25 times in our nation's history. He wants a census  
that excludes undocumented immigrants, the same

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1 way they tried to ensure that enslaved people  
2 were not fully counted back when they first  
3 created the Constitution. And as if that were  
4 not enough, he's also pushing to cancel mail in  
5 ballots, silencing millions of voters who depend  
6 on their right to vote. To those on the other  
7 side, explain how silencing voters is the same  
8 thing as protecting them. Or is it just about  
9 protecting your power at the federal level? So  
10 when Republicans stand up here talking about  
11 transparency or protecting voters, don't be  
12 fooled. The truth is, the crisis started in a  
13 Republican state, Texas lit a match, and  
14 California is simply leveling the playing field  
15 instead of waiting until Abbott and Trump burn  
16 our own house down. ACA 8 does not give us an  
17 advantage. It gives us fairness. And let's not  
18 forget, this is going to the voters. So if you  
19 are opposing this, you. You are siding with  
20 hypocrisy and voter suppression because you want  
21 to talk about what's unconstitutional. You only  
22 want to talk about what's unconstitutional when  
23 it comes to what you believe is happening in  
24 California. But when it's the United States of  
25 America, you're okay with Trump mandering and  
Trump pandering. I urge an I vote. Thank you.

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1 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember El  
2 Hawari. Assemblymember Gabriel, you are  
3 recognized.

4 MEMBER GABRIEL: Thank you very much, Mr.  
5 Speaker. Colleagues, I rise today with sadness  
6 and also with conviction. And I think it's  
7 important, as many of our colleagues have said,  
8 that we take a moment and step back and ask  
9 ourselves, how did we arrive at this moment? And  
10 I see it as I often do, through my lens as a  
11 parent, as a father of young kids, and I will  
12 tell you, everyone who has had the blessing of  
13 being a parent understands what is going on here.  
14 Start playing a card game with my five year old.  
15 He feels like it isn't going his way. He feels  
16 like he might lose. And so he starts to change  
17 the rules. And that's what we have, that is  
18 transparently what is happening with this  
19 president. He understands that his policies are  
20 not popular. He understands that people do not  
21 want him to continue to be able to be unchecked  
22 in Washington. And so rather than change his  
23 policies or play by the rules, he's trying to  
24 change the rules. And they are moving forward  
25 and changing the rules in the most undemocratic  
fashion. And that has put those of us in

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1 California in a very difficult position. How do  
2 we respond? What do we do in this moment? And  
3 what we have from our colleagues on the other  
4 side of the aisle is saying, close your eyes. Be  
5 willfully blind. Ignore what is happening in the  
6 rest of the country, as if we in California are  
7 immune to that. Stand down. Do nothing  
8 unilaterally, surrender. But to me, there are  
9 deep moral implications to that unilateral  
10 Surrender. There are real impacts to our people,  
11 to, to our population, to our planet and to our  
12 democracy. And so there are many of us that feel  
13 that California cannot stand idly by in this  
14 moment, will not stand idly by in this moment.  
15 We owe it to our children to stand up and be  
16 counted. And so what do we do when we have these  
17 two arguments, Those who say California should do  
18 nothing, and those who say California should  
19 stand up and fight back. We do what is  
20 fundamentally the most democratic thing that we  
21 can do. We asked the people of the state of  
22 California to weigh in on that. Our colleagues  
23 have sat here and lectured us about what the  
24 people want. They have sat here and told us,  
25 they talked to us repeatedly about democracy.  
Well, good. Let's let democracy decide. The one

1 argument here to which they cannot rebut and will  
2 never be able to rebut is that the ultimate  
3 decision here rests with the people of the state  
4 of California. Donald Trump will not decide  
5 this. Gavin Newsom will not decide this.  
6 Congress will not decide this. This legislature  
7 will not decide this. The people of the state of  
8 California will get to decide what they want to  
9 do at this pivotal moment in history. And that,  
10 to me, is what makes this the right approach. So  
11 we heard from our colleague from Westminster. He  
12 said, listen to the people. I agree. Let's  
13 listen to the people. Let's let the people vote.  
14 Let's let the people have their moment to make  
15 this decision. They have the wisdom, they have  
16 the judgment. And I am confident that they will  
17 want to stand up and fight back to protect our  
18 democracy. And with that, and in the spirit of  
19 giving our citizens and our voters the  
20 opportunity to make this consequential decision,  
21 respectfully request an I vote on ACA 8. Thank  
22 you, Assemblymember Gabriel, Assemblymember  
23 Salache, you are recognized.

24 MEMBER SALACHE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker,  
25 members and to everyone watching out there,  
Americans, international community. This is not

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1 a Republican, Democrat or independent issue.  
2 This is an American issue. People have died,  
3 people have suffered to save democracy. I assure  
4 you that if today we took a vote in this same  
5 floor and that board, that we all like to watch  
6 the outcomes of the votes, if we put a vote about  
7 the Independent commission taking their action  
8 every 10 years, it would be a unanimous vote.  
9 Because not only have the Republicans, but  
10 Democrats have acknowledged that, that that's the  
11 way to go. I agree. It's the golden standard  
12 that California has set for the nation. And as  
13 they say, as California goes, so does the nation.  
14 So I couldn't agree with you more that we have to  
15 protect that in California for The sake of not  
16 only Californians, but for America. But, ladies  
17 and gentlemen, and to all our communities, our  
18 LGBT community, our immigrant community, we have  
19 to raise our voices for Californians and for  
20 America today. Now, let's not forget that in  
21 this action, the commission will continue doing  
22 the work so that we don't have to take any more  
23 votes, that they will continue doing the work  
24 after the 2030 process. This is a temporary  
25 approach to react to what's happening with other  
states. And so I agree with the minority leader.

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1 The president is wrong on this one, and Texas is  
2 wrong on this one. I agree with him  
3 wholeheartedly. And that's why I am proud, as I  
4 have had some concerns about this process, that  
5 California will continue to have its independent  
6 commission process. But you see, ladies and  
7 gentlemen, and everyone here today, I was sent to  
8 Sacramento to represent almost 500,000  
9 constituents. I proudly represent a high  
10 immigrant, undocumented community. Con mucho  
11 ruyo y con mucho corazon. I'm here representing  
12 them and being a voice, because just this morning  
13 on Atlantic Boulevard in my city of Linwood, at  
14 the barbershop, there's three ICE agents trying  
15 to force themselves into the barbershop. And  
16 once I'm done, I will happily drop that video for  
17 you to watch. I'll airdrop it so you can all  
18 have it happened this morning in my own  
19 community. The very same people that send me to  
20 represent them, people who look like me, are  
21 being racially profiled and kidnapped on the  
22 streets on the way to work, accessing health care  
23 while taking their kids to school or even going  
24 to church. How disgusting is that? Immigrants  
25 are not the problem. Our diversity makes our  
state and our country strong. California's

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1 immigrant communities are vital part of this  
2 prosperity through all our nation. I will not  
3 sit back and watch ICE kidnap more members of my  
4 community. Our community. I ask all of us that  
5 we temporarily do this for America. People are  
6 watching not only locally, but internationally.  
7 And I bring not only my heart, my voice today to  
8 this Capitol to ensure that the 500,000 people  
9 that I represent in my community of Linwood,  
10 Southgate, Maywood, Huntington Park, Walnut Park,  
11 Lakewood, Bellflower, and Paramount have a voice.  
12 I invite all of you to help protect America.  
13 This is not a Republican, Democrat, or  
14 independent issue. Let's save humanity, let's  
15 save democracy and temporarily respond to this  
16 horrible situation that we're living. And then  
17 California will continue leading the way by  
18 protecting our independent commission and our  
19 independent maps so that all Californians have a  
20 voice. And if some are leaving, we welcome you  
21 back. And those that want to leave other states.  
22 Welcome to California 32nd. We have great  
23 beaches, great parks and of course some of the  
24 best restaurants that our community gets to  
25 offer. Thank you. Let's continue to lead and  
America, we have your back. Gracias. Thank you.

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1 Assembly member Solace, Assembly member

2 Patterson, you are recognized. Great.

3 MEMBER PATTERSON: Thank you. Mr. Speaker,  
4 I'm going to take you up on this unique offer to  
5 talk about political parties. It's not something  
6 I like to do, but some of these comments like  
7 quote unquote dropping to the knees of the  
8 President. What does that mean? I take offense  
9 to that. My grandpa used to say when something  
10 miraculous happened, not bad for swirling gases.  
11 What he was doing was mocking evolution. Piper  
12 wasn't an overly religious man. He loved God and  
13 he loved our nation. Especially as he defended  
14 it in the military for entire career. He was a  
15 man that believed in a higher power. He believed  
16 there were no coincidences these miracles were  
17 divine. Despite thousands and thousands of years  
18 of authoritarian governments, kings, dictators,  
19 it wasn't swirling gases that created our form of  
20 government. And our founders said as much when  
21 they declared us an independent nation. The  
22 Declaration of our Independence proclaims the  
23 people are endowed by their creator and our alien  
24 inalienable rights which are not granted by the  
25 government, they are inherently bestowed upon us.  
I believe as the Founders did in Divine

1 Providence, meaning that I firmly believe any  
2 internal threats to our democracy, whether from  
3 the national level or right here in the chambers  
4 of the California State assembly, that we will be  
5 okay. The Divine Providence will secure  
6 inalienable rights to self determination. And  
7 despite attempts by this body or attempts by the  
8 Governor, from the moment he went unchallenged by  
9 members on this floor, when he exerted so much  
10 power with no Democratic input. What did you do?  
11 Mention me sitting by idly? You sat idly by.  
12 And he chose to close schools. He closed  
13 businesses. And at least partially responsible  
14 for the pain and suffering you see in our  
15 streets. And we continue to see see to this day.  
16 And guess what? To address my colleague from Los  
17 Angeles about Republicans in this body that sat  
18 idly by. I take great offense to that kind of  
19 stuff. Mr. Speaker, when someone talks about  
20 what Republicans here have and haven't done.  
21 Please. Democrats have been in charge of this  
22 state for my entire natural life. I know as  
23 individual legislators, some of you have tried  
24 but you going to talk about sitting idly by as  
25 they say on X lol. Democrats, maybe not as  
individuals, but as a ruling dictator party of

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1 this state for my entire life are sitting idly by  
2 and have effectively done nothing that has  
3 resulted in a better education for our children  
4 has done nothing to effectively address the  
5 people laying in our street just blocks from this  
6 building. These things have gotten worse,  
7 especially since Democrats have taken full  
8 control of every lever of our government right  
9 here in California. I believe in democracy.  
10 Why? Because it's rooted in our fundamental  
11 inalienable right to be free. And you cannot  
12 take that away. And neither can Gavin Newsom.  
13 What this body is likely to do in a few minutes  
14 highlights the flaws of man. Many of you will  
15 vote not to turn the other cheek. You will vote  
16 under your own admission to fight back, to punch  
17 back, to fight fire with fire. I believe at the  
18 end of the day, despite your best efforts to  
19 participate in attempt to erode democracy, we  
20 will be fine. When history looks back,  
21 California will not succeed in its mutual goal of  
22 joining with entrenched partisan Democrats  
23 throughout our nation to throw out democracy in  
24 its fight for fire with fire. Because it cannot  
25 override the fundamental protections our founding  
documents guarantee us. History will not look

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1 proudly on this moment. It will look highly on  
2 potential changes to any map in this state. It's  
3 going to be frowned upon. And it certainly won't  
4 look highly on the partisan gerrymandered maps  
5 here in California. And. And those are the  
6 words from one of the co authors in committee of  
7 this measure. I don't ever want to be lectured  
8 ever again by Democrat anywhere that their  
9 party's the party of democracy. 30 seconds.  
10 Because what you're doing, even by amending this  
11 proposal this morning without any input, is  
12 showing you are no better. Democracy is flawed.  
13 Mankind is flawed. The measure is flawed and you  
14 know it. How many people in this body testified  
15 by Texas, the public got to know that you struck  
16 out the language this morning. I didn't even  
17 know it till I walked in the building. To even  
18 talk about Texas. No matter what Texas does, if  
19 they do nothing, you are asking the people to  
20 erode their rights. Thank you, Assembly. Me? I  
21 asked for a no vote. Thank you, Assembly Member  
22 Patterson, Assembly Member Schultz, you are  
23 recognized.

24 MEMBER SHULTZ: Thank you very much. Mr.  
25 Speaker. Permission to read that. Objection.  
The people will save their government if the

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1 government itself will allow them. You know,  
2 I've thought as I've sat here, I want to first of  
3 all mention to my colleague from Lancaster,  
4 sorry, from Palmdale, I appreciated your comments  
5 at the beginning, sir. I didn't raise my mic  
6 right away. I wanted to listen. I wanted to  
7 listen to my colleagues speaking in favor of ACA  
8 8. I wanted to listen to some of you who have  
9 concerns about ACA 8. I also want to thank our  
10 esteemed minority leader. We don't agree on  
11 much, but I appreciate your words today, sir.  
12 The president is wrong. He is wrong to be doing  
13 what he's doing. And your point about two wrongs  
14 not making a right and burning the entire House  
15 down? There's a lot of truth in that statement.  
16 I agree with you, sir. And yet over the last  
17 week, I've struggled with this issue. I have  
18 consulted the Good Book. I've spent time in  
19 thought and prayer at the cathedral. I've been  
20 trying to find the right answer on this issue.  
21 And the remarkable thing is, as I sat here on  
22 this floor listening and really giving thought to  
23 what we're being asked to do, it was this  
24 portrait that hangs above us that really centered  
25 my thoughts. The people will save the  
government. They will save themselves if the

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1 government simply allows them to do so. The  
2 words of probably one of the greatest presidents  
3 we ever had, a portrait that hangs over our  
4 chamber. A man who, with General Order 141, had  
5 to suspend habeas corpus and take unprecedented  
6 action because of the risks that face the  
7 Republic in an unprecedented time. We're  
8 absolutely in unprecedented times. I bring all  
9 this up to say that I'm not here to stand with  
10 righteous indignation. I'm not here to point  
11 fingers at any of you. But what I can say is the  
12 house is burning. Democracy is at risk. What is  
13 happening in Texas, what is happening across the  
14 country, is fundamentally wrong. I don't believe  
15 the answer to how we save democracy can be  
16 decided among the 119 legislators in our state  
17 capitol. I don't believe the governor alone can  
18 make that answer. What I do believe, though, is  
19 we have to give the people the chance to weigh in  
20 on this matter. And that is exactly what aca8  
21 does. I believe that this question should be  
22 returned to the people. And I'll simply close  
23 with one point. Never in the course of history  
24 and in the state of California or in any state,  
25 have the people been directly given an  
opportunity to vote on a map. I believe that is

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1 democracy in its finest hour. Let the people  
2 respond and tell us how we should fight to  
3 continue saving democracy. I will be voting I  
4 and I encourage everyone to vote aye on aca8.  
5 Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Assemblymember Schultz,  
6 Assembly Member Aarons, you are recognized.

7 MEMBER AARONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
8 Before I give remarks, I just wanted to mention  
9 that I'm a proud co sponsor of ACA 8. So when  
10 the opposition continues their unserious  
11 lawsuits, they know who to direct them towards.  
12 I rise in support of standing up and Defending  
13 the rights of freedoms for all Californians and  
14 Americans. We must take decisive action to stand  
15 up to Donald Trump's unprecedented call for  
16 Republican led states like Texas and Florida to  
17 redraw the Congressional lines and unfairly rig  
18 the 2026 midterm elections for Republican  
19 politicians to benefit. Donald Trump and  
20 Republicans in Congress passed their big ugly  
21 federal budget which is set to obliterate health  
22 care access for millions and already struggling  
23 Californians colleagues, each and every single  
24 one of you in this room, regardless of political  
25 party, have tens of thousands of constituents who  
will lose health care because Donald Trump and

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1 Washington D.C. republicans recently adopted  
2 that budget and Republican Congress members  
3 passed this big ugly federal budget which cuts  
4 hundreds of billions of dollars in funding to  
5 America's health system. Without any alternative  
6 plan to protect health access for anyone, how  
7 will your community's hospitals and health  
8 clinics benefit from the suffering of this  
9 federal budget, the result of massive divestment  
10 of federal dollars in health care? Trump's big  
11 ugly federal budget will indeed result in lives  
12 being lost. Donald Trump and MAGA extremist  
13 Republican politicians will make no plan to  
14 protect health care access for any Californians  
15 or any Americans. MAGA extremist Republicans in  
16 D.C. have decimated our health care in every  
17 corner of the United States for no reason and no  
18 alternative plan just to give tax cuts to their  
19 super wealthy campaign donors and millionaires  
20 like themselves. These Trump cuts will kick poor  
21 people off of their health care but also result  
22 in higher health insurance premium premiums for  
23 all of us because without health insurance we  
24 will have to get, we will have to get care at the  
25 most expensive place and time in whatever  
emergency rooms that are left in our communities.

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1 And now that America now Americans are pissed off  
2 at Republican politicians for obliterating their  
3 access to health care. Trump is leading a  
4 Republican led states like Texas and Florida and  
5 demanding that they exert their state legislative  
6 power to unilaterally redraw their Congressional  
7 districts to make it easier for more Republican  
8 politicians to win Congressional seats. And what  
9 are we to do? We cannot sit by and let Donald  
10 Trump and Republicans rig the next election so  
11 that they cannot be held accountable and have no  
12 chance to be voted out or lose control of  
13 Congress. Heaven forbid they actually are held  
14 accountable by their failed policies in America.  
15 California is honoring our Constitution unlike  
16 Republicans in Texas by defending our liberty and  
17 giving Californians a choice to defend themselves  
18 and against Donald Trump's attacks on our country  
19 and our state. I rise in support and ask all of  
20 my colleagues to join me in fighting back for all  
21 of California regardless of where you represent  
22 and stop the robbing of Californians rights, the  
23 robbing of our liberty and our lives. We must  
24 stop Trump MAGA Republicans steal of our  
25 congressional elections and the desecration of of  
our founding father's dream for a government by

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1 and for the people. I urge all of my colleagues,  
2 all Californians and all Americans to join  
3 California's efforts to defend ourselves against  
4 the rising tide of fascism and authoritarianism  
5 in this country. And I urge your I vote. Thank  
6 you, Assemblymember Ahrens. Assemblymember  
7 Berner, you are recognized.

8 MEMBER BERNER: Thank you. I rise in  
9 support of ACA 8. For this simple, Californians  
10 should be given the right to choose. The right  
11 to choose, to fight partisanship with  
12 partisanship, the right to do something rather  
13 than nothing, and the right to have a voice.  
14 Let's be clear. There's only one reason a  
15 sitting President calls for states to stack  
16 Congress in his favor for five years. When our  
17 grandchildren look back in a few decades, I want  
18 Californians to be able to say that they had a  
19 voice, they did something and they had a choice.  
20 I respectfully urgent I vote on ACA 8.

21 MR. SPEAKER: Assemblymember Berner,  
22 Assemblymember Ransom, you are recognized.

23 MEMBER RANSOM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I  
24 rise today because democracy is on the line.  
25 Freedom is on the line. Liberty and justice is  
on the line. Free and fair elections for all is

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1 on the line today. I don't know about anyone  
2 else, but I was raised to stand up for people who  
3 could not stand up for themselves. We can't just  
4 be bystanders when bullies come to push us  
5 around, especially when people already don't have  
6 a voice. That's what the people elected us to do  
7 and that's what this is all about. We're not  
8 forcing anything down anyone's throat. We are  
9 giving Californians a choice. Do you want to bow  
10 down or do you want to fight back? ACA 8 gives  
11 the voters, the people that we represent, the  
12 decision making power. To those who suddenly  
13 have so much to say. I have to say that I have  
14 been baffled by the silence that we have heard.  
15 It's been very loud. Where was all of the noise  
16 when the President and Congress slashed federal  
17 funding, cut Medicaid, imposed tariffs that hurt  
18 small businesses? Where was the noise? There's  
19 been complicity as the Constitution has been  
20 undermined as partisan gerrymandering. Maps have  
21 been pushed on the people in Texas, which  
22 ultimately affects the entire United States.  
23 Where was all the noise while America was being  
24 hijacked? Today, with all of the objections and  
25 with all of the noise, I'm clearly concerned that  
it is our job to stand up and to speak out? We

1 must ask, can you tell us, please? What I've not  
2 heard is why are we so afraid to give the voters  
3 a choice? What are we so afraid of? And we  
4 should also ask, with all the tears to protect  
5 the president's gerrymandering plan, where were all  
6 the tears for the poor people, the people who  
7 have been silenced? People are suffering and  
8 dying because we need to lead. People are not  
9 leading and that hurts America. So we have a  
10 voice and we have a choice. Do we deny the  
11 citizens a chance to have democracy, freedom,  
12 free and fair elections, and liberty and justice  
13 for all? Like we say when we stand up and we  
14 pledge allegiance to this same flag when we come  
15 into this chamber, this is about citizens that  
16 are being terrorized. When those who are being  
17 bullied need someone to stand up, California is  
18 not going to sit down and be a bystander. If you  
19 want to be taken seriously, you need to be able  
20 to explain to us why you don't want to give this  
21 to the voters. The rules have been changed, and  
22 that means we have to act accordingly. We have a  
23 choice. Do we want to allow the entire nation to  
24 be disenfranchised, or do we ask the citizens of  
25 California to lock arms with us and to march  
forward to save democracy in the world where the

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1 US has now become an authoritarian government and  
2 has adopted the strategies of dictators to rig a  
3 system? I say that it's our duty to give it to  
4 the voters so that we can have a chance to fight  
5 back on behalf of the citizens of the United  
6 States. And I respectfully ask for your. I  
7 vote.

8 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember  
9 Ransom. Assemblymember Avila Farias, you are  
10 recognized.

11 MEMBER FARIAS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I  
12 rise as a proud co author of ACA 8. For years,  
13 Trump's administration has targeted our state,  
14 holding California wildfire and disaster relief,  
15 hostage taking food out of the family's mouths by  
16 cutting SNAP benefits, terrorizing immigrant  
17 communities with brutal raids and no due process,  
18 and kidnapping our community members, imposing  
19 tariffs that have punished the working families.  
20 And now Trump and his allies, his domestic  
21 terrorists, are trying to dismantle democracy  
22 with California's redistricting proposal. We're  
23 not racing to the bottom. We're drawing the  
24 line. While Republican led states rampartisan  
25 maps in secret, we're doing the opposite. Voters  
made it clear they want independent

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1     redistricting, not partisan power grabs. For  
2     those who know me, I have dedicated much of my  
3     public service to protecting the right to vote  
4     and to ensure that historically disadvantaged  
5     communities enjoy a voice at the TABLE Every  
6     state should have an independent redistricting  
7     commission. And guess what? This measure, we  
8     still do. But let's be clear. We're also  
9     defending against the coordinating power grab.  
10    This isn't politics as usual. This is an  
11    emergency. This is an emergency for our state.  
12    This is an emergency for our country. It's an  
13    emergency to protect our democracy. California  
14    will always defend the right to vote. And we  
15    will. And the will of the people. Unlike Texas,  
16    we won't be silenced. That voice. We will send  
17    the issue to the ballot box where it belongs.  
18    California voters will see maps. California  
19    voters will decide. California will not back  
20    down. We will protect our vote, our voice and  
21    our values. Thank you.

22           MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember Avila  
23    Farias. Assemblymember Michelle Rodriguez, you  
24    are recognized.

25           MEMBER RODRIQUEZ: Mr. Speaker, I wasn't  
going to talk on this bill today and I'm still

1 not. We just needed a little break and Get our  
2 minds on something else.

3 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember  
4 Rodriguez. Assemblymember Davies, you are  
5 recognized.

6 MEMBER DAVIES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
7 Members, I just have a simple question for you.  
8 In your hearts, do you honestly believe this aca8  
9 is the right thing to do? For a second, let's  
10 ignore the partisan noise. I think we can all  
11 agree gerrymandering anywhere is wrong. It's not  
12 hard or controversial to say that. Imagine what  
13 we could fund with \$235 million.

14 MR. SPEAKER: We could use pardon decorum in  
15 the chamber, please. Let's respect the speaker.

16 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Thank you, Mr.  
17 Speaker. We could use this money to help with  
18 the state's insurance crisis or pay raises for  
19 first responders. Members, let me remind you  
20 that our independent redistricting commission  
21 held 196 public meetings, had 3,800 public  
22 comments and received 32,000 written submissions.  
23 Compare that to the process where Californians  
24 had four days to view the public maps and submit  
25 comments through a portal and had one assembly  
hearing to voice their support and opposition.

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1 That wasn't even put into record. Has anyone in  
2 this chamber ever seen the 16,000 written  
3 comments we have supposedly received on this  
4 issue? Anyone? Need I remind you that voters  
5 approved the commission drawing congressional  
6 districts via Prop 20 with 61% of the votes.  
7 Californians gave our government a mandate that  
8 it should be everyday citizens who will be given  
9 the power to draw fair maps using these six  
10 principles. Population equality, compliance with  
11 Federal Voting Rights act, geography and geodic  
12 geographic integrity and geographic compactness.  
13 And lastly to nest state Senate and Assembly  
14 districts into compact areas. Democrats,  
15 Republicans and Independents came together  
16 believed politicians should not draw their own  
17 maps. On a personal note, let me tell you how  
18 ACA 8 will affect Assembly District 74. This  
19 proposal splits my assembly district into three  
20 congressional districts and divides communities  
21 of interest and goes against the principles of  
22 geographic integrity. That's absurd.  
23 Communities of interest are supposed to remain  
24 together. What does a desert community have in  
25 common with a suburban city? You have chosen to  
stifle the voices of California. You say you

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1 know what is best. Well, I believe that their  
2 voices matter. I hear. Listen. Listen to the  
3 people. Well, that's what I do. I listen to the  
4 people. It's not my agenda, it's their agenda.  
5 Through lcms, I sent out a five question poll.  
6 My district is the most purple and balanced  
7 district in the state. So you should be all  
8 interested in these results. The first question  
9 that was asked stated, currently California has  
10 an independent citizens redistricting commission  
11 that draws election district maps. Do you think  
12 redistricting should be done by an independent  
13 commission? The legislature are unsure. These  
14 answers might surprise you. 65% of Democrats  
15 favored an independent commission, 96% of  
16 Republicans favored an independent commission,  
17 and 92% of independents favored an independent  
18 commission. The second question that was asked  
19 stated, how important is it to that the  
20 redistricting division be made through a process  
21 that is open to the public and allows for  
22 community input? 78% of Democrats said very  
23 important, 97% of Republicans said very  
24 important, and 96% of independents said very  
25 important. At the beginning of this year and  
session, it was very clear what the concerns of

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1 Californians were. 30 seconds they needed from  
2 this legislature. I think everyone agreed the  
3 people know what's right and what's wrong. And  
4 in my district they have responded and told me,  
5 Mr. Speaker, question to.

6 MR. SPEAKER: The author without objection.  
7 Your time is about to elapse.

8 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Yep, just finish up  
9 here. My final question to the author is did you  
10 or do you know anyone that signed an NDA? Thank  
11 you.

12 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, madam. Thank you,  
13 Ms. Davies. Assemblymember Rogers, you are  
14 recognized.

15 MEMBER ROGERS: Thank you so much, Mr.  
16 Speaker. I agree with many of my colleagues. We  
17 know that gerrymandering is bad for  
18 representative democracy. Our system was built  
19 on checks and balances. And unfortunately, right  
20 now we have a TEMU dictator in the White House  
21 and we have a Congress that has completely  
22 abdicated their responsibility to act as that  
23 check on that dictator. And I do not for a  
24 moment want us to leave here with sound bites of  
25 sanctimonious pearl clutching from my colleagues  
about protecting Californians without making sure

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1 we talk about what our legislature has been doing  
2 this year to protect Californians. Not one of my  
3 colleagues across the aisle has condemned the  
4 president for turning our Military against our  
5 own people in LA and in D.C. not one of my  
6 colleagues across the aisle condemned the  
7 President for sending armed thugs to a press  
8 conference that the governor and the legislature  
9 was having last week in an act of intimidation.  
10 Not one of my colleagues across the aisle has  
11 condemned the President for being in the Epstein  
12 files. Not one of my colleagues across the aisle  
13 has condemned the president for withholding funds  
14 for fire victims in California. If we're going  
15 to talk about protecting Californians, we're  
16 going to talk about how this legislature is  
17 protecting Californians. To quote and paraphrase  
18 Ben Franklin, it's a democracy if they choose to  
19 keep it. Every time we go to the ballot box, we  
20 get to choose if we are going to fight for  
21 democracy. And this November, Californians and  
22 Democrat Democrats in California are going to  
23 fight for democracy. Thank you, Assemblymember  
24 Rogers. Assemblymember Fong, you are recognized.

25 MEMBER FONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I  
rise as a proud co author of ACA 8 and its

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1 importance in defending our democracy. We didn't  
2 ask for this fight and we need to fight back  
3 against President Trump's power grab. This is  
4 more about defending our democracy and making  
5 sure that every voice counts. This is our chance  
6 to stand up and raise our voices to fight for our  
7 democracy. The stakes couldn't be higher. The  
8 President federal administration is denying  
9 wildfire relief, targeting our diverse immigrant  
10 communities, targeting our number one public  
11 university with an extraction request of \$1  
12 billion and pulling millions off of health care.  
13 We will stand up and we will defend the Voting  
14 Rights act and protect our historically  
15 marginalized communities. We must fight fire  
16 with fire and we will let the voters decide.  
17 That is democracy at its best. I strongly urge  
18 an I vote on acai. Thank you. Thank you,  
19 Assemblymember Fong. Members, this is a last  
20 call to raise your microphone if you are going to  
21 be speaking on ACA 8. Last call, please.  
22 Assemblymember Jeff Gonzalez, you are recognized  
23 colleagues.  
24 MEMBER GONZALEZ: Today I rise in complete  
25 and utter disappointment. We're about to  
potentially waste \$230 million to undo something

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1 Californians already decided on in 2010, that an  
2 independent commission, not the governor and not  
3 the legislature, should draw district lines. The  
4 majority of Californians don't want this. Yet  
5 here we are. I'm exhausted that this is what  
6 we're choosing to spend our time on. This body  
7 has all the power to make the lives of  
8 Californians better. And Californians are sick  
9 and tired of watching us come to this floor week  
10 after week with no solutions to the crises that  
11 are faced that we're facing. We as a body are  
12 out of Touch with the issues raging in our state,  
13 from affordability, health care to the housing  
14 crisis to homelessness. As a marine corps  
15 veteran, it sickens me to know that men and women  
16 who I fought alongside are sleeping on the  
17 streets. We can fix that, but we aren't.  
18 Instead, the governor and members of this body  
19 are playing partisan politics. Let me be clear.  
20 Californians in my district tell me every day  
21 they feel forgotten by. By this body.  
22 Forgotten. Let me be clear about that. You see,  
23 in my district, the needs are urgent and real.  
24 Palo Verde Hospital in Blythe is on the brink of  
25 closure. I requested 4 million in emergency  
funding to keep it operating a lifeline that was

1 not fulfilled. As a result, the hospital now  
2 faces an uncertain future, and residents of  
3 Blythe could soon be forced to travel over 100  
4 miles just to access emergency care. This is not  
5 just a health care issue. It's a public safety  
6 crisis. In Imperial county, the last sugar beet  
7 plant, Spreckles, has shut down, wiping out over  
8 700 jobs in a county that already suffers a 20%  
9 unemployment rate. And. And yet instead of  
10 focusing on jobs, we're debating on  
11 gerrymandering. At Ironwood State Prison in  
12 Blythe, leadership is doing incredible work  
13 rehabilitating incarcerated people with programs  
14 that gives men something to look forward to.  
15 Imagine what a fraction of this money could do  
16 there. In the mountain communities from  
17 Winchester to Anza, families live with a constant  
18 threat of wildfires. We should be filling  
19 reservoirs and doing real forest management, but  
20 we aren't. I've heard arguments in these halls  
21 that just because Texas is doing it, we should  
22 too. That the White House is holding onto money  
23 that should go to California and democracy is in  
24 flames. Colleagues too. Wrong zone. Make a  
25 right like my colleagues, that if democracy is on  
the line, then California should be strengthening

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1 it, not rigging it for political gain. Hundreds  
2 of millions of dollars could be directed towards  
3 fighting food insecurity, helping organizations  
4 like FIND and the Imperial Valley food banks who  
5 are doing God's work every single day and serving  
6 the most vulnerable in our communities. We  
7 cannot claim to serve the people while  
8 prioritizing the their most basic needs. And I  
9 could go on. Families in Imperial, Riverside and  
10 San Bernardino county can't afford gas,  
11 groceries, childcare. Parents are choosing  
12 between filling their gas tanks or their fridge.  
13 That's the reality my district is living with  
14 every single day. So let me ask why are we  
15 wasting time and money on reckless measures that  
16 that is being pushed down onto Californians from  
17 those at the highest levels of government in our  
18 state? You know, when I was at war. At least I  
19 was able to see the threats coming at me. But  
20 here in Sacramento, I have no idea about the  
21 backroom deals. I still can't get answers as to  
22 who actually drew the lines. I ran for office  
23 because of my son, RJ who has cerebral palsy. He  
24 can't speak for himself. So I ran to be his  
25 voice and the voice for his families. And we  
fought together to take back in home supportive

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1 services. We work together to do that. We can  
2 do so much more. We can get so much more done.  
3 So, colleagues, I end by saying this. Let's rise  
4 up. Let's work together to fix the problems in  
5 our state, because we can do it. I've seen it  
6 done. So let's make this happen. Thank you,  
7 Assemblymember Gonzalez, Assemblymember Arambula,  
8 you are recognized.

9 MEMBER ARAMBULA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and  
10 members, for the opportunity to present on this  
11 floor. I don't oftentimes speak, but I felt  
12 called today to be able to share some words.  
13 Just yesterday, an icon of this great country  
14 reminded me of our family's roots that began in  
15 Tejas. My my father being born in Brownsville,  
16 Texas, in 1952, during a particularly racist and  
17 xenophobic period in American history, a time  
18 that was known as Operation Wetback, what is  
19 still to this day America's largest mass  
20 deportation event, an event that helped to sweep  
21 up my father, who is an American citizen, and  
22 deported our family to Mexico. That we learned  
23 that there are states that value and give dignity  
24 and respect to all who called that state home and  
25 states that do not. And so we migrated to the  
great state of California, to Delano, where it

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1 was Dolores Huerta who reminded me yesterday that  
2 we were fighting for dignity and respect when it  
3 was UFW. My father, who I spoke about earlier,  
4 also had the honor of serving, serving in this  
5 institution where he had an independent streak.  
6 Now, back in 2008, he was one of those Democrats  
7 who, along with Republicans, voted for the  
8 independent redistricting commission to go before  
9 the people. And so it is with great pride that  
10 many of us have been watching their work and  
11 honored by the service of those who wish to serve  
12 on that commission. And I too was watching each  
13 one of those hearings and impressed with what was  
14 happening in 2020. But I had dinner with my  
15 father this past weekend and I spoke with him  
16 about that vote. And he reminded me that today's  
17 electorate looks different than when he made that  
18 vote nearly two decades ago, that today's  
19 democracy looks different than it was two decades  
20 ago. And that fundamentally representation is  
21 about returning Resources, the taxes that we pay.  
22 And for those of us who come from poor areas, who  
23 represent poor people, we are not getting our  
24 fair share. And the representation that we have  
25 in Congress is not returning resources. That  
big, beautiful bill was bad for our communities.

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1 And despite my ideals of wanting to fight for  
2 independence and redistricting, we must make sure  
3 we're getting our fair share of resources. And  
4 so that means that you have to stand up against  
5 your ideals and stand up for your morals. You  
6 have to stand up for a community who too often  
7 doesn't get represented here in the people's  
8 house. And so I will put my ideals to the side  
9 and instead stand up for our morals. But it  
10 comes with a warning that this institution might  
11 not be able to resist the temptation to come back  
12 here again, and that we have to make sure that we  
13 are fundamentally believing that we can maintain  
14 that independent redistricting commission. So I  
15 will tell you, while I share that fear, what I  
16 put my faith in. I put my faith that there's  
17 someone here in the great state of California who  
18 one day will be walking around being the  
19 President of the United States and the White  
20 House, and that our governor then will be able to  
21 pass federal independent redistricting commission  
22 for all states. And by doing that, we can have a  
23 balanced, level playing field where every single  
24 person counts and we have representation that is  
25 returning resources for our communities. I put  
faith in the people of our state to decide their

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1 future. That while we might not have been a  
2 state when our nation was created, we are the  
3 bearer of its future. It is incumbent on us to  
4 rise up and to defend our democracy. I  
5 respectfully ask for an I vote. Thank you,  
6 Assembly Member Arambula. Assembly Member  
7 Tangipa, you are recognized.

8 MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
9 This measure before us is neither bold nor  
10 principled. It is, in plain terms, a blatant  
11 attack on the most transparent process our state  
12 has ever had for drawing congressional districts.  
13 It undermines what has become the gold standard  
14 for the nation, the Independent Citizens  
15 Redistricting Commission. The commission was  
16 created to restore fairness to ensure  
17 representation in California is not based on  
18 which party controls the government, but on  
19 principles of independence, transparency, and  
20 community. And it worked. Californians can look  
21 at their districts today, and they know that they  
22 were not manipulated for partisan advantage. And  
23 now, in just four days, with two rushed committee  
24 hearings and almost no opportunity for real  
25 public comment, we are on the verge of throwing  
all of that away. Let me remind this body.

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1 During committee hearings, one of our colleagues  
2 brazenly admitted that this entire thing was  
3 about partisan gerrymandering. Admitted partisan  
4 politics. This was a direct response to the  
5 question about protecting voters and underserved  
6 communities. Not a word about fairness, not a  
7 word about transparency. An open admission to  
8 partisan gain. So how can we stand in this  
9 chamber and criticize Texas, Florida or other  
10 states for gerrymandering when we've joined them  
11 in the same practice? How can we demand fairness  
12 in the courts or before Congress when we're  
13 willing to sacrifice it here at home? We have  
14 lost all credibility. Let's not forget this is  
15 not free. We are wasting money and resources on  
16 an election that that is unnecessary and  
17 unwanted. Every dollar spent on this political  
18 stunt is a dollar not spent on addressing the  
19 cost of living crisis or wildfires, not spending  
20 on improving our schools, not spent on keeping  
21 our communities safe, and not spent on expanding  
22 healthcare access. Californians never asked for  
23 this election. What they did ask for was a fully  
24 fund Prop 36, which this legislature failed to  
25 do. What they asked for was for us not to ration  
medi cal because Californians and families are

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1 dying. Dying. We were told at the start of this  
2 session that our priority was addressing cost of  
3 living. Yet I haven't seen any bills rushed  
4 through four days to lower utility rates, to make  
5 housing more affordable, to bring down our food  
6 prices. But when it comes to the bills that  
7 serve political ambition, suddenly four days is  
8 plenty of time. Suddenly co authoring bills  
9 without even reading them is no problem. This  
10 isn't just bad policy. It flies in the face of  
11 established fact. Study after study shows  
12 gerrymandering reduces federal dollars coming to  
13 our communities, depresses voter turnouts,  
14 disenfranchises us and even leads to lower  
15 wages. None of that helps Californians who are  
16 already stretching every single penny thin. None  
17 of it helps to cover rent, grocery gas. None of  
18 that helps the families that are deciding whether  
19 to pay for medicine or if they can afford their  
20 utility rates or if they can make an insurance  
21 payment or if they can afford to even buy a house  
22 for the next generation. None of it. These  
23 facts again highlight my concerns with our  
24 spending problem and leveraging the future. Ten  
25 to \$30 billion structural deficit is what we were  
told with the LAO and the Department of Finance.

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1 That is year over year all the way to 2028. If  
2 we don't stop this reckless spending on measures  
3 like this, we're going to drain what's left of  
4 our rainy day fund and we are going to have to  
5 make significant, significant cuts for  
6 Californians and you are saying for partisan  
7 gain. It is worth it for families that are  
8 dying. To me, the message from the majority  
9 party is clear. Principles and independence only  
10 matter when it's politically convenient. And  
11 Californians can do worse. Better. 30 seconds.  
12 Shameful. The level of Trump derangement  
13 syndrome in this party is debilitating our  
14 ability to govern properly. It is being claimed  
15 that the reason reason for this bill is to combat  
16 authoritarianism. Before redistricting, before  
17 the big beautiful bill, before any cuts were  
18 implemented, it was this legislature that  
19 stripped the minority of the committees because  
20 they spoke out in opposition. It was this  
21 legislature that restricted our time. The real  
22 authoritarian problem is in the mirror. The.  
23 What about him? Thank you, assembly member Tony.  
24 Everywhere else. Thank you, Assemblymember. The  
25 youngest member of this committee, Assemblymember  
Harbidian. You are recognized.

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1 MEMBER HARBIDIAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
2 There's an old adage for lawyers that when the  
3 law is on your side, you pound the law. When the  
4 facts are on your side, you pound the facts.  
5 When neither the facts of the law are on your  
6 side, you pound the table. And I'll tell you, my  
7 friends on the other side of the aisle, we've  
8 been hearing a lot of pounding the table today.  
9 Most of what we heard, including what we just  
10 heard, was completely hyperbolic and devoid of  
11 fact. And with all the bluster, let's be clear  
12 about the admission of partisan gain. There is a  
13 representative that will go down in history in  
14 Texas, one by the name of Representative Todd  
15 Hunter, who admitted that this was nakedly  
16 partisan. What happened in Texas, and I quote,  
17 the underlying goal of what happened In Texas, as  
18 Mr. Hunter said of this plan, is straightforward  
19 to improve Republican political performance.  
20 That is the admission of partisan objectives that  
21 we should be focused on. That is the admission  
22 of gerrymandering. That why we are here today.  
23 And for every friend across the aisle that stood  
24 up today, including my friend from Fresno that  
25 has held up independent commissions for  
redistricting as the model. When my friend From

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1 Merced introduced AB 1441 for independent  
2 redistricting in her district, every single one  
3 of you voted against it. So save it. This is  
4 about one thing. It's about one man trying to  
5 control California, trying to control our  
6 country. We will not bend, we will not break.  
7 And we will do everything in our power to save  
8 California and save our country. This is one of  
9 the proudest moments of my short term as a  
10 legislator here. It's one of the easiest votes  
11 that I will take and I will be very proud when  
12 the California people who ultimately make this  
13 decision actually help us save our country. I  
14 request AN I vote, Mr. Speaker. Thank you,  
15 Assemblymember Harbidian. Assemblymember Hoover,  
16 you are recognized.

17 MR. HOOVER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I  
18 agree with my colleague from Lynwood that this is  
19 not a fight between Democrats and Republicans.  
20 In fact, redistricting has never been a fight  
21 between political parties. It has always been a  
22 fight between the people and power hungry  
23 politicians and friends. This did not start in  
24 Texas. For over 200 years, politicians have used  
25 gerrymandering to choose their preferred voters,  
protect their own political interests, and avoid

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1 accountability. And let's be clear, it is wrong  
2 when this is done by either party. In fact, many  
3 of the points raised by my colleagues on this  
4 floor today highlight the harms of partisan  
5 gerrymandering and underscore exactly why  
6 politicians should not be drawing their own maps.  
7 That is why I was proud when California citizens  
8 chose a better path forward. A system where  
9 politicians no longer choose their voters, but  
10 one where the voters get to choose their  
11 politicians. Our Citizens Redistricting  
12 Commission is a model for the nation and a model  
13 that should be adopted nationwide to end all  
14 partisan gerrymandering once and for all.  
15 Despite Governor Newsom's insistence that ACA 8  
16 preserves this model, make no mistake that it  
17 undermines the will of the voters and forever  
18 tarnishes California's legacy as a leader on  
19 independence redistricting. You are all correct  
20 that the voters will get a say once again if this  
21 passes today. And I truly believe that they will  
22 see through this veiled attempt to return power  
23 to the politicians. As of this week, polls  
24 already show that 64% of Californians do not  
25 support the proposal before us today. So I urge  
you to reject this race to the bottom, to stand

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1 on principle and vote no on ACA 8. Thank you,  
2 Assemblymember Hoover. Assemblymember Kalra, you  
3 are recognized.

4 MEMBER KALRA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's  
5 really tiresome to hear these sanctimonious cries  
6 from the opposition to this measure. For the  
7 past several weeks and even months, as Trump has  
8 been clamoring for more and more power, talking  
9 about having a third term and then very directly  
10 demanding seats be given to him that he's  
11 entitled to from Texas. We didn't hear our  
12 Republican colleagues say a word about that.  
13 When it's their party in control of Congress,  
14 their party in control of the White House. That  
15 fight was brought to us and we didn't hear  
16 anything about redistricting and, and fairness at  
17 all until today when it's brought to our doorstep  
18 and we have to now stand up to defend our  
19 democracy against a tyrant. And these crocodile  
20 tears about, oh, what about the children, oh,  
21 what about the health care when not any one of  
22 Them spoke about this big ugly bill that was  
23 passed that's going to take over over a trillion  
24 dollars away from Medicaid, millions in snap  
25 giving food to children and seniors. They talk  
about a cost of an election. They never talk

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1 about a cost of an election when time and again  
2 they try to recall the governor. We didn't hear  
3 about cost of election then, but we hear about it  
4 now. What is the cost of election? Oh, about  
5 the cost of one. Trump Ballroom. So let's be  
6 real about what we're talking about when we talk  
7 about getting on your knees. You talk about  
8 taking and bending the knee. You're bending the  
9 knee to a tyrant. And we will not have any  
10 kings. We will have no kings in America. Not as  
11 long as California exists. Not as long as we  
12 have the ability to fight back. We will not have  
13 a king. You all are choosing your supreme leader  
14 over your own constituents. You're choosing your  
15 supreme leader, Trump over children that are  
16 going to lose health care and food. You are  
17 making that choice and we're standing up against  
18 it. We're not going to stand up for trillions in  
19 tax cuts for billionaires. We're going to stand  
20 up for democracy. We are going to go down  
21 fighting for our democracy. And we'll let you be  
22 on the wrong side of history, Republicans.

23 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Assemblymember  
24 Kara. Members, this is the second and final  
25 request. Anyone who wishes to speak must raise  
their microphone now. They do not, will not be

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1 recognized. Speaker Reavis, you are recognized.

2 MEMBER REAVIS: Well, thank you, Mr.

3 Speaker. Protam. Quite the year we have had

4 here. 2025. I'm proud of this chamber. I'm

5 proud of my colleagues for meeting this moment

6 with courage. President Trump wants us to be

7 intimidated. And his playbook is a simple one.

8 Bully, threaten and silence, then rig the rules

9 to hang onto power. And we are here today

10 because California will not be a bystander to

11 that power grab. We are not intimidated and we

12 are acting openly, lawfully, with purpose and

13 resolve to defend our state and to defend our

14 democracy. And look, Donald Trump, he does not

15 believe in democracy. He is terrified of losing

16 and he will do whatever it takes to cling onto

17 power. We saw this on January 6 when he

18 unleashed a violent mob on our nation's capital

19 and he did this to overturn an election. We saw

20 it yesterday in the state of Texas where

21 Republicans advanced a mid decade map designed to

22 flip a up to five congressional seats and lock in

23 a partisan edge in the U.S. house of

24 Representatives at President Trump's order.

25 Again, this is the same dangerous playbook. If  
Trump can't win fairly. He'll try to make it

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1 impossible for Republicans to lose. And why?  
2 Because Donald Trump knows what we know. Voters  
3 are ready to hold him accountable from California  
4 to New York, from north to South. But of course,  
5 President Trump, he doesn't want to be held  
6 accountable for his failures in an election,  
7 especially the next one, and that's why he is  
8 trying to rig it. And of course, our Republican  
9 colleagues in this chamber don't want their party  
10 to be held accountable by voters, and certainly  
11 not in California. Accountable for ripping away  
12 \$1.25 billion billion dollars from our state for  
13 food assistance for hungry kids, hungry children,  
14 our most vulnerable families. Accountable for  
15 the millions of Californians who will lose their  
16 health care coverage because of this president.  
17 Accountable for the cuts to our disaster  
18 preparedness while our communities burn and  
19 flood. Accountable for the communities in our  
20 state torn apart by ICE raids. Neighbors,  
21 friends, the people who put food on our tables,  
22 shoved into unmarked vans by men wearing masks,  
23 taken without warning or due process.  
24 Accountable for tariffs that are driving up our  
25 grocery prices every single, single day.  
Accountable for corruption that makes Trump, his

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1 family and his friends richer while everyone else  
2 struggles to get by in California. In  
3 California, we will do whatever it takes to  
4 ensure that voters, not Donald Trump, will decide  
5 the direction of this country. This is a proud  
6 moment in the history of this Assembly.  
7 Californians, we believe in freedom. We will not  
8 let our political system be hijacked by  
9 authoritarianism. And today, we give every  
10 Californian the power to say no. To say no to  
11 Donald Trump's power grab and yes to. To our  
12 people, to our state and to our democracy. Mr.  
13 Speaker, I proudly ask for an I vote. Thank you,  
14 Mr. Speaker.

15 MR. SPEAKER: All debate having ceased.  
16 State your point, assembly member Gallagher.

17 MR. GALLAGHER: Mr. Speaker, in the past and  
18 actually earlier today, you've said that. State  
19 your point of order. Assemblymember Gallagher,  
20 you have said that votes are to suspend the  
21 Constitution. ACA 8 specifically says,  
22 Notwithstanding provisions of the state  
23 constitution. So when we vote on this, would you  
24 please reference it as a vote to suspend the  
25 Constitution as you have done previously.  
Moment, Mr. Gallagher. Point is not well taken.

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1 Assemblymember Gallagher, this is a vote to put  
2 the measure on the ballot for the people of the  
3 California, of the state of California. It is  
4 not a suspension of the Constitution. All debate  
5 having ceased, Clerk will open the roll. All  
6 members vote who desire to vote. All members  
7 vote who desire to vote. All members vote who  
8 desire to vote. Clerk will close the roll.  
9 Tally the votes. Ayes 57. Nose 20. The measure  
10 passes. The measure is adopted. Media  
11 transmittal to the Senate not. Objection.  
12 Members. We actually have a very special guest,  
13 historic Californian is visiting us today and  
14 we're going to take an opportunity to take a  
15 quick break from business on the Daily File and  
16 recognize Assemblymember Wicks for her guest  
17 introduction and Assemblymember Banta for her  
18 guest introduction.

19 MEMBER BANTA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and  
20 colleagues. I rise today to recognize one of the  
21 greatest athletes of all time. In addition to  
22 being an Oakland native, a proud UC Berkeley  
23 alumni. That's right, a business owner, a  
24 philanthropist, an actor, he's also the only man  
25 who has ever single handedly caused an  
earthquake. I am honored to introduce to you Mr.

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1 Marshawn Lynch. He is a true renaissance man.  
2 During his NFL career, Marshawn, nicknamed Beast  
3 Mode, rushed over 10,000 yards, scored 85  
4 touchdowns, earned five Pro bowl selections and  
5 led the Seattle Seahawks to their first Super  
6 bowl victory in 2014. Since retiring, Marshawn  
7 has continued to make a lasting impact off the  
8 field. From co founding the Fam First Family  
9 Foundation, a non profit dedicated to empowering  
10 youth through mentorship, to starring in a number  
11 of movies, Marshawn has dedicated his career to  
12 representing and uplifting his community. He's  
13 also involved in a variety of business ventures  
14 including Beast Mode Apparel, Rob and Ben's  
15 Sports Bar and Restaurant in Emeryville, Beast  
16 Mode and Beast Mode Productions. And of course,  
17 we all know his love of Skittles. Sorry, Mr.  
18 Gabriel. Please join me in giving a nice warm  
19 California welcome to a leader, a legend in  
20 sports, entertainment, business and community,  
21 Marshawn Lynch.

22 MR. SPEAKER: Welcome to the California  
23 assembly members. We have a few other welcomes  
24 for Mr. Lynch. Just a moment, just a moment.  
25 Assemblymember Bonta and Assemblymember Tangipa,  
Assemblymember Banta, you are recognized.

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1 MEMBER BANTA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm  
2 honored on behalf of the beautiful people of  
3 Oakland to welcome to the town our own Marshawn  
4 Lynch to the Capitol. Before he was a Super bowl  
5 champion, Marshawn's love for football was born  
6 in Oakland and his talents on the field were  
7 quickly recognized. During his time time at  
8 Oakland Technical High School, Marshawn would go  
9 on to bring his fierce skills to Berkeley, the  
10 Bills, the Seahawks and the Raiders. Off the  
11 field, Marshawn has never failed to show the love  
12 for his hometown of Oakland, particularly as he's  
13 seen working with his family fam First Family  
14 foundation, embodying the true spirit of  
15 California and the soul of the town. As he  
16 constantly outdoes himself. Marshawn has even  
17 made a name for himself on the silver screen in  
18 smash hits like Bottoms, Freaky Tales and I Know  
19 My kids are waiting to see what you'll bring this  
20 next season. With Euphoria, we want to thank and  
21 love on our Marshawn Lynch, because right now,  
22 Oakland deserves the defender, the caretaker, the  
23 champion that is embodied in our icon, Mr.  
24 Marshawn Lynch. Thank you for being here.

25 MR. SPEAKER: And finally, Assemblymember  
Tangipa.

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1 MEMBER TANGIPA: I just wanted to say really  
2 brief. Marshawn lynch and I, we had an amazing  
3 mentor of ours, Coach Jeff Tedford, that taught  
4 principles and values to us. And you as a teddy  
5 bear and me as a teddy dog. We all know that  
6 that man said it. And shout out to kp, my  
7 teammate at Fresno State, thank you. Thank you  
8 for coming and speaking to us and fostering the  
9 next generation. Because most people don't see  
10 that. They don't see what you do to the young  
11 men out there. And you tell them to buy in. And  
12 when you don't have a man in your life, you can  
13 find a leader who will build that foundation for  
14 you. You did that for hundreds of thousands of  
15 young men across the state that believe in you,  
16 that found passion, that drove themselves when  
17 they had nothing and no hope. But one man  
18 believed in us and changed our lives. They did  
19 that. And you are leading that same example.  
20 And I just wanted to say thank you and it's good  
21 to see you. Welcome to the California Assembly.  
22 IT members, we have continued business on the  
23 daily file. We are now moving to the Senate  
24 third reading file, item 145, SB 280, by Senator  
25 Cervantes, presented by Assemblymember Pellerin.  
Members, can I have you take your desk, please?

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1 Members, please take your desks. Take your  
2 conversations off the floor. Leader Gallagher,  
3 you are recognized. Is this on the amendments?  
4 Mr. Speaker, you're recognized, Leader Gallagher.

5 MEMBER GALLAGHER: Thank you. Mr. Speaker,  
6 I do have amendments at the desk on SB 280. This  
7 amendment would require the proposed  
8 congressional maps to be publicly available for  
9 at least 131 days. Mr. Gallagher, I'm going to  
10 ask the clerk to read first, and then. And then  
11 I'll ask you to recognize you once again. A  
12 Clerk will read SB 280. Senate Bill 280, with  
13 amendments by Assembly Member Gallagher. Set  
14 two. Assemblymember Gallagher, you are  
15 recognized.

16 MEMBER GALLAGHER: Yes. Thank you again,  
17 Mr. Speaker, this amendment would require that  
18 the proposed congressional maps to be publicly  
19 available for at least 131 days before the voters  
20 make the decision on ACA 8. This is about  
21 putting people over politics. Rushing through  
22 maps without scrutiny is unacceptable. By  
23 requiring the maps to be publicly available well  
24 in advance and in compliance with the  
25 constitutional deadline of 131 days. We protect  
the integrity of our democracy democracy and give

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1 citizens ample time to review and challenge any  
2 unfair boundaries. We can't ignore the stark  
3 contrast. The commission's independent public  
4 driven approach has delivered fair  
5 representation. But this legislative push  
6 sparked by other politics threatens to drag  
7 California into redistricting wars that  
8 prioritize party power over people. The  
9 Independent citizens redistrict Commission held  
10 over 100, actually over 200 meetings and welcomed  
11 extensive input from voters on the communities  
12 and needs ensuring a thorough and transparent  
13 process. These amendments to SB280 are essential  
14 to ensure that there is enough input and review  
15 time for voters to understand what they are  
16 voting on. This is a very complex matter. These  
17 are very intricate maps that cover the entire  
18 state and people need to know what communities  
19 have been split, what communities have, what  
20 counties have been split out, what their  
21 representation will actually look like. So  
22 giving California that time that they deserved,  
23 much like they had during the commission's  
24 exhaustive process, helps ensure that we have  
25 fundamental fair review before those are voted  
on. And I respectfully ask for your I vote on

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1 this reasonable amendment. Thank you.

2 Assemblymember Gallagher. Majority Leader.

3 Madam Majority Leader, you're recognized.

4 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: I move delay the  
5 amendments on the table.

6 MR. SPEAKER: Seconded by Assemblymember  
7 Garcia. This motion is not debatable. It takes  
8 a majority of those present and voting members.  
9 This is a procedural vote. Clerk will open the  
10 roll. All members vote who desire to vote.  
11 Majority leaders asking for an I vote. Leader  
12 Gallagher is asking for a no vote. All members  
13 vote who desire to vote. All members vote who  
14 desire to vote. The clerk will close the roll.  
15 Tally the votes. Ayes 48, nos. 19. The  
16 amendments are laid on the table. Assemblymember  
17 Demaio, you are recognized.

18 MEMBER DEMAIO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I  
19 rise in strong opposition to SB 280 and have an  
20 amendment at the desk. Assemblymember Demaio  
21 will. We still need to open on the measure first  
22 and then you will be recognized for the amendment  
23 at the author. There's an amendment at the desk.  
24 Mr. Demaio, you're out of order. Mr. Demaio, you  
25 may approach the deus and speak with the chief  
clerk. Your amendments are not here at the desk.

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1 Assembly member Pellerin. Okay, we have. We  
2 have sets of amendments here. Assemblymember  
3 Castillo, we have your set of amendments. Would  
4 you like to speak on your amendments?

5 Assemblymember Castillo, you are recognized to  
6 speak on your amendments. Clerk will read the  
7 amendments.

8 CLERK: Senate Bill 280 with amendments by  
9 Assembly Member Castillo. Set one. Assembly  
10 Member Castillo, you are recognized.

11 MEMBER CASTILLO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
12 Members, I am presenting these Amendments today  
13 because California voters created the Citizens  
14 Redistricting Commission for one clear purpose.  
15 To take the power of drawing district lines away  
16 from politicians and return it to the people.  
17 Yet Governor Newsom and Democrat politicians are  
18 seeking to redraw our maps without transparency  
19 and public input. What we see before us today is  
20 exactly the kind of gerrymandering Californians  
21 thought they ended when they approved the  
22 Citizens Redistricting Commission in the first  
23 place. These amendments to SB280 make sure the  
24 commission remains truly independent. By making  
25 it a misdemeanor for elected officials to  
communicate with commissioners about district

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1 lines, we close the door to backroom deals and  
2 unethical political pressure. If redistricting  
3 is to happen, it should happen on the merits of  
4 the needs of the people, not because powerful  
5 politicians whispered in the ear of the  
6 commission. This is simply about trust. The  
7 public deserves to know what the maps they live  
8 under are drawn fairly, not manipulated for  
9 partisan advantage. We stand here as elected  
10 representatives of California, not Texas. We  
11 were sent here to protect the will of the  
12 California voters. This has nothing to do with  
13 Texas. I respectfully ask for your support on  
14 these amendments to protect the will of  
15 California voters. Thank you for your attention  
16 to this matter.

17 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Assemblymember  
18 Castillo. Madam Majority Leader, you are  
19 recognized. I moved.

20 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Lay the amendments  
21 on the table.

22 MR. SPEAKER: Seconded by Assemblymember  
23 Garcia. Members, this motion is not debatable.  
24 It takes a majority of those present voting.  
25 This is a procedural vote. Clerk will open the  
roll. All members vote who desire to vote. The

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1 Majority Leader is asking for an aye vote.  
2 Assemblymember Castillo is asking for a no vote.  
3 All members vote who desire to vote. All members  
4 vote who desire to vote. Clerk will close the  
5 roll. Tally the votes. Ayes, 55. Noes, 19.  
6 The amendments are laid on the table.  
7 Assemblymember Gallagher Set 3. You are  
8 recognized for your amendment, sir. The clerk  
9 will read. Excuse me. Clerk will read. Senate  
10 Bill 280 with amendments by Assembly Member  
11 Gallagher. Set three. Assembly Member  
12 Gallagher, you are recognized.

13 MEMBER GALLAGHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
14 So this is the amendment that I was. I was  
15 speaking to earlier that was taken out. So right  
16 now, ACA8 does not have a trigger provision. If  
17 Texas were to move forward with redistricting,  
18 that this would only go into effect if that  
19 happens. I am proposing this amendment to SB280  
20 to make that the case. And truly, if the debate  
21 that we just heard is true, that we have to do  
22 this because of what Texas is doing. And by the  
23 way, one House has passed the redistricting  
24 measure. Another House still has to pass it.  
25 The Governor would Still have to sign it in  
Texas. Put the condition in the bill. If it's

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1 truly about Texas and you're countering what  
2 Texas is doing, then there should be a condition  
3 on this ACA and this measure going forward. If  
4 you truly believe that, then you should support  
5 this amendment. And that's again another simple,  
6 reasonable amendment I'm proposing to this  
7 legislation. I hope that this body will support  
8 it and put your money where your mouth is. Thank  
9 you. Assembly member Gallagher. Madam Majority  
10 Leader, you are recognized.

11 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: I move delay the  
12 amendments on the table.

13 MR. SPEAKER: There is a motion by the  
14 Majority leader. Seconded by Assemblymember  
15 Garcia. Members, this is a procedural vote. It  
16 is not debatable. Takes majority of those  
17 present voting. Clerk will open the roll. All  
18 members vote who desire to vote. The majority  
19 Majority leader is asking for an aye vote. Mr.  
20 Gallagher is asking for a no vote. All members  
21 vote who desire to vote. All members vote who  
22 desire to vote. The clerk will close the roll.  
23 Tally the votes. Ayes. 55, nos. 19. The  
24 amendments are laid on the table. Clerk will  
25 read set four of the amendments. Senate Bill 280  
with amendments by Assemblymember Tangipa. Set

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1 four summary. Member Tangipa, you are  
2 recognized.

3 MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you. This amendment  
4 is simple. And if you voted for aca8 and the  
5 maps it created or sorry and you're about to vote  
6 on this, you shouldn't be allowed to immediately  
7 run for those districts. You shouldn't have a  
8 vested interest in approving the measure. And if  
9 you truly believe that SB280 was about fairness,  
10 then you should have no problem stepping back and  
11 giving up the chance from benefiting from it.  
12 This amendment closes that loophole. It makes  
13 sure the legislature legislators can't change the  
14 rules one day and cash in on them the next.  
15 Public service should come first before self  
16 interest, period. I ask that you support these  
17 amendments and you prove that you don't have a  
18 vested interest. Thank you.

19 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Thank you,  
20 Assemblymember Tangipa. Madam Majority Leader,  
21 you are recognized.

22 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: I move to lay the  
23 amendments on the table.

24 MR. SPEAKER: Majority leader has moved to  
25 lay the amendments on the table. Seconded by  
assembly member Garcia. Members, this is a

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1 procedural vote. Takes 40 majority of those  
2 present in voting. Clerk will open the roll.  
3 All members vote who desire to vote. Majority  
4 leaders asking for an I vote. Mr. Mr. Tangipa is  
5 asking for a no vote. All members vote who  
6 desire to vote. All members vote who desire to  
7 vote. Clerk will close the roll. Tally the  
8 votes. Ayes 53, nos. 19. The amendments are  
9 laid on the table. Now onto the bill in Chief.  
10 The Clerk will read Senate Bill 280 by Senator  
11 Cervantes and others inaccurating to election and  
12 making it appropriation, therefore declaring the  
13 urgency thereof to take effect immediately.  
14 Assemblymember Pillorin, you are recognized.

15 MEMBER PILLORIN: Thank you. Good  
16 afternoon, Mr. Speaker and members. I rise to  
17 present SB 280, a bill that is jointly authored  
18 by Senator Cervantes and myself. This bill calls  
19 for a statewide special election on November 4th  
20 of 2025. This special election gives California  
21 voters the opportunity to vote on a Congress  
22 constitutional amendment. Let me repeat that.  
23 California voters, not elected officials, will  
24 make the final decision. ACA 8 as was presented  
25 by my colleague from Menlo park, will allow for a  
one time temporary mid decade redistricting of

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1 our state's Congressional districts. Not because  
2 we want to, but because we want to allow voters  
3 to to decide if they want to fight against the  
4 horrific Trump policies that are harming their  
5 families, businesses, communities and  
6 institutions. SB 280 also makes the necessary  
7 statutory changes to allow for the election to be  
8 held on time and to allow elections officials to  
9 conduct a fair and transparent, secure and  
10 accessible election. As a former county  
11 elections official, I can attest that the county  
12 elections officials I know are the most  
13 professional, well trained, dedicated group of  
14 public servants I have ever met. They have  
15 proven time and again that they can deliver  
16 elections with accuracy, integrity and  
17 dedication. From presidential contests held  
18 during a pandemic to recalls held during  
19 wildfires, they have risen to every challenge. A  
20 special election in November will demand  
21 extraordinary effort and resources. But I have  
22 full confidence that with the proper state  
23 support and under the leadership of our Secretary  
24 of State and her team, they will once again  
25 ensure that every voter has access, every ballot  
is secure and every voice is heard. SB 280 also

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1 includes language to ensure that counties are  
2 made whole for the cost of conducting this  
3 special election. This provision was especially  
4 important for me and I know that it's important  
5 for counties of all sizes to quickly touch on the  
6 issue of costs. I know there's been concern from  
7 some the of of my colleagues that having this  
8 special election is not the best use of state  
9 dollars. Whatever it costs to conduct this  
10 special election pales in comparison to the  
11 massive economic harm by Trump on our state.  
12 We've heard many people speak of it today. His  
13 tariffs have fueled higher prices. Families are  
14 paying more at the grocery store. And yet he's  
15 slashing billions of dollars from families food  
16 assistance, leaving 735,000 Californians at risk  
17 of losing calfresh. He's cutting nearly a  
18 trillion from Medicaid to pay for tax breaks.  
19 For billionaires putting Medi cal coverage for 3  
20 million Californians on the line. And he's  
21 holding back nearly a billion dollars for our K  
22 through 12 schools. Trump's mass arrests,  
23 detentions, and deportations will cost the state  
24 billions of dollars and eliminate \$23 billion in  
25 tax revenues. Trump's policies slash science and  
climate funding, strip women's and LGBTQ rights,

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1 cut support for veterans, seniors, and people  
2 with disabilities, and target our communities of  
3 color, undermining health, dignity, and  
4 opportunity for the most vulnerable. The list  
5 goes on. Trump's policies don't just hurt our  
6 economy. They hurt our families, our schools,  
7 our health, and our future. That is the  
8 democracy we are fighting for. It's the people.  
9 A government of, for, and by the people. The  
10 cost of this election is pennies compared to the  
11 price Californians are already paying for Trump's  
12 failed policies. But ultimately, California  
13 doesn't have to spend a single dime on this  
14 special election. Our state's Republican  
15 representatives in Congress can march over to the  
16 White House right now, pick up the phone,  
17 organize themselves, and tell the president to  
18 stop what is happening in Texas right now. Now,  
19 his grab for five seats that he thinks he is  
20 entitled to. And they better act fast, because  
21 we know that map has been passed by the House and  
22 it's going to the Senate today. As long as this  
23 president thinks he's entitled to more Republican  
24 seats in Congress, regardless of how the people  
25 vote, and as long as Republican officials  
nationally are unwilling to stand up and to fight

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1 for it and to preserve our democracy, then  
2 California must give voters this opportunity to  
3 decide whether to fight back against these  
4 authoritarian tactics by approving the use of  
5 these temporary congressional district maps. I  
6 respectfully ask for your. I vote on SB280.

7 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assembly Member  
8 Pellerin. Assembly Member Demaio, you are  
9 recognized.

10 MEMBER DEMAIO: Mr. Speaker, permission to  
11 use a prop. We are not allowing props today, Mr.  
12 Demaio. Then why have you become props to  
13 Governor Gavin Newsom's presidential campaign?  
14 That is what SB 280 is. An unnecessary special  
15 election at a cost of a quarter billion dollars.  
16 Why? Because his campaign for president has been  
17 going down in flames and he needs something to  
18 prop up his chances. Make no mistake about it,  
19 this is a political stunt. An unnecessary,  
20 costly special election because Gavin Newsom  
21 needs chum in the water for political attention.  
22 You know it and I know it. And you're allowing  
23 state taxpayer money to be used for it. My  
24 friends across the aisle say that this is no more  
25 than a special election, like the recall was in  
2021. But let me tell you why there's a big

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1 difference. The recall in 2021 was a citizen's  
2 right. You may disagree with it. I know you all  
3 likely voted against it. But it is a right of  
4 the citizens to collect signatures and place  
5 items on the ballot and trigger a special  
6 election. If you felt that this was necessary to  
7 overturn the 2010 citizens initiative, that took  
8 the power out of your hands to manipulate lines  
9 and that's what you're doing here. That's what  
10 ACA8 does. Takes the power away from the  
11 citizens commission and gives it right back to  
12 the politicians so they can do what they've done  
13 for the last 72 hours. Go behind closed doors  
14 and manipulate maps and draw lines and fashion  
15 congressional districts for themselves or their  
16 friends in the future. If you wanted to do all  
17 that, then you should have done a citizens  
18 initiative campaign. You should have collected  
19 your signatures like the recall backers did. But  
20 you didn't. Because you have no problem spending  
21 precious scarce state tax dollars in the middle  
22 of a budget crisis. You say that we have to  
23 defend dollars for California, but you have  
24 wantonly wasted money. For example, giving free  
25 health care to illegal immigrants at the cost of  
\$10 billion and counting. \$250 million applied

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1 to our state budget may not make up for your  
2 multi billion dollar deficit, but it's a start.  
3 You know what \$250 million would do? It would  
4 fully fund Prop 36 so that we could give power to  
5 and tools to the prosecutors and the law  
6 enforcement agencies to arrest and punish  
7 criminals. Voters voted for Prop 36, but you  
8 refused to fund it from the party that says let  
9 the voters decide and let's do what the voters  
10 want. Baloney. You do what you want. Might  
11 makes right. And that's exactly what you've done  
12 for the last 72 hours by trampling over  
13 constitutional provisions and violating House  
14 rules. And you talk about a fair election.  
15 SB280 shortens the timeline necessary for an  
16 election. But because you have an urgency clause  
17 there might makes right. You change election law  
18 and now you're going to slap a misleading ballot  
19 title on. You can't even win based on the truth.  
20 You say you trust the voters, but you don't trust  
21 them enough to tell them the truth. Because your  
22 ballot measure title. Because we've seen it.  
23 We've seen your polling that the DCCC or someone  
24 paid for. Retains the Independent Citizens  
25 Redistricting Commission. Are you proud of  
yourselves? Retains the Independent Citizens

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1 Redistricting Commission. You are eviscerating  
2 that commission. You are nullifying that  
3 commission. You are suspending the voice of the  
4 citizens. And what they decided to grab the  
5 power back for yourself. And don't for a moment  
6 call it temporary. You know darn well that this  
7 is permanent. You will never give the power back  
8 to the people once you seize it back from them.  
9 30 seconds. And finally you say that you're  
10 going to respect the vote of the people. Did you  
11 do that with Prop 36 by fully funding it? No.  
12 Did you respect the vote of the people who put  
13 Article 21 in our state constitution and said you  
14 shouldn't have the ability to draw maps? You are  
15 drawing a map in violation of the state  
16 constitution. You don't care about what the  
17 voters said. You're disregarding it from 2010.  
18 Oh, but they'll retroactively approve our  
19 decision here, will they? Give them an honest  
20 ballot title. You'll see what these voters.

21 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. DeMaio. Thank  
22 you, Mr. DeMaio. Mr. DeMaio. That was pretty  
23 funny. I was so tempted to recognize birthdays,  
24 but I refrained. Assemblymember Gallagher, you  
25 are recognized.

MEMBER GALLAGHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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1 I rise in opposition. You know the scripture  
2 that I quoted earlier about turning the other  
3 cheek, It. It is a hard word. It's a hard word  
4 for me because all this week, all I've wanted to  
5 do is fight back. And when you see something you  
6 think is wrong, that's your immediate gut  
7 reaction. But that scripture is for me, and it's  
8 for everyone in this room. And it may be hard,  
9 it may go against the grain, but it is  
10 nonetheless true. And I think what is also true  
11 is that we have to stop saying that our democracy  
12 is in peril. And let me talk about that a little  
13 bit more. I've been hearing that since I was in  
14 college. I remember when George W. Bush won the  
15 election, and that was all you would hear. Oh,  
16 my God, our democracy is over. He's a warmonger.  
17 All these outlandish statements that we make  
18 about our opponents, right? To gin up the base,  
19 to make. To further polarization. It really  
20 started even back then on my side, when Obama got  
21 elected, oh, my God, our democracy is over. You  
22 know, he's a communist plant. He's probably  
23 going to bring about communism, right? To gin up  
24 the base, right? And then, of course, when Trump  
25 got elected, oh, our democracy is over. And yet  
we had an election, right? And Joe Biden was

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1 elected president. Imagine that. Our democracy  
2 wasn't over, right? And of course, on our side,  
3 a lot of people upset as well. We didn't like  
4 what Joe Biden was doing. I didn't like his  
5 policies. I Did not like his executive orders  
6 that I thought were an overreach of executive  
7 power. I certainly called them out. But our  
8 democracy was not over, no, not by a long shot.  
9 We didn't stop meeting in these halls as the  
10 representatives of the people. We didn't stop  
11 doing those things. People still voted,  
12 elections still happened. And Donald Trump was  
13 re elected president in the last cycle. I know  
14 that that bothers you. I know you don't like it,  
15 but he was duly elected. And our democracy is no  
16 more in peril than it was back when George W.  
17 Bush or when Barack Obama was elected or when Joe  
18 Biden was elected. So stop saying that because  
19 it contributes to the problem, ginning everybody  
20 up further polarization, more vortex of  
21 polarization that we can't get out of. That's  
22 the problem. We have a responsibility right here  
23 in this building to pass just laws. And now we  
24 have a bill before us. It is not just to suspend  
25 election laws, to suspend the time that people  
have to review constitutional amendments, to

1 shorten the time for when you're supposed to have  
2 elections, shorten the time when people have the  
3 ability to review and, and that give public  
4 input, to move through these bills in three days  
5 when you're supposed to have at least 30 days in  
6 print before you even hear them. And you know  
7 it. It's not just. So don't pretend that it is.  
8 And here's another truth. All the flowery  
9 language, all the defending democracy, standing  
10 up, fighting for your democracy, all of that is  
11 all subterfuge for this one principle. Because  
12 this is exactly what you were saying, that in  
13 order to save democracy, we must dismantle it, we  
14 must undermine it. In order to preserve  
15 representation, you must temporarily suspend it.  
16 That principle has never been true and has always  
17 led to despotism and authoritarianism. But  
18 you're following along, marching along right to  
19 it, giving away power that belongs to the people,  
20 subverting the Constitution, and then saying  
21 you're doing it under the auspices of democracy.  
22 30 seconds. You know, I had no problem saying  
23 that. I think my president is wrong. I agree  
24 with a lot of his agenda, but I think he is wrong  
25 on this point. What I don't hear over there on  
this other side is that our governor is wrong and

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1 you were silent. Don't talk to me about  
2 executive overreach when he didn't even let us go  
3 worship in our churches. And you said nothing.  
4 When he shut down businesses, many of them Latino  
5 owned immigrant businesses, you said nothing.  
6 Thank you, Assembly member Gallagher --

7 MEMBER GALLAGHER: -- So stand up for  
8 executive overreach when it really Matters.

9 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, assembly member  
10 Gallagher, state your point. Assembly member.  
11 Assembly Member Schultz, state your point of  
12 order.

13 MEMBER SHULTZ: Yep. All right. Thank you,  
14 Mr. Speaker. Just want to encourage everyone to  
15 follow the rules and not impugn the integrity of  
16 any member of the body. I'm pretty sure I can  
17 borrow another handbook here by my seatmate.

18 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Schultz. Thank  
19 you, Mr. Schultz. Your point of order is well  
20 taken. Members, I will remind you what I read  
21 earlier, based in section 120 and 121. Freedom  
22 of speech involves obedience to all the rules of  
23 debate. The language used by members during  
24 debate should be temperate, decorous and  
25 respectful. Assembly member Tangipa -- You are  
recognized.

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1 MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I  
2 really like to do data, facts and dates, so let's  
3 have some. Seven months ago, there was a  
4 different president in the White House. Let's be  
5 clear. The challenges Californians faced are the  
6 same ones they are now. But then, back then,  
7 seven months ago, the average cost of a home in  
8 the state, in this state was 825,000. One in  
9 every five Californian right now can't afford  
10 their utility bills. Recent college graduates  
11 were drowning in student loan debt, and small  
12 businesses were shuddering at an alarming rate.  
13 The fact of the matter is this. The common  
14 denominator in all of this isn't who sits in the  
15 White House. It's the priorities.

16 MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, Assemblymember  
17 Tangipa. Just a moment, somebody. Member  
18 Harbidian, state your point of order.

19 MEMBER HARBIDIAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
20 Would ask the speakers to actually speak to the  
21 bill in front of us and --

22 MR. SPEAKER: -- Thank you, Assemblymember  
23 HarBidian. Your point is well taken. Member  
24 Tangiba, please speak to the merits of this bill.

25 MEMBER TANGIBA: And we are here today  
debating a bill that does nothing to address

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1 housing affordability, utility rates, education,  
2 or small business survival. Instead, we're  
3 debating a bill that writes blank checks for an  
4 election that solves nothing that was never asked  
5 for by anybody. The Legislative Analysis Office  
6 and the Department of Finance, two offices that  
7 rarely agree on much, are in lockstep on one  
8 thing. Our state faces a structural deficit  
9 between 10 billion and 30 billion. Until 2028,  
10 we don't even know the final cost of this  
11 election. The analysis says it'll likely run in  
12 the hundreds of millions of dollars when. At a  
13 time when we're already in the red. And that's  
14 even before we even factor in the additional  
15 blank checks that are written by the Attorney  
16 General for an inevitable litigation that will  
17 truly, truly follow colleagues. This bill and  
18 the manner in which it is being forced through  
19 the legislature is the exact opposite of fiscal  
20 responsibility. Again, as a business owner and a  
21 realtor, it usually takes around 21 days to  
22 perform due diligence. When spending \$500,000 on  
23 a home. I can't even get 21 minutes in a  
24 committee to perform due diligence and we're  
25 debating on spending over \$200 million. That's  
just financial insanity. This is a bill that

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1 would spend millions of dollars and affect 40  
2 million Californians. Writing Blake checks  
3 without due diligence is grossly negligent.  
4 Californians deserve more than two hearings,  
5 limited comments and no answers. Rather than  
6 wasting hundreds of millions of dollars on a  
7 special election that nobody asked for, we have  
8 an opportunity to reevaluate our priorities. The  
9 money could be used to address very real and  
10 critical issues. Madera County, a rural county.  
11 The hospital is struggling to remain open in that  
12 exact county. You cannot have a baby in it. And  
13 I represent them along with others colleagues.  
14 Let's be honest. This bill is not about solving  
15 California's real problems. It's about political  
16 gamesmanship at the expense of 40 million people  
17 who are already stretched to their limits. Every  
18 dollar we throw at a vanity project is a dollar  
19 we steal from families who cannot afford  
20 groceries, from the six to eight hospitals on the  
21 verge of closing its doors from student to buried  
22 in debt and small businesses just trying to  
23 survive. If we pass this bill, we're not just  
24 writing blank checks. We're writing off the very  
25 people we elected to serve. Californians deserve  
leadership, not recklessness. They deserve

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1 solutions, not distractions. They deserve a  
2 legislature that treats their hard earned tax  
3 dollars the same as they treat their own. I will  
4 not stand by and rubber stamp financial insanity.  
5 I urge you to join me in rejecting this wasteful,  
6 shortsighted and hypocritical bill. When asked  
7 multiple times, how much does it cost? Can we.  
8 Can we allocate money? I was attacked over and  
9 over and over again. And if we want to use  
10 hypocrisy as an argument, then let's look at it.  
11 Let's look at the independent redistricting.  
12 Let's look at all this. Let's bring up 1441 when  
13 it was. If you even read the bill, if you even  
14 read that partisan gerrymandering bill, you would  
15 realize that it's based off of the registration  
16 in that county, gets the majority. And it also  
17 has written in that bill that the minority party  
18 doesn't even have to agree with it. That is  
19 structurally different than the independent  
20 redistricting Commission we have here, and it is  
21 a blatant lie. And you are trying to gaslight  
22 people that we are hypocritical. Let me do you  
23 one better, because I look at this so much.  
24 There's another bill that was AB 2030 in 2022  
25 that created the exact same thing that was a  
partisan Citizens Redistricting Commission. I

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1 ask that you look at a nonpartisan, independent  
2 one and you protect the sanctity of it. And you  
3 also prioritize a Californian's wallets because  
4 they can't afford the BS. I urge a no thank you,  
5 Assemblymember Tangipa. Assemblymember McKinner,  
6 you are recognized. Yes.

7 MEMBER MCKINNER: Mr. Chair and members, I  
8 urge an eye on SB 280 as we look at how much it's  
9 going to cost to. To hold this election. My  
10 colleague quoted \$200 million. Where I can find  
11 that \$200 million? Donald Trump. He's froze  
12 nearly \$1 billion in education funds meant for  
13 California schools. This money supports after  
14 school programs, teachers training and English  
15 learning programs that tens of thousands of  
16 California kids rely on. He's stripping these  
17 funds, punishing our most vulnerable. Look,  
18 Donald Trump is not just playing politics. He's  
19 deliberately punishing California's families,  
20 students and workers by withholding billions of  
21 dollars we've already earned. We can, we cannot  
22 allow one man's vendetta to rob our state of his  
23 future. He's also holding research in higher  
24 education funds. Trump has pulled \$584 million  
25 in federal research grants from UCLA alone,  
threatening groundbreaking cancer research.

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1 MR. SPEAKER: He's pulling money.

2 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: He's holding money.

3 I haven't heard anyone stand up and.

4 MR. SPEAKER: Say why he is pulling money  
5 from.

6 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Our state on this  
7 vendetta. And so I think that we can find the  
8 money to save democracy. And with that, I ask  
9 for an I vote.

10 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember  
11 McKinner. Assemblymember Davies, you are  
12 recognized.

13 MEMBER DAVIES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
14 Yes. There were five questions to my poll, so I  
15 thought I'd finish them up again. Listen to the  
16 people, because what I'm hearing is there's no  
17 limit to the cost for this election. So we had a  
18 question. If the state were to hold a special  
19 election to change the redistricting process, it  
20 could cost taxpayers more than \$200 million.  
21 Knowing this, would you support or oppose holding  
22 a special election on this issue? Democrats  
23 supported it by 64%, Republicans opposed it by  
24 90%. And once again, independents opposed it by  
25 69%. Also, some people say giving redistricting  
power back to politicians could lead to

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1 gerrymandering. Districts drawn to favor  
2 incumbents or one party. Others say politicians  
3 are accountable to voters and should have this  
4 responsibility. Which view comes closest to  
5 yours and your concerns? 56% of Democrats said  
6 they had concerns. Republicans, 98% said they  
7 had concerns with politicians making the maps.  
8 And 90% of independents had strong concerns about  
9 putting it in the hands of politicians. So once  
10 again, it's not my voice, it's the people's  
11 voice, and they deserve to be heard. I recommend  
12 an opposition to SB 280. Thank you.

13 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Assemblymember  
14 Davies. Assemblymember Berman, you are  
15 recognized.

16 MEMBER BERMAN: Mr. Speaker, is there a  
17 doctor in the House? Are you asking the chair,  
18 Mr. Berman? Yeah, I'm asking the speaker if we  
19 have. I am severely worried. Some colleagues  
20 from across the aisle are suffering from severe  
21 Gavin Derangement Syndrome, and I'm worried about  
22 their health. But I'll tell you, I'm so tired.  
23 I'm so tired of hearing the faux outrage and the  
24 lecturing and the hypocrisy from colleagues who  
25 are silent or worse yet, support efforts to rip  
food assistance away from hundreds of thousands

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1 of Californians who supported efforts to rip  
2 health care away from millions of Californians,  
3 especially in their districts. I'm so tired of  
4 Republicans. Excuse me, colleagues from across  
5 the aisle who complain about the cost of  
6 democracy, but who are silent when the President  
7 of the United States. The duly elected President  
8 of the United States. Never a debate on that for  
9 me. No, stop the steal over here. Wants to  
10 extort California institutions for billions of  
11 dollars. But now, now when we're trying to  
12 defend democracy, it's too high of a cost to  
13 bear. Eight and a half years in, and the faux  
14 outrage has gotten a little nauseating. I  
15 encourage my colleagues to vote Aye on SB 280.  
16 Thank you, Assemblymember Berman. Assemblymember  
17 Hadwick, you are recognized.

18 MEMBER HADWICK: Mr. Speaker, I rise today  
19 in strong opposition. Arise today for rural  
20 California, for the communities that have once  
21 been get once again been forgotten and sidelined  
22 by a process that should have been transparent,  
23 but instead was conducted in secret behind closed  
24 doors. I've stood side by side by colleagues on  
25 both sides of the aisle to fight for federal  
funding. I truly try to make decisions for

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1 people, for the people that live in my very  
2 unique district. I went to D.C. to speak again  
3 to both sides of the aisle for funding for secure  
4 rural schools, for Head Start, for tribes. So I  
5 was not silent then, and I can't be silent now.  
6 These redistricting efforts divide my district  
7 into pieces, splitting apart communities that  
8 share history, geography, and real human  
9 connection. How Does Modoc county belong in a  
10 district with Marin and the Golden Gate Bridge?  
11 These counties are 400 miles apart and separated  
12 by two mountain ranges. The priorities of  
13 Alturas and Sausalito could not be more  
14 different. My rural county that borders Oregon  
15 and Nevada, with eight residents now will have  
16 the same representative as our governor in Marin  
17 County. Modoc county, one of the poorest and  
18 most remote in the state, grouped with Marin  
19 county, one of the wealthiest and urban. That is  
20 not a community of interest. That is political  
21 Frankenstein. The people, not the politicians,  
22 should choose their representatives. My district  
23 hates government. I grew up in the original  
24 state of Jefferson. They don't trust our state.  
25 This plan is a violation of what little public  
trust we have left with Californians. It's

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1 expensive, it's rushed, and it's done without the  
2 consent of the very people that we claim to be  
3 protecting. And if it can happen here, it can  
4 happen anywhere. And I don't agree that it  
5 should happen anywhere. The games, the revenge,  
6 the hate, the politician answers to very simple  
7 questions. The actions taken by this body this  
8 week. This is why people, people don't trust us.  
9 We've heard a lot of quotes from Martin Luther  
10 King Jr. Today, and one of my favorites that  
11 he's also most probably his most famous quote  
12 that I try to live by every day is, darkness  
13 cannot drive out darkness. Only light can do  
14 that. And hate cannot drive out hate. Only love  
15 can do that. My district has two congressmen  
16 that are bold, relentless fighters who stand tall  
17 for rural California. They don't back down from  
18 a fight, whether it's defending our water, our  
19 farms, our natural resources, disaster relief, or  
20 simply our way of life. Now they are being  
21 targeted with this new map designed to silence  
22 our voice. Again, strip what little power these  
23 rural communities have, and we cannot afford to  
24 lose them. We need leaders who know us, who  
25 stand with us and fight like hell for us. They  
are loved in my district because they understand

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1 my very unique district. You cannot serve  
2 communities that you do not understand, and you  
3 cannot fairly represent people whose voices you  
4 deliberately silence. My district is arguably  
5 the most conservative in the state, and I truly  
6 hate the party lines, the divide. I represent  
7 everyone that lives in my district, no matter  
8 what party, and I try to take that into  
9 consideration in my work because that is good  
10 governance. The party divide in these new maps  
11 are not my only concern. My concern is that my  
12 district is diced into pieces, creating an urban  
13 versus rural divide that already happens every  
14 day in this building. This is not good  
15 governance. This is about control. And it's  
16 rural Californians who will pay the price? This  
17 isn't just bad policy. It's bad faith. And  
18 Californians, my constituents, deserve better  
19 than to be used as pawns in a political game that  
20 we weren't even invited to play in. I believe  
21 the voters will see through this in November, and  
22 the results will be that we all lose. The only  
23 thing that we're going to have is more  
24 Californians that think that their government is  
25 once again trying to trick them, once again  
wasting money on political messaging and once

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1 again letting them down. The people, not the  
2 politicians, should choose the representatives.  
3 And at the end of the day, Californians deserve  
4 better than this.

5 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember  
6 Hadwick. Assemblymember Sanchez, you are  
7 recognized.

8 MEMBER SANCHEZ: Colleagues as we listen to  
9 the debates today on the floor. Do you  
10 understand now why people feel the system is  
11 rigged against them? These discussions are not  
12 just about maps. They are about our values.  
13 It's about whether this legislature is listening  
14 to the people of California or only to itself.  
15 On April 23, 2025, Speaker Robert Rivas said  
16 something that hit home for so many of us.  
17 California's cost of living is the single biggest  
18 threat to our future. Middle class families  
19 earning 125,000 a year are struggling to afford  
20 rent, child care, groceries. And that is not  
21 sustainable. He was right. I see it in my  
22 community every single day. Heck, I've lived it.  
23 Families working two to three jobs, parents  
24 leaving the house before the sun comes up and  
25 coming home late at night still wondering if  
they're able to make enough for rent to keep the

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1 lights on or to put food on the table. And yet  
2 here we are asking for \$250 million from those  
3 same families and spending it on redistricting,  
4 on carving up maps to protect politicians. Let's  
5 be real. This \$250 million is not going to put a  
6 bag of groceries on the table. And it doesn't  
7 help a mom pay for childcare. It doesn't keep a  
8 roof over a family's head. What it does do is  
9 make life harder for the very people who are  
10 already struggling the most. That money could be  
11 used to keep teachers in classrooms, to reduce  
12 childcare wait lists that working parents have  
13 been stuck on for years, to fund wildfire  
14 prevention or to expand mental health services  
15 that our communities so desperate desperately  
16 need. Instead, Sacramento wants to waste it on  
17 politics. And that's the problem. Too often,  
18 this building puts the needs of politicians  
19 before the needs of the people. And that's why  
20 so many Californians, especially in working class  
21 communities and in Latino communities like mine,  
22 feel forgotten. We came here to Serve the  
23 people, to serve our brothers, to serve our  
24 sisters in our neighborhoods, not to serve  
25 ourselves. And the people are telling us loud  
and clear they cannot afford more broken

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1 promises. So I urge you, stand with our  
2 California families. Stand with the workers who  
3 are breaking their backs to give their children  
4 and their kids a better Future. Reject this \$250  
5 million power grab. Reject rigging the system  
6 against the people. Protect families, not  
7 politicians. I urge a no on SB 280.

8 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember  
9 Sanchez. Assemblymember Stephanie, you are  
10 recognized.

11 MEMBER STEPHANIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
12 I rise after a contentious week being in  
13 elections committee on Tuesday. And one of the  
14 things I said in that committee was just stating  
15 the obvious. They feel one way about what is  
16 happening in Texas or what has happened in Texas,  
17 and we feel another. And I'm desperately trying  
18 to understand the other side. And it came to me  
19 that this is really just about power. They are  
20 okay with his power. We are not. What is  
21 happening in Texas may be happening in Ohio,  
22 Missouri, Florida and others doesn't scare the  
23 other side. You might say gerrymandering is  
24 wrong, but it doesn't scare you. It scares us.  
25 Scares me a lot. You are okay with his  
leadership. We are not. You are okay with his

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1 insane all caps tweets that embarrass this  
2 country? I am not. You are okay with the  
3 rolling out of the red carpet for a murderous  
4 dictator on American soil? I am not. There are  
5 so many things about his power that scare me, and  
6 his attempts to increase it scare me even more.  
7 And that is why I am fine with what we Democrats  
8 are doing here today in California. Because as a  
9 member from Palmdale said earlier in another  
10 debate, gerrymandering is wrong when it's  
11 benefiting people. When you're doing it to  
12 wrongly benefit certain people, you shouldn't do  
13 it. And Texas is all too willing to redraw the  
14 lines without voter input to benefit Trump, whose  
15 power scares the hell out of me. They are not  
16 just enabling Trump, they are handing in the  
17 keys, the maps and the Sharpie. We're eight  
18 months in, eight months in. No disaster relief  
19 while California's homes literally burn. Cuts to  
20 Medicaid. I hear a lot about health care cuts to  
21 Medicaid that hurt the poorest of California's  
22 kids, seniors, people with disabilities, putting  
23 them at great risk. Public schools defunded,  
24 cruel, pointless immigration raids that just  
25 scare and really bother anyone if you have any  
empathy at all. Tariffs that tank small

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1 businesses that we all care about raise prices  
2 for working people, and that includes food  
3 prices. Courts stacked with extremists These are  
4 your stupid prizes, the stupid prizes that I  
5 talked about the other day in committee. And  
6 it's going to get worse and you're going to get  
7 more. And it's not going to be on us because we  
8 are doing everything we can in California to stop  
9 it. We're not doing this to the people. We're  
10 doing this with the people. And we are asking  
11 the people on November 4th to validate our fear  
12 of Donald Trump's power. Thank you.

13 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember  
14 Stephanie. Assembly Member Patterson, you are  
15 recognized.

16 MEMBER PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
17 You know, I was fortunate enough, I'm very  
18 fortunate enough to be able to go home every day  
19 and see my family, kiss my babies good night,  
20 drop them off at school. Despite my colleague to  
21 my left, I'm always miss pre session at the  
22 caucus because dropping my kids off at school  
23 every single day. You know, I come into this  
24 building and I think about the things that we've  
25 worked on together. Social media, harms of our  
children, over processed foods that are causing

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1 detrimental impacts on our children. And all of  
2 us, colon cancer screenings that might not be  
3 required pretty soon together, hopefully we can  
4 get that done and through the finish line if it's  
5 not vetoed again this year. But these are things  
6 we've worked on together and many, many other  
7 things. And I just wonder if there's a little  
8 bit of amnesia about 90% of the work that we do  
9 together, Republicans and Democrats. Some of the  
10 things just to address the points that have been  
11 made on this floor is that Republicans joined  
12 together with you to pass resolutions about cuts  
13 occurring on the federal level. Does anybody  
14 remember that? We supported many of those  
15 resolutions, but yet we're being accused of not  
16 standing up to the man or bending at the knees,  
17 whatever that means. We joined with you on  
18 issues like that. Republicans authored a  
19 resolution today saying that we need independent  
20 redistricting everywhere, and the Democrats voted  
21 no. The Republican leader of our caucus, one of  
22 the most conservative individuals that I'm proud  
23 to serve with, actually said it was wrong for  
24 Republicans in the president to pressure  
25 redistricting in other states. He actually said  
that. And it's like the very next speech from a

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1 colleague on the other side of the aisle. I hear  
2 about how Republicans don't stand up to the  
3 president. All governments, including the  
4 federal government, no matter who's in charge,  
5 can have problems. But before we left for  
6 recess, Governor Newsom was talking his initial  
7 statement on this, he didn't even want to put  
8 this on the ballot. That was his initial  
9 statement, that he would just tell you to do this  
10 well, guess what? Somebody told him that it's  
11 actually got to go to the people. But I remember  
12 my prediction that day, actually on my favorite  
13 social media platform, was make no mistake about  
14 it, if Governor Newsom asks the majority party  
15 Democrats to pass this out of the building, they  
16 will pass it. And here we are doing exactly as I  
17 predicted. I didn't need a crystal ball. When  
18 he wanted to undermine Proposition 36, did  
19 anybody speak up and say, hey, you know what?  
20 That's a bad idea. Very few of you maybe behind  
21 closed doors, but who doesn't have the courage to  
22 speak up when Governor Newsom says crazy things  
23 like that, undermining Prop 36. Again, I don't  
24 want to be lectured on us not standing up. Who  
25 stood up there? By the way, most of my  
colleagues in this chamber Oppose Proposition 36,

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1 and it passed in every single district. 30  
2 seconds. Ask yourself, have you even voted  
3 against a member of your party's bill? Some of  
4 you may have, some of you may have, but you know  
5 what happens? You, you kill it behind closed  
6 doors because you, you don't have the courage to  
7 even do a no vote. By the way, I have voted  
8 against bad Republican bills. But please do me a  
9 favor. Don't lecture us on who has the courage  
10 to stand up, because I've never seen you say one  
11 bad word on public record about the governor.  
12 With that, I ask for a no vote. Thank you,  
13 Assemblymember Patterson, Assemblymember Lackey,  
14 you are recognized for the first time.

15 MEMBER LACKEY: I will tell you that I'm not  
16 proud of the way we spent our time this morning.  
17 We've spent this whole, this whole floor  
18 experience talking about circumstances that  
19 aren't really in our purview. We think that  
20 we're proxy Congress people today, and I think  
21 that's misplaced. I think we have some very  
22 severe problems here in the state of California,  
23 and we haven't spent one minute talking about  
24 them. In California. We all admit it's not  
25 broken here. We have an independent redistrict  
commission that we're proud of the process, but

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1 we're going to get rid of it temporarily because  
2 we don't like what another state is doing. Is  
3 that really where we should be spending our time?  
4 I don't think so. I think it's sad that we've  
5 let the circumstances nationwide distract us from  
6 our real responsibility, and that is to the state  
7 of California residents. We have very severe  
8 affordability problems. We have insurance  
9 problems. We have all these crisis circumstances  
10 we didn't spend one minute on today. We need to  
11 be better than that. Everybody. And I'm not  
12 here to insult anyone either. I think that's  
13 shameful. I think it's shameful when we point at  
14 other people, we make them feel small, or at  
15 least try to make them feel small. Shame on all  
16 of you for doing that. I don't care if it's our  
17 people or your side or our side. Why are we  
18 doing that? The people expect better from all of  
19 us. And I don't normally like to raise my voice,  
20 but I'm telling you, everybody, we are better  
21 than this. I am proud to belong to this group of  
22 people, even though people that think like me are  
23 in small number. I'm proud of the fact that we  
24 care. But I think we can also be distracted.  
25 And that's what's happened this morning. And I'm  
sorry about that. And I had to express my

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1 regrets along that line. I hope we can be better  
2 from here on out. Quit insulting people that  
3 disagree with you. Make your point and make it  
4 effective. Thank you. Thank you, Assemblymember  
5 Lackey, seeing and hearing no further debate.  
6 Excuse me. Assemblymember Schultz, you're  
7 recognized.

8 MEMBER SCHULTZ: Thank you very much, Mr.  
9 Speaker. I just wanted to actually thank my  
10 colleague from Palmdale for his remarks. I think  
11 that decorum is important in this. In this  
12 debate today. In response to my colleague from  
13 Rockland, I would simply say I have voted no on a  
14 colleague's bill. I have disagreed with the  
15 governor, and many of you have exploited the.  
16 That, to be very blunt, in the past, the point  
17 I'm bringing up is this. We have to find a way  
18 to disagree without being disagreeable. We're  
19 not going to see eye to eye on this issue. I'm  
20 not going to stand here and challenge or question  
21 any of your integrity or your motivations. I  
22 think that we have to find a way to move forward  
23 on the issue. ACAAs has passed out of this  
24 chamber. I believe it will pass out of the  
25 Senate, and it will be signed by our governor.  
SB280 is a companion piece of legislation that

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1 will ensure that every Californian's voice can be  
2 heard. It is essential that we pass it. I'll be  
3 voting aye, and I humbly ask all my colleagues to  
4 vote. I thank you to the authors.

5 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember  
6 Schultz, seeing and hearing no further debate.  
7 Assemblymember Pellerin, would you like to close?

8 MEMBER PELLERIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and  
9 members, thank you for the robust debate on this  
10 floor today. When I woke up this morning, I knew  
11 this was going to be a tough, difficult day. And  
12 in looking for inspiration, I came across this  
13 wooden pen I had in my closet that's a memorial  
14 from the Holocaust that simply says never again.  
15 And I thought about the people in Germany in  
16 1930, in those 53 days that the authoritarian  
17 dictator in their country changed the course of  
18 history forever, that resulted in millions of  
19 deaths of innocent Jewish lives. We are now at  
20 the 212th day of this administration and we have  
21 been fighting, fighting every single day for the  
22 things we care about here in the state of  
23 California. We've been passing laws, we've been  
24 passing resolutions, and we've been making our  
25 voice heard for the people of the state of  
California. And at the end of this day, this is

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1 about those people, those people we represent  
2 that live in our communities, those hard working  
3 families, those moms struggling to find  
4 affordable daycare. It's for our seniors, our  
5 veterans, our persons with disabilities, our  
6 immigrant families who are out there making sure  
7 we have food on our table, who serve in our  
8 hospitality industries, who provide those vital  
9 health care services to our loved ones. These  
10 people who were heralded as heroes during the  
11 pandemic are now being taken away from their  
12 families, ripped away and put in detention  
13 centers and treated like criminals without due  
14 process. This is about the people. This is  
15 about our democracy. And we can't just fight  
16 what is happening right now with thoughts and  
17 prayers and values and principles. We must fight  
18 this urgent fight. And I'm sorry we don't have  
19 more time. I wish we had more time. But time is  
20 up. Texas has taken its action and California  
21 will stand up for the people of California. And  
22 we will this election on November 4, 2025. And I  
23 am telling every eligible registered voter in  
24 this state to make sure that you get that ballot  
25 and you vote your ballot and you make sure your  
voice is heard. With that, I ask for your I

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1 vote.

2 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember  
3 Pelleran. I'll debate. Having ceased, the clerk  
4 will open the roll. All members vote who desire  
5 to vote. Members, this measure requires 54  
6 votes. All members vote who desire to vote. All  
7 members vote who desire to vote. Kirk will close  
8 the roll and tally the votes. Eyes 57 nos 20 on  
9 the urgency. Ayes 57, nose 20 on the measure.  
10 The measure passes without objection. Immediate  
11 transmittal to the senate. Assistant Majority  
12 Leader Garcia, you are recognized for your  
13 procedural motions. Thank you Mr. Speaker.  
14 AB604 has been received from the Senate. I  
15 request unanimous consent to suspend Assembly  
16 Rule 63 to allow assembly member Aguiar Curry to  
17 take up the bill today without reference to file  
18 for the purpose purpose of concurrence and senate  
19 amendments. Thank you assembly member Garcia.  
20 Assembly Member Flora, you are recognized.

21 MEMBER FLORA: Thank you Mr. Speaker. With  
22 hold consent and ask for a roll call vote. Okay.  
23 The motion has been made by Assemblymember  
24 Garcia. It is seconded by Assemblymember Ortega.  
25 This motion is not debatable. It requires 40  
votes. Clerk will open the roll. All members

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1 vote who desire to vote System. Majority Leader  
2 Garcia is asking for an aye vote. Mr. Flora is  
3 asking for a no vote. All members vote who  
4 desire to vote. Clerk will close the roll and  
5 tally the votes. Ayes 54 noes 18 rules are  
6 suspended without reference to file AB 604 by  
7 Majority Leader Aguiaracuri for concurrence and  
8 senate amendments. The Clerk will read Assembly  
9 Bill 604 by Assemblymember Agriacuri and  
10 accolades for redistricting declaring the urgency  
11 thereof to take effect immediately. Madam  
12 Majority Leader, you are recognized.

13 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Thank you Mr.  
14 Speaker and members, let's not dance around the  
15 issue here. If California Democrats had our way,  
16 the midterms would continue under the maps drawn  
17 by our independent Citizens Redistricting  
18 Commission. But that's not the moment we're in.  
19 We weren't planning on redistricting again until  
20 after the 2030 census. But once Republicans in  
21 other states started stacking the deck with mid  
22 decade maps designed to rig the 2026 election, we  
23 had no choice but to act. We didn't start this  
24 fight. We've said that numerous times. And  
25 we're not going to roll over. We have to meet  
the moment. AB 604 lays out our new

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1 congressional districts, but only if voters  
2 approve AC8. This temporary map will only take  
3 effect if the voters approve it, and only because  
4 Republicans force partisan maps on voters in  
5 other states. Unlike Texas, which is imposing  
6 its maps on voters or asking voters for their  
7 approval, there's nothing more Democratic than  
8 that. The legislator's map represents the work  
9 of the independent Redistricting Commission. By  
10 keeping 76.7% of Californians in their same  
11 congressional district, the legislator's map  
12 respects California constitutional requirements  
13 to maintain communities of interest. The  
14 legislative map respects redistricting guidelines  
15 by reuniting 26 cities, reducing the breakup of  
16 local jurisdictions based upon the Citizens  
17 Redistricting Commission's work, hearings and  
18 public input. More districts are more compact  
19 and most importantly, the people, not  
20 politicians, decide. So to my Republican  
21 colleagues, if you want to stop this, the answer  
22 isn't in this chamber. It's with your colleagues  
23 in Texas and with the President. Tell them to  
24 stop trying to rig the elections. Tell them to  
25 support a truly fair system where every state  
uses an independent redistricting Commission

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1 colleagues, until that happens, California cannot  
2 sit around and do nothing. So what happens next  
3 year is up to the president, to the national  
4 Republicans, and with this proposal, to the  
5 California voters. Thank you.

6 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam majority  
7 leader. Assemblymember DeMaio, you are  
8 recognized. And now we get to the map. The map  
9 that's the murder weapon, killing democracy in  
10 our state. Excuse me, Mr. DeMaio. Excuse me,  
11 Mr. Demaio. Assemblymember Harbidian, state your  
12 point of order.

13 MEMBER HARBIDIAN: The speaker is using  
14 maps, Mr. Speaker. Against the rules. Thank  
15 you, Mayo. Please refrain from using props. We  
16 get to the map, the murder weapon of democracy in  
17 California, the murder weapon that will end  
18 competitive elections, fair districts, exactly  
19 what voters sought to prevent in 2010 when they  
20 took the power away from you. And what did you  
21 do over the last several weeks? You proved them  
22 right, that you cannot be trusted to safeguard  
23 our democracy, to give us a voice. Because if we  
24 adopt this map, we are silencing millions of  
25 voters. And you seem to be comfortable with that  
because the ends justify the means. You've

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1 already laid out your ends. You don't like  
2 Donald Trump. We got the message. You don't  
3 like Donald Trump. That's what elections are  
4 for. Fair elections. You get to state your  
5 point of view. The American people get to hear.  
6 They get to decide. And they decided what you  
7 could do is get back to work for Californians.  
8 But you've spent the last eight months fighting  
9 the guy in the White House rather than doing the  
10 job for the constituents here in California. And  
11 now you're going to continue to not do your job  
12 and instead call an unnecessary special election  
13 to try to cram these maps through. So it leads  
14 the question. And there are two reasons why I'm  
15 asking this question. But it's a simple  
16 question. Who drew the maps? This is a question  
17 that you've refused to answer. The reason why we  
18 ask who drew the maps is, number one, we need to  
19 know whose interest was behind these maps.  
20 Perhaps a sitting state legislator that wants to  
21 create their own congressional district, or  
22 perhaps a special interest that wants to dilute  
23 the voices of certain constituencies. We deserve  
24 to know who drew the maps to know what was their  
25 interest. But secondly, I want to know who drew  
the maps because I want to know who to hold

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1 accountable. In the absence of that, there is  
2 the citizens initiative that was filed earlier  
3 this week, the poison pill to hold politicians  
4 accountable for trying to subvert the will of the  
5 voters, to overturn the Citizens Redistricting  
6 Commission. That initiative would bar anyone who  
7 voted for the map or voted for the ACA. Today  
8 from seeking election for 10 years.

9 MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, Mr. DeMaio. Mr.  
10 Schultz, please state your point of order

11 MR. SHULTZ: Thank you. Mr. Speaker would  
12 ask the speaker at the time to direct his  
13 comments to the bill and not anything external to  
14 our process today. Thank you. Thank you, Mr.  
15 Schultz, your point is well taken. Mr. DeMaio,  
16 please state of the merits of the the  
17 legislation.

18 MEMBER DEMAIO: Well, I'm trying to get the  
19 who because in the absence of knowing who, to  
20 hold accountable for this gerrymandered map, we  
21 must hold everyone involved in the. Call it a  
22 conspiracy, a collusion, whatever you want to  
23 call it, the effort to subvert democracy. This  
24 map is partisan. You admit it's partisan. You  
25 want to seize congressional districts for your  
party. This map is self serving. A number of

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1 legislators allegedly are going to get  
2 congressional districts drawn for themselves.  
3 This map silences the voices of communities,  
4 cities and counties by splitting them up. And I  
5 have a colleague from San Bernardino who likes to  
6 always tell us how he fights for the tribes. But  
7 do you know that this map splits tribal  
8 reservations? Did you know that? I don't think  
9 you know that. You haven't even been bothered to  
10 look at the map. Most of you. Agua Caliente is  
11 split. Santa Rosa tribe split. Rincon split,  
12 split. San Pasqual tribe, split. Mesa Grande  
13 split. Sequan tribe split. La Posta tribe  
14 split. Campo tribe split. Morongo tribe split.  
15 Round Valley tribe split. Did you bother to  
16 consult the Native American governments with  
17 sovereignty? No. I checked with several of  
18 their representatives. Not a single call. But  
19 you split those tribal governments, scattering  
20 them across different congressional districts.  
21 So much for minority rights. So much for the  
22 voice of the people. 30 seconds. We want to  
23 know who drew the maps. But in the absence of  
24 that, I will tell every single Californian in the  
25 next seven weeks as we educate them as to what  
really this initiative does. You want to hold

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1 people accountable, hold the majority party  
2 accountable for everyone who voted for this, who  
3 wasted our money. And by the way, Mr. Newsom,  
4 when your campaign for president ends, kindly  
5 transfer your campaign treasury over to the state  
6 of California. Thank you, Assemblymember Demaio.  
7 Thank you. Thank you, Assemblymember DeMaio.  
8 Assemblymember Tangipa, you are recognized.  
9 MEMBER TANGIPA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So this  
10 is how liberty dies. With thunderous applause.  
11 That's what we've seen. That's the actions we've  
12 had today. I grew up always in a toxic  
13 relationship, in an abusive relationship. You  
14 could see it from 100 miles away. When you hide  
15 behind platitudes and. And percentages. When  
16 we're saying that 76% of this map remains the  
17 same. That means 24%, but in raw numbers, that  
18 means 10 million Californians. 24% of this map  
19 is only a huge majority of this state.  
20 Republicans only represent 18%. So that means  
21 100% of the Republican representative  
22 representation in this state has changed. We can  
23 see it. We see the toxic relationship, the  
24 gaslighting coming out of this legislative body  
25 and we're losing transparency that was built  
under the Citizens Redistricting Commission on

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1 how maps are allocated. People loved. People  
2 may not have always loved every outcome, but they  
3 knew the process was open and they knew who was  
4 responsible. But with the maps before us today,  
5 we can't say the same thing. In fact, we can't  
6 answer the most basic question. Who drew the  
7 maps? Who decided which cities should be kept  
8 whole and which should be divided? Who made the  
9 judgment call about where communities of interest  
10 begin and end? I asked nine different questions  
11 and got nine different answers. Was it the  
12 Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee as  
13 reported by the media? Was it Paul Mitchell and  
14 special interests as stated in a podcast? Was it  
15 Democrat leadership as stated by my colleagues on  
16 the election committee? Or is it the assembly  
17 and Senate Elections Committee as written in the  
18 bill? You couldn't even say that. And it's in  
19 the legislation that somehow it was prepared by  
20 me on the Elections committee. Couldn't even get  
21 that part right. The lack of authorship and the  
22 lack of transparency should trouble every  
23 Californian, regardless of your political  
24 ideologies. Normally, when the commission does  
25 its work, there are dozens, dozens of political  
hearings. There are transcripts. There are

1 recorded votes. There are explanations of  
2 criteria, details about competing priorities.  
3 Here there is nothing. These maps simply  
4 appeared handed to us in 11th, in the 11th hour,  
5 even as we. As if we're supposed to take them on  
6 faith. But democracy doesn't run on faith. It  
7 runs on accountability. If we cannot point to  
8 the people who drew the lines, how can the voters  
9 have confidence in them? And let us look at  
10 these maps. Let's look at what these maps do.  
11 In city after city, neighborhoods are carved up.  
12 Communities are fought for decades to have their  
13 voices heard, split all into pieces. And let me  
14 ask this plainly. How does it benefit a city to  
15 be broken into small fragments across multiple  
16 congressional districts? Does Fresno gain  
17 strength by being cut into four different seats?  
18 Or does it simply dilute the voices of its  
19 residents? We are told that these maps protect  
20 Californians against gerrymandering in other  
21 states. You removed that language this morning  
22 and didn't even tell anybody. But secrecy is in  
23 its own form of gerrymandering. When lines are  
24 drawn behind closed, closed doors, without  
25 explanation, without participation, and without  
accountability. We invite the very abuse our

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1 commission, the gold standard was set out to  
2 prevent. So I ask this again. Who drew the  
3 maps? Why won't anybody say it? If this is  
4 truly about fairness, why not allow the Citizens  
5 Redistricting Commission, which voters created  
6 precisely for this person, to do its job? Job?  
7 Why, Rush? Why the secrecy? At the end of the  
8 day, Californians deserve to know who is drawing  
9 the lines that will shape their communities for  
10 the next decade. They deserve to see the process  
11 that the process and trust that is fair.  
12 Anything less undermines the very foundation of a  
13 representative government. Our votes created the  
14 Citizens Redistricting Commission because they  
15 wanted fair maps, not political maps. They  
16 wanted a property process that belongs to them.  
17 Not politicians, not insiders, and certainly not  
18 partisan, anonymous map makers working in the  
19 shadows. California should remain a model for  
20 democracy, not a cautionary tale.

21 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: 30 seconds.

22 MR. SPEAKER: If we accept maps with no known  
23 authors and no known accountability, it doesn't  
24 matter how many times you say the word  
25 transparency, there is none. The saying goes, as  
California goes, so goes the nation. But passing

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1 this bill, it will now be, as Texas goes, so goes  
2 California. And for those reasons, I  
3 respectfully ask you to lead this nation by  
4 example and vote no on these maps, because you  
5 don't even know who did them.

6 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Assemblymember  
7 Macedo, you're recognized.

8 MEMBER MACEDO: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm  
9 not sure how many of you watched the elections  
10 committee this week, so I want to walk you  
11 through a few very key things that happened.  
12 First, there was an attorney there to be a  
13 technical witness. I asked him, who are you here  
14 on behalf of? He informed me that was protected  
15 by attorney client privilege. I asked him, who  
16 is paying you to be here? Once again, he  
17 wouldn't answer that question. So then I asked,  
18 are you being paid to be here? Once again, he  
19 didn't answer that question. So then, as my  
20 colleagues have stated, I asked the most  
21 fundamental and simplest of questions. Who drew  
22 the maps? So let me share the answers. I was  
23 shared with. First, it was Assembly. Here we  
24 are. Put your hands in the air if you drew the  
25 maps. Didn't see one go in the air. So then I  
was told it was the legislature. Once again,

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1 here we are. I'm part of the legislature. I  
2 didn't draw these maps. So then I was mocked for  
3 not being a part of leadership. That leadership  
4 and the leadership team drew these maps. The  
5 leadership team's here. Anybody want to own up  
6 to it? Our majority leader admitted she did not  
7 directly draw these maps, and she is Leadership.  
8 Is this the type of transparency you're promising  
9 voters that? I was mocked for asking that  
10 question. You're not mocking me. You're mocking  
11 voters by not answering that question. These  
12 maps, in the language it says the Assembly  
13 Elections Committee wrote it. That is seven  
14 people. Seven. Me and my colleague can say we  
15 did not participate in the drawing of these maps.  
16 So I am asking that this is factually incorrect  
17 in the bill and I am asking the author to remove  
18 the words the Assembly Elections Committee and  
19 include the Democrat colleagues on that committee  
20 that are willing to put their names on paper that  
21 they drew these maps because I will not be  
22 included in the debauchery that has happened with  
23 the drawing of these maps. Are you requesting to  
24 ask a question of the author? I'm requesting  
25 that the author takes the amendment that we  
remove the Assembly Elections Committee language

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1 because I do not want. I am one of seven people.  
2 That is a small group of people that you have  
3 lumped me in with when I didn't even know my  
4 member. Portal did not even say that I had an  
5 Elections committee hearing until 20, less than  
6 24 hours before the hearing. Concurrences cannot  
7 be amended. Then I am asking a question of the  
8 author. I will address without objection. I  
9 will address this in my clothes. Thank you.  
10 This is not transparency, and you know it's not.  
11 You can stand here and admonish us all day long,  
12 but this is fundamental to your entire lecture  
13 today, that this is the most transparent process.  
14 The chair of this committee didn't even know that  
15 the maps had been amended. And you want to say  
16 that the Elections Committee drafted these maps.  
17 This is wrong, this is deceit, and I will make  
18 sure the voters know that. Assemblymember Flora,  
19 you're recognized.

20 MEMBER FLORA: Thank you, Madam Speaker.  
21 Colleagues, there's been a lot said today and  
22 I'll keep my remarks very short. There's a lot  
23 of emotions today on both sides. Clearly there's  
24 a lot of emotions with the federal government on  
25 how people feel about that. Not a single one of  
us have said, what Texas is doing is good, what

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1 California is about to do is good. But it's  
2 because of emotions. And because of that  
3 emotion, we have policy. If you do policy that  
4 is emotional, it usually turns out bad. And one  
5 way or the other. So I rise on behalf of a  
6 community 33 miles south of here, community of  
7 just under 69,000 people called Lodi. Lodi is  
8 split into three congressional districts almost  
9 in the center of town. A community that is by  
10 and large family have been there for generations.  
11 A farming community. We have now split that.  
12 Parents voting differently than their kids, than  
13 their grandparents, colleagues. When we do  
14 things that are emotional, we get bad policy.  
15 When we talk about keeping communities together.  
16 Splitting a community of 68,000 people is simply  
17 wrong. And my heart truly goes out to Lodi and I  
18 know there's other examples that have been  
19 stated, but this needs to be fixed. It truly,  
20 truly does. We need to take the emotion out of  
21 policy so we can create good policy and we move  
22 forward. Thank you. I respectfully asked for a  
23 no vote. Assemblymember Flora, Assemblymember  
24 Patterson, you are recognized.

25 MEMBER PATTERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.  
I appreciate the opportunity. Today, these maps.

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1 I'm going to answer a question for one of my  
2 colleagues on the other side of the aisle. The  
3 worst kept secret in Sacramento history. There  
4 aren't very many secrets in this place. This is  
5 definitely not one. I was looking at an exchange  
6 between two members of our press corps where one  
7 member kept asking elected officials, because,  
8 you know, maybe elected officials answer these  
9 questions like who drew these maps? And you  
10 know, that question was kind of asked a lot  
11 because, you know, it's an important question.  
12 And another member of the press corps said, oh,  
13 come on, everybody knows who drew the maps.  
14 Actually, they were just on a podcast saying they  
15 drew the maps. So the worst kept secret in  
16 America is that Democratic consultant Paul  
17 Mitchell drew these maps and told you all to  
18 adopt it. And so there's no secret. We all knew  
19 that. We all knew that. But I think what's,  
20 what's. What's interesting is that there.  
21 What's even not a secret is that one of the  
22 presenters of the bill said something and, and I  
23 want to ask the author, and I'll put down my mic.  
24 One of the co presenters had mentioned in  
25 committee said specifically these are partisan,  
gerrymandered maps. That is what was said in

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1 committee by our co presenter. And I would just  
2 like to know if that's your feeling as well with  
3 that. Also, I respectfully asked for a no vote.  
4 Thank you, Assemblymember Patterson.

5 Assemblymember Gallagher, you are recognized.

6 MEMBER GALLAGHER: Yeah, thank you, Mr.  
7 Speaker. And first of all, I just want to say I  
8 do write all of my own speech speeches. You  
9 know, I don't need the governor's press office to  
10 write my speeches like the speaker does. And  
11 just a moment, Mr. Gallagher. Assemblymember  
12 Berman, you're recognized.

13 MEMBER BERMAN: I want to ask in his own  
14 words, definitely not the gentleman. Not the  
15 gentleman. The person from Nicholas. Not to  
16 insult people on the floor and to keep his  
17 comments to the bill that we're debating. Thank  
18 you, assembly member Berman, your point is well  
19 taken, Leader Gallagher. Please do not impugn.  
20 Please be respectful, be decorous, follow the  
21 rules of debate as always.

22 MEMBER GALLAGHER: I only speak the truth,  
23 and I can do no other, Mr. Speaker. And you  
24 know, and apparently the majority leader's speech  
25 was written yesterday because she read those  
remarks. You are out of order, Mr. Gallagher.

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1 This is the last warning. If you don't abide by  
2 the rules of this House, we will move on. In her  
3 remarks, she says that this is only if Texas  
4 moves forward. And we all know from the  
5 amendment this morning that Texas is not a  
6 condition of moving forward with this partisan  
7 gerrymander. But let's just talk actually about  
8 you guys saying fighting fire with fire, like  
9 what is actually happening, because right now,  
10 actually, Texas and California are very similar.  
11 The minority party in both states gets about 40%  
12 of the vote. Democrats get about 40% in Texas.  
13 Here in California, we get around 40% here on  
14 statewide votes. But right now, Texas  
15 congressional delegation is made up of 30%  
16 Democrats. You know how much it is here in  
17 California? 17%. So already disparity. And  
18 even if Texas does move forward, they would be.  
19 If they're successful in getting five seats in  
20 Texas, they'd actually still be better than us in  
21 representation because 18% of the delegation  
22 would be Democrats. And meanwhile, here at 17.  
23 And what you guys are doing with these maps is  
24 taking us down to 7%. That's fair. That's  
25 representation. That's fire with fire. Seems  
like a sledgehammer. And more importantly, it's

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1 not about party. It's about taking away people's  
2 rights of representation. Places. Places that  
3 have meaning, that have values, that have certain  
4 views on. They share industries. And you can't  
5 sit here and tell me that a map for all of us to  
6 see from MODOC to Marin county is fair  
7 representation, that that meets the  
8 constitutional principles of compactness that are  
9 in our Article 21 of the Constitution. This  
10 specifically says districts shall not be drawn to  
11 encourage geographic. That they shall be drawn  
12 to encourage geographical compactness such that  
13 nearby areas of population are not bypassed for  
14 more distant population. And that's exactly what  
15 that map does, and you know it. And the majority  
16 leader knows this because we both represent  
17 districts, and I think we do it pretty well. We  
18 stand up for our people. We fight for the things  
19 that are in their interests. We represent them  
20 well. And in Congress, I have A representative  
21 Doug LaMalfa, who does that. And you have one  
22 Mr. Mike Thompson, who does the same thing. And  
23 those congressmen actually work together on a lot  
24 of issues on water issues and that bipartisan  
25 Fashion actually is very helpful when  
administrations change. But what this is going

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1 to do is blow that all up and create a one party  
2 system. And here's the other thing. Who gets to  
3 decide who gets represented? Not the people, the  
4 parties and the party insiders and the people who  
5 have the favored inside track. And I'm only  
6 saying what's been reported is that one of the  
7 most powerful politicians in this legislature,  
8 the pro tem, is reported to have been involved in  
9 drawing a district that favors him that he plans  
10 to run in. I don't know if that's a fact, but it  
11 has been reported. 30 seconds. And I think  
12 that's a big problem, that the people don't  
13 longer get to choose who the representative is,  
14 but the party insiders do. And that is the real  
15 issue here. And guys, I'm just going to end on  
16 this because it is important you don't stand up  
17 to this governor. You never have. And he is  
18 doing wrong things and he is pushing you and he  
19 insults you all the time and says he jams you.  
20 And this is what he's got to do and he's going to  
21 push it through. And for all this talk, man,  
22 that I've heard on this floor today, I just don't  
23 understand it.

24 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember  
25 Gallagher, while you always bow and go to the  
beck. Thank you, Assemblymember Gallagher.

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1 Thank you, Assemblymember Gallagher.

2 Assemblymember Ellis, you are recognized. I'd  
3 like to know who drew the maps.

4 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: I do too.

5 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, assembly member  
6 Ellis, Assemblymember Davies, you are recognized.

7 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: On behalf of  
8 500,000 Californians, I'd like to know who do the  
9 maps.

10 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember  
11 Davies. Assemblymember Dixon.

12 MEMBER DIXON: I too, on behalf of Assembly  
13 District 72, 500,000 Californians who drew the  
14 maps.

15 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assemblymember  
16 Dixon. Assemblymember Mark Gonzalez, you are  
17 recognized.

18 MEMBER GONZALEZ: Let's be clear, members.  
19 I write my own talking points, so let's start  
20 with that. And let's also be clear that the maps  
21 didn't just come out of thin air. They were  
22 drawn through California's process with experts  
23 and community input years ago. Don't act brand  
24 new. What frustrates me is that people keep  
25 obsessing over who held the pen instead of why  
these maps even matter in the first place. This

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1 isn't a Scooby Doo mystery. There's no mask to  
2 rip off, no hidden villain. The process was  
3 open, transparent and accountable from day one.  
4 And let's be honest, the hypocrisy is glaring.  
5 Reporters aren't grilling Republicans in Texas  
6 about who's drawing their maps, even though those  
7 maps are blatant gerrymandering designed to  
8 silence voters and lock in power. I don't hear  
9 anybody on the right side saying that because  
10 they know that they're wrong. But here in  
11 California, we followed the rules and did it  
12 right. Suddenly, it's treated like a scandal.  
13 Meanwhile, Republicans in Texas, Florida and  
14 across the country are actively rigging districts  
15 to silent voters and protect Donald Trump, your  
16 hero. California is not going to sit back and  
17 let them cheat their way into power. These maps  
18 are about protecting our democracy and making  
19 sure every community here has a fair voice,  
20 period. Thank you, Assembly member Gonzalez.  
21 Summit member Gallagher, state your point of  
22 order.

23 MEMBER GONZALEZ: My point of order this,  
24 Mr. Speaker, is there's been a lot of things that  
25 misstate the facts in the record through our  
committee process and, and what we know today on

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1 the floor, one is that the election. Excuse me,  
2 Mr. Gallagher. What is the rule that has been  
3 violated? State your point of order. Misstates  
4 the testimony and the record. Your point is not  
5 well taken. Okay. Appeal. Assembly member.  
6 Assembly member Ramos, you are recognized.

7 MEMBER RAMOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And  
8 I'm sitting here and hearing the different  
9 debates going on from colleagues from both sides  
10 of the aisle. But I have to raise my mic and be  
11 able to talk about when a colleague from the  
12 other side is talking about history, talking  
13 about California's first people and drawing them  
14 into this conversation. Where was that voice?  
15 Where was that voice when this state was taken  
16 from them? Where was that voice when their  
17 representation isn't there? Where was that voice  
18 when they were being murdered in the state of  
19 California? And now you want to bring them into  
20 this debate because it benefits you. These are  
21 things that we have to come together and look at.  
22 But when you start to exploit the history in the  
23 state of California and. And for your own gain  
24 is the same tactics that were used when this land  
25 was stolen and murdered people of our culture to  
get it. I would rather you stand up for all of

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1 those things, all those bad things, than to bring  
2 them in to justify your seeing what's going on  
3 here. You should not, and you should be ashamed  
4 of yourself to bring in the history. Because we  
5 all know in these chambers the atrocity, the  
6 genocide, the bloods that shed and the bones that  
7 are still in the archives of many institutions in  
8 this state who still call our remains of our  
9 ancestors trophies in their backyard. It's time  
10 that we come together. And if you want to bring  
11 things forward for your own gain, this body will  
12 not stand for it. It's time that we stand for  
13 the voices of all California Indian people and  
14 stand up when they are brought into these debates  
15 for your own gain. That's the same tactic that  
16 was used in colonization and. Mr. Speaker, I  
17 called the member out. I called the member out  
18 for using our people for self gain. That's what  
19 brought down the state of California. That's  
20 what the history is, what we're still fighting  
21 for in the state of California. And when he  
22 brings up lines in land that has been drawn.  
23 Drawn on stolen land. Come on. He should be  
24 reprimanded for even bringing those things  
25 forward to this floor. It's time that we stand  
in one unified voice. And when we talk about

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1 debate, let's have it. But if you want to go  
2 back into history and. And start to look at what  
3 has happened and somehow smirk and smile about  
4 the murders that took place against our people,  
5 this body will not stand for it. Yes. Thank  
6 you. Assemblymember Ramos. Assemblymember  
7 DeMaio, you are recognized.

8 MEMBER DEMAIO: Mr. Speaker, I believe the  
9 member from San Bernardino would like to change  
10 his vote on ACA 8. Mr. DeMaio, your point is not  
11 well taken. Assembly Member Macedo, you are  
12 recognized.

13 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Mr. Speaker, I have  
14 a point of parliamentary inquiry.

15 MR. SPEAKER: State your point.

16 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: I would like to ask  
17 if it would be possible to submit a letter to the  
18 Journal based on my colleague's testimony that we  
19 are willing to say who drew the maps. That it is  
20 not the Assembly Elections Committee. That based  
21 on his testimony.

22 MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, Assembly member  
23 Macedo, you're asking whether or not it is  
24 appropriate.

25 MEMBER MACEDO: I am asking.

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me. You're asking. Let

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1 me finish. Whether or not you can submit a  
2 letter to the Journal. Why you're submitting a  
3 letter to the Journal is irrelevant to your  
4 inquiry. Is that your question?

5 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Yes, sir.

6 MR. SPEAKER: Just a moment, Ms. Macedo. So,  
7 Ms. Macedo, to answer your question, it is  
8 appropriate if you have a letter. Where is that  
9 letter?

10 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: I was unaware that  
11 the testimony would be given on the 4th.

12 MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me. Please answer the  
13 question. Where is your letter?

14 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: I cannot prepare  
15 for something if I'm not.

16 MR. SPEAKER: The answer to your inquiry is  
17 if you had a letter, we would be able to vote  
18 whether or not that letter could be accepted.

19 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Then I asked a  
20 motion for recess to draft my letter and then we  
21 can come back and vote.

22 MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved and seconded  
23 that we recessed. Just a moment, please. It's  
24 been moved and seconded that we recess  
25 temporarily. Takes a majority of those present  
and voting. Clerk will open the roll. Clerk

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1 will open the roll motion by Macedo. We'll wait  
2 till the roll is open. All those vote who desire  
3 to vote. Ms. Macedo is asking for an I vote.  
4 Majority Leader is asking for a no vote. All  
5 those vote who desire to vote. All those vote  
6 who desire to vote. Clerk will close the roll.  
7 Tally the votes. Ayes 19, nos. 52. The motion  
8 fails. State your point of order, Mr. Gallagher.

9 MR. GALLAGHER: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Let me  
10 try to address this issue. State your point of  
11 order, Mr. Gallagher. The point of order is that  
12 the bill says that the Elections Committee drew  
13 the maps. And that is factually incorrect based  
14 on the test. Okay, Your point is not well taken.  
15 Members, let's take a step back for a moment.  
16 Let me give you a quick lesson on what a point of  
17 order is. When you raise your microphone for a  
18 point of order, you need to state the rule that's  
19 being violated. And we're speaking of the House  
20 rules. That is the point of order that you need  
21 to make. Mr. Gallagher, I'm going to recognize  
22 you again. The point of order is it factually  
23 misstates the testimony in the record, in the  
24 legislative record. Thank you, Mr. Gallagher.  
25 That is not a violation of the House rules. Your  
point is not well taken. We will continue

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1 proceeding on debate on this measure, seeing and  
2 hearing no further debate. Assemblymember  
3 Gallagher, you have already spoken on the point  
4 of order. Mr. Gallagher, you are out of order.  
5 Seeing and hearing no further debate. Madam  
6 Majority Leader, do you wish to close?

7 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Thank you  
8 colleagues for this debate. And I want to thank  
9 you to my colleague, Senator Gonzalez, for  
10 partnership in this important issue. Let me  
11 answer some of the questions that were raised  
12 here today and over this week. The map in AB604  
13 was drawn in partnership with a group that  
14 includes legislative leadership and a team of its  
15 members, Members of Congress, leading independent  
16 redistricting experts and groups that have worked  
17 on more than 100 city and county non partisan  
18 independent redistricting efforts and legal  
19 counsel to review and assure we meet all the  
20 requirements of our state and the federal laws  
21 and constitutions. We use the work of the  
22 Independent Commission and their many hours of  
23 hearings and public testimony. Our maps keeps  
24 more cities whole. 60 compared to 57 in the  
25 Commission's map. We respected constitutional  
guidelines, including communities of interest and

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1 seeking more compact and contiguous districts.  
2 In fact, under this map, 76.7 of Californians  
3 stay in the same district drawn by the  
4 Commission. The Commission maps were public for  
5 14 days and approved by 14 commissioners. These  
6 maps will be public for 74 or 5 days. I got to  
7 remember that and tens of millions of California  
8 voters.

9 MR. SPEAKER: Madam Majority Leader, just a  
10 moment, please. Assembly member Tangipa you are  
11 recognized for your point of order.

12 MEMBER TANGIPA: Well, and a point of  
13 clarification. The comments. Sir, you are  
14 recognized for your point of order. The comments  
15 that were made are not in the legislation and  
16 those comments should be included in the  
17 legislation if that's what's being done. That is  
18 not a point of order. If you're saying that her  
19 speech is not just germane to the bill, your  
20 point is not well taken. Anything further, Mr.  
21 Tangipa? A point of clarification. Thank you,  
22 Mr. Tangipa. We're going to continue. Madam  
23 Majority Leader, you may continue.

24 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: This is the most  
25 transparent than any other process in the  
country. In an ideal world. In an ideal world,

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1 we not need to go through this process. We  
2 respect the work of the Independent Redistricting  
3 Commission. In fact, the only challenges to the  
4 work of the Independent Redistricting Commission  
5 map came from the Republican challenges in 2011.  
6 Those challenges did not give voters a chance to  
7 decide. And yes, the cost is worth it. We are  
8 fighting to ensure Californians have at least a  
9 fair chance in next year's election. And the  
10 stakes are high. Maybe that's why the  
11 Republicans in this country are so afraid to let  
12 the voters have a say. Maybe it's because they  
13 know why this president and Washington  
14 Republicans are trying to rig the 2026 elections.  
15 They can't run on their record. A record that in  
16 seven short months have been devastating to  
17 working Californians and Americans across the  
18 country while benefiting only the wealthy. A  
19 record that includes cutting fresh food from  
20 family farmers that feeds our school children,  
21 closing rural hospitals and clinics, cutting  
22 health care for 3.5 million California seniors  
23 and the most in need, separating immigrant  
24 families who work in and contribute to our  
25 communities. Families guilty of nothing. Not  
nothing, but they just want to seek a better

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1 life. And turning the clock back 50 years on  
2 women's reproductive rights. If you want to stop  
3 this.

4 MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, Madam Majority  
5 Leader.

6 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Pardon me.

7 MR. SPEAKER: Assemblymember Macedo, you are  
8 recognized for your point of order.

9 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: I have my letter  
10 prepared and would like to submit it to the  
11 record. Based on the testimony on the floor  
12 today.

13 MR. SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.  
14 Point of point is not well taken. Excuse me,  
15 we're not in motions and resolutions. Your point  
16 is not well taken.

17 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: You asked me for my  
18 letter.

19 MR. SPEAKER: Members, we're in the last  
20 minute debate. We do not use parliamentary  
21 procedure as a mechanism to debate bills. Not a  
22 majority leader may continue.

23 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: If you want this to  
24 stop, the easiest way to do this would be to use  
25 all this passion demanding this president to stop  
trying to rig next year's Elections. Help your

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1 DC colleagues pass Democratic and Republican  
2 bills to prevent mid decade gerrymandering and  
3 have an independent redistricting process in  
4 every single state. Until you succeed, we will  
5 continue to fight for the interests of  
6 Californians. Colleagues, I am very proud to ask  
7 you for your I vote today for AB604.

8 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you madam Majority  
9 Leader. All debate having ceased, the Clerk will  
10 open the roll. All members vote. You desire to  
11 vote? All members vote who desire to vote.  
12 Members, this measure requires 54 votes. All  
13 members vote who desire to vote. Clerk will  
14 close the roll. Tally the votes. Ayes 54 knows  
15 20 on the urgency eyes 54 knows 20 on the  
16 measure. Senate amendments are concurred in  
17 without objection. Immediate transmittal to the  
18 governor. Members, we now must continue with  
19 business on the daily file reading of the  
20 previous day's journal. Assembly Assembly  
21 Chamber Sacramento Thursday, July 17, 2025 the  
22 assembly met at 9am The Honorable Josh Lowenthal,  
23 Speaker Protein Leader Agar Curry moves and Mr.  
24 Flora seconds that the reading of the previous  
25 day's journal be dispensed with presentations and  
petitions. There are none. Introduction and

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1 reference of bills will be deferred. Reports of  
2 committees will be deemed read and amendments  
3 deemed adopted. Messages from the Governor?  
4 There are none. Messages from the Senate? There  
5 are none. Moving on to motions and resolutions.  
6 The absences for the day for bereavement.  
7 Assembly member Addis moving. Moving back to  
8 procedural motions. Madam Majority Leader,  
9 you're recognized for your procedural motions.

10 MEMBER ADDIS: I request unanimous consent  
11 to suspend Assembly Rule 45.5 to allow assembly  
12 members Alanis, Sharp, Collins and Wicks to speak  
13 on adjournment and memory today.

14 MR. SPEAKER: That Objection. Such shall be  
15 the order.

16 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: I request unanimous  
17 consent to Suspend Assembly Rule 118A to allow  
18 assembly members Alanis, Quercilvo and Wicks to  
19 have guests in the rear of the chamber today.

20 MR. SPEAKER: Non. Objection. Such shall be  
21 the order.

22 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: I request unanimous  
23 consent to rescind the action whereby on July  
24 7th, 17th, 2025 SB 255 sierto was read a third  
25 time, passed and sent to the Senate. Please  
order this bill back to the third reading file.

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1 MR. SPEAKER: Objection. Such shall be the  
2 order. Members, I'm rescinding the action by  
3 which I referred AB786 Salache to the banking and  
4 Finance Committee pursuant to Assembly Rule 77.2.  
5 Madam Majority Leader, I request unanimous  
6 consent.

7 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: To return AB 786  
8 Salache to the Senate for further action.

9 MR. SPEAKER: Not Objection. Such shall be  
10 the order. Mr. Alanis, we're going to be getting  
11 to you in just a moment. Please Members, the  
12 quorum call is in place. We have more business  
13 on the daily file. Please take your desk.  
14 Moving to business on the daily file. Second  
15 reading. The clerk will read Senate Bills 21,  
16 3403-743894-46440, 4474-804895-04506, 5075-  
17 446096-17626, 6716-867317-64792, 847, 854, 857,  
18 859, 30, 40, 62, 68, 81, 97, 233, 262, 283, 3043-  
19 583623-95415, 4534-564664-70486, 4935-125135-  
20 43547, 5486-256306-70697, 777, 805, 825, 841.  
21 Senate Bill 98 with amendments, 627 with  
22 amendments and Senate Bill 400 with amendments.  
23 Okay. All bills will be deemed read and all  
24 amendments will be deemed adopted as the items on  
25 concurrence. Excuse me, Madam Majority Leader,  
you are recognized. Yes.

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1 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: At the request of  
2 the author, please move file item 30, SB 97  
3 Grayson to the inactive file.

4 MR. SPEAKER: Clerk will note. Now we're  
5 going to the items on concurrence. We're going  
6 to pass and retain on all items. Getting to the  
7 assembly third reading. Going to pass and retain  
8 on all items. Senate third reading. File item  
9 77, 145. We're going to pass and retain on all  
10 items other than file item 145, which has been  
11 dispensed with Members. We are now lifting the  
12 call on the consent calendar. Clerk will post on  
13 the consent calendar all those vote who desire to  
14 vote. All members vote who desire to vote. All  
15 members vote who desire to vote. Clerk will  
16 close the roll. Tally the votes. I77, no. 0.  
17 Consent calendar is adopted. Clerk will read the  
18 remaining items on consent. House Resolution 49,  
19 I77, no. 0, Senate Bill 621, I77, no. 0 Senate  
20 Bill 440, I77, no. 0 senate bill 392, I77, no.  
21 0 SENATE BILL 510, I77, no Senate Bill 598, I77,  
22 no. 0 CONATE BILL 856, I77, no. 0 SECATE BILL  
23 733, I77, no. 0 SUREATE BILL 858, I77, no. 0  
24 SERATE Concurrent Resolution 97, I77, no. 0 AND  
25 SENATE Concurrent Resolution 99, I77, no. 0  
Members, we're moving on to adjournment's memory.

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1 The quorum call remains in place. Please give  
2 our respectful attention to those who were  
3 granted prior permission to speak on their  
4 adjournment. In memory. Please take all  
5 conversation off the floor. Please take all  
6 conversations off the floor. Assembly member  
7 Alanis, you are recognized for your adjournment  
8 and memory.

9 MEMBER ALANIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And  
10 first off, I just want to apologize to the family  
11 for having us take so long to have you guys  
12 recognized. So thank you for your patience.  
13 Colleagues, it's with a heavy heart that I ask  
14 that we adjourn in memory for Avery Roxanne  
15 Mellerek Avery will be remembered as a  
16 compassionate young woman who brought light into  
17 any room she walked into. Avery was taken from  
18 this world too soon following a car accident on  
19 June 21st of this year, Avery was pursuing her  
20 love for cinematic film arts at the California  
21 State University Northridge and spent her summer  
22 breaks giving back to the Modesto community at  
23 Camp Taylor. In my district, she gave back. As  
24 a camp counselor, Avery was focused on improving  
25 the lives of children with heart conditions.  
Camp Taylor is only one of eight medically

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1 supervised camps focused on serving children with  
2 heart disease. After graduation, Avery hoped to  
3 combine her love for film and her passion for the  
4 children at Camp Taylor by making documentaries  
5 about the stories of children born with heart  
6 conditions. Avery's cheerful personality will  
7 continue to shine through memories with her  
8 competitive cheer team, serving as a role model  
9 to young children and energetically cheering on  
10 the Sacramento Kings. Avery chose to be an organ  
11 donor, a decision that shaped by personal  
12 experiences with her brother Ethan and her best  
13 friend Anneliese, both who have received heart  
14 transplants. Through her final act of  
15 generosity, Avery continues to touch lives and  
16 saved others. Today, we are joined by Avery's  
17 beloved family here in the back of the room,  
18 including her mother, Sierra, her older brother  
19 Ethan, her stepfather Jason, her aunts Joanna and  
20 Vanessa, and her Camp Taylor friends and family,  
21 who are also up in the gallery. I want to extend  
22 my condolences to Avery's family, her friends,  
23 and the Camp Taylor community. Thank you for  
24 allowing me to honor Avery's life here on the  
25 assembly floor, and I ask that we adjourn in  
memory of Avery. Thank you.

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1 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assembly member  
2 Alanis. Members, let us observe a moment of  
3 silence to honor the life of Avery. Roxanne  
4 Millerick just a moment, Ms. Wicks.  
5 Assemblymember Wicks, you are recognized for your  
6 adjournment and memory.

7 MAJORITY LEADER GARCIA: Thank you, Mr.  
8 Speaker and members, I rise to adjourn in the  
9 memory of Zona Roberts, an unwavering champion of  
10 the of disability rights and a trailblazer of the  
11 independent living movement. Zona was born in  
12 Portland in 1920 and grew up between Oregon and  
13 California. She met her husband, Verne Roberts  
14 through a mutual friend in high school, and they  
15 had four sons together. Zona's eldest son, Ed  
16 Roberts, contracted polio in 1953 when he was  
17 only 14 years old. Ed spent 18 months in the  
18 hospital, and when he was finally able to come  
19 home, he did so as a quadriplegic. This spurred  
20 Zona's transformation into a tireless advocate  
21 for for inclusion and accessibility. Battling  
22 educational, medical, and societal bureaucracies  
23 and prejudice. She was steadfast in her fight  
24 for Ed to have the rights and opportunities that  
25 he deserved, starting with his right to go to  
school. She worked alongside Ed to establish

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1 support for individuals with disabilities, both  
2 at the University of California and in the  
3 broader East Bay community. At the age of 44,  
4 Zona enrolled at UC Berkeley, where she received  
5 her bachelor's degree and her teaching  
6 credential. During that time, her Berkeley home,  
7 known as the Greenhouse, became a gathering place  
8 not just for disabled students, but also for  
9 teachers, doctors, riders and visitors studying  
10 the growing community of disability activists.  
11 Through those gatherings, she created one of the  
12 earliest models of independent living. Zona  
13 passed away on January 10th at the age of 104.  
14 She was preceded by her beloved sons, Ed, Ron,  
15 and Randy. She is survived by her son Mark, her  
16 grandchildren and great grandchildren. She also  
17 leaves behind an endless number of friends who  
18 will miss her dearly. We can all learn from  
19 Zona's unwavering belief in human dignity and the  
20 tenacity with which she advocated not only for  
21 her son, but for every disabled person to realize  
22 their potential. Zona's contributions will  
23 continue to resonate in the fight for equity and  
24 dignity for every individual. Her legacy will  
25 live on in communities and across this nation.  
Zona's son Mark, and many of her friends and

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1 family are with us here today in the gallery to  
2 celebrate her amazing and purposeful life. I  
3 respectfully ask that the assembly join me in  
4 adjourning in her memory today.

5 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Assembly member  
6 Wicks. Members, let us observe a moment of  
7 silence to honor the life of this historic  
8 Californian, Zona Roberts. Assembly member  
9 Sharpe Collins, you are recognized for your  
10 adjournment in memory.

11 MEMBER SHARPE COLLINS: Thank you, Mr.  
12 Speaker. Today I rise to remember a man whose  
13 name became synonymous with leadership,  
14 dedication, and service to the city of La Mesa,  
15 located in San Diego, the Honorable Arthur Art  
16 Madrid. Art's story is one of perseverance,  
17 service, and deep commitment to community. Born  
18 in New Mexico in 1934, Art came to La Mesa as a  
19 teenager, quickly developing the strong sense of  
20 civic pride that would define his life's work.  
21 He served his country in the United States Marine  
22 Corps and later worked for Pacific Belle, a man  
23 who knew both the discipline of service and the  
24 value of hard work. Art's political journey  
25 began with his work for the then San Diego mayor,  
Pete Wilson. But it was in La Mesa that his

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1 public service truly flourished. Elected to city  
2 council in 1981 and then as mayor in 1990, Art  
3 would lead the city for 24 years, a remarkable  
4 run marked by his vision, tenacity, and results.  
5 He never shied away from bold action, even when  
6 it brought national headlines, as in 1994, when  
7 he took on a controversial stand against  
8 prostitution within our community. His  
9 leadership was recognized far and wide. The  
10 American Society of Public Administrators named  
11 him San Diego County's outstanding elected  
12 official, and the San Diego Magazine listed him  
13 Amongst the top 50 people to watch as they knew  
14 about his millennial approach beyond our city  
15 limits, Art shaped regional and statewide policy  
16 as chair of the San Diego association of  
17 Governments, president of the San Diego Division  
18 of the League of California Cities, and President  
19 of the California Council of Governments. He  
20 believed deeply in collaboration and that cities  
21 and communities were stronger when they worked  
22 together. His courage as a public servant was  
23 matched only by his resilience and as a person.  
24 For all of his public accomplishments, Art's  
25 greatest devotion was to his family. He and his  
beloved wife, Sally, shared decades together,

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1 raising four children. Life dealt them  
2 heartbreaking losses with the passing of their  
3 son to cancer and later Sally's own passing in  
4 2003. Yet even in grief, Art continued to serve,  
5 guided by a belief in giving back to the  
6 community that he truly loved. Art Madrid passed  
7 away peacefully at his La mesa home on June 6,  
8 2025, at the age of 90. And I can tell you, all  
9 the way up until that time, he was still  
10 advocating and fighting for his community.  
11 Today, we remember not only a mayor, but a  
12 neighbor, a veteran, a husband, a father, and a  
13 friend. His life reminds us that true public  
14 service is not measured just in years served or  
15 titles held, but in the lasting differences made  
16 in people's lives. So we honor his memory by  
17 continuing the work that he has so passionately  
18 believed in and building a community that is  
19 safe, strong and united. So, although today I am  
20 standing here saying goodbye, just know that we  
21 will also say thank you. And I'll continue to  
22 say thank you to Art for everything that he has  
23 done. So thank you, Mayor Madrid, for your  
24 leadership, your courage, and your heart. And  
25 your city will never, ever forget you. Thank  
you.

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1 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Dr. Sharp Collins.  
2 Members, please bring the names to the desk to be  
3 printed in the Journal. All requests to adjourn  
4 in memory will be deemed read and printed in the  
5 Journal. Moving on to announcements session  
6 schedules as follows. Friday, August 22nd.  
7 There's no floor session, no check in session.  
8 Monday, August 25th floor session at 1pm seeing  
9 and hearing no further business, I'm ready to  
10 entertain a motion to adjourn. Madam Majority  
11 leader moves and Mr. Patterson seconds that this  
12 House stands adjourned till Monday, August 25th,  
13 at 1pm Quorum calls lifted and we are adjourned.  
14 ( Off the record 6:30 p.m. )

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF CALIFORNIA )

COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO )

I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript was reported as stated in the caption, and the questions and answers thereto were reduced to typewriting under my direction; that the foregoing pages represent a true, complete, and correct transcript of the evidence given upon said deposition, and I further certify that I am not of kin or counsel to the parties in the case; am not in the employ of counsel for any of said parties; nor am I in a way interested in the result of said case.

This the 30th day of October 2025.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Charles Golding", is written over a horizontal line.

Charles Golding, CVR

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1 MR. FOSTER: The Capitol weekly podcast is  
2 supported by TASIN, the Tribal Alliance of  
3 Sovereign Indian Nations.

4 MR. EHISEN: Hello everybody, and welcome  
5 once again to the Capitol Weekly podcast. I am  
6 Capitol Weekly Editor Rich Ehsen.

7 Joined, as always, by my colleague and  
8 partner in crime, Tim Foster.

9 Tim, how are we doing today?

10 MR. FOSTER: I'm well, Rich. Thanks.

11 MR. EHISEN: Well, I always say we have a  
12 special show. Today we really have a special  
13 show because, unless you have been, I don't know,  
14 in a cave somewhere, you know the biggest story  
15 out there right now here in California, at least,  
16 is around redistricting and, essentially,  
17 California's ongoing war with the President of  
18 the United States.

19 And that right now is centered around  
20 something that used to make people's eyelids  
21 droop and nod off onto their keyboards,  
22 redistricting. And that is not making anybody  
23 fall asleep right now because, again, unless  
24 you've been in a cave somewhere, you know  
25 California is getting ready to release maps as we

1 are recording this.

2 This is going to probably come out right  
3 after the maps -- redrawn maps that voters will  
4 likely get to vote on in November will have just  
5 come out by the time this goes live.

6 And to help us discern everything going on  
7 there, we have the man himself, Paul Mitchell of  
8 Political Data, Inc., who has been tasked mostly,  
9 with a lot of help, which he'll acknowledge when  
10 he joins us here in just a moment, in putting  
11 together not just hyper partisan maps.

12 I really hope people pay attention here  
13 and listen to what he's saying about the care  
14 that went into creating these maps, and it might  
15 actually be very surprising to you.

16 So I just realize my cadence just went  
17 like Gavin Newsome. I have apparently watched  
18 way too many Gavin Newsome press conferences.

19 MR. FOSTER: Haven't we all.

20 MR. EHISEN: Haven't we all.

21 But before we get to that, really quick,  
22 Tim, why don't you update folks on when this  
23 one's going to run, and then we have a different  
24 schedule for the next podcast. So let us know  
25 what's going on there, Tim.

1 MR. FOSTER: Right. So normally we post  
2 these podcasts on Monday morning. And this  
3 episode, you may have noticed, is going live on a  
4 Friday. And that is because this information  
5 with Paul we thought was so timely that we needed  
6 to get it out as soon as possible. We actually  
7 recorded this with him before the maps were even  
8 posted.

9 So, in any case, today is Friday, if  
10 you're listening to this when it's brand new.  
11 And we are then going to have a little bit of a  
12 space between the next episode, because normally  
13 we do release them on Monday. We would release  
14 the next one on next Monday.

15 However, we have the top 100 coming up on  
16 August 26th and that's our annual look at  
17 California's top 100 power players who are not in  
18 elected office, and that will be on August 26th.

19 So we will release the next podcast on  
20 August 27th, where we're going to sort of talk  
21 about the decision-making process, who made it  
22 on, who made it -- who didn't make it on, why,  
23 etcetera, and basically set you up to yell at us  
24 about why we made terrible decisions and why your  
25 friend should have been on, and why that person

1 you hate shouldn't have been on.

2 So, anyway, so we will have the next  
3 episode after this will be going live on the  
4 morning of August 27th, so look for that.

5 So, with that, we can go ahead and get to  
6 our conversation with Paul. Which, as Rich said,  
7 was fascinating.

8 MR. EHISEN: Okay. We'll be right back  
9 with Paul Mitchell.

10 Okay. Paul Mitchell, as promised, has  
11 joined us here.

12 So, Paul, before we get into all of the  
13 stuff with the maps and some specifics there,  
14 give us the nickel tour of what this last couple  
15 of weeks has been like for you personally in this  
16 process of putting together these maps the voters  
17 are going to get to vote on in November.

18 MR. MITCHELL: Yeah. I mean, for me  
19 personally, I had planned a vacation to Europe  
20 with my wife and daughter, a tour of London,  
21 Paris, Rome. You know, taking my bike with me,  
22 the whole thing. And then two weeks ago I  
23 dropped them off at the airport and, you know,  
24 just yesterday I picked them up at the airport.  
25 So they went and did the family vacation without

1 me.

2 And I've been at home working a lot pretty  
3 intensely. You know, probably 8:00 in the  
4 morning till 2:00 in the morning most days. And  
5 trying to do like the best job that I can with my  
6 team, Evan McLaughlin, Joe Armenta, Jacob  
7 Thompson-Fisher.

8 Stacey Reardon came in and helped with a  
9 lot of the community of interest stuff.

10 Liz Stitt, who's worked for me, worked for  
11 the Speaker, is in London now, and she was  
12 working all night. So like we would get done.  
13 We'd leave a note for Liz and she would do it.  
14 And I'd get up at 5:00 in the morning and I'd  
15 walk out to the -- you know, I'd like walk my  
16 dogs in the morning, and I'd call Liz and talk  
17 with her about the things she had done overnight.  
18 Like this was intense.

19 Chris Chaffee would be on these Zooms.  
20 Daniel Lopez. It was like the whole coming  
21 together again of the Redistricting Partners team  
22 in this amazing like we have to do it spirit.

23 And it put me in a position where I just  
24 couldn't stop focusing and working on this. And  
25 it was, I think, probably the hardest I've ever

1 worked in my career, and one of the most  
2 important and maybe potentially impactful things  
3 I've ever done in my career.

4 MR. EHISEN: Well, before we came on the  
5 air you noted it's taken a little bit of a  
6 physical toll on you, right?

7 MR. MITCHELL: I think you can tell from  
8 looking at me I've lost seven pounds. I've, you  
9 know, lived off of chicken nuggets and Diet Cokes  
10 and I'm all out of chicken nuggets. So it's  
11 been -- yeah, it hasn't been the best for your  
12 health. I wouldn't suggest this to anyone.

13 But, you know, the focus really was on  
14 trying to put together a work product that we  
15 could be proud of given the fact that  
16 Redistricting Partners has only done nonpartisan  
17 redistricting.

18 We did the New York Independent  
19 Redistricting Commission twice. We did LA, you  
20 know, San Jose, like 15 counties, 38 cities in  
21 California, always doing redistricting with a  
22 focus on the Fair Maps Act.

23 And, you know, I've done Zooms with  
24 clients that wanted to hire us. And I would say  
25 to them beforehand, do not tell me where your

1 incumbents live. I will not meet with your  
2 incumbents to like, you know, draw whatever they  
3 want in their district. We're going to do a  
4 fully transparent process. Everything that we're  
5 talking about redistricting has to be done in  
6 public meetings. No closed sessions.

7           There's been this whole culture of our  
8 company and we wanted to try to bring the same,  
9 you know, values to this process, even though  
10 we're in a position, because of Texas, where we  
11 have to insert partisanship into this process.

12           Not our choice. Not our choice to do any  
13 of this. But if we were going to do it, we  
14 wanted to do it with the same kind of California  
15 values and the values that our company has. And  
16 unlike Texas, you know, we wanted to, you know,  
17 do this right.

18           And I feel like there's metrics that we  
19 have in these plans that will kind of shock a lot  
20 of people in terms of just how consistent they  
21 are with the Commission work product and how  
22 different they are than the crazy maps that you  
23 would see on Twitter.

24           MR. EHISEN: Well, you know what, that is  
25 a really good point to follow up on here.

1 Because, you know, we're already seeing the  
2 opposition people come out. You know,  
3 Schwarzenegger has voiced his disapproval.

4 Charles Munger has promised to throw like  
5 a hundred million dollars -- or excuse me,  
6 \$30 million at this.

7 Kevin McCarthy's come out of whatever  
8 hidey hole he's been in saying he's going to, you  
9 know, raise a hundred million dollars to defeat  
10 this.

11 And all of it, of course, is being framed  
12 as, you know, this is super, super partisan.  
13 Which, as you noted, all of this has sparked from  
14 very partisan stuff that's happening in Texas,  
15 possibly to what's happening here in California,  
16 and maybe somewhere else.

17 But from everything that you just said,  
18 you know, you're putting the kind of thought and  
19 care into this to try to make it sort of what the  
20 Governor and the Democratic party are after here  
21 without going so far over the edge that it's -- I  
22 don't know the right word is -- absurd.

23 MR. MITCHELL: Yeah. Extreme.

24 MR. EHISEN: Help me out here. Because I  
25 don't know that I'm --

1 MR. MITCHELL: No. And actually, I --

2 MR. EHISEN: -- (inaudible).

3 MR. MITCHELL: When this first started, I  
4 have to admit, there were people in the  
5 Democratic eco stream, you know, this kind of  
6 like whirlwind of people that were like calling  
7 me because I'm the only redistricting person they  
8 know, and trying to talk about what could happen.

9 So many of them were like, if Texas is  
10 going to throw away the VRA, then we can throw  
11 away the VRA. Can't we create more districts?  
12 Can't we create six or seven or eight Democratic  
13 pick-ups? Can we do a 52/0 map?

14 And I basically had to calmly show them  
15 that -- and it wasn't everybody, but just these  
16 particular voices that were pushing this stuff.  
17 I had to calmly show them, look, we can create a  
18 five district pick-up map and follow the Voting  
19 Rights Act, keep communities of interest  
20 together.

21 We actually in our map split fewer cities  
22 than the State Commission's plan. As of right  
23 now, we're kind of finalizing everything. I  
24 think we're going to be two or three cities fewer  
25 than the existing lines in terms of how many

1 cities get split in the redistricting. So, you  
2 know, we took this care.

3 When we're drawing these districts, we  
4 were considering communities of interest. And,  
5 you know, the fact that we can do these things in  
6 terms of like drawing a map that is -- you know,  
7 it's not touching nine entire congressional  
8 districts.

9 In Texas they don't touch one  
10 congressional district. Like everything's  
11 changed in Texas except one district.

12 In ours, we don't touch nine, and another  
13 20 districts are touched less than 10 percent.  
14 So it's kind of like trying to reduce how much we  
15 have to depart from the Commission's work. And  
16 we respect the Commission's work and we think the  
17 Commission's work is, you know, the gold  
18 standard.

19 But we do have something we're trying to  
20 achieve with these to push back on Texas. We can  
21 achieve them while still having a good defensible  
22 map.

23 And part of this, you see like at this  
24 press conference, Sara Sadhwani came out, and she  
25 is a former Commissioner, and spoke at the rally.

1 Now, I don't want to put words into Sara  
2 Sadhwani's mouth, but when I first talked to her,  
3 I think that the fact that she knew that we were  
4 doing this, that we were considering all this  
5 stuff, that we had hired a staff person who used  
6 to work at the Commission, you know, we were  
7 going to do it right. It wasn't going to be  
8 hacked up.

9 I don't think she'd stand up on that stage  
10 and say, I support this, if what we're going to  
11 get was districts that decimated all the  
12 communities, you know, throughout LA, like some  
13 of the public map -- or some of the map proposals  
14 we've seen. So --

15 MR. FOSTER: I think that was a really  
16 interesting -- when I saw her there, I thought  
17 that was really interesting that she was part of  
18 this.

19 MR. MITCHELL: She's not the only one. I  
20 got a text this morning from a Commissioner from  
21 the 2011 Commission saying, hey, when can we  
22 talk? I want to -- we're going to talk this  
23 afternoon. And she's -- this is one of four  
24 Commissioners that we've talked to that are  
25 interested in supporting this because they see

1 this as like an existential crisis, one.

2           They also see that doing the minimum  
3 change in order to get -- in order to push back  
4 on Texas is possible and can be done well. We  
5 can create an environment where we do the new  
6 districts not because we want to, but because we  
7 have to. And when we do them, we do them in a  
8 way that is effective at creating that partisan  
9 gain without just decimating everything.

10           And that's one of the things about a real  
11 fortunate series of events, because we have here  
12 in California with our company a company that's  
13 worked in so many cities and counties and  
14 locally, a company that has this reputation, a  
15 company that knows on the ground.

16           We worked with some folks in D.C. and saw  
17 some maps, as an example, that went into Orange  
18 county and just tore up the Asian community in  
19 Orange county as they drew the maps, and that's a  
20 no go.

21           We saw districts being proposed that would  
22 have, you know, seven or eight districts going  
23 from Santa Monica out to like Imperial -- the  
24 Inland Empire. Just long strips of districts  
25 that would just decimate all the communities.

1 No respect for the LGBT community. No  
2 respect for all the testimony from environmental  
3 groups that were trying to create communities of  
4 interest in the last redistricting. No respect  
5 for neighborhoods within cities. No respect for  
6 cities.

7 Like we're fortunate that we have the  
8 opportunity in a three-week period to go from  
9 we're going to draw districts to getting a final  
10 plan that the Legislature can consider and have  
11 that final plan be buttoned up enough and be  
12 consistent enough with the Commission work and be  
13 supported by community of interest testimony. So  
14 I think there's a lot there.

15 MR. FOSTER: So you were talking about  
16 maybe a change of five seats and that's  
17 substantial. I mean, that's 10 percent of the  
18 districts almost.

19 Can you talk about how this is -- the same  
20 thing is really happening in other states? I  
21 mean, there's -- very few states have independent  
22 redistricting commissions.

23 What I'm taking away from this is what's  
24 happening in Texas and what's happening in other  
25 places. In a perfect world, if we had

1 independent redistricting commissions in all 50  
2 states, would we see substantially different  
3 numbers in Congress right now?

4 MR. MITCHELL: Yeah. So first off, you'd  
5 see differences in two things. One is how good  
6 objectively the maps are, and then  
7 representation, political representation in  
8 Congress.

9 And the how good the maps are, you look at  
10 what Texas is doing, they're splitting 145  
11 cities, right? More than double what we're  
12 splitting. And that means that they're just  
13 carelessly going through areas and trying to just  
14 do the partisan gerrymander and not actually  
15 trying to put out a good plan.

16 And that's true in other states, even  
17 democratically held states, where there's states  
18 that have kind of a, you know, wild, wild west  
19 redistricting. It has this objective harm that's  
20 done to communities, outside of who's getting  
21 elected to Congress. Just the lines themselves  
22 are dividing communities.

23 They're waiving political representation  
24 for disaffected groups. They are oftentimes  
25 violating the Voting Rights Act. They're just

1 bad districts.

2 Now, in terms of representation, you know,  
3 it would be a fun political exercise, and  
4 somebody's probably done it, to say, what would  
5 be the, you know, composition of Congress if you  
6 had a kind of projected map drawn by commissions?

7 Because you can actually do a thing  
8 with -- it's called ensemble analysis, where you  
9 can run like 10,000 plans with a computer and  
10 say, what's the bell curve of how many Democratic  
11 districts there are in every state? And then  
12 pick the middle of that bell curve and run that  
13 out nationally to determine what the like  
14 probabilistic metric would be of likely Dem reap  
15 if you had independent fair redistricting in  
16 every state that wasn't considering partisanship.

17 But I've never done that. I don't know  
18 what the natural shape of Congress should be. I  
19 would guess that it would be more Democratic.  
20 But, you know, that would be something for  
21 somebody to analyze if they wanted to. And  
22 the --

23 MR. EHISEN: Well, you know --

24 MR. MITCHELL: Yeah.

25 MR. EHISEN: -- Paul, let me ask you a

1 question along those lines. Because we already  
2 saw Kevin Kiley, who is one of the  
3 representatives here in California who is going  
4 to be -- whose seat is going to be in danger if  
5 these maps go through.

6 MR. MITCHELL: I could be one of his  
7 constituents.

8 MR. EHISEN: Yeah. And I would have been,  
9 too, if we hadn't moved to Davis.

10 But, you know, he's proposed -- and I  
11 don't even know if he's introduced it yet, but he  
12 was talking about, you know, legislation  
13 essentially to bar the states from doing this  
14 kind of mid-century redistricting.

15 Do you know anything about that proposal  
16 and how it might impact the kinds of things  
17 you're talking about here?

18 MR. MITCHELL: I think that proposal is  
19 great on the face of it, if that's what somebody  
20 wants to do, a hundred percent. I tweeted at him  
21 when he did that. I did like a retweet and said,  
22 you know, welcome to the resistance. But he  
23 could back that up --

24 MR. FOSTER: And, of course, Trump is  
25 going to sign that instantly.

1 MR. EHISEN: Yeah, I know. He could back  
2 that up by going to the White House and saying,  
3 look, let's not do this, you know. Let's stand  
4 down.

5 Because objectively we shouldn't be having  
6 this mid-decade redistricting war. No voters or  
7 residents in these states are going to be  
8 benefiting from it. And, you know, it's  
9 something even the Governor said, if they stand  
10 down, we'll stand down.

11 There's no reason for California to being  
12 doing this other than to defeat kind of their --  
13 counter the -- Texas and other states that are  
14 doing this.

15 And so if Kevin Kiley was able to pull  
16 that off, if he could flip a switch and make this  
17 whole thing go away, that would be great. And I  
18 think everybody would celebrate that.

19 But I don't think he's being genuine and  
20 he's not putting the actual work into that that  
21 would be necessary to actually diffuse the  
22 situation.

23 MR. EHISEN: You know, the other thing,  
24 too, you know, we're all talking about artificial  
25 intelligence right now. And, you know, you

1 mentioned writing computer models. You know,  
2 what about AI in the use of all of this? I don't  
3 know.

4 MR. MITCHELL: Yeah.

5 MR. EHISEN: This might be a tangent. But  
6 listening to how much work you've had to put into  
7 this individually --

8 MR. MITCHELL: Yeah.

9 MR. EHISEN: -- I mean, is this something  
10 that in the future, by the time -- you know, at  
11 some point where we do take it away from  
12 lawmakers entirely and from commissions  
13 entirely --

14 MR. MITCHELL: Uh-huh.

15 MR. EHISEN: -- and have artificial  
16 intelligence do this?

17 MR. MITCHELL: It's been brought up and I  
18 definitely have opinions on this.

19 So, first off, when you say AI, you're  
20 really talking about in the redistricting space  
21 like machine learning and algorithms that can  
22 draw plans, and those already exist. There's a  
23 lot of research on this and we've done a lot of  
24 it.

25 And you can say -- like with a city, you

1 can say, hey, city -- hey, database, draw 10,000  
2 maps of the city of Sacramento and tell me what  
3 you get. And it can draw the 10,000 maps and it  
4 can tell you -- like you can ask it a question  
5 once you've drawn -- it's drawn the 10,000 maps.  
6 Not like ChatGPT, but you, you know, use the  
7 data.

8 And you can say, hey, how many times in  
9 your 10,000 maps is downtown split? So just on  
10 the average, if you know the space of downtown,  
11 how many of those plans is there a line through  
12 downtown? And it'll say, you know, 40 percent of  
13 the time, or whatever it is.

14 You might say, how many times is the  
15 Pocket split? And it might say never, you know,  
16 because Pocket's kind of like off to the side.  
17 It'd be really weird to split it, you know. And  
18 just mathematically it would be very unlikely  
19 that that actually gets done. And so you could  
20 do things like that.

21 How often is an incumbent drawn into the  
22 district? How often is it not? How often is it  
23 a Democratic leaning district? How often is it  
24 not? Like you can ask these things, and it's  
25 called an outlier analysis.

1 In legal cases before the Supreme Court,  
2 they've done like the North Carolina  
3 redistricting and they've used these algorithms  
4 to show that the plan is an outlier on that bell  
5 curve.

6 That the average number of seats that are  
7 drawn that are Democrat and Republican kind of  
8 fits within this bell curve, with kind of the  
9 median point being the most likely outcome and  
10 these far extremes being very, very, very  
11 unlikely.

12 And when Republicans in North Carolina  
13 draw the plan, ooh, magically their plan ends up  
14 on the very, very, very outlier, you know,  
15 unlikely scenario of a maximal Republican plan.

16 And the courts have accepted the idea that  
17 if you can prove that something is a gross  
18 outlier, then you can assume that there was some  
19 kind of intent behind that change. That it  
20 wasn't just like some benign accidental thing.  
21 Of course, unless, you know, the opponents can  
22 come up with what that cause was.

23 So that AI stuff is still -- is already in  
24 use. But using AI to actually draw the districts  
25 and just say this is a perfect district, the

1 problem with that is it really obfuscates the  
2 intent behind the plan.

3           So if you give me the tool to draw the  
4 districts in Sacramento that would be the  
5 algorithm, me and my programmers, we could be the  
6 ones writing the algorithm and we could be  
7 saying, place a higher priority on keeping  
8 neighborhoods together.

9           Oh, and create an even higher priority on  
10 keeping the LGBTQ neighborhoods together. And  
11 keep a higher priority on keeping the renters  
12 together. But then diminish the priority of  
13 keeping people who are complaining about a new  
14 development on J Street together.

15           Like you could do a thing where you  
16 advantage or disadvantage groups or issues or  
17 impact the way the map's done in a way that's  
18 hidden from the public because it's all in code,  
19 and nobody would know how it's done.

20           So the problem is, is that the front-  
21 facing process of redistricting that's supposed  
22 to be community driven could get undercut by like  
23 this algorithmic thing that's going from the back  
24 end.

25           Like nerds in the basement determining

1 which groups are favored or unfavored, and it  
2 looks like some objective like analytical AI  
3 kicked out this perfect plan. But there's  
4 intentionality behind it and you just don't know  
5 when somebody's writing an algorithm to make it.

6 MR. EHISEN: That's always been a problem  
7 with all use of AI is it's kind of a garbage  
8 in/garbage out thing. Whoever is doing the  
9 programming, whoever is doing the teaching, or  
10 however the machine learning is being done is  
11 always going to still be subject to human biases,  
12 right?

13 MR. MITCHELL: Yeah, absolutely. And, you  
14 know, you can't take that kind of idea of those  
15 human biases out of the process, you know.

16 MR. FOSTER: Well, and kind of what I'm  
17 taking away from this is that there isn't a real  
18 clear right and wrong, good map, bad map. That  
19 it's very much a spectrum.

20 MR. MITCHELL: There's no perfect map.  
21 There's no perfect map.

22 MR. FOSTER: Exactly.

23 MR. MITCHELL: And I'll tell you like as  
24 an example. We were focused a lot on reducing  
25 the city splits. And one of the cities that we

1 unified was Ventura. Okay? And Ventura had this  
2 weird little dongle of 12,000 people, or  
3 whatever, that was in a different congressional  
4 district.

5 And the Commission criteria is to keep  
6 them whole, but the Commission criteria is also  
7 to preserve communities of interest.

8 And there are these little towns around  
9 Ojai. And they had people from Ojai saying, hey,  
10 keep us all together, these little area. Don't  
11 divide us. And then they had people in Ventura  
12 saying don't split Ventura.

13 So you know what they did? They did the  
14 State Senate plan. I think it's one of the  
15 legislative plans. In one of the legislative  
16 plans they kept Ventura whole and split those  
17 areas. In the other one they split Ventura and  
18 kept those areas together, the congressional.

19 So they're admitting we have two bad  
20 choices. No redistricting plan is perfect.  
21 Given the need to produce a plan and make  
22 compromises, we'll do -- we'll err on this plan  
23 this way, we'll err on that plan that way.

24 And it's an implied understanding that  
25 like when you're trying to draw districts that

1 are, especially in congressionals, equal to the  
2 one person deviation and then you're trying to  
3 balance the need to, you know, create districts  
4 at a certain size, respect mountain ranges and  
5 highways and, you know, neighborhoods and cities,  
6 all these things, it's really hard to do.

7 And adding partisanship is another thing  
8 to consider. Should make the other criteria  
9 harder to achieve, and it made it a really hard  
10 job. But we were able to still achieve a lot of  
11 the other criteria. So, yeah, there's no perfect  
12 redistricting plan.

13 MR. FOSTER: Well, and so cutting to the  
14 chase, you mentioned Kevin Kiley earlier. What  
15 are some of the other seats that could be in for  
16 a significant change?

17 MR. MITCHELL: Well, you know, if you  
18 believe what's reported, it's LaMalfa in Northern  
19 California. Kiley. Valadao is in a district  
20 that becomes more Democratic. And --

21 MR. EHISEN: Young Kim?

22 MR. MITCHELL: Young Kim gets a great  
23 district. But Calvert's district kind of  
24 disappears from the map and a new  
25 majority/minority Latino district is put in the

1 middle of southeast LA.

2 And then Issa's district becomes kind of a  
3 Palm Springs district with east county San Diego  
4 and some smaller San Diego cities that are more  
5 Democratic, so his district becomes like a three-  
6 and-a-half point Kamala Harris district. So --

7 MR. EHISEN: Wait a minute. Did you just  
8 say Young Kim gets a great district?

9 MR. MITCHELL: Young Kim gets a great  
10 district. Young Kim --

11 MR. EHISEN: For her?

12 MR. MITCHELL: Young Kim gets a great  
13 district because what happens is that the Calvert  
14 district basically disappears off the map. And  
15 Issa takes the Palm Springs side. She takes the  
16 Corona side. And then there's other movement  
17 coming from other districts on the Inland Empire  
18 to take the remainder.

19 So the Young Kim district is heavily  
20 Republican. It takes the -- kind of looking at  
21 the map, the left or western side of the Calvert  
22 district and gobbles that up.

23 Issa takes the right-hand side of the  
24 Calvert district, gobbles that up. And  
25 essentially, there's no Calvert district anymore.

1 And then in LA there's a new district that  
2 has the Calvert number 41 that's put in southeast  
3 LA that replaces the old Roybal-Allard district  
4 that the Commission removed in the last  
5 redistricting.

6 To back up a second, the last Commission  
7 had to go from 53 to 52 seats. There was two  
8 arguments.

9 Matt Rexroad was saying, hey, LA is where  
10 you're losing the population, so you should take  
11 that, you know, district out of LA.

12 And honestly, like it's easier just to  
13 take one district out and let the rest of the  
14 districts collapse in on itself than to do what  
15 we were saying, which was no, no, no, keep all  
16 the districts in LA.

17 Yes, we've lost population, but we've  
18 actually gained the Latino population. And so  
19 why would you remove districts from an area  
20 that's, you know -- and from a Latino community  
21 where this Roybal-Allard district has been  
22 historically and there's a lot of community  
23 interest arguments about that district?

24 Why take that out when you could just  
25 leave it there and let all the districts in LA

1 kind of push out over -- kind of lip over the  
2 county into other areas?

3 So the first thing we did was we used that  
4 community of interest testimony and kind of undid  
5 what the Commission did last time in putting that  
6 district back in LA and kind of eliminating that  
7 Calvert seat.

8 And so what's left is a district that's  
9 like north Orange county, Corona. Kim is perfect  
10 for that seat.

11 MR. EHISEN: Well, that's interesting to  
12 me, because she's been such a target of the  
13 Democrats. They've been talking nonstop about  
14 going after her seat and how this is the year.

15 We had my friend, Jeff Pearlman, who lives  
16 in Laguna Niguel, on this podcast a while back.  
17 He does The Truth OC pretty much daily  
18 newsletter.

19 And, you know, there's all constant,  
20 constant theme and airs about, you know, the  
21 effort to unseat Young Kim, and all of this hue  
22 and cry about how it's going to help Dems. And  
23 it sounds like it just solidified her hold on  
24 that what's probably going to be a new district  
25 for her.

1 MR. MITCHELL: Yeah. I mean, there's  
2 winners and losers. And Kim could be considered  
3 a winner because she's given a great district for  
4 her. And there's losers.

5 One of the things I've joked about is that  
6 we've protected so many frontliners in this  
7 process to make sure that we're not just shifting  
8 the targets. Like we increased the Democratic  
9 registration in a lot of these Democratic-held  
10 districts. When people look at the maps, they  
11 can go see those changes.

12 We've done that so much that there's a  
13 loser in this process and that is media buyers in  
14 Los Angeles who would like to spend \$40 million  
15 on TV ads for competitive Orange county and LA  
16 districts.

17 MR. FOSTER: Sorry, Sherrie Settler  
18 (phonetic).

19 MR. MITCHELL: Sorry, Sherrie. We can  
20 still send you digital data for something, I'm  
21 sure.

22 There will still be campaigns in the Issa  
23 district and the Valadao district.

24 But, yeah, there are a lot of people  
25 probably who are either, A, planning to run

1 against Kim and had a campaign rolling, or were  
2 doing digital ads or media stuff in Kim's  
3 district right now to try to take her out.

4 But I think they'll be placated by the  
5 fact that we have such a bluer map and so many  
6 other potential targets for Republicans taken off  
7 that map and, you know, real opportunity for  
8 Democrats to pick up seats.

9 MR. EHISEN: I find that -- again, I just  
10 find that so interesting how this whole dynamic  
11 can change in such a very short time, and how  
12 that the possible results -- because, obviously,  
13 voters still have to approve all this -- could be  
14 so -- could be so different than maybe what we  
15 thought just a couple weeks ago how this was all  
16 going to play itself out. It's so fascinating to  
17 me.

18 So, Paul, what's the question we haven't  
19 asked? What's the most -- what are we missing  
20 here? Is there anything at all?

21 Because, you know, so much of this is  
22 being framed obviously in the heavy partisan  
23 politics of the moment.

24 And, you know, we've seen Governor Newsome  
25 absolutely trolling the hell out of Donald Trump

1 on social media in the last couple of days.

2 I mean, this feels -- you know, he had the  
3 press conference at the old Governor's mansion  
4 last week with the reps from Texas. You know,  
5 these things always tend to produce things maybe  
6 we didn't expect.

7 The Young Kim one is the one that you --  
8 you totally caught me off guard with that one.

9 MR. MITCHELL: Yeah.

10 MR. EHISEN: But what else are we not  
11 seeing here?

12 MR. MITCHELL: Well, I'll tell you, one of  
13 the things that we haven't talked about was these  
14 maps are going out to voters. But honestly, it's  
15 not about the maps in a way. It's about what  
16 they represent. It's about that these are --  
17 this is pushing back on Trump.

18 And so, you know, you guys are talking to  
19 me right now about the maps. Great. We'll have  
20 two days of people talking about maps now that  
21 they're out.

22 But at some point, the map discussion  
23 becomes kind of background noise to this larger  
24 Commission -- this larger, you know, messaging  
25 around this fight between Trump and Newsome. And

1 a California fight between Trump and Newsome, we  
2 know how that goes. And so that's the right way  
3 for that campaign to go.

4 So I will recede to the background a lot  
5 on this map stuff and only the real redistricting  
6 nerds are going to care about it. But in the  
7 short term you're going to see them attack the  
8 map because of shapes of things.

9 Matt Rexroad, who I'm great friends with,  
10 I love Matt, he's going to attack the maps for  
11 all these crazy districts.

12 And I'm going to tell you, admittedly,  
13 there is one district there that you will see and  
14 you will say, that is the grossest-looking  
15 district. It literally looks like a pterodactyl  
16 on like a branch with --

17 MR. FOSTER: That's historical.

18 MR. MITCHELL: -- like two T-Rex arms out  
19 and all this stuff.

20 MR. FOSTER: I mean, the gerrymander is  
21 actually named, like a salamander, after  
22 (inaudible).

23 MR. MITCHELL: It is. It is a gross-  
24 looking district. But I have to tell you, that's  
25 the 20th district. This is the Vince Fong

1 district. We did not change it. It is a  
2 Commission district.

3 So when Harry Enten looks at this map and  
4 goes, oh, my gosh, we've got this crazy looking  
5 district that looks like a pterodactyl, I'm going  
6 to be sitting here in my house curled up in a  
7 ball screaming like that is a Commission map.

8 The district that they will be attacking  
9 the most as being the most ludicrous-looking  
10 district is literally one that was parodied for  
11 having two arms, two like -- you know, there was  
12 an emoji with those two flexing arms that would  
13 go with people who are supporting that map,  
14 because it was the McCarthy district and it  
15 performed -- it did what Democrats wanted in  
16 creating kind of a Republican vote seat there in  
17 McCarthy. Kind of like the, you know, Kim seat  
18 is a Republican vote seat for her. And we didn't  
19 touch it really. We nibbled around the edges,  
20 but that was it.

21 And so, yeah, I'm sure that there will be  
22 people who focus on the map. But I'm here to  
23 admit that like, even though this consumed my  
24 life for a while and I'm proud of it, I recede to  
25 the background.

1           This campaign's not going to be about  
2 lines and, you know, this stuff. It's going to  
3 be about this cathartic scream of California back  
4 at Trump and the Texas Republicans in this kind  
5 of fight for democracy. And I'm going to be  
6 cheering it on, and I hope voters, you know, get  
7 the importance of this.

8           MR. FOSTER: Well, you know, totally  
9 anecdotally, watching the response to all of this  
10 entire scene with Newsome tweeting in all caps  
11 and thank you for your attention, and clearly  
12 trolling Trump, and then having this press  
13 release yesterday, you know, flanked by basically  
14 everyone in the Democratic party, people that  
15 have been extraordinarily critical of Newsome and  
16 of the Democrats are loving this. They like to  
17 see the fight.

18           And I think that there will be people who  
19 maybe on the face of it would be more  
20 enthusiastic about having nonpartisan maps, what  
21 we've had for the last ten years, but who also  
22 really want to see California punch back at  
23 Trump.

24           And I think the Governor and his team are  
25 really counting on that to push this over the

1 line. And they're going to need, you know, 51 --  
2 I just saw that there was some polling that came  
3 out that I think it was two to one against.

4 MR. MITCHELL: That was a stupid poll.

5 MR. FOSTER: There hasn't been an ad run  
6 yet.

7 MR. MITCHELL: I mean, that was a -- they  
8 did a poll. And even I talked to another  
9 pollster this morning who was like, you know, I  
10 love that pollster, but my God, what were they  
11 doing?

12 Because they asked a poll where there was  
13 yes/no question and it was like, yes, I want to  
14 get rid of the Commission, or, you know -- and it  
15 was like get rid of the Commission and let  
16 legislators draw the lines. Neither of those  
17 things are happening.

18 You know, we've got legislators putting  
19 together the bill that's going to go to the  
20 voters. The voters get to be the ones that  
21 decide. You know, they're the ones that  
22 actually, for the first time in U.S. history, get  
23 to decide what the lines are going to be.

24 So that's not what's happening, and this  
25 doesn't get rid of the Commission. The

1 Commission comes right back in 2031. There's an  
2 embracing of reform, of national redistricting  
3 reform in this thing.

4 And so when people do a poll question,  
5 they can do -- I understand maybe they didn't  
6 have any sense of what the question might be that  
7 the voters get. But they could have called me  
8 maybe and just said, hey, what do you think this  
9 is going to look like?

10 MR. EHISEN: It goes to show how important  
11 the messaging is going to be here. I mean --

12 MR. MITCHELL: A hundred percent.

13 MR. EHISEN: -- because so much of all our  
14 politics right now is about the messaging. And,  
15 you know, it's almost exhausting for Joe average  
16 and a lot of us who are not Joe average in terms  
17 of our involvement in politics to keep up with  
18 everything that is happening here and to  
19 understand the nuance.

20 And I know people are so tired of -- and  
21 there's not really any nuance here. It's just  
22 what the facts are. They are -- as you know,  
23 they're going to get to vote on these maps that  
24 will apply for three elections, period.

25 MR. MITCHELL: Absolutely. And, you know,

1 if the --

2 MR. EHISEN: But it's going to be so  
3 important to get the --

4 MR. MITCHELL: It's so much bigger than  
5 the maps.

6 MR. EHISEN: -- message out for those who  
7 want this.

8 MR. MITCHELL: Yeah. It's so much bigger  
9 than the maps. And like I said, I'm going to  
10 recede back to, you know, going back to PDI.  
11 I've got a redistricting I'm doing at a school  
12 district in San Jose. That's going to be my  
13 number one redistricting, you know, in a few  
14 days. The biggest one I have is a school  
15 district in San Jose.

16 But if there are people that are listening  
17 to this and they think, you know, hey, my  
18 organization really doesn't like this, but maybe  
19 like if we could talk a little bit more about the  
20 maps, you know, I'm always going to be willing to  
21 do that kind of thing.

22 And there might be some people who get --  
23 you know, who want to feel like they can do this,  
24 and they wouldn't have done it if it was some  
25 really hack job crazy Twitter map. But who see

1 what we produced and think, okay, you know, a  
2 little sigh of relief that things are going to be  
3 okay under these lines, and that helps them get  
4 over the hump to support this, that's great.

5 But, you know, this is Trump versus  
6 California, and I expect California to step up.

7 I expect Jodi, my wife, to have much more  
8 of a role in helping voters understand the  
9 importance of it than I ever will, you know.

10 MR. FOSTER: Well, yeah, she was front and  
11 center at the press conference.

12 MR. MITCHELL: She was at the press  
13 conference, yeah. Her and Sara Sadhwani, who is  
14 the Commissioner. The folks that spoke there are  
15 going to be powerful voices to support this.

16 You know, we've done so many podcasts  
17 together that it's natural for me to come on and  
18 talk you through kind of the inside of what  
19 happened in this in these last few weeks.

20 But, you know, I'm going to be not out  
21 there this whole time. This campaign's about  
22 everybody else. And my job is to try to do the  
23 best job I could with this incredible task that  
24 we were kind of forced into. And I'll be proud  
25 of it. And hopefully it passes.

1 MR. EHISEN: Well, with that, Paul, we  
2 will let you recede into the background here for  
3 at least the next half hour or so until some  
4 other media type --

5 MR. MITCHELL: No. I want to recede in  
6 the background until the 2026 election. Then  
7 you'll see me in your inbox and on the podcast  
8 talking about turnout, things like that. Normal  
9 midterm election stuff, not this crazy, crazy,  
10 crazy stuff.

11 MR. EHISEN: Well, I'm ready for all of  
12 this to be over, too, because we have more  
13 Capitol Weekly Insider surveys to do and we need  
14 your attention for that. So --

15 MR. MITCHELL: Oh, yeah, we got to send  
16 more of those out.

17 MR. EHISEN: Absolutely, people.  
18 Priorities here. Come on.

19 Anyway, Paul Mitchell, thank you, as  
20 always, for joining us and sharing your insights  
21 into this. This is a -- we live in intense crazy  
22 times. And thank you for being a person who can  
23 come on and give some -- shed some intellectual  
24 light on all of this and help everybody out there  
25 who listens to this make good decisions when the

1 time comes. So thanks again.

2 MR. MITCHELL: Thanks for having me.

3 MR. EHISEN: And all of you out there,  
4 don't go away. We're going to be right back with  
5 who had the worst week in California politics.

6 (Music playing.)

7 MR. EHISEN: All right. Well, it's time  
8 for worst week, who had the worst week in  
9 California politics. And I'm just going to say  
10 right up front this is a hard one. For me  
11 personally, it's a really, really difficult  
12 presentation. I'm not sure what the right word  
13 is here.

14 It's kind of hard for me to think of  
15 somebody who had a worst week in California  
16 politics than our friend, and I say that  
17 sincerely because I've been friends with Cynthia  
18 Moreno for a very long time, now the former press  
19 secretary for Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas.

20 All of us in the media I think were  
21 stunned over the weekend when we got the notice  
22 from Lia Lopez in the Assembly Rules Committee  
23 that Cynthia had been terminated for saying,  
24 according to what was told to us, some  
25 inappropriate things. Other aspects of the

1 investigation that they felt she wasn't  
2 forthright with.

3           You know, I'm at a loss. Because as  
4 someone -- like I say, I've known Cynthia a long  
5 time. I've never even heard Cynthia swear.

6           MR. FOSTER: Well, and she -- to be clear,  
7 she says that this is absolutely not true.

8           MR. EHISEN: Yes.

9           MR. FOSTER: And that I think she -- the  
10 word she used was slander.

11           MR. EHISEN: Yeah.

12           So I haven't spoken with her directly.  
13 Again, I'm being -- I'm trying to be really up  
14 front here. Because I think anyone listening to  
15 this, that they deserve to know, again, I  
16 consider Cynthia a friend. A lot of us do. She  
17 was a former reporter with The Bee. And again,  
18 I've known her for many, many, many years. And  
19 so this is a really difficult one.

20           I haven't spoken with her directly, only a  
21 little bit over text. Again, straight disclosure  
22 here.

23           But we don't know -- again, according to  
24 the rules that have come into place, the changes  
25 that were brought about by the "we said enough"

1 movement here in California, nobody can say  
2 anything other than what the very, very redacted  
3 information that was released to us.

4 Those around the Assembly's Office --  
5 Assembly Speaker's Office cannot say anything.  
6 And if they did, I'm sure as hell not going to  
7 tell you.

8 But the reality is that this is as much as  
9 we know. If something happens from here, it is  
10 to be determined. But with a heavy, heavy heart  
11 I say this week I don't think anyone had a worst  
12 week in California politics than Cynthia Moreno.

13 MR. FOSTER: Yeah, I would agree. I mean,  
14 sad story all around.

15 MR. EHISEN: Yeah. And, you know, I have  
16 no judgment here on this, again, because, you  
17 know, Cynthia is a dear friend. And I'm -- my  
18 heart is just breaking for her over this. And I  
19 hope -- I hope however it plays out in the near  
20 future, you know, the right things happen.  
21 That's all I can say.

22 MR. FOSTER: Yep. And I have to say, you  
23 know, we actually did a profile of Cynthia when  
24 she was -- came over to the press office. And  
25 she had been a fantastic journalist for many

1 years.

2 And in fact, I remember when John and I  
3 first started doing Capitol Weekly as a  
4 nonprofit, I often would read her stories. And I  
5 would be frustrated because she would do stories,  
6 and I'd think, damn it, I wish we had done that.

7 MR. EHISEN: Well, you know, she has  
8 rightfully been noted by many, many publications  
9 around the region for her role as a  
10 representative of, you know, the Latina community  
11 and aspiration and success and achievement.

12 And, you know, again, she's always been  
13 one of the most standup people I know in this  
14 world. And this is -- you know, there's not --  
15 you can't say that about every single person in  
16 our profession or in politics.

17 And, again, I'm still gobsmacked and I'm  
18 going to stay gobsmacked for a long time over  
19 this one.

20 So, yeah, like I say, all I can say is I  
21 hope whatever happens from here, the right things  
22 happen, you know, and justice prevails in  
23 whatever way the universe wants it to. That's  
24 all I can say here, but, yeah.

25 MR. FOSTER: And to wrap this episode up,

1 I just want to remind everyone that we are not  
2 going to be posting an episode next Monday. We  
3 will post our next episode on August 27th, a  
4 Wednesday. And we will be talking about the top  
5 100 list, which will have come out that same  
6 morning, or basically the night before.

7 And so if you're looking for a podcast  
8 next Monday, you'll have to look elsewhere. But  
9 we will be here the Wednesday after the top 100.  
10 So August 27th we will have a fresh podcast for  
11 you where we dig into the top 100, the decision-  
12 making process, who's on, who's off, et cetera.  
13 So --

14 MR. EHISEN: Or you could listen to this  
15 podcast again and really listen to what Paul  
16 talked about on this process, and share it with a  
17 friend. This is one of those -- this is one of  
18 those times. Share it with a friend.

19 There's going to be a lot of information  
20 out there and a lot of it, frankly, is going to  
21 be bad.

22 You're going to get to hear this directly  
23 from the horse's mouth, so to speak. I highly  
24 recommend you pay attention and share it with  
25 people who maybe are not as up to speed on all of

1 this as they could be. But as we all know, that  
2 does not stop people from having opinions. And  
3 so --

4 MR. FOSTER: In fact, it probably -- my  
5 experience anecdotally is that the less informed  
6 you are, the more likely you are to have an  
7 opinion.

8 MR. EHISEN: Absolutely. As I said, when  
9 I was -- when I was young, you know, when I was  
10 20, I knew everything and I had the answers for  
11 everything. And now at this ripe old age of  
12 almost 62 years old, all I have is questions.

13 So hopefully everyone can evolve into  
14 something where they're a little more, you know,  
15 balanced in their thinking.

16 But anyway, we got to get out of here. So  
17 thanks again for listening to the podcast. And  
18 we will see you after the top 100. Take care.

19 MR. FOSTER: The Capitol Weekly podcast is  
20 produced by Tim Foster for Open California.

21 The Capitol Weekly podcast is supported by  
22 TASIN, the Tribal Alliance of Sovereign Indian  
23 Nations.

24 (Recording ended.)  
25  
26

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, MARY ANN SCANLAN, hereby certify that  
I transcribed the Capital Weekly podcast  
broadcast on August 15, 2025, as completely and  
correctly to the best of my ability.

I further state that pages 1 through 47,  
inclusive, constitute an accurate and complete  
transcription of the video recording for the  
proceedings specified.

Dated: October 29, 2025

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Mary Ann Scanlan, CSR

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HISPANAS ORGANIZED FOR POLITICAL EQUALITY  
(HOPE)

PRESENTATION ON ZOOM

OCTOBER 17, 2025

TRANSCRIBED BY: MARY ANN SCANLAN, CSR



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**EXHIBIT**  
**11**

1 MS. TORRES: Hello, everyone. Thank you  
2 so much for joining us today for this very  
3 important Zoom.

4 My name is Helen Iris Torres. I am the  
5 proud CEO of HOPE, Hispanas Organized for  
6 Political Equality.

7 At HOPE our mission is to advance  
8 political and economic parity for Latinas to the  
9 benefit of all communities. We believe that  
10 every person deserves fair representation and an  
11 equal voice in shaping the decisions that affect  
12 our lives.

13 Redistricting is a critical part of  
14 achieving that vision. It determines how our  
15 communities are represented at every level of  
16 government. It's one of HOPE's -- one of our  
17 foundations of HOPE's broader civic engagement  
18 work, ensuring Latinas and all Californians have  
19 equitable access to political power.

20 While HOPE is a nonpartisan organization,  
21 we recognize that redistricting has become an  
22 increasingly partisan and at times contentious  
23 issue. Across the country gerrymandering has  
24 threatened fair representation, making it more  
25 urgent now than ever for us to stay informed.

1           This November 4th, and for some of us who  
2   have already received our ballot in the mail,  
3   Californians will vote on Proposition 50, a  
4   measure that would temporarily authorize the  
5   state to adopt new congressional maps.

6           To be clear, once again, that HOPE has not  
7   taken a position on Prop. 50. Our goal today is  
8   to ensure that our communities are informed and  
9   empowered, to understand what's on the ballot and  
10   what this measure means, and how it could shape  
11   representation in California.

12           We have a jampacked program for you  
13   running until 1:15 p.m. So we encourage you to  
14   stay on for the full discussion.

15           You'll hear from an incredible lineup of  
16   speakers sharing their expertise and perspectives  
17   as civil rights attorneys, demographers and civic  
18   engagement leaders.

19           While we won't be doing a live Q&A, please  
20   drop your question in the Q&A box. Our speakers  
21   will be responding in the chat throughout the  
22   session. We also ask you to please keep the  
23   questions respectful and on topic.

24           With that, as our housekeeping is covered,  
25   it's our -- it's my pleasure to introduce

1 Maria Morales, HOPE's statewide policy director,  
2 who will guide us through today's conversation  
3 and introduce our distinguished guests, our first  
4 distinguished guest, Sonja Diaz.

5 Thank you, Maria.

6 MS. MORALES: Thank you, Helen.

7 And hi, everyone. Thank you so much for  
8 joining us today.

9 I am excited to welcome to the virtual  
10 stage Sonja Diaz to kick off our conversation.  
11 Sonja Diaz is a civil rights attorney and policy  
12 adviser, renowned for her pioneering work in  
13 advancing equitable representation and  
14 opportunities for Latinas.

15 As a cofounder of the Latina Futures 2050  
16 Lab, she champions the vision where Latinas have  
17 equal access to leadership roles, contributing to  
18 a thriving society for all.

19 And prior to her groundbreaking work with  
20 the Latinas Futures Lab, Sonja cofounded and  
21 directed the UCLA Latina Policy and Politics  
22 Institute, which is the first comprehensive think  
23 tank within the University of California system  
24 dedicated to addressing the policies of the  
25 nation's second largest racial and ethnic group.

1           We're really excited to have you, Sonja.

2           Thank you so much for being here.

3           MS. DIAZ: Thanks so much for having me.

4           This is one of my favorite topics.

5           MS. MORALES: Well, we're really looking  
6           for your expertise. I think we'll just get right  
7           into it.

8           So maybe for the first question, for  
9           someone who is unfamiliar with what redistricting  
10          is, can you give us a rundown of what it actually  
11          means, why it's so important?

12          MS. DIAZ: Yeah, absolutely.

13          Redistricting is the process of redrawing  
14          electoral district boundaries. Electoral  
15          district boundaries are your state-legislated  
16          boundaries, your congressional districts for the  
17          House of Representatives.

18          It typically occurs every ten years and it  
19          reflects population changes that are captured in  
20          the U.S. decennial census. So the last census  
21          was 2020.

22          Redistricting determines how communities  
23          are represented in Congress. So reapportionment  
24          apportions the congressional seats in the House  
25          of Representatives to states based on the census.

1           Now, the states within that -- and states  
2 have different ways of doing redistricting --  
3 they then allocate the mapping. And we hear a  
4 lot about redistricting and maps. And so what  
5 they look to is to draw the political boundaries  
6 of a legislative district or a congressional  
7 district.

8           Now, historically there have been many  
9 practices that undermine the ability of Americans  
10 to be able to elect their candidate of choice, in  
11 addition to being able to cast a fair ballot that  
12 is going to be counted.

13           And so in redistricting there's two things  
14 that are very important, which is this idea of  
15 crafting. So this is where, when these maps --  
16 these political maps are drawn, what they're  
17 doing in crafting is that they're splitting a  
18 cohesive minority community, be it African  
19 Americans, Asian Americans, American Indians,  
20 Latinos, across many districts.

21           So maybe they live together and then that  
22 one circle district can be five, four, three.  
23 And so that's crafting. And that makes it so  
24 that that particular group within that political  
25 jurisdiction in that map cannot elect their

1 candidate of choice.

2           The other thing that we hear often is  
3 packing, so this is consolidating. This is  
4 putting like all the Latino voters or all the  
5 African American voters into a single district,  
6 even though they're spread out and dispersed over  
7 several miles.

8           And, in fact, it limits their ability to  
9 exercise their true political power, right?  
10 Because now they're in one particular district  
11 and they can only elect one candidate of choice.  
12 Instead, maybe they could have been a, you know,  
13 majority or opportunity district across others.

14           The last thing that I think is really  
15 important, Maria, about redistricting is that  
16 there was a Supreme Court case under the Warren  
17 court. And more than Brown v. Board of  
18 Education, Chief Justice Warren said that  
19 Reynolds versus Sims, which was in 1964, was the  
20 case that I think meant the most to him.

21           And this was a case that set the context  
22 for redistricting, which is one person, one vote.  
23 And so it required districts to have roughly  
24 equal population.

25           Now, I mentioned the crafting. I

1 mentioned the packing. There's other legislation  
2 and a statutory regime to try and make it so that  
3 that isn't so.

4 One thing that still exists is Section 2  
5 of the Voting Rights Act, and this is really so  
6 that protected classes can elect their candidate  
7 of choice.

8 This is particularly important for  
9 minoritized groups, including Latinos and African  
10 Americans. And this helps combat discriminatory  
11 vote dilution.

12 Now, there's a lot of voting rights cases  
13 that have happened over the last 15 years, and so  
14 that has created some holes, if you will. I  
15 wanted to say cracks, but I'll say some holes in  
16 being able to ensure that there's fair maps.

17 MS. MORALES: I appreciate you breaking  
18 that down, because the way you're saying it is  
19 that there's statutory guidelines that determine  
20 how these maps are supposed to come together,  
21 like the actual drawing of the lines.

22 I guess now I'll take it to the larger  
23 context, redistricting today, and we've seen this  
24 kind of rise in -- I know Helen alluded to it --  
25 this rise in partisan gerrymandering, right?

1           So if you can talk to that trend and the  
2 larger national perspective on how California and  
3 Texas compare in terms of the actual  
4 redistricting process, and how do you see that  
5 partisan redistricting impacting representation/

6           MS. DIAZ: Yeah. So, Maria, I mentioned  
7 that it's one person, one vote. That typically  
8 this happens after every census. The census does  
9 not happen in 2025. It's once a year, 2010,  
10 2000, 2020. The next one is 2030.

11           And here we are in 2025, where California  
12 and Texas are both doing redistricting. There is  
13 no new decennial census that they're basing this  
14 off of, right? That happens once every ten  
15 years.

16           But I think what's important here is that  
17 California and Texas couldn't be more different.  
18 In California, voters took politics out of the  
19 process of redistricting and they created an  
20 Independent Redistricting Commission, which has  
21 now had two full cycles of redrawing the  
22 congressional and the legislative map.

23           This is community driven. It's  
24 transparent. Last time this happened it was over  
25 Zoom. We were in COVID-19. And it really is

1 there to abide by the laws to make sure that  
2 people have fair and equitable representation.

3 Now we're in a place right now and we're  
4 talking about things because there is now a thing  
5 on the ballot, Proposition 50, that would for  
6 four years, between 2026 and 2030, pause that  
7 Independent Redistricting Commission's map,  
8 reintroduce new maps that the State Legislature  
9 drew in public through its legislative sessions  
10 this summer. And now it's going to the voters to  
11 choose.

12 That ballot initiative then would cease,  
13 and in 2030 would go through the same process  
14 that I talked about, which is the census.

15 Texas, on the other hand, has always let  
16 politicians draw the lines. And there is a  
17 voting rights expert at Stanford Law School,  
18 Pamela Karlan, and she said Texas has not had  
19 their maps challenged in court since the 1970s.  
20 So the 1970 census, 1980 census, 1990 census and  
21 so forth, these maps have been challenged. The  
22 same has occurred with Texas's 2020 map.

23 Now, I think what's really important about  
24 both these states, one state has an Independent  
25 Redistricting Commission. The other one did not

1 and has had multiple challenges, from Black civil  
2 rights leaders, from Latino civil rights leaders,  
3 and others, of vote dilution, of not following  
4 the law.

5 And this has only been exacerbated after a  
6 Supreme Court decision in 2013, which said,  
7 Texas, even though you were under Section 5 of  
8 the Voting Rights Act and every time you wanted  
9 to make a little change, we have to approve it,  
10 that's gone.

11 Texas has now really been able to continue  
12 to do what they want with little to no federal  
13 court oversight except for the right of action of  
14 civil rights and other interested parties to sue  
15 them.

16 So I said Texas and California couldn't be  
17 more different. Here is the fact that remains  
18 true about both of them. Latinos are the  
19 plurality population in both California since  
20 2014, and in Texas since two years ago.

21 Texas's apportionment of House seats in  
22 U.S. Congress is based on the growth of the  
23 Latino population. Now, the number of Latino  
24 majority districts in the congressional map for  
25 the Texas delegations did not increase over the

1 last ten years. And, in fact, the maps that are  
2 now presently in Texas based on this 2025  
3 redistricting is seeing an increase of five  
4 Republican maps.

5 And so this is based on a partisan impetus  
6 to redrawn the lines to essentially curtail  
7 Democratic party win in 2026. Historically, the  
8 party in opposition to the White House is able  
9 that first kind of midterm election to win.

10 What is important is that this is not just  
11 a partisan issue. This is a racially motivated  
12 issue. This is around the ability of Latinos in  
13 Texas and other protected classes to be able to  
14 elect their candidate of choice.

15 That's why Texas's 2020 maps were  
16 challenged. That is why Texas is pulling back  
17 and changing those maps that they drew again.

18 And so I think that's really important  
19 because that's not what California did with the  
20 Independent Redistricting Commission, and that's  
21 not the history of California as a large state,  
22 right, akin to Texas and changing things.

23 So we're in a very historical moment.  
24 This is unprecedented to do redistricting in the  
25 middle of a decade. Now, it's being done for

1 partisan reasons.

2 MS. MORALES: That's a really powerful  
3 statement that you made around moving it away  
4 from this, you know, partisan framing and talking  
5 more about the impacts that it's going to have  
6 directly on communities.

7 And I know you've been doing a lot of  
8 research on the impact of Latino voters,  
9 especially in the 2024 election. And now, you  
10 know, these new maps are coming out that in some  
11 ways are -- in many ways are going to impact the  
12 Latino political power and voting power.

13 So what challenges or opportunities do you  
14 see both for Latinos in the voter turnout and  
15 also what that looks like for 2026?

16 MS. DIAZ: Well, Maria, I really struggled  
17 with the challenges and opportunities, right?  
18 Because my sense is to give both equal weight or  
19 to identify a parity in both the challenges and  
20 the opportunities and, frankly, I can't.

21 There are some opportunities, but there  
22 are a lot of challenges. And I think the  
23 participants on this webinar and people that are  
24 watching what's happening with our democracy, I  
25 can't say it in plainer terms, the ability of

1 people to cast a ballot that will be counted and  
2 elect their candidate of choice is -- has been  
3 under siege going back to 2013 and before.

4 But particularly right now with this  
5 unprecedented redistricting effort on the part of  
6 the Republican party has really made it so that  
7 the ability to have your Medicare, the ability to  
8 have your SNAP benefits, the ability to be able  
9 to elect a candidate of choice, or to cross over  
10 in a coalition district if there's political kind  
11 of congruence between Asian American and Latino  
12 voters, say in a place like Orange county,  
13 California, or Harris county, Texas.

14 All of these things are really up for  
15 grabs right now. And unfortunately, we don't  
16 have a federal court system that is able to  
17 intervene on behalf of the civil rights regime  
18 that was effected by the Warren court in the  
19 1960s. That has been clear.

20 Now, in terms of the challenges and really  
21 laying them in for the audience here, every  
22 redistricting cycle is not just an election  
23 cycle. This is generational. So a win in one  
24 district of redistricting maps creates momentum  
25 in a direction, right?

1           And so if Latinos are able to elect their  
2 candidate of choice -- and that doesn't mean that  
3 that candidate is Latino. It can be purple.  
4 They can elect whoever they want. It's that they  
5 together, under the law, are able to elect their  
6 candidate of choice because they're not craft and  
7 they're not packed by redistricting.

8           One would hope that they have substantive  
9 policy gains. Maybe they're living in healthier  
10 communities. Maybe they're able to afford an  
11 increasingly unaffordable space. Maybe their kid  
12 is able to have ethnic studies in their  
13 classroom. You name it. Depending on the issues  
14 that those voters care about.

15           And so the maps that are drawn really  
16 curtail whether or not someone has that  
17 substantive representation because that's the  
18 start of whether or not they're able to actually  
19 have a vote that counts, or they're just voting  
20 and, you know, it's rigged against them.

21           Now, because this is generational -- and  
22 Latino are a youthful demographic, right? Asian  
23 Americans, Latinos fastest-growing demographic,  
24 youngest demographic. These are electorates that  
25 are more often than other voters, including and

1 especially non-Hispanic White voters, to be  
2 persuadable voters, right? To be undecided on  
3 some issues.

4 This is an opportunity for organizations  
5 that care about the health, well-being and  
6 quality of life in these communities to not just  
7 react to redistricting, to be able to strategize,  
8 identify these emerging growth zones, think about  
9 coalitions, and also think about districts by  
10 districting.

11 And so the future of these map cycles  
12 really requires participation from everyday  
13 people, including young people who are not  
14 eligible to vote because they're under 18.

15 Now, to just kind of highlight it, what  
16 are the challenges? Erosions of being able to  
17 have a vote that matters, right? So your voting  
18 power is being diminished.

19 For Latinos, in the space of rapid  
20 population growth, there's unequal power. That  
21 is the story of Texas. That is also the other --  
22 the story of other states, that the growing Asian  
23 American, Latino, Black populations and immigrant  
24 populations that all of a sudden are trying to  
25 erode that voting strength.

1           The other thing is partisan polarization.  
2 We're in a country where there are diametrically  
3 opposing ideas, and we're on the fight for what  
4 the future may hold, especially for the  
5 possibility of a multiracial, multiethnic  
6 democracy.

7           So I said all of those challenges. What  
8 are the opportunities? So the opportunities are.  
9 is that when, you know, the federal courts are  
10 weakened, when the federal government is  
11 weakened, when Congress is weakened, states and  
12 localities offer a new terrain, a new path  
13 forward for reform.

14           California did this with the California  
15 Voting Rights Act. Joaquin Avila, the Mexican-  
16 American Legal Defense and Educational Fund,  
17 along with legislators like Senator Richard  
18 Polanco, passed the CBLA.

19           It's time to update that. It's time to  
20 update that so that it actually matches the real  
21 world 2025 circumstances that we're in. So that  
22 Californians can elect their candidate of choice  
23 if they are from a protected class.

24           There's other opportunities, too. There's  
25 opportunities for everybody to talk about what

1 the community looks like and to engage in the  
2 political process. So that even if you're not  
3 living in a state like California and maybe  
4 you're in Arizona, where there's a lot of  
5 independent voters, in Nevada, where there's a  
6 lot of independent voters, that there's  
7 opportunities to be able to start to experiment  
8 with this thing we call equal justice under the  
9 law.

10 MS. MORALES: Sonja, I just want to say, I  
11 am so grateful that you could join us. And I'm  
12 really glad that we could take apart this  
13 conversation with you breaking the issue down,  
14 but also just underscoring why it's so important  
15 to make our voice heard in this special election,  
16 especially because the turnover has been so  
17 quick.

18 So I think it segues us really well into  
19 our next session, where we're going to be  
20 breaking down the actual map. So hopefully that  
21 your explanation made sense to some folks.

22 And so, with that, I wish we could have  
23 some more time, but I'm really, really grateful.

24 And I do want to share with the attendees,  
25 so please use the Q&A box feature if you want to

1 submit questions to Sonja directly. That way  
2 she'll be, you know, monitoring and can reply to  
3 them since we didn't have time in the open Q&A  
4 portion.

5 But thank you so much, Sonja.

6 And with that, I'm going to welcome Helen  
7 back onto the stage.

8 MS. TORRES: I agree with you, Maria, that  
9 is a fantastic way to kick off.

10 Thank you again to Sonja.

11 Sonja, I think that you do have two  
12 questions in the Q&A box, if you have a moment to  
13 review those. I think one in particular is for  
14 clarification.

15 So I'm excited to continue this  
16 conversation with someone that we have known at  
17 HOPE for almost 20 years. He has been a key  
18 presenter at all our HOPE Leadership Institute  
19 sessions, or the majority of them, and that's our  
20 next speaker, Paul Mitchell.

21 He is one of California's leading experts  
22 on redistricting and political data. He's been  
23 directly involved in drafting the map that  
24 California voters will be deciding on this  
25 November.

1 Paul has worked closely with the State's  
2 Independent Redistricting Commission in the past,  
3 so he brings a unique perspective on both the  
4 process and the specifics of Prop. 50, the  
5 Prop. 50 maps.

6 Paul, thank you so much for joining us  
7 today.

8 MR. MITCHELL: Thanks for having me.

9 MS. TORRES: So, Paul, I thought we'd  
10 start with one key question. You have been  
11 directly involved in drawing the Prop. 50 maps.  
12 Can you walk us through how you approached  
13 developing these maps?

14 Specifically what factors, you know, that  
15 you used, especially what you're required by law  
16 as your guidelines? And where do you see -- and  
17 where do you have more flexibility?

18 MR. MITCHELL: Sure. And thanks for  
19 having me. It's always fun to come and speak  
20 with you.

21 For folks who know me, a lot of people  
22 know me through my work at Political Data. So if  
23 they're tracking the election right now, then  
24 they might be looking at early vote data that I'm  
25 putting out. And if they've run for office, they

1 might use PDI.

2 But my other hat is that I'm the owner of  
3 Redistricting Partners. We're a redistricting  
4 firm that's done over a hundred local  
5 redistrictings, all nonpartisan. We've done  
6 nonpartisan redistricting with a number of  
7 commissions, from Los Angeles to New York City to  
8 New York state's redistricting, where we've  
9 worked twice in New York state.

10 We've even helped stand up independent  
11 redistricting commissions, like where we advised  
12 the Ethics Commission in New Mexico on the  
13 creation of their first Independent Redistricting  
14 Commission. So I've been very tied to  
15 nonpartisan and commission-based redistricting, a  
16 real fan of it for a long time.

17 And when this first -- when I was first  
18 approached about this, it wasn't even at first  
19 like, well, how would I draw the maps? My first  
20 reaction was like, there's no way that we can do  
21 this. Voters love the Commission. And I support  
22 the Commission's work. And why would voters give  
23 the Legislature the authority to redraw lines?

24 And so a lot changed after Texas did what  
25 they did to, you know, redo their maps responding

1 to President Trump. And the idea of this as  
2 being a counterbalance to what Texas was doing  
3 became a core kind of idea of this project. And  
4 then a commitment that it goes back to the  
5 Commission afterwards. That all of this is  
6 temporary. So even before I started looking at  
7 potential maps, that was what I was thinking  
8 about.

9 Now, when I was first talked to by folks,  
10 I won't call out any names of elected officials,  
11 but I did have some elected officials call me and  
12 say, well, if Texas is going to throw away the  
13 VRA, we should just throw away the VRA. You  
14 should just draw anything you can. Don't worry  
15 about the VRA.

16 And I would be like, okay, thanks for  
17 calling. But there was no way that I was going  
18 to do that. Folks who work with me understand  
19 that. And also, I just felt like that was going  
20 to be the wrong strategy.

21 So the first real thing I took at -- to  
22 answer your question, how did we start  
23 approaching drawing maps, it was by utilizing the  
24 State Fair Maps Act criteria and the  
25 Redistricting Commission's criteria and the

1 Redistricting Commission's actual maps.

2           So one of my first rules of the process  
3 was that we would follow the Commission process  
4 and have a lot of respect for the Commission work  
5 product.

6           We would also preserve communities of  
7 interest. And I have worked, like I said, in so  
8 many parts of this state, and my staff, that all  
9 kind of came back on a volunteer basis to work on  
10 this, had all worked in so many places that we  
11 knew where those communities of interest were.  
12 We've been active in the state redistricting  
13 process.

14           And following the Voting Rights Act was  
15 very important. Even though, as of today,  
16 there's a Supreme Court hearing to potentially  
17 dismantle it, we still were holding to it.

18           Now, when we really knew that this was  
19 real, I sent a text to my little chat of all my  
20 Redistricting Partners staff. And I said, guys,  
21 this might happen. Who can get on -- we call it  
22 the box. Who can get on the box and start  
23 drawing? And this is what I want to draw.

24           And I started listing out this concept of  
25 drawing a replacement Latino majority/minority

1 district in the middle of Los Angeles. That was  
2 the number one thing that I first started  
3 thinking about because it was something that I  
4 worked with HOPE on in the last redistricting  
5 process.

6 I'm going to read for a second -- I hate  
7 doing this on a presentation, but I'm going to  
8 read from a HOPE letter from November 24th, 2021,  
9 where it said, HOPE is concerned about the  
10 elimination of a majority/minority Latino  
11 district within the area of Los Angeles gateway  
12 cities.

13 The seat, which is called by the LA Times  
14 the most Latino district in the country,  
15 disappeared off the map despite the growing  
16 Latino population throughout the state.

17 And that letter on page 2 illustrated what  
18 HOPE wanted to see done in a coalition with a lot  
19 of other partners in Los Angeles. And it said,  
20 number one, create a gateway cities district  
21 centered around Downey, as described in the  
22 analysis, allowing for the creation of five  
23 Latino majority/minority districts in an area  
24 where there are currently four.

25 Secondly, take the district that was

1 called LB North, which is now the Robert Garcia  
2 district, take that district to the south through  
3 Seal Beach into Huntington Beach, making a  
4 Latino-influenced district at 35 percent Latino  
5 by voting age population.

6 That two bullet points was the first thing  
7 we did in drawing the new map. We essentially  
8 reversed the Redistricting Commission's decision  
9 to eliminate a Latino district from LA, the old  
10 Ed Roybal district, Lucille Roybal-Allard  
11 district, the first Latino majority/minority  
12 district in the country, the first Latino member  
13 of Congress in the country.

14 We put that district back. Eliminated  
15 the -- basically moving the 41st over there and  
16 eliminating the Ken Calvert district in  
17 Riverside, and then moving the districts around  
18 in order to fill in.

19 Now, did that just come up in our head  
20 like, hey, it's 2025, let's draw this? No. We  
21 went back to maps the Commission was considering.  
22 We went back to proposals from HOPE, Equality  
23 California, a number of groups that were trying  
24 to advocate for these changes in the end of the  
25 last redistricting process.

1           So what we did, which you could only do in  
2 California, was we took the Commission map. We  
3 kept about 80 percent of it the same, but in  
4 certain areas we made small, modest changes in  
5 order to create a push back to what Texas was  
6 doing, an opportunity for Democrats to pick up  
7 five seats, and to counterbalance the five  
8 Republican seats in Texas.

9           And in doing so, we were able to keep a  
10 large number of communities of interest together.  
11 We were able to reduce the numbers of cities that  
12 were split. We were able to protect the Voting  
13 Rights Act.

14           The Voting Rights Act analysis that we got  
15 back said -- and, again, I'll read -- while both  
16 the Commission map and the draft map are  
17 compliant with Section 2, the empirical evidence  
18 shows that the public submission map, which is  
19 the Prop. 50 map, improves the opportunity for  
20 Latino voters to elect candidates of choice in  
21 two more districts than the existing plan.

22           And then PPIC just put out an analysis  
23 last week that said that our plan maintained the  
24 status quo in terms of the Voting Rights Act and  
25 added one more Latino-influenced district.

1           So there's a good story to tell about what  
2   these maps have done, and that how we did it  
3   really was building off of the Commission work  
4   product, keeping the same values that the  
5   Commission and Californians have, doing modest  
6   changes, and, you know, doing the minimum we had  
7   to in order to achieve the political goal while  
8   protecting communities of interest.

9           MS. TORRES: Thank you, Paul.

10           It's always good to hear my words being  
11   read back to me --

12           MR. MITCHELL: Sorry.

13           MS. TORRES: -- from the flood of ideas  
14   that --

15           MR. MITCHELL: I didn't warn you I was  
16   doing that, so anybody knows that was not  
17   planned.

18           MS. TORRES: That's okay.

19           MR. MITCHELL: She did not know I was  
20   going to do that.

21           MS. TORRES: But I think you made your  
22   point that the crafting of these maps, Prop. 50  
23   maps, it wasn't just, you know, you and a couple  
24   bad scientists coming together. It's really  
25   truly individuals that are -- and building on the

1 current maps that are out there.

2 And, you know, there is no denying it.  
3 You mentioned that two great sources, especially  
4 PPIC, that, you know, is calling out that this  
5 will potentially create a Latino -- an additional  
6 Latino seat, or replace -- or bring back the  
7 Latino seat that we lost in the past.

8 With that, and trying as much as we can to  
9 keep it nonpartisan, from your perspective, what  
10 should Latino voters pay the most attention to  
11 when it comes to this -- to these Prop. 50 maps?

12 MR. MITCHELL: Well, I think that when we  
13 get into 2026 election cycle, and presuming these  
14 maps pass, I think it's about organizing. There  
15 will be different districts in LA in particular.  
16 So every district -- because there's this  
17 replacement of the Roybal-Allard district in the  
18 middle of the gateway cities portion of LA, that  
19 essentially moved a bunch of districts going  
20 through San Gabriel Valley, through the Inland  
21 Empire, where those members of Congress had to  
22 look at a map and say, wait, that's not my  
23 district. My district got changed significantly.

24 So you're going to have a lot of members  
25 of Congress that are going to be running in new

1 areas. And then in particularly the Robert  
2 Garcia district that's going to now be Long  
3 Beach, goes down into Huntington Beach, which has  
4 been pretty antagonistic towards Democrats,  
5 somewhat antagonistic towards minority groups,  
6 and vehemently antagonistic against the LGBTQ  
7 community.

8 And so you've got some places where he  
9 needs to get support and get engaged folks to  
10 support and do turnout there for Latinos to  
11 protect a Latino member of Congress in a district  
12 that is still a Latino-influenced district, but  
13 is no longer a majority/minority district because  
14 his district, most Latino portions go into the  
15 replacement Roybal-Allard district. So that's  
16 one big thing.

17 The other big things are the big things we  
18 always talk about, which is trying to get Latinos  
19 to vote earlier so that they're not scrambling to  
20 try to get them out to the polls on election day.

21 Looking right now just at the Prop. 21  
22 [sic] vote, Latinos are 28 percent of the  
23 registered voters, but only about 13 percent of  
24 the votes that have come in so far. So getting  
25 Latinos to vote earlier.

1           Getting Latinos to, you know, make best  
2 use of all the methods of voting, whether it's by  
3 mail, drop box, or in person at a vote center,  
4 and just really kind of focusing on that  
5 engagement.

6           The Prop. 50 maps I think will be great  
7 for the Latino community in two critical ways.  
8 One is that they ensure that the Latino districts  
9 that are the VRA seats are bolstered in order to  
10 make them most effective, particularly in the  
11 Central Valley.

12           And then, secondly, have to hazard a  
13 guess, and I don't want to be too political or  
14 partisan here, but I have to hazard a guess that  
15 whoever gets elected in that gateway cities  
16 district in Los Angeles, it's a majority/minority  
17 district, is going to be a better representative  
18 for the community than the representative being  
19 elected from the Ken Calvert seat.

20           So I think there are opportunities  
21 throughout the map where you might get somebody  
22 better representing San Diego/Palm Springs area  
23 in a new seat that is drawn under Prop. 50 than  
24 you would under the existing Darrell Issa  
25 district.

1           So I think there are opportunities there  
2 in the substance of the maps and the outcomes of  
3 the maps, and I think there's a lot of  
4 opportunities in terms of kind of those VRA  
5 concerns as well.

6           MS. TORRES: So, Paul, you know, I know I  
7 only have a couple more minutes with you, but I  
8 wanted to come back to just clarify.

9           You mentioned Prop. 21, but I think you  
10 were mentioning -- did you mean to mention  
11 Prop. 50 and what the voting count looks like  
12 now? Because you're tracking that, right, how  
13 much voters --

14           MR. MITCHELL: Oh, I'm sorry. Yeah. I  
15 don't know.

16           MS. TORRES: Yeah.

17           MR. MITCHELL: Maybe I misspoke. Yeah.  
18 So the Prop. 50 tracker, we have it up now, so  
19 we're processing ballots that are -- the counties  
20 are processing the ballots that are coming in.  
21 And right now Latinos are 28 percent of the votes  
22 that have been cast for Prop. 50. And, you know,  
23 they're 28 percent of registered voters, and only  
24 about 13 percent of the votes that have been cast  
25 so far.

1           So, yeah, if I said 21, it might just be  
2 because I was thinking about the --

3           MS. TORRES: So just so I'm clear.

4           MR. MITCHELL: Yeah. Yeah.

5           MS. TORRES: Latinos make up 28 percent of  
6 the voting population in California, and about --  
7 we're tracking at 13, 16 percent of ballots --

8           MR. MITCHELL: Of the ballots that have  
9 been returned.

10          MS. TORRES: And is that usually what you  
11 see? Because Latinos seem to vote later; is that  
12 correct?

13          MR. MITCHELL: So Latinos have  
14 traditionally voted later. Also, when we talk  
15 about Latinos on the voter file, we're talking  
16 about younger voters. Because your average  
17 Latino on the voter file is a lot younger than  
18 the average White voter, as an example.

19                So in addition to Latinos voting more on  
20 election day, you also have younger people less  
21 responsive to their mail. They're not checking  
22 their mail every day and mailing their ballot  
23 back right away.

24                So those are things that can be worked on  
25 in order to bring a fuller turnout from all these

1 communities, whether it's Latinos or young people  
2 or renters, or different groups that kind of  
3 socioeconomically are traditionally lower turnout  
4 or later voters in the process.

5 MS. TORRES: And I'll just -- you know, I  
6 think you already answered the question what this  
7 map means for long-term political -- Latino  
8 political power in the state, especially leading  
9 to 2032, but if you wanted to add anything else  
10 to that.

11 And then, Paul, you know, there's always  
12 this conversation of the lack of investment made  
13 by everyone that has to do with either political  
14 parties or, you know, when it comes to  
15 propositions in the Latino vote. Really, you  
16 know, investing in getting the vote out.

17 Any thoughts around that, and as well as  
18 any ending words around the Latino -- long-term  
19 Latino power, political power?

20 MR. MITCHELL: Well, yeah, this is  
21 definitely something we've talked about a lot.  
22 And a lot of what HOPE does has been instrumental  
23 in helping turn the tide on that, you know.

24 I'm sitting and talking with members of  
25 Congress that were part of a HOPE class that I

1 spoke to ten years ago. It's literally happened.

2 I've met with people who are new elected  
3 officials and they were people who saw me present  
4 on voter data, you know, 15 years ago.

5 So a lot of what you're doing to create  
6 that culture is incredibly important.

7 Also, pushing the political parties and  
8 pushing consultants to recognize the importance  
9 of the Latino vote. And not just to only target  
10 the most very, very, very likely voters.

11 You know, even at PDI we've created voter  
12 universes that are targeted to get those likely  
13 voters, but also bring in some of the less likely  
14 voters among the Latino, Asian and Black  
15 communities in order to make what we call equity  
16 universes. And those universes, we've encouraged  
17 consultants to target those voters.

18 Because part of the challenge of these  
19 campaigns is you have a campaign consultant who  
20 says, well, I want to spend this, you know,  
21 \$50,000 as efficiently as possible.

22 But then you also have the bigger need in  
23 the long term that if that consultant is only  
24 mailing to the most likely voters, all they're  
25 doing is reinforcing the most likely voters to

1 vote.

2           They need to also be mailing to the less  
3 likely voters, and texting and phoning and doing  
4 digital and pushing to the less likely voters to  
5 get them to turn out as well. Because if  
6 somebody gets five mailers and somebody else gets  
7 one mailer, the group that gets one mailer is  
8 going to be lower turnout.

9           So we want to make sure that when we're  
10 pushing candidates, to make sure they're talking  
11 more inclusively to all voters. When we're  
12 talking to consultants, when we're, you know,  
13 talking about how money is spent in campaigns,  
14 that it's being done in a more equitable way to  
15 ensure that we're not creating a permanent lower  
16 voting class in our total electorate.

17           So that's one thing that we've had  
18 conversations about, and I've had conversations  
19 with a lot of consultants about. Or, you know,  
20 Mindy Romero, as an example, has done a lot of  
21 work on trying to push this kind of argument  
22 about turnout. So I think there's a lot of work  
23 that still needs to be done, obviously.

24           MS. TORRES: Thank you, Paul. And always  
25 a pleasure to hear from you. And may St. Paul

1 continue to be prosperous in his map making.

2 Thank you so much for your time.

3 MR. MITCHELL: Thank you very much and  
4 take care.

5 MS. TORRES: Appreciate it.

6 MR. MITCHELL: Good-bye.

7 MS. TORRES: Now we're going to turn to  
8 our third guest. Gosh, I just feel we have  
9 incredible speakers lined up for you, and I hope  
10 it's bringing a full -- we'll be bringing a full  
11 picture of all that's at stake with the upcoming  
12 special election.

13 So, once again, thank you, Paul, for  
14 breaking down the Prop. 50 map for us.

15 To provide some balance, we now turn to a  
16 different perspective. Joining us is Fabian  
17 Valdez, Jr., who leads Redistricting Insights,  
18 data-driven approach to redistricting as their  
19 chief demographer, with expertise in predicting  
20 models at GIF Mapping and Database Systems.

21 Fabian has led projects from supporting  
22 mission-driven organizations and government  
23 agencies to guiding nonprofits through  
24 redistricting initiatives. His insights here  
25 will help us understand the critiques and

1 alternative views of Prop. 50.

2 Thank you so much for joining us.

3 MR. VALDEZ: Thank you for having me. And  
4 I don't get to say I've been around for 20 years  
5 like Paul has with you, but I'm glad to be my  
6 first time with HOPE and getting to speak to you  
7 and looking forward on the conversation today.

8 MS. TORRES: Thank you so much.

9 Well, we always love making new friends,  
10 and I think we've made a great new friend in you.  
11 So thank you so much.

12 The first question I have for you is, some  
13 argue that these maps either dilute or  
14 concentrate regional voting power. What's your  
15 view on how these maps impact voter  
16 representation?

17 MR. VALDEZ: So that's a really good  
18 question. When we're talking about, first, how  
19 they dilute or concentrate regional voting power,  
20 I want to be clear in what my take on that is.

21 So regional voting power is a lot of  
22 things. It can be a county. It can be a city.  
23 It can be rural versus urban. There can be a few  
24 different ways you can look at regional voting  
25 power.

1 In general, the way this has been going on  
2 in the state of California is there has been a  
3 number of places in the Central Valley, LA region  
4 and then Orange county going down to San Diego  
5 that Latinos have had a lot of voting power, so  
6 to speak. They have large CVAP populations,  
7 citizen voting age population, in some of these  
8 districts. They also have large percentage of  
9 the voting block in these districts.

10 And I would argue that in most of the  
11 districts that we have in California, Latinos  
12 have actually been electing their candidates of  
13 choice and getting voter representation they  
14 want.

15 This is actually seen really well in a  
16 couple of districts recently. CD 13, which is  
17 the Josh Harder district, you can see the Latinos  
18 there chose a candidate where they had a  
19 Republican candidate. They weren't happy with  
20 it. They moved on and chose a Democratic  
21 candidate only recently.

22 CD 27, where you had Mike Garcia, who was  
23 a Latino but was a Republican Latino, that the  
24 Latinos in that area maybe didn't agree with,  
25 they moved on and chose someone else for their

1 candidate, George Whiteside.

2 So they've actually been electing in a lot  
3 of these places -- in terms of their power, they  
4 have been electing who they would like, or  
5 getting who they would like.

6 Now, how that affects with this -- these  
7 new maps concentrating regional -- or diluting  
8 regional voting power, we have a couple areas  
9 where it's maybe been somewhat of a problem.

10 For instance, in a lot of the parts in the  
11 Central Valley we have, you know, very rural  
12 agricultural Latino populations. A lot of them  
13 are farmwork, or at least dealing with the  
14 farmwork communities. And now they've drawn a  
15 new map which takes urban Latinos in Stockton  
16 amongst these rural Latinos and agricultural  
17 Latinos.

18 Now, the Hispanic people in general,  
19 everybody knows we're not monolithic. We all  
20 like speak Spanish and we all have, you know, a  
21 general kind of understanding of that. But you  
22 have a lot of different countries in South and  
23 Central America. You have a lot of different  
24 groups of people. And treating them  
25 monolithically sometimes isn't necessarily the

1 best way to allow for representation.

2           So when you have a place like Stockton and  
3 urban Latinos being lumped in with all the rural  
4 agricultural Hispanic people and Latinos in the  
5 rest of the Central Valley, you're kind of not  
6 only diluting the power of rural representation,  
7 but you're also in a way packing. That was  
8 mentioned earlier in the presentation.

9           You're packing these Latinos into one  
10 district just to say now we have a district,  
11 CD 13, which has more Democrat voters and so it  
12 will be safer for a Democrat candidate, rather  
13 than allowing the Latinos in that district to  
14 really elect the candidate they would like.

15           What it comes down to is -- and we've seen  
16 this a lot, especially in the last couple of  
17 elections. Even though Latinos might have a  
18 shared language and in some places a lot of  
19 shared culture, there's not always a shared  
20 ideology. There's actually a lot of Hispanic  
21 voters who are voting one way and a lot of  
22 Hispanic voters who are voting another way.

23           And so there's this idea that, well, if we  
24 put them all together, that's going to give them  
25 better representation. Well, in some cases, you

1 may not necessarily want as a Hispanic Democrat  
2 voter to be in a district with a bunch of  
3 Hispanic Republican voters, because you may not  
4 have the ability to elect a Democratic candidate.  
5 Or vice versa, if you're a Republican Hispanic  
6 voter, you may not want to be in a Democratic  
7 district.

8 Just because you're getting what the  
9 Hispanic Democrats want doesn't mean that you're  
10 getting what a Hispanic Republican wants, but you  
11 might be.

12 In general -- sorry. In general, my point  
13 on it is, you know, treating us monolithically is  
14 a bit reductive and it kind of ignores how  
15 diverse and broad of a community the Latino and  
16 Hispanic people, especially in California, can  
17 be.

18 MS. TORRES: And would you say that's your  
19 concern about these maps is that it -- or one of  
20 the main concerns, that it's looking at Latinos  
21 as a monolithic voting block?

22 MR. VALDEZ: Yeah. It's definitely  
23 something I have struggled with myself as a  
24 Latino in California. And I sit a lot more on  
25 the fence in the middle, and maybe middle and to

1 the right sometimes than a lot of other Latinos I  
2 know.

3 It's been a struggle for me to look at,  
4 you know, balancing representation and saying,  
5 well, are we getting what we deserve in terms of  
6 where a majority -- not like we're -- we're  
7 plurality in the state. Are we getting the  
8 number of representatives and the kind of  
9 representation we need versus do we agree on what  
10 that representation is?

11 I've had many conversations with Latinos  
12 across the state in different areas who, you  
13 know, have very different opinions on what's  
14 going on in their communities and, you know, how  
15 the current administration is affecting them, and  
16 what they like and don't like.

17 And to say that, oh, everyone is the same  
18 because you have -- you know, your last name has  
19 an E-Z or an E-S ending, it's like, well, I mean,  
20 maybe that's not exactly how they should treat  
21 us.

22 I mean, for instance, in the Asian  
23 community -- and anybody who works in politics  
24 can speak to this. In the Asian community, we  
25 treat the Vietnamese very different from Chinese.

1 We treat Korean different from Japanese. But we  
2 don't really do that in the Hispanic community.

3 MS. TORRES: Thank you for that.

4 Fabian, how do you think these maps impact  
5 competitiveness, particularly in regions -- and I  
6 think that you started answering this question --  
7 particularly in regions where Latino voters make  
8 up a decisive voting block?

9 MR. VALDEZ: Yeah. So to be clear, these  
10 maps were drawn specifically to enable more  
11 Democratic representation, Democratic elected  
12 officials. So, I mean, that's the understanding  
13 of that. In general, the goal is to kind of  
14 reduce competitiveness as a goal, and that's --  
15 plainly stated. That's not obfuscated in any  
16 way. That is the goal of these maps.

17 But how does it affect the ones maybe  
18 where Latinos have the higher voting block, or  
19 have more people living in them? So there's a  
20 couple places I'd like to look at that you can  
21 see a better example of this.

22 Specifically, you have districts like  
23 district -- current district -- I'm talking about  
24 the current districts. Current District 9, which  
25 is at San Joaquin area.

1           You have current District 13, which kind  
2 of runs from the Central -- down the Central  
3 Valley through Stanislaus and down into Madera.

4           You have District 22, which is the current  
5 Valadao district, which kind of runs through that  
6 Kingstown and Fresno county area.

7           And then you also have District 27, which  
8 is a district in northern LA county that kind of  
9 runs from the Lancaster/Palmdale area.

10           In all of those districts, Hispanic voting  
11 block -- and when I say voting block, I mean  
12 that's different than the CVAP. The voting block  
13 of Hispanics is pretty high, over 30, 40, in some  
14 places 60 percent. So we have large Hispanic  
15 voting populations.

16           And these are all competitive districts.  
17 And what I mean by competitive is I mean these  
18 districts can swing Republican or Democrat, and  
19 they have in the last few elections.

20           So we have Democrat candidates sometimes.  
21 We have Republican candidates. Either could win  
22 in either of these district -- any of these  
23 districts. Latinos are able to choose who they  
24 want as their representative in these districts.  
25 And that all these districts being able to choose

1 as a Hispanic or Latino voter, it gives you the  
2 representation that you're looking for.

3 In all those districts I just mentioned,  
4 they have reduced the competitiveness. So in  
5 every single one of those districts, they've  
6 added Democrats to the district in a way that  
7 then makes those districts less competitive.

8 Now, why might that matter if you're still  
9 getting representation? Well, again, this comes  
10 down to, what is that representation? When you  
11 talk about who you want voting -- who you want on  
12 your -- in your election, District 22 is a good  
13 example, Valadao.

14 Valadao is a Republican who won in a  
15 majority Hispanic voting district. It's roughly  
16 63 percent Hispanic voters. And to say to those  
17 Hispanic voters in '22, well, you elected a  
18 Republican you like, but we don't believe who you  
19 elected is who is best for you.

20 Instead, we're going to draw a district  
21 where Valadao is, frankly, unelectable, and we're  
22 going to make sure a different representation  
23 comes in that is Democratic. Well, that's a  
24 little insulting to the Hispanic voters who voted  
25 for Valadao in that region.

1           And, again, 63 percent Hispanic voting. I  
2     guarantee you 63 percent of all of the voters are  
3     Hispanic. I guarantee you all of them did not  
4     vote against Valadao. That means he had to win  
5     Hispanic voters over. That means the Hispanic  
6     voters, Latinos voters who voted for him.

7           And now to say, oh, well, we're going to  
8     remove that decision from you, this goes back to  
9     the problem we had in 2008 where -- and before we  
10    had this whole Prop. 10 and we had these, you  
11    know, competitive -- sorry, Commission-driven  
12    maps. It goes back to the problem of politicians  
13    drawing what they think are best for voters  
14    rather than the voters saying what we think is  
15    best for us.

16           MS. TORRES: Since you brought up the  
17    Valadao seat, which I find always a very  
18    interesting seat in our California politics, once  
19    again, a swing vote seat.

20           MR. VALDEZ: Uh-huh.

21           MS. TORRES: There was a time that he  
22    wasn't voted in and then it went back to him,  
23    right?

24           MR. VALDEZ: Uh-huh.

25           MS. TORRES: What I find curious about

1 that is you mentioned a majority voting Latino  
2 district. What was the voter turnout, though?  
3 Because, unfortunately, I always hear -- not only  
4 hear, but experience that the voter turnout for  
5 Latinos aren't as high in some of these Central  
6 Valley seats.

7 MR. VALDEZ: Well, in general, that is  
8 actually a statement that can be made across the  
9 state.

10 MS. TORRES: Across the board.

11 MR. VALDEZ: Yeah. Across the state,  
12 Hispanic, Black and Asian voters tend to vote at  
13 lower numbers than White voters. That is  
14 absolutely true.

15 You can say that -- I don't know what the  
16 exact numbers are. I'd have to look up '22 to  
17 know exactly what the voter turnout of Hispanic  
18 voters was in that district.

19 But in general, I would say it's probably  
20 pretty safe to say that of those Latinos in the  
21 state, they probably turn out a slightly lower  
22 level.

23 Paul mentioned that currently it's 28  
24 percent and then 13 percent have voted so far.  
25 Yeah, Latinos tend to hold their votes to later.

1 But in general, they will show up at a little bit  
2 of a lower rate in the election.

3 So when you ask the question what  
4 percentage of those voters voted, I don't have  
5 the answer right away. However, what I can say  
6 is, even if you were to say, well, a lower number  
7 of Hispanic voters voted there, that's how  
8 Valadao got in.

9 So you're saying, first of all, the choice  
10 not to vote is a choice. If a Latino decides  
11 they don't want to vote because they don't want  
12 to -- they don't like either candidate, that is a  
13 choice in themselves.

14 You're also saying that the Latino that  
15 did vote for Valadao -- and I guarantee you there  
16 are a lot of them, because you cannot win that  
17 district without getting Hispanic vote. Even if  
18 they're voting at lower levels, you cannot win  
19 that district. The Hispanic voters that did vote  
20 for Valadao, their vote didn't matter as much as  
21 the ones that didn't vote.

22 So it's more about, hey, what are we being  
23 able to do, what are we -- what are we being able  
24 to look at in terms of how Hispanics are  
25 positioning themselves for representation? Who

1 are they allowed to vote for versus what you're  
2 choosing for them to vote for.

3 Actually, Paul just let me know 48 --

4 MS. TORRES: I saw that.

5 MR. VALDEZ: -- 48 percent. So 48 percent  
6 Hispanic voter turnout.

7 MS. TORRES: I love being with you and  
8 Paul.

9 MR. VALDEZ: Yeah.

10 MS. TORRES: I know we could always get  
11 good data when we have you and Paul together.

12 MR. VALDEZ: Yeah.

13 MS. TORRES: That's fantastic.

14 I guess the bigger point, and this is the  
15 point that I was trying to make with Paul, too,  
16 is like this underspent, quite frankly, of  
17 resources in getting the Latino vote, period.  
18 You know, really investing in the Latino vote.

19 And, you know, you go from a district that  
20 was a little over 60 percent of Latino voters to  
21 only getting about 48 percent of that voter  
22 turnout.

23 To me, the conversation always is, who is  
24 truly investing in the Latino vote? You know,  
25 who is truly educating and making the efforts to

1 garner our vote to ensure that our voices are  
2 being heard? So I just always -- I always come  
3 back to that, right?

4 MR. VALDEZ: Yeah. I would argue it's  
5 HOPE. HOPE is part of the -- part of the --

6 MS. TORRES: We are.

7 MR. VALDEZ: -- part of the good people.

8 MS. TORRES: We're trying to make sure  
9 everyone's --

10 MR. VALDEZ: Part of the process.

11 MS. TORRES: And we all have to be  
12 hopeful, right?

13 MR. VALDEZ: Yeah.

14 MS. TORRES: We only have a little bit  
15 more time together, and I wanted to make sure I  
16 asked you the same question I asked Paul to wrap  
17 things up, and that was, how do you see these  
18 maps influence the long-term political power of  
19 Latinos in California? And not just in this next  
20 election cycle, but, you know, the decade leading  
21 up to or close to, you know, five to six years,  
22 leading up to 2030, 2032?

23 MR. VALDEZ: Yeah. That's a great  
24 question, too.

25 I looked at this a little more

1 holistically in terms of what these maps mean.  
2 Now, these new maps or the current maps, whatever  
3 maps they're using, if they pass or it doesn't,  
4 these maps will stay in place until 2032. 2032  
5 is when we will see maps -- the new Commission  
6 gets starting the process in 2030 for new maps in  
7 2032. So this will be for the next three  
8 election cycles.

9 And then looking beyond that, what are  
10 the -- what is the opportunities or what is the  
11 potential problems for Latinos?

12 In general, there's going to be -- as Paul  
13 said, there is a new Hispanic majority district  
14 in LA. But what does that mean? Well, to draw  
15 that district, you actually have to break up some  
16 areas.

17 We talked a lot about the gateway cities.  
18 And yes, the gateway cities are kind of made into  
19 this new district. But in doing that, they also  
20 split cities, like Pico Rivera and Norwalk, which  
21 are also gateway cities. And splitting them  
22 isn't necessarily helping the Latinos in those  
23 communities.

24 For instance, the new 41 splits Norwalk in  
25 favor of grabbing people in Brea. Well, they

1 could have kept Norwalk together and left Brea in  
2 a different district.

3           These are the kind of considerations when  
4 you're drawing these maps in order to draw them  
5 just for political purposes, you end up losing  
6 some of the idea of, well, how can we help these  
7 communities stay together?

8           And it's not just Pico Rivera and Norwalk.  
9 Pomona gets split, another heavy Hispanic  
10 community. Santa Ana gets split up. Norwalk. I  
11 talked about Nueva, which is a smaller community  
12 in Inland Empire.

13           You have -- in the north you have Stockton  
14 being split up. You have Porterville. You have  
15 Madera. These are all Latino majority cities  
16 which are now cut up. And again, they're cut up  
17 to favor Democratic representation and Democrats,  
18 which I understand the purpose.

19           But to do that, they have to split them  
20 and say, well, some Latinos we need with  
21 Republicans over here, and some Latinos we need  
22 with Democrats over here in order to make sure we  
23 have enough Democrats being elected. And that  
24 just isn't good for, you know, Latino communities  
25 in general.

1 And what that means for longer term is  
2 weaker -- potential weaker coalition power. When  
3 you are splitting these groups up and you're  
4 putting places like Coalinga and Avenal into  
5 San Jose, and you're saying, well, Latinos in  
6 Coalinga and Avenal, you're now going to be  
7 represented by someone in San Jose, that starts  
8 to -- I mean, everyone knows politics starts at  
9 the lowest level.

10 And so when these people are being shunted  
11 up all the way to another area, maybe that's  
12 harder to organize the Latino community all the  
13 way from Coalinga and all the way to San Jose.  
14 It's harder to build local incumbency.

15 It's harder to secure that responsive  
16 representation and say, hey, you know, we have  
17 this bench, you know, the bench candidates of  
18 people who ran for city council and ran for  
19 district elections, and now they're moving up  
20 through to Congress.

21 Well, they're never going to have that  
22 opportunity because the lines have been drawn in  
23 such a way that to kind of break some of that  
24 coalition up and split it into different places.

25 And what that means long term is

1 potentially diminished policy wins, you know,  
2 when you're unable to get what you need in your  
3 local community, you're unable to move it up to  
4 the next level. Then potentially it's going to  
5 work out not in your favor in the long term.

6 I think also, in general, how this affects  
7 long-term political power for Latinos is my whole  
8 problem with the monolithic -- how we're treating  
9 monolithically. When you treat Latinos  
10 monolithically, they will -- look, you have power  
11 now. Well, we can still disagree with each  
12 other.

13 And, you know, saying that to a rural  
14 Hispanic farmer that you are now in a district  
15 with a bunch of urban Latinos and Hispanic people  
16 who are going to decide your district for you,  
17 how does that increase your political power as a  
18 rural Hispanic farmer? If anything, it reduces  
19 or completely eliminates it, because you don't  
20 get that choice anymore. It's only what the  
21 other people decide for you.

22 MS. TORRES: Fabian, thank you so much for  
23 joining us. And I feel like we've made a new  
24 friend, so --

25 MR. VALDEZ: I'm happy to talk any time.

1 MS. TORRES: -- welcome to the family.

2 MR. VALDEZ: Thank you very much.

3 MS. TORRES: We really appreciate your  
4 insights.

5 MR. VALDEZ: And all of you, thank you for  
6 having me. And I would love to come back any  
7 time and have another conversation.

8 MS. TORRES: Wonderful. We'll make sure  
9 that happens.

10 Now we're going to transition over to  
11 Maria Morales again, our HOPE policy director, as  
12 she brings in our final great speaker.

13 And thank you everyone for listening and  
14 continuing the conversation.

15 MS. MORALES: Thank you, Helen, for  
16 moderating those segments.

17 And thank you so much, Paul and Fabian,  
18 for the really in-depth breakdown of the map. I  
19 feel like I learned a lot, so thank you.

20 It's a pleasure to introduce our final  
21 speaker, which is Christian Arana from the Latino  
22 Community Foundation. I think Christian will be  
23 able to ground this conversation in community  
24 voice.

25 He is the vice president of Civic Power

1 and Policy at the Latino Community Foundation,  
2 where he leads the Foundation's efforts to  
3 advance policy solutions that will improve the  
4 lives and political power of California's  
5 Latinos.

6 Christian will share polling data insights  
7 on how Latino voters are engaging with Prop. 50.

8 So thank you for all you do, Christian,  
9 and thank you so much for joining us today.

10 MR. LARA: Yeah. Well, thank you so much,  
11 Maria and Helen, and honestly, the entire HOPE  
12 team. I was telling them that in preparation for  
13 this, that it's real kudos to HOPE and the  
14 organization for putting this on.

15 As I'll explain in a bit, you know,  
16 there's a lot of work to be done to ensure that  
17 our community is prepared and well-educated about  
18 what exactly is going on.

19 So as Maria mentioned, the Latino  
20 Community Foundation -- and then, actually, just  
21 for more context, we are the nation's largest  
22 Latino serving Foundation. You know,  
23 historically we've been a California-focused  
24 foundation, but under the leadership of our new  
25 CEO, Julian Castro, it started to expand

1 nationally, right, just to see how we replicate  
2 along the work that we have done here in  
3 California and take it to other parts of the  
4 country.

5           Critical to this work that we have done  
6 over the last couple years is to commission  
7 public opinion polling of the community. I think  
8 too often in American politics conversations  
9 around our voters, right, in our community are  
10 based on very scant evidence or data or polling.

11           And so we want to make sure that we're  
12 always portraying an accurate narrative about  
13 what our community is thinking, what are the key  
14 issues that we're thinking about, and so on and  
15 so forth, right?

16           MS. MORALES: Yes.

17           MR. LARA: So as Paul and Fabian and Sonja  
18 were talking about, you know, I think towards the  
19 middle of the summer, we knew we were barreling  
20 towards a special election on redistricting, and  
21 so we wanted to take it upon ourselves to  
22 commission to both, right? To ensure that we're  
23 capturing Latino attitudes and sentiments around  
24 this issue.

25           And so just to share a couple of key

1 highlights about what we found in our polls, so  
2 just for additional context.

3 There's 1200 registered Latino voters  
4 across the state of California. And I think one  
5 of the biggest findings that we found were that  
6 Latinos generally are in support of this idea of  
7 temporarily redrawing these congressional  
8 districts, right?

9 We asked the question specifically  
10 about -- as it was moving through the Legislature  
11 and the Governor was going to sign it, that 54  
12 percent were generally supportive of this idea.

13 As to the proposition itself, you know,  
14 whether or not Latinos would want to actually  
15 have our state temporarily redraw the districts,  
16 46 percent were in support, 20 percent were just  
17 a flat out no, and 29 percent of Latinos are  
18 undecided.

19 And when you look at other public opinion  
20 polling that has been done on this issue so far,  
21 it's kind of been around that area, where Latinos  
22 are the voting blocks that tend to be the most  
23 undecided on this, right?

24 I guess I'll just share some other key  
25 data points before we go into some of your other

1 questions, Maria.

2 MS. MORALES: Yes.

3 MR. LARA: And I know we -- some of the  
4 other presenters talked about this as well.

5 You know, when I think about this 29  
6 percent number, 29 percent undecided, I was like,  
7 well, like, you know, it seems like all this is  
8 on TV. It's constantly in the news, you know.  
9 But we can't take for granted that your everyday  
10 Latino out there is paying attention to this  
11 stuff.

12 And so one of the questions we asked in  
13 this poll is asking our community whether or not  
14 they've actually been contacted so far. And what  
15 we found was something remarkable.

16 MS. TORRES: Interesting.

17 MR. LARA: Yeah. Fifty-four percent of  
18 Latinos said they have not been contacted at all.  
19 At all. Not a single piece of mailer. Not a  
20 phone call. Not a text message. Not someone  
21 knocking on your door.

22 And so, you know, I always like to say  
23 over the years is that, how can you ask anybody  
24 in their right mind to vote for someone or  
25 something that they have never met?

1 And so, you know -- and I know some of the  
2 questions beforehand have spoken to this, about  
3 how our community is observing of that kind of --  
4 that respect in treatment and attention and  
5 outreach, right?

6 One other thing I'll share, too, is that,  
7 you know, as we dug in deeper around like, you  
8 know, attitudes around this issue, you know, if  
9 we were -- if the state were to temporarily  
10 redraw these maps, right, because that's the  
11 question before us on November 4th, you know,  
12 85 percent of Latinos said that it's super  
13 important that these maps actually create fair  
14 opportunities for us to actually --

15 MS. TORRES: Uh-huh.

16 MR. LARA: -- (inaudible) in Congress,  
17 right? You know, if this does pass, like it's  
18 likely that Democrats will have a much better  
19 chance of picking up five additional seats,  
20 right?

21 But who runs in those seats, if these maps  
22 do pass in 2026, is also going to matter. And  
23 our community is flat out saying to us that like,  
24 hey, if this is going to happen, we want to  
25 ensure that our community has those opportunities

1 to ensure that we have the representation that we  
2 want.

3 So -- and Maria, I know we're pressed for  
4 time, so you let me know when to be quiet.  
5 But --

6 MS. TORRES: No, no, no. Well, I mean, I  
7 appreciate you -- the first question was on your  
8 poll findings, so you already met that, and I  
9 appreciate that.

10 I guess I was wondering if you can respond  
11 to this like larger theme that we saw in this  
12 conversation around Latinos as a monolith, or if  
13 there's like assumptions being made about Latinos  
14 as it relates to the special election?  
15 Especially that finding that you said, 54 percent  
16 of folks haven't even been contacted, right?

17 Like what are gaps in -- or opportunities  
18 that you're seeing that like both sides of this  
19 pro and con topic you should be considering if  
20 they want to accrue that Latino vote?

21 MR. LARA: Yeah. So, I mean, it's  
22 interesting because -- I mean, I think Sonja  
23 mentioned this. I mean, we do this every decade,  
24 this process of redistricting. And so literally  
25 this just feels like it just came out of nowhere,

1 right?

2 Obviously, California leaders have decided  
3 to put this on the ballot to respond to what  
4 Texas and other states are doing around this  
5 issue.

6 But in the poll, you know, we also asked  
7 another question about, you know, how much have  
8 Latinos heard about all of this? And, you know,  
9 44 percent like actually heard very little about  
10 what's happening in Texas and why California is  
11 (inaudible).

12 MS. MORALES: Uh-huh.

13 MR. LARA: Another remarkable data point  
14 that you'll find in this poll is that 57 percent  
15 of Hispanic and Latino voters across the state of  
16 California have no idea, literally no idea on how  
17 this is going to affect their community.

18 Just to give you a really good example, my  
19 mom, right, my mom called me when all this  
20 happened. And so, you know, there are now like  
21 tools where you can see like whether or not if  
22 your neighborhood is actually going to be moved  
23 into a new district should the map pass.

24 MS. MORALES: Uh-hmm.

25 MR. LARA: You know, my mom is currently

1 represented by Latinos. But under the new map  
2 proposed, like she would not, right?

3 And so, you know, those are just some of  
4 the things that -- you know, pieces of  
5 information that people should have, right? And  
6 whether or not that matters to you, you know,  
7 people should make their own votes on that.

8 But, you know, I think this is a critical  
9 time to ensure that people are getting that  
10 information. Like are you going to be in a new  
11 district? Is your district going to stay the  
12 same? How would it affect your representation?

13 I know in prep calls that you've had  
14 before -- you know, I think this is also another  
15 critical opportunity to provide like just very  
16 basic voter education. Like what does a member  
17 of Congress do, right?

18 MS. MORALES: Yeah.

19 MR. LARA: They can reopen the government.  
20 They can, you know, fight on issues like  
21 immigration and in healthcare. It's also  
22 constituent services.

23 You know, I had -- I know I made a joke  
24 with you and Helen beforehand. How many of my  
25 friends that I know that had to get a last-minute

1 passport appointment to go on vacation? You  
2 know, your member of Congress actually is there  
3 to help you get that appointment, or make sure  
4 you get your passport on time. And it matters  
5 the type of constituent services that you get,  
6 right?

7 MS. MORALES: Yes.

8 MR. LARA: And so to answer your question,  
9 you know, this is a really critical time for  
10 voter education, right? Because this doesn't  
11 really happen, right? You know, there's  
12 presidential elections. There's midterm  
13 elections.

14 You know, the last time we had kind of  
15 like a snap election was Governor Newsom's 2021  
16 recall election. And even then, it was the same  
17 barriers. It's like, what is this? What's going  
18 on? Why does it matter to me? Why should I turn  
19 out to vote?

20 You know, and for us at our Foundation,  
21 you know, whether you're voting for your local  
22 school board race or something like this that has  
23 national implications, like your voice is super  
24 critical on whatever it is that you're voting on.

25 MS. MORALES: Yeah. And I wonder --

1 because in your research and in that poll, do you  
2 have any findings that show like what is actually  
3 resonating with Latinos?

4 I know that there's been this really big  
5 push for digital media in the special election,  
6 which I think has been almost like a preview of  
7 what's going to come for the midterms, for the  
8 2028 election.

9 So -- and, you know, we also heard from  
10 some of our other speakers that Latinos tend to,  
11 you know, vote in person or vote a little bit  
12 later.

13 Is there anything that you saw in your  
14 poll that you think is interesting as far as like  
15 what strategies would actually resonate with the  
16 communities?

17 MR. LARA: Yes. Actually, just taking a  
18 step back from that, we did ask a question in the  
19 poll around whether or not Latinos are concerned  
20 about the President sending in federal officials  
21 to monitor polling places and vote setups for  
22 this election.

23 I will be the first to tell you that the  
24 results concern me a lot. Sixty-six percent of  
25 registered Latino voters are concerned that these

1 people are going to be just lingering around  
2 polling places. These are American citizens --

3 MS. MORALES: Yeah.

4 MR. LARA: -- right? And so --

5 MS. MORALES: Uh-huh.

6 MR. LARA: -- I know recently the Attorney  
7 General of California and the California  
8 Secretary of State held a press conference, you  
9 know, reminding people of what their -- what  
10 their voting rights are.

11 And I think that work is going to be more  
12 important than ever. So, you know, if you're  
13 that person in your family, encouraging your  
14 folks to vote. You know, also make sure to know  
15 like what their -- what their rights are, right?  
16 Because whether you want to vote by mail or vote  
17 in person, like, you know, that is your choice  
18 and it's your right to do all that.

19 As to your other part of your question, I  
20 think in this environment that we're in, you  
21 know, especially for us that deals here in  
22 California, like issues like immigration, issues  
23 like the economy, when you look at what either  
24 side of the campaigns are doing right now,  
25 they're speaking to a lot of this, you know.

1 MS. MORALES: Uh-huh.

2 MR. LARA: So on the yes side, I know I've  
3 seen ads run immigration. On the no side,  
4 they've been talking about affordability and, you  
5 know, whether or not -- which party can better  
6 handle these issues.

7 But I think, just to return to the  
8 original point, you know, ads and mailers, you  
9 know, they're very cost-effective ways to reach  
10 our community.

11 But I have always been a big advocate that  
12 nothing will ever substitute the importance of  
13 face-to-face interaction. Just straight up, you  
14 know.

15 MS. MORALES: Yeah.

16 MR. LARA: I understand in American  
17 politics like you got to reach as many people as  
18 possible to win the campaign, right? I'm more  
19 interested in this in terms of democracy.

20 I think too often we see in the data, the  
21 voter turnout data, that Latinos consistently are  
22 the ones that are -- have the biggest gap in  
23 terms of voter registration and voter turnout.

24 And really, what is it going to take to  
25 ensure that, you know, whether you're a candidate

1 or a campaign, or whoever -- whatever your  
2 position is on American politics, like what would  
3 it take for you to realize that there are nearly  
4 nine million eligible Latino voters in the state  
5 of California?

6 There are more voters here -- Latino  
7 voters in our state than there are people in the  
8 state of Arizona. We are such a powerful voting  
9 block.

10 And if these polling numbers that I see so  
11 far that, you know, the yes side probably has  
12 like what, 55 percent support or so? Obviously  
13 we won't know what the result is until election  
14 night. But, you know, it's kind of hovering  
15 around the margin of error, right?

16 This is a turnout game, and so -- and  
17 knowing that there are nine million -- almost  
18 nine million eligible Latino voters, like we can  
19 be the decision-makers on this. Not just for  
20 ourselves here in California, but for the entire  
21 nation.

22 MS. MORALES: Yeah. And I think that's a  
23 really powerful statement to make, just  
24 exercising the power of our vote.

25 And I want to be mindful of time, but I do

1 want to ask you one last question, and also an  
2 opportunity to make any final statements.

3 But this larger question about Latino  
4 political power long term, right, with what  
5 happens with Prop. 50 and after, what do you  
6 think that looks like for our communities?  
7 What's at stake?

8 MR. LARA: Yeah. No. I've said as it  
9 relates to this conversation that we have to  
10 treat this election as a down payment for next  
11 year's midterm election.

12 You know, when people dig into the maps  
13 that were drawn by Paul and his team, you realize  
14 a lot of these districts have become a little bit  
15 more competitive because of Latino voters.

16 So I know like the Santa Rosa area was  
17 drawn into a new district. South Sacramento.  
18 You know, these are communities that are built  
19 with our Latino community members.

20 And so, you know, I often like to joke  
21 that, you know, these people might be the most  
22 important people in our country right now and  
23 they don't even know about it.

24 MS. MORALES: Uh-huh.

25 MR. LARA: And so, you know, what are we

1 going to do to engage these folks and these  
2 communities to understand that, you know, their  
3 voice and their votes have always mattered, but  
4 especially even more so now just given what  
5 the --

6 MS. MORALES: Yes.

7 MR. LARA: -- (inaudible) for 2026.

8 And then moving ahead, you know, even long  
9 beyond this very contentious political moment  
10 that we're living in right now, there's always  
11 going to be another election. Always, you know,  
12 more debates around healthcare, immigration.

13 You know, this is my return to the point  
14 like, you know, whether you're a school board  
15 member or a member of Congress, like these people  
16 have such important responsibilities and  
17 decisions that they make over every single day.  
18 And so it's all of our responsibility to  
19 understand what they are, right?

20 You know, that's why I work in this role  
21 now in philanthropy. Like, you know, we're  
22 helping to move money to organizations that do  
23 this work. You know, we've been long-time  
24 supporters of HOPE.

25 You know, because our -- you can't expect

1 to merely -- just to independently want to, you  
2 know, Google or find this information.

3 Obviously, we want them to do that. But, you  
4 know, it's all of our civic responsibility to  
5 help them connect the dots, right? Because I  
6 think once people understand their power --

7 MS. MORALES: Uh-huh.

8 MR. LARA: -- they're sure as hell going  
9 to wield it. And I'm hopeful that we're going to  
10 see that in this election and in elections to  
11 come.

12 MS. MORALES: Yeah. Thank you so much,  
13 Christian, for lending us your expertise, and for  
14 staying on. I know it's not always great being  
15 the last speaker, but I feel like we ended on a  
16 really powerful note. So I'm just really  
17 grateful for you and your time.

18 MR. LARA: Thank you.

19 MS. MORALES: I also know there's a lot of  
20 questions in the Q&A box, so I want to make sure  
21 that you have time to answer some of those. And  
22 also, so that we can include the link in the chat  
23 to the polls. But thank you so much.

24 With that, I'm going to hand it over to  
25 Helen so that she can close us out.

1 MS. TORRES: Thank you so much, Maria.

2 We really appreciate you, Christian, and  
3 everything the Latino Community -- oh, just  
4 realized my camera is not coming on. There we  
5 go.

6 I was just saying a big thank you to all  
7 our speakers and to all of you who stuck through  
8 this Zoom. It was an hour and 15 minutes, I  
9 think, of incredible information. Obviously, we  
10 can't cover everything.

11 There were some good questions on the Q&A  
12 box, so I hope some of our speakers can go on  
13 there and answer those so that we can have an  
14 informed electorate, which is really important.

15 So as I close, I not only want to extend a  
16 heartfelt thank you to all our speakers, but also  
17 to all of you.

18 And please get out to vote this  
19 November 4th. Or like I already have, already  
20 voted. There is no reason to wait. You should  
21 have already received your ballot.

22 If you haven't, please contact your local  
23 county's voter registrar to ensure that you do  
24 get your ballot, or make sure that you can vote  
25 on November 4th by knowing where your polling

1 place is.

2 The perspectives shared today are a  
3 starting point, not the end of this important  
4 conversation. Redistricting is complex. It  
5 impacts every level of our government, from  
6 school boards to Congress.

7 We encourage you to keep learning, explore  
8 multiple sources of information. HOPE will be  
9 putting together a HOPE voting resource guide  
10 that will list a variety of ways in which you  
11 should be looking out for your ballot. Making  
12 sure you know the deadlines. And, of course, to  
13 get out to vote before November 4th or right on  
14 November 4th. Which includes, you know, as I  
15 mentioned, additional materials and links to the  
16 California Attorney General's Office for voter  
17 education.

18 I also wanted to reiterate that HOPE is a  
19 nonpartisan organization. Our goal is to tell  
20 you -- not to tell you how to vote, but -- I only  
21 leave that for my husband and my twin boys. I  
22 tell them how to vote. Otherwise, we don't tell  
23 you how to vote.

24 We just want you to keep informed, and  
25 well-informed at that. And that you get out

1 there and use the information, the tools to  
2 mobilize our community. Their voices are  
3 critical during this time.

4 And before we go, a quick critical  
5 reminder about voting this year. By now you  
6 should have received, as I mentioned, the ballot  
7 in the mail. It's essential for Californians to  
8 vote as early as possible.

9 Due to the recent changes in the U.S.  
10 Postal Service operations, mail delivery times  
11 may vary. So if you're voting by mail, make sure  
12 you vote early and that your vote will get  
13 counted. And that you place it in a U.S. voting  
14 mailbox or a post office on election day.

15 It may not be counted if it's not  
16 postmarked by November 4th. So, please, if  
17 you're voting by mail, vote early so your vote  
18 will count.

19 If you're going to a polling place, make  
20 sure you're well-informed about where your  
21 polling location is.

22 So, once again, a big thank you to all our  
23 speakers, and thank you for joining us on this  
24 Zoom. Have a great day, and don't forget to  
25 vote. (Recording ended.)

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, MARY ANN SCANLAN, hereby certify that I transcribed the Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE) Zoom presentation held on October 17, 2025, as completely and correctly to the best of my ability.

I further state that pages 1 through 75, inclusive, constitute an accurate and complete transcription of the video recording for the proceedings specified.

Dated: October 29, 2025



Mary Ann Scanlan, CSR

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# HOPE

Citizens Redistricting Commission  
721 Capitol Mall, Suite 260  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
[votersfirstact@crc.ca.gov](mailto:votersfirstact@crc.ca.gov)

November 24, 2021

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing you with urgent concern, on behalf of Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE), regarding the congressional drafts you released on November 10<sup>th</sup> and will begin adjusting on this coming Monday, November 29<sup>th</sup>.

In particular, HOPE is concerned about the elimination of a majority-minority Latino district within the area of Los Angeles' Gateway cities. The seat, which was called by the Los Angeles Times the most Latino district in the country, disappeared off the map, despite the growth in Latino population throughout the state. This seat was absorbed by neighboring districts, with most of it going into a district "LBNORTH" which is only 40% Latino when looking at eligible voters.

Throughout HOPE's 32 years of community leadership, we have remained committed to our mission, ensuring political and economic parity for Latinas through leadership, advocacy, and education to the benefit of all communities and the status of women.

The work of HOPE and the influential base of HOPE graduates, local activists and local leaders has led a reformation of governance at every level – making our elected officials look more like the people they represent. Most recently this past fall, HOPE trained over 400 Latinas across California on importance of redistricting to all of our communities and the need for diverse representation. This movement and commitment has yielded important successes: Today there are more Latinas in elected government than ever before.

This revolution has been due to organizing and changes in how California conducts elections. The California Voting Rights Act has created more districted elections, benefiting Latinas who are seeking local office. And fair districts drawn with the Voting Rights Act in mind have expanded the number of legislative and congressional districts that can express the values and political choices of the state's growing Latino population.

HOPE has always been a supporter of independent redistricting and we are all grateful for your work on this daunting task. We also appreciate public statements by commissioners regarding the coming final weeks of the commission work and changes that need to be made to the map, particularly around the VRA issues in Los Angeles.

**EXHIBIT**  
**12**

In order to help with your work I am attaching an analysis from two respected Southern California researchers, Christian Grose and Natalie Masuoka, who have looked closely at the draft lines and need under the Voting Rights Act to return a Latino Majority Minority district to the congressional plan in Los Angeles.

Based on this analysis, we believe the commission could achieve something that would be consistent with the Voting Right Act and also empower more communities of interest. The three steps would be:

- 1) **Create a new GATEWAYCITIES District centered around Downey, as described in this analysis, allowing for the creation of FIVE Latino Majority minority districts where there currently are four.**
- 2) **Take the current LBNorth seat to the south, through Seal Beach into Huntington Beach, making that a Latino influence seat at 35-40% Latino by voting age population.**

This would return to Los Angeles the now missing Latino Majority Minority district and ensure that the consequences of population losses statewide are not borne by the fastest growing population – the state's increasing Latino population.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

With HOPE toward the future,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helen Iris Torres".

Helen Iris Torres  
Executive Director & CEO  
Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE)

**A voting rights analysis of high-Latino-CVAP proposed districts in south and east L.A. County:  
Are proposed districts in L.A. County and the southern California area Latino-ability-to-elect  
districts?**

**Dr. Christian Grose and Raquel Centeno, Ph.D. student**

November 23, 2021

The California Citizens Redistricting Commission has released its proposed congressional district maps. In this report, we look at congressional districts in southern California/L.A. County in the Commission's proposed draft maps with a specific emphasis on voting rights, Latino ability to elect districts, and Latino influence districts in the area of south and east Los Angeles County.

Given racial polarization in Southern California, including parts of L.A. County, it is necessary to assess whether these proposed districts will provide sufficient opportunities to elect Latino candidates of choice. We also seek to analyze whether an additional Latino ability-to-elect or Latino influence district could be added to L.A. County. We conclude that with some reconfiguration of proposed districts, such a district could be added to L.A. County without diluting the influence of Latino voters in other districts.

In this report, Latino candidates of choice are defined as Latino candidates who are preferred by a majority of Latino voters.<sup>1</sup> While not presented here, we find evidence of racially polarized voting between Latino voters and non-Hispanic white voters in parts of Los Angeles County, Orange County, and other areas of southern California.<sup>2</sup>

We analyzed five proposed congressional districts with large Latino CVAPs in the south and east L.A. County area: LBNORTH, STH60, CDCOV, SP710, and CDNELA. These districts are listed in Table 1 below. The names of these districts are those given by the California Citizens Redistricting Commission upon the recent release of their draft congressional district maps.

**Table 1: Racial and Ethnic Demographics of south and east L.A. County-area districts**

Proposed District Name	Latino CVAP	Asian CVAP	Black CVAP	Non-Hispanic white CVAP
CDCOV	53%	32%	3%	12%
CDNELA	57%	18%	7%	16%
STH60	56%	21%	2%	20%
LBNORTH	40%	13%	12%	33%
SP710	63%	10%	11%	14%

<sup>1</sup> We identified Latino candidates of choice in exogenous elections. In the interest of space, this full analysis is not presented here. To identify Latino candidates of choice in exogenous elections, we conducted analyses of racially polarized voting of Latino voters and non-Hispanic white voters in L.A. County and southern California.

<sup>2</sup> Non-Hispanic whites and Latinos sometimes choose different candidates in southern California, according to RPV analyses conducted. We also find that Latino voters and Black voters; and Asian American and Latino voters in L.A. County sometimes vote in coalition with one another in general elections; though this depends on the specific region/area/districts of southern California.

As Table 1 shows, four of these five districts are Latino CVAP majority districts (CDCOV, CDNELA, STH60, and SP710) and one has Latino CVAP as the plurality group (LBNORTH). LBNORTH is a district with a 40% Latino CVAP, though we will later assess if it has the potential to be a Latino ability-to-elect coalition district as Latino voters are 40% CVAP, Black voters are 12% CVAP, and Asian voters are 13% CVAP. None of these five proposed congressional districts are white majority CVAP. The four Latino-majority districts range from CDCOV with a 53% Latino CVAP to SP710 with a very high 63% Latino CVAP.

### **Are these five districts able to elect Latino candidates of choice?**

Simply looking at the Latino CVAP in a district is not sufficient for determining if a district is likely to elect a Latino candidate of choice. A key metric is whether the district demonstrates an ability to elect a Latino candidate of choice (a Latino candidate of choice is defined as a candidate preferred by a majority of Latino voters). In fact, recent Supreme Court jurisprudence has suggested that arbitrary racial thresholds could trigger racial gerrymandering claims (i.e., *Cooper v. Harris*), and therefore close attention to a district's ability to elect Latino candidates of choice is one critically important metric for determining if a district is likely to elect a Latino candidate of choice.

**Table 2:** Can These L.A.-area U.S. House Districts Elect Latino Candidates of Choice?

<b>Proposed District</b>	<b>How often do Latino candidates of choice win elections in the proposed district?</b>	<b>What is the average vote % of Latino candidates of choice in exogenous elections (across all voters in proposed district)?</b>
LBNORTH	67% win rate	58.3%
STH60	83% win rate	57.5%
CDNELA	83% win rate	69.4%
CDCOV	83% win rate	61.7%
SP710	83% win rate	64.4%

In Table 2 above, we examine these five south and east L.A. area districts to assess how likely they are to elect Latino candidates of choice. The first column displays the name of the proposed congressional district in the Commission's draft maps. The second column shows the percentage frequency that Latino candidates of choice in exogenous elections win in the district. The third column displays the mean vote percentage that Latino candidates of choice receive in general elections in these

five districts.<sup>3</sup> These latter two metrics provide information on how likely the districts are to elect Latino candidates of choice.

As Table 2 reveals, the Latino CVAP majority districts have a very high propensity of electing Latino candidates of choice. In STH60, CDNELA, CDCOV, and SP710, there is a very high probability that a Latino candidate of choice will be elected in these districts. Of the five districts, these four districts have the highest Latino CVAP. Further, in three of these districts, the average vote share received by Latino candidates of choice in exogenous elections ranges from 61.7% to 69.4%. These are very high margins of victory and Latino candidates of choice will be elected in these districts.

In fact, these districts are so high performing for Latino candidates of choice that these districts could be attacked on voting rights grounds for overpacking Latino voters into four Latino CVAP-majority districts when five districts could have instead been drawn in this region to elect Latino candidates of choice. If geographically feasible, the Commission may want to slightly unpack some of these districts to provide greater Latino voting strength to surrounding district(s). It could be possible to marginally unpack these districts to simultaneously protect the ability to elect Latino candidates and preserve Latino CVAP majorities in those districts; and in doing so also create one more L.A. County-based Latino ability-to-elect district. This seems potentially feasible particularly in these three districts with very high Latino CVAPs and ability to elect rates (CDNELA, CDCOV, and SP710).

It is important to remember that voting rights and the protection of voters of color is a higher priority than preserving county boundaries or other lower-order criteria. Further, it is also acceptable for Commissioners to value providing influence to voters of color in its districting plans, so long as it is not the sole criterion used, even beyond the minimal requirements for voting rights guidance provided to the Commission by its voting rights staff. Thus, it may be important that some of these very high Latino districts in L.A. County expand somewhat into neighboring counties such as Orange County or Riverside County. Crossing into Orange County will make some of these districts less overpacked but also will still allow for very high levels of Latino ability to elect and Latino CVAP majorities. For instance, district SP710 is 63% Latino CVAP. Such a district is likely overpacked beyond what is required to definitively allow for the election of a Latino candidate of choice given the data shown in the third column of Table 2. Similarly, STH60 and CDNELA are 56% and 57% Latino CVAP respectively. If these districts were between 52% and 54% Latino CVAP, for instance, they would still be very likely to elect Latino candidates of choice. The Commission may want to consider the optimal allocation of Latino CVAP in L.A. County so as to create one additional very-high Latino CVAP-majority or plurality districts in this area while retaining these four Latino-CVAP-majority districts.

The LBNORTH district is distinct from the other districts in that it has a lower propensity to elect Latino candidates of choice (as shown in Table 2 above). As a result, we will focus more specifically on this LBNORTH district below.

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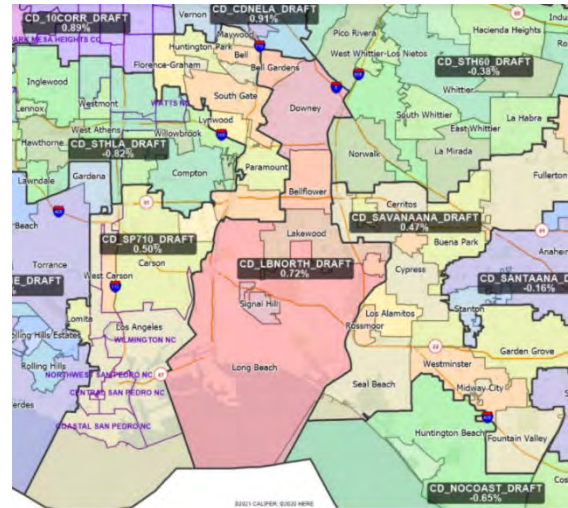
<sup>3</sup> Given California has a top two primary, the analyses of the ability for Latino candidates of choice to win includes election with same-party candidates running against each other when Latino candidates compete against non-Latino candidates as well as different-party candidates competing against each other. Peer-reviewed academic research has shown that the salience of racial and ethnic identity can be very high to voters in top-two elections when candidates of the same party compete; see Sara Sadhwani et al., 2018, "Candidate Ethnicity and Latino Voting in Co-Partisan Elections," *California Journal of Politics and Policy*.

## Is the LBNORTH proposed district a

**Latino-ability-to-elect district or a Latino influence district?** The Commission's LBNORTH proposed district is 40% Latino, 12% Black, 13% Asian, and 33% non-Hispanic white. This district was displayed on the Commission's website and is reproduced and displayed on the right.

This potential congressional district includes parts or all of Long Beach, Hawaiian Gardens, Lakewood, Bellflower, Downey, and Bell Gardens.

Is this district a Latino-ability-to-elect district? In other words, can this district provide a regular opportunity for Latino candidates of choice to win in U.S. House elections? Given the district is currently 40% Latino CVAP and only 33% non-Hispanic white, it may have some positive probability of electing Latino candidates of choice but it deserves stricter scrutiny given its relatively low Latino CVAP.



As Table 2 above revealed, *LBNORTH* has the lowest propensity of electing Latino candidates of choice of all districts in the table. LBNORTH elects Latino candidates of choice sometimes, in only 67% of exogenous elections analyzed. On average, Latino candidates of choice win in this district more often than they do not, but the district could possibly be redrawn to improve the likelihood that Latino candidates of choice will win in the district. The Commission may want to consider ways in which this district could increase its probability of electing Latino candidates of choice.

## How could the Commission enhance LBNORTH's ability to elect Latino candidates of choice?

Based on our close analysis of the data, the Commission has at least two options to increase the ability to elect Latino candidates of choice in the LBNORTH area:

### 1. The Commission can increase the Latino CVAP in LBNORTH in order to make it go above its current 40% Latino CVAP.

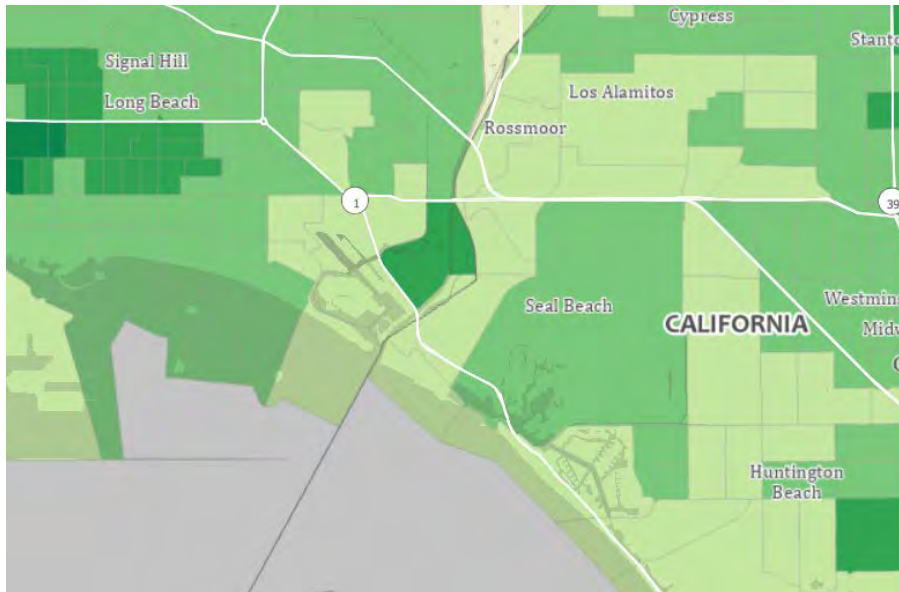
The district may not need to be Latino CVAP majority, but an increase in its Latino CVAP will give it a much higher likelihood of electing a Latino candidate of choice. There are several ways such a district could be drawn. This could involve including more of the neighboring Latino areas to the north of LBNORTH into the LBNORTH district, or including other neighboring areas that have significant Latino VAPs currently not in LBNORTH. The Gateway cities, a heavily Latino ward of Long Beach not currently in LBNORTH, and other nearby geographies, including some nearby census tracts in Orange County, have sizable Latino populations. By revising the LBNORTH district in such as way, it would likely increase its probability of electing Latino candidates of choice beyond the 67% level identified earlier.

2. **A bold move to increase Latino voting power would be for the Commission to create a new GATEWAYCITIES district in L.A. County by removing Downey from LBNORTH and combining Downey with several other highly Latino cities in the Gateway region of Los Angeles County and possibly extending into Orange County. With this option, the Commission would then extend the LBNORTH district somewhat southeast to maintain LBNORTH as a Latino influence district. This addition of a GATEWAYCITIES district would provide one more additional Latino ability-to-elect district that does not currently exist in L.A. County in the proposed map, and would still allow for a reconfigured LBNORTH district that is based in the Long Beach area and that would provide Latino influence, but that would now extend outward in its southern portion of the district instead of north into the Gateway cities.**

The Commission could create a new GATEWAYCITIES district centered around Downey, Bell Gardens, and include high-Latino Gateway city areas in neighboring districts without significantly altering the ability of neighboring districts to elect Latino candidates of choice. In creating a GATEWAYCITIES district in this area of L.A. County, the Commission could seek to add this additional Latino-ability-to-elect district while slightly reducing the Latino CVAP in the neighboring four Latino-CVAP-majority districts. However, it is critically important for voting rights to maintain these surrounding districts as Latino ability-to-elect districts with Latino CVAP majorities. By creating a new GATEWAYCITIES Latino-ability-to-elect district centered on Downey and other Gateway cities – instead of placing Downey in LBNORTH – it may be possible to have five – instead of four – Latino CVAP-majority ability-to-elect districts in L.A. County (or possibly five very high Latino majority/plurality CVAP ability-to-elect districts in L.A. County).

The LBNORTH district could be reconfigured so that it is a Latino influence district. Such a revised LBNORTH district would include Long Beach and extend into Seal Beach, Rossmoor, and possibly other northeastern Orange County communities to be a Latino influence district. This revised LBNORTH district would still likely be a Latino influence district as it would have a very high percentage of Latino CVAP, Black CVAP, and Asian CVAP. Based on RPV analyses not displayed, this area of Long Beach and neighboring Orange County has previously shown a willingness of Latino and Black voters, in particular, to vote in coalition with one another for Latino congressional candidates of choice.

**Extend LBNORTH into Seal Beach and northern Orange County.** To build in an additional Latino influence district that would include parts of Long Beach, we would recommend that the LBNORTH district be extended southward to include Seal Beach and possibly down to areas of Huntington Beach with sizable Latino populations. The map below is a visualization of census tracts based on the 2020 census. The darker green indicates higher Latino populations and the lighter green indicates fewer Latino residents. As shown in the map, Seal Beach includes several census tracts with sizable Latino populations. For instance, census tract 995.02 in Seal Beach is 34.2% Latino. In addition, census tract 994.02 in Orange County is 68.5% Latino. These concentrations of Latino voters in the Seal Beach/Orange County coastal area are important as they have often faced racial polarization in voting. Placing them in a Long Beach-based district would enhance their voting power in the face of racially polarized voting.



In order to retain the Latino influence district that has already been created by the Commission with LBNORTH, but also to add a new GATEWAYCITIES district in L.A. County to enhance Latino voting rights to the north of LBNORTH, the Commission could extend LBNORTH into these areas with higher Latino populations in Seal Beach and other areas of Orange County in order to offset for population declines cause by removing some or part of Downey at proposed district LBNORTH's north to create a new GATEWAYCITIES district.

**To create a new GATEWAYCITIES district to enhance Latino voting influence, the Commission would need to meld together two white-majority districts elsewhere** so as to cause an aggregate increase in the number of districts providing voting power for voters of color across the region and the state. This second option of creating a new GATEWAYCITIES district would require the Commission to meld an existing proposed district into another district in another part of the state so that there are 52 congressional districts. Such a melding of districts should not merge together other minority-ability-to-elect or minority influence districts. Instead, the addition of a GATEWAYCITIES district should instead lead the Commission to find a geographic area where two proposed districts likely to elect white candidates of choice would be merged together. Such a move would enhance voting rights in the aggregate in the state for Latino voters and voters of color. The melding together of two proposed districts that are likely to elect white candidates of choice in another part of the state to accommodate the addition of a new Latino-ability-to-elect GATEWAYCITIES district and a revised LBNORTH district would enhance Latino voting power in California's new map by adding one additional Latino district.

#### **About the Authors**

***Dr. Christian Grose*** is Professor of Political Science and Public Policy at the University of Southern California. He is the Academic Director of the USC Schwarzenegger Institute for State and Global

Policy. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Rochester and his B.A. from Duke University. He is the author of more than 40 articles and chapters about American politics; legislative politics; race and ethnicity; Latino politics; Black politics; voting rights; and statistical methodology. These articles have been published in peer-reviewed journals such as the *American Political Science Review*, the *American Journal of Political Science*, and the *Journal of Politics*. His award-winning book *Congress in Black and White*, analyzes the role of race and ethnicity in the redistricting process. His research has been funded by the Russell Sage Foundation, the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, the MIT Election Data Science Center, and others. Grose directs USC's Fair Maps and Political Reform Lab, which produces nonpartisan research about redistricting, the top-two primary, and independent commissions. He has worked as an expert witness and consultant on numerous voting rights cases, and has extensive experience analyzing racially polarized voting and minority ability-to-elect districts. He has experience working with bipartisan and nonpartisan groups such as commissions.

***Raquel Centeno*** is a Ph.D. student at the University of Southern California in the Political Science and International Relations Ph.D. program.



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If you're keeping track at home....

☀️ "proposed Proposition 50 map will further increase Latino voting power over the current Commission map" Cal Poly Pomona / CalTech [cpp.edu/class/politica...](http://cpp.edu/class/politica...)

☀️ "proposed map likely will increase Asian American voting power" UCLA AAPI Policy Initiative [aasc.ucla.edu/resources/poli...](http://aasc.ucla.edu/resources/poli...)

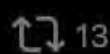
☀️ "the proposed plan matches the current one almost exactly: it adds one more Latino influence district but otherwise replicates the status quo." PPIC [ppic.org/blog/how-would...](http://ppic.org/blog/how-would...)



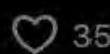
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## Latino Voters and the November 2025 Special Election: Redistricting and Representation

Dr. Raquel Centeno (Caltech Linde Center for Science, Society, and Policy)<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Jarred Cuellar (California State Polytechnic University, Pomona)<sup>2</sup>

**Executive summary:** This nonpartisan and educational report analyzes the impact of the proposed Proposition 50 map on Latino representation across California, with a focus on how the proposed map would alter Latino-majority and Latino-influence congressional districts if it is adopted by voters. Our analysis finds that the proposed map will likely not negatively impact Latino voting power. The proposed map instead diffuses and enhances that power across more districts, and in many ways reflects the changing demographics of communities within the state. While the current map increased Latino voting power over the previous map, we also find that the proposed Proposition 50 map will further increase Latino voting power over the current Commission map. The proposed map will likely *increase* Latino voting power, given its creation of two new Latino community influence districts and the expansion of the Latino electorate in other districts.

### Key findings of this report:

- The current map has 16 Latino-majority districts, and the proposed Proposition 50 map maintains 16 Latino-majority districts. From our review of the maps, both the current map passed by the Commission and the Proposition 50 map being presented to voters enhance Latino voting strength and Latino communities of interest over their predecessor maps.
- The current map has 14 Latino-majority districts that frequently elect candidates preferred by Latino voters, and the proposed map is likely to improve Latino representation by creating 16 Latino-majority districts that frequently elect Latino voters' preferred candidates.
- The current map has 6 Latino-influence districts, and the Proposition 50 map will increase the number of Latino-influence districts to 8.
- The proposed Proposition 50 map will likely increase Latino descriptive representation—the election of Latino representatives—via the creation of a new Latino-majority District 41 in southeastern Los Angeles County, as well as the likely reelection of the Latino representative in

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neighboring District 42. New Latino-influence districts in the proposed map may also provide new opportunities for Latino candidate emergence.

- Latino voters are the largest minority group in California and are increasingly flexing voting power. Both the current map passed by the Commission and the Proposition 50 map reflect this Latino voting power in the state, though differential turnout between Latino voters and non-Latino voters in California plays a critical role in who gets elected and who is represented.
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## I. Introduction & Context

### Purpose of the Report

This nonpartisan and educational report examines the potential effects of California's Proposition 50 on Latino voters, who constitute nearly forty percent of the state's population and 32% of the citizen voting-age population, and play a central role in shaping the state's political future. Although redistricting has implications for all Californians, the Latino electorate merits focused analysis because of its size, regional distribution, and internal diversity. Latino communities are not a uniform constituency; they differ significantly across urban, suburban, and rural regions in terms of socioeconomic status, citizenship rates, linguistic backgrounds, and political participation. These variations influence both how district boundaries translate into political representation and how redistricting changes may amplify or diminish Latino influence in congressional elections.

By isolating the specific effects of Proposition 50 on Latino voters, this report aims to identify where the proposed temporary redistricting process may alter opportunities for representation. Specifically, we examine and compare the current congressional map and the new map that would be put in place temporarily if Prop 50 passes. Understanding these differences is essential to determining whether Proposition 50 strengthens or weakens pathways to equitable representation for California's Latino population.

### Background on Proposition 50 and Redistricting

Proposition 50, officially titled the *Election Rigging Response Act*, proposes a temporary transfer of congressional redistricting authority in California from the California Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to the state Legislature for the 2026, 2028, and 2030 election cycles. The measure would allow voters to put into place a new congressional map put on the ballot by the Legislature that complies with federal requirements such as equal population and contiguity. After the 2030 Census, redistricting authority would revert to the Citizens Redistricting Commission under the standard decennial process.

California's independent redistricting framework was established through voter initiatives in 2008 and 2010 to reduce partisan influence and enhance public accountability. The Citizens



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Redistricting Commission has since been regarded as a model for transparent and nonpartisan mapmaking. Proposition 50 would temporarily alter this structure, introducing new maps that voters will consider in 2025. Understanding this institutional shift provides essential context for evaluating its potential implications for Latino political representation and the broader distribution of congressional influence across the state.

## **How Redistricting Has Historically Shaped Latino Representation in California**

Redistricting has played a decisive role in shaping Latino political representation in California. Major gains in Latino representation have occurred in response to redistricting, such as historic local changes made through *Garza v. County of Los Angeles* and other significant redraws. Across successive census cycles, boundary changes have expanded and constrained Latino electoral influence, affecting the creation and preservation of majority-Latino and Latino-opportunity districts under the Voting Rights Act—and preserving and enhancing Latino communities of interest. The establishment of the Citizens Redistricting Commission in 2010 marked a significant institutional shift toward greater transparency and reduced partisan manipulation, and commission-drawn maps have generally corresponded with increases in Latino-majority districts and officeholders.

Nevertheless, disparities persist between Latino population size and political representation, reflecting not only the enduring sensitivity of redistricting to Latino voting power but also broader structural factors such as turnout, citizenship, and candidate recruitment. As such, redistricting remains a central mechanism through which Latino inclusion and influence in California’s democratic process continue to be negotiated.

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## **II. Demographic Overview**

### **Latino Population Trends in California**

Latinos comprise roughly 40 percent of California’s total population, making them the state’s largest demographic group ([NALEO 2024](#)). Their political influence continues to expand within the *Citizen Voting-Age Population* (CVAP)—the segment of residents aged 18 and older who are U.S. citizens and therefore eligible to vote—which serves as a key metric in voting-rights and redistricting analyses ([U.S. Census Bureau 2025](#)). As of the most recent 2019–2023 CVAP tabulation, Latinos constitute approximately 32.4 percent of California’s total CVAP, underscoring their growing weight within the state’s eligible electorate ([NALEO 2024](#) & [Redistricting Data Hub 2025](#)).

From 2012 to 2022, the Latino CVAP expanded from 6.4 million to 8.5 million—an increase of 32.5 percent that accounted for more than 90 percent of the state’s overall growth in eligible voters during that period ([NALEO 2024](#)). This sustained expansion positions Latino voters as an



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increasingly central constituency in California’s political landscape and a focal point for assessing electoral equity under any proposed redistricting changes.

Spatially, Latino populations are most concentrated in Los Angeles County, which remains the single largest Latino population center in the United States. The Inland Empire (Riverside and San Bernardino Counties) is now majority Latino—about 52 percent of residents identify as Latino (OCPSC 2025)—and the Central Valley also hosts numerous majority-Latino counties. Significant concentrations extend across the Central Coast, San Diego, Imperial, and inner Bay Area regions as well ([UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Institute 2021](#); U.S. Census 2020). At least 11 of California’s 58 counties now have Latino majorities.

While the overall state population has stabilized, Latino growth within the electorate has continued due to natural increase, naturalization, and aging into voting eligibility. Recent *CVAP* data from the 2019–2023 American Community Survey confirm that Latinos are steadily increasing their share of California’s eligible-voter base ([U.S. Census 2025](#)).

These demographic and geographic patterns are directly relevant to redistricting. Latino population concentration—particularly in the Inland Empire and the Central Valley—creates opportunities for drawing districts where Latino voters can flex electoral power and elect candidates of their choice. Conversely, uneven growth or dispersed settlement in suburban regions raises the risk that new district lines could divide cohesive Latino communities, diluting their collective influence. As Proposition 50 proposes temporary changes to congressional map-drawing authority, these evolving demographic realities underscore the importance of evaluating how any interim maps will reflect, or potentially distort, California’s Latino electorate.

## **Political Participation in Congressional Elections**

Latino engagement in California is increasingly consequential in congressional contests, though participation remains uneven and sensitive to electoral context. Registration among Latinos has grown, but gaps persist relative to their share of the citizen voting-age population. According to NALEO’s 2024 portrait, Latino registered voters make up about 30% of California’s total registered voters—while Latinos account for roughly 36% of the state’s eligible electorate (i.e., citizen voting-age population). This disparity suggests that a nontrivial share of eligible Latinos have not yet registered, limiting their potential influence in all elections, including those for the U.S. House.

When it comes to turnout in congressional and midterm cycles, Latino participation tends to fluctuate with electoral competitiveness. Historical data from the [California Voter Turnout Project](#) show that, in general elections, Latino voters are under-mobilized in off-year cycles compared to presidential years. Given that congressional elections typically occur in these lower-turnout contexts, the consistency of Latino engagement is especially critical to representation and



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policy responsiveness. Further, while Latino voters often prefer Democrats in California, cohesion levels can vary within the diverse Latino voter populace.<sup>3</sup>

### **Examples of Districts in Current Map Where Latino Participation Was Key in 2022 and 2024**

In several recent House races, Latino turnout—and the success or underperformance of Latino-preferred candidates—was pivotal:

- **CA-13 (Central Valley):** A majority-Latino district (50.2% Latino CVAP) where Democrat Adam Gray defeated Republican John Duarte by just 187 votes in 2024, following Duarte's 564-vote win in 2022. Latino voters supported Gray both cycles, and minor shifts in turnout likely determined the outcome.<sup>4</sup> While the Latino-preferred candidate won narrowly in 2024, the opposite occurred in 2022.
- **CA-22 (Kings, Tulare, and Kern Counties):** A 59% Latino CVAP district where Rep. David Valadao (R), who is of Portuguese descent, has not been the Latino-preferred candidate. Most Latino voters supported Democrat Rudy Salas, yet Valadao's victories in 2022 and 2024 were sustained by lower Latino turnout and stronger participation among non-Latino voters. This pattern highlights how turnout gaps—rather than a simple focus purely on the Latino CVAP—can dilute Latino electoral power.
- **CA-27 (Northern Los Angeles County):** Roughly 33% Latino CVAP, this district defeated the incumbent in 2024 after several close contests, reflecting the influence and mobilization among younger and suburban Latino voters in a competitive district.
- **CA-41 (Inland Empire):** At 29.7% Latino CVAP, this district remained competitive across 2022 and 2024, with margins narrow enough that Latino turnout increases could materially affect future results if this district is not changed. This district did not elect candidates in 2022 and 2024 preferred by Latino voters, but was electorally competitive.

In sum, Latino political participation in congressional elections reflects a dynamic interplay of voter registration levels, turnout volatility, Latino voter cohesion, and generational renewal. Because U.S. House outcomes in California can hinge on narrow margins, mobilizing Latino voters—especially in competitive and Latino-majority districts—can directly shape representation. Proposition 50's temporary redistricting framework must therefore be assessed not only in terms of population balance, but also in how new district boundaries either strengthen or weaken the ability of Latino-preferred candidates to translate community support into electoral success.

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<sup>3</sup> Jarred R. Cuellar. 2025. "Fe y Políticas: Latino Evangelical Vote Choice in the 2020 Presidential Election." *Religions* 16(6):708. Also see Matt Barreto. 2010. *Ethnic Cues: The Role of Shared Ethnicity in Latino Political Participation*.

<sup>4</sup> These data on voting preferences are taken from analysis of individual-level survey data and additional analysis of homogenous precincts. For survey data, please see the [California Elections and Policy Poll of 2024](#) California congressional districts. In California, survey data shows that a majority of Latino voters prefer Democratic candidates of choice.



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### III. Latino Representation in Current vs. Proposed Maps

#### Current Map: 16 Latino-majority Districts and 6 Latino-influence Districts

The maps created by the California Citizens Redistricting Commission during the 2020 redistricting cycle [resulted in a noteworthy 16 Latino-majority districts and 6 Latino-influence districts](#). *Latino-majority districts* are districts in which Latinos make up a majority of the citizen voting age population, meaning campaigns in these districts are incentivized to campaign for and mobilize Latino voters. We define *Latino-influence districts* as those in which Latinos are a significantly sized minority, meaning they are at or above 30.0% of the district's CVAP but below 50.0% Latino CVAP. In these districts, Latinos are a large enough portion of the voting population to play an influential role in election outcomes.

The current map was drawn to comply with the Voting Rights Act, ensuring that Latino voters have fair opportunities to elect candidates of their choice in districts where they form a sufficiently large and cohesive community.<sup>5</sup> Many of these districts are concentrated in the Central Valley and interior communities including San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial Counties. Table 1 lists all Latino-majority districts under the current map, and Table 2 lists the Latino-influence districts in the current map. The districts are listed in order of highest to lowest Latino CVAP.

**Table 1: Latino-Majority Congressional Districts Under Current Map**

District	Representative	% Latino CVAP in Commission map
22	Valadao	59.4%
35	Torres	57.4%
34	Gomez	56.1%
38	Sánchez	55.6%
31	Cisneros	54.7%
29	Rivas	54.2%
21	Costa	53.3%
25	Ruiz	52.5%
33	Aguilar	52.5%
42	Garcia	52.4%
39	Takano	51.2%
52	Vargas	51.1%

<sup>5</sup> Christian R. Grose and Lucien LaScala. 2023 [“The Supreme Court Supports Voting Rights - with massive implications for congressional redistricting.”](#) 3Streams Blog/Medium.



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44	Barragán	51.0%
18	Lofgren	50.5%
46	Correa	50.5%
13	Gray	50.2%

**Source:** <https://wedrawthelines.ca.gov/final-maps/>. Percentages rounded to nearest tenth, based on 2020 Census for each district as reported by the Citizens Redistricting Commission.

**Table 2: Latino Community Influence Districts Under Current Map**

District	Representative	% Latino CVAP in Commission map
43	Waters	44.0%
37	Kamlager-Dove	38.7%
27	Whitesides	33.3%
23	Obernolte	32.8%
26	Brownley	31.6%
9	Harder	31.0%

**Source:** <https://wedrawthelines.ca.gov/final-maps/>. Percentages rounded to nearest tenth, based on 2020 Census for each district as reported by the CA Citizens Redistricting Commission.

With Latino-majority districts totaling approximately 30% of California’s 52 congressional districts, it is clear why Latinos are an important group within the electorate. When including the six Latino-influence districts in the current map, Latinos are a sizable portion of the electorate in over 40% of the state’s districts. Latino-majority districts are spread throughout the state, generally found in places with historically large concentrations of Latinos. Of the five districts with the highest Latino CVAP, one is in the Central Valley (CD 22); three are in the greater Los Angeles region (CDs 31, 34, and 38); and one is in the Inland Empire (CD 35). Most of these districts are concentrated in the Central Valley or further south.

However, just because Latinos are the majority (or even a large minority) of a district does not mean it is a guarantee that a Latino candidate of choice will be elected. Racial turnout gaps and fluctuations in electoral competitiveness sometimes result in lower than expected levels of support for Latino candidates of choice, even within Latino-majority districts. For example, in the rural and agricultural communities of CD 22, lower Latino turnout in part led to the Latino candidate of choice losing the 2024 election. Increases in the size of the Latino electorate even in already Latino-majority districts in the proposed map could result in meaningful differences in election outcomes. These changes could be especially palpable in districts like CD 22 where the Latino electorate tends to be lower in socioeconomic status and younger, making mobilizing lower-propensity voters especially challenging. Similarly in the current Commission-drawn CD 13, the Latino candidate of choice has not always won in this district.

Taking into account how frequently Latino candidates of choice are elected in these districts, the current map has 14 districts that are effectively providing an opportunity to elect Latino voters’ preferred candidates in every election since the map was put into place. However, two of the 16



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Latino CVAP-majority districts in the current map passed by the commission—CD 13 and CD 22—are not effectively providing Latino voters’ preferred candidates the opportunity to win. In 2022, the Latino-preferred candidate lost in both CD 13 and CD 22; and in 2024, Latino voters’ preferred candidate lost in CD 22.<sup>6</sup>

## **Proposed Map: 16 Latino-majority Districts and 8 Latino-influence Districts**

**The new map maintains the same number of Latino-majority districts as the current map, and it increases the number of districts that will provide effective opportunities for Latino voters to elect candidates of choice. Even with changes to district boundaries, the proposed Proposition 50 map will result in 16 Latino-majority congressional districts.** Table 4 shows the percentage of the Latino CVAP in each of the majority-Latino districts in the proposed map. In general, most of the Latino-majority districts under the current map remain a Latino-majority district in the proposed map. The Prop 50 map maintains the same number of Latino-majority districts as the current map.

In fact, a number of Latino-majority districts in the proposed Proposition 50 map change very little relative to the current map. For instance, the Latino-majority District 18 and the Latino-majority District 34 had only minimal changes over the current map. District 18 was created by the Commission in 2020 to provide an additional Latino-opportunity district representing Salinas Valley communities of interest. This district faces minimal changes in the proposed Proposition 50 map and thus maintains Latino voting strength in this region. District 34 is a historically Latino district that has existed over many redistricting cycles and includes eastern sections of the city of Los Angeles, and this district is maintained with significant Latino voting strength.

There is one new Latino-majority district created in the Proposition 50 map that was a non-Hispanic white-majority district in the current map (CD 41, bolded in Table 4). This white-majority CD 41 is represented by Ken Calvert in the current map. The proposed map shifts CD 41 to the west to create a new Latino-majority district centered in the Gateway cities area of southeastern Los Angeles County. This shift of CD 41 into a new Latino-majority district caused one district (CD 42) to have a meaningful decrease in Latino CVAP. It appears that this change occurred because CD 42 was altered to create CD 41 around the Gateway cities community of interest area and to increase the Latino CVAP of CD 41. Public testimony during the 2020 Commission process frequently identified the northern Gateway cities as a community of interest and the city of Long Beach as a separate community of interest, and this significant level of testimony may have factored into the newly proposed CD 41 in the Proposition 50 map.

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<sup>6</sup> We examined individual-level survey data in these districts, as well as conducted an analysis of homogenous precincts to draw these empirical conclusions. For instance, surveys we have conducted of congressional districts showed that the Latino-preferred candidates lost in both CD 13 and CD 22 in 2022, and in CD 22 in 2024. Thus, while these districts are majority-Latino CVAP, the districts are not effectively electing the candidates that a majority of Latino voters voted for.



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Where CD 41 is not a Latino-influence district in the current map, in the proposed map it has the third highest Latino CVAP proportion in the state. The current map's CD 42 is Latino-majority, and in the new map it is centered in Long Beach and coastal Orange County. The proposed CD 42 is a racially and ethnically diverse district with slightly less than half of the district's CVAP being voters of color. CD 42 will likely continue to elect the Latino representative who currently represents Long Beach in the current map if Proposition 50 passes and if voters of color vote in coalition for this Latino representative, even though it is no longer Latino-CVAP majority.

**Table 4: Majority Latino Congressional Districts in Prop 50 Proposed Map**

District	Representative	% Latino CVAP	Change from 2020 Commission Map
22	Valadao	65.4%	+6.0%
44	Barragán	62.3%	+11.3%
41	Calvert	55.0%	+25.3%
34	Gomez	54.9%	-1.2%
33	Aguilar	54.5%	+2.0%
21	Costa	54.4%	+1.1%
39	Takano	54.3%	+3.1
13	Gray	53.8%	+3.6%
29	Rivas	53.6%	-0.6%
35	Torres	53.1%	-4.3%
18	Lofgren	53.0%	+2.5%
46	Correa	52.7%	+2.2%
38	Sánchez	52.6%	-3.0%
31	Cisneros	52.2%	-2.5%
25	Ruiz	52.1%	-0.4%
52	Vargas	51.8%	+0.7%

**Source:** <https://aelc.assembly.ca.gov/proposed-congressional-map>. Percentages rounded to nearest tenth, based on 2020 Census for each district as reported by the CA State Assembly.

While the number of Latino-majority districts remains the same, the proposed map does shift the share of Latino voting power across districts. There is an increase in the Latino CVAP of ten districts, and in eight of those districts, the Latino CVAP would be at least two percentage points higher than in the current map. Such a change is noteworthy because even a two percentage point increase in Latino CVAP can make a meaningful difference for Latino candidates of choice, and two districts see even greater jumps in their Latino CVAP. If Proposition 50 is passed, CD 22 in the Central Valley would have a 6 percentage point higher Latino CVAP and CD 41 in southern California would have a 25 percentage point higher Latino CVAP than in the current map.

Not all districts in the proposed map would increase the size of their Latino electorate. The Latino CVAP would decrease in six Latino-majority districts. However, these decreases would generally be small, hovering around one percentage point or less. Of the Latino-majority districts



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in the Proposition 50 map, CD 35 and CD 38 are the two districts that would see the largest decreases in their Latino electorate, with about a 4%-point drop to 53.1% and a 3.0%-point drop to 52.6%, respectively. However, given that these districts still have high enough Latino CVAPs to not even fall to the bottom of the list in Table 4, there is reason to believe the proposed map would not significantly dilute the Latino voting power in these districts.

To summarize, the Latino CVAP increased in a number of proposed districts where Latino voters have not had meaningful voting strength, and the percentage point increases are relatively significant. In districts where Latino CVAP declined, most of these declines are relatively small and in districts where Latino voters' preferred candidates are winning in the current Commission map and will likely continue winning in the Proposition 50 map. Only in CD 42 was there a significant decrease in Latino CVAP in the proposed map, though it was offset by the significant increase in Latino CVAP in CD 41.

**Table 5: Latino Community Influence Congressional Districts in Prop 50 Proposed Map**

District	Representative	% Latino CVAP	Change from 2020 Commission Map
43	Waters	46.5%	+2.5%
37	Kamlager-Dove	39.8%	+1.1%
27	Whitesides	39.5%	+6.2%
23	Obernolte	37.0%	+4.2%
26	Brownley	33.9%	+2.3%
48	Issa	32.0%	+10.6%
20	Fong	31.8%	+6.4%
9	Harder	31.0%	+0.0%

**Source:** <https://aelc.assembly.ca.gov/proposed-congressional-map>. Percentages rounded to nearest tenth, based on 2020 Census for each district as reported by the CA State Assembly.

Table 5 shows the congressional districts that are not Latino CVAP majority but would meet the over 30% Latino CVAP threshold to be considered a Latino community influence district. **While the current map includes a noteworthy six Latino-influence districts, the proposed map would increase the number of Latino-influence districts to eight.** None of these districts would face decreases in their Latino CVAP under the new map boundaries. Many would see significant increases in the Latino portions of their electorate, strengthening the relative power of the Latino vote in those communities. The one district with little change in Latino CVAP under the new map would be CD 9, in which Latinos would remain the same 31% of the CVAP as the current map.

Of particular noteworthiness are the two new Latino influence districts, CD 20 and CD 48 (bolded in Table 5). Neither district has a sufficiently large enough Latino CVAP under the current map to be classified as a Latino influence district (25.4% and 21.4% respectively). With the proposed map, however, CD 20 would have a Latino CVAP of nearly 32% and CD 48 would also have a Latino CVAP of 32%. These are significant shifts in districts that under the current



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map have much larger non-Hispanic white majorities. While the current map has a notable number of Latino-influence districts, the proposed map creates a heightened Latino electoral advantage through the creation of two new Latino-influence districts and generally larger Latino CVAPs than in pre-existing influence districts in the current map.

In addition, at least two of these proposed Latino-influence districts have majority-minority CVAPs, providing additional opportunities for Latino voters to flex strength if voting cohesively and in concert with other minority groups. Voters of color are more than 60% of the CVAP in Proposition 50's CD 9, while voters of color were about 55% of the district's CVAP in the Commission map. Latino voters may be able to elect preferred candidates if there is a multiracial coalition in this district. In both the current and proposed maps, District 27 has a majority-minority CVAP. Latino voters are the largest minority group in District 27 in the Proposition 50 map, and this district could provide electoral strength to Latino voters who vote in coalition with other voters of color or with crossover white voters.

To summarize, the Proposition 50 map increases the number of Latino-influence districts, defined as districts with Latino CVAP of 30% to 50%, relative to the current map. Both the current map and the proposed map provide meaningful influence for Latino voters in influence districts (6 influence districts in the current map and 8 influence districts in the proposed map).

## IV. Key Districts of Interests for Latinos

The table below summarizes several of the largest net gains and net losses in Latino CVAP in the Proposition 50 map relative to the current map. As can be seen, several districts in southern California (CA-41, CA-44, CA-48) and the Central Valley (CA-20, CA-22) have gains in Latino CVAP in the proposed Proposition 50 map. Several other districts, all in southern California (CA-29, CA-31, CA-35, CA-38, CA-42), have reductions in Latino CVAP in the proposed Proposition 50 map relative to the current map.

**Table 6: Proposed Districts with Largest Net Gains and Losses in Latino Eligible Voters**

District	Representative	Net Change Latino CVAP (in Percentage Points)
41	Calvert	+25.3
44	Barragán	+11.3
48	Issa	+10.6
20	Fong	+6.4
22	Valadao	+6.0
42	Garcia	-27.8
35	Torres	-4.3
31	Cisneros	-2.5
38	Sánchez	-3.0



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29	Rivas	-0.6
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**Source:** <https://aelc.assembly.ca.gov/proposed-congressional-map>, <https://wedrawthelines.ca.gov/final-maps/>. Percentages rounded to nearest tenth, based on 2020 Census for each district as reported by the CA State Assembly.

## V. Regional Breakdown of Latino Representation Shifts in the Proposed Map

### Los Angeles County / San Gabriel Valley

Latino-majority representation in Los Angeles County remains robust under the proposed map but becomes more geographically balanced. The greater Los Angeles region trades one concentrated Latino-majority district for broader, multi-district Latino influence. This change will likely promote continued competitiveness and representation for Latino voters in the region.

- **CA-35 (Norma Torres, D)** and **CA-38 (Linda Sánchez, D)** record small declines (−4.3 percentage points in CA-35, and −3 percentage points in CA-38) but remain safely majority-Latino.
- **CA-42 (Robert Garcia, D)** shows the largest Latino CVAP decline statewide, falling from 52 % → 25 % (about a −27 percentage point change). Southeast L.A. County’s Latino population is redistributed into nearby districts—especially CA-41 and CA-44—broadening, rather than eliminating, Latino voting power, while CA-42 continues to have Long Beach as its anchor population and making the former mayor of Long Beach, Garcia, likely to win in the new district.
- **CA-44 (Nanette Barragán, D)** gains +11 percentage points, rising to 62% Latino CVAP. This change consolidates South L.A. County and Harbor communities into a stronger Latino majority seat.

### Central Valley (Fresno, Kern, Stanislaus, Tulare)

The Central Valley continues to be a cornerstone of Latino political power. Overall, the map deepens Latino representation in agriculture-based counties while extending influence into previously lower-representation areas.

- **CA-13 (Adam Gray, D)** increases from 50.2 % Latino CVAP to about 54% Latino CVAP (approximately a +4 percentage point increase), allowing greater opportunity for Latino voters to choose the winning candidate.
- **CA-20 (Vince Fong, R)** increases from 25.4 % Latino CVAP → 31.8 % Latino CVAP (+6.4 percentage point increase), becoming a new Latino-influence seat.



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- **CA-21 (Jim Costa, D)** in the Fresno area has a slight increase in Latino CVAP between the current map and the proposed map, and is a district in which Latino voters' preferred candidates are likely to win in either the current map or the proposed map.
- **CA-22 (David Valadao, R)** climbs from 59.4 % Latino CVAP → 65.4 % Latino CVAP (+6 percentage point change), strengthening its ability for Latino voters to affect the outcome of the election.

### **Inland Empire (Riverside, San Bernardino, Ontario, Corona)**

The Inland Empire emerges as California's new hub of Latino electoral growth. Latino voters are consolidated across Riverside County and the broader area, shifting the region's political center of gravity toward Latino-majority representation.

- **CA-25, CA-33, CA-35, CA-39** are all majority-Latino districts in the Inland Empire region in the current map and in the Proposition 50 map.
- **CA-41 (Ken Calvert, R)** posts the largest statewide gain in the Proposition 50 map—**+25.3 percentage points**, from 29.7% to 55.0% Latino CVAP—transforming into a new majority-Latino district (and moving the district to L.A. County in the Proposition 50 map).

### **Orange County / San Diego**

Latino representation grows markedly in northern Orange County and remains strong along the border. Overall, Orange County's Latino communities, once split among multiple suburban districts prior to this decade now form a more cohesive district in CA-46 in both the current and the proposed map, while San Diego's Latino influence increases in the proposed map in CA-48.

- **CA-46 (Lou Correa, D)** and **CA-52 (Juan Vargas, D)** remain securely majority-Latino in both the current and the proposed maps. In the proposed maps, these two districts are both at or near 53% Latino CVAP, and in the current map both are Latino CVAP majority. CA-46 is centered in Santa Ana and inland Orange County and CA-52 is centered in San Diego and suburban San Diego County communities near the Mexico border.
- **CA-48 (Darrell Issa, R)** rises from 21.4 % → 32.0 % (+10.6 percentage points) in the Proposition 50 map, creating a new Latino-influence district centered on the transportation corridor connecting San Diego County to Temecula and Palm Springs in Riverside County.

### **Bay Area & Northern California**

Latino representation remains smaller in number but steady in influence. Overall, the Bay Area sees continuity rather than major change, maintaining current levels of Latino political presence within multi-ethnic urban districts.



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- **CA-18 (Zoe Lofgren, D)** gains modestly (+2.5 percentage points → 53.0 % Latino CVAP) and remains majority-Latino. This was a new Salinas Valley-based Latino CVAP-majority district created by the Commission in 2020, and it continues with greater Latino CVAP strength in the proposed Proposition 50 map.
- Other Bay Area districts (e.g., CA-12) maintain coalition and crossover-based representation where Latino, Asian-American, and Black voters have the potential to collectively shape outcomes in both the current map and in the proposed map.

## Statewide Takeaway

Adopting the proposed Proposition 50 map would largely redistribute—not diminish—Latino voting strength. Latino influence would expand across fast-growing inland and suburban regions while preserving or enhancing long-standing majority-Latino representation in Los Angeles and the Central Valley.

Rather than concentrating Latino voters into a limited number of extremely safe seats, the proposed map broadens their reach into more districts, creating more opportunity for Latino communities to have a decisive and influential voice in a greater share of California’s 52 congressional races. This geographic rebalancing reflects the state’s ongoing demographic evolution—where Latino population growth in suburban and inland corridors now reshapes the political landscape—making equitable representation increasingly dependent on sustained engagement and turnout among Latino voters statewide.

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## VI. Conclusion

Having examined the data under the current map and the proposed Proposition 50 map, we find that there is no change in the number of Latino-majority CVAP districts across both maps. Each map has 16 Latino-majority districts, meaning there is significant opportunity for Latino representation. We also conclude that—when considering Latino voting patterns in each district—Proposition 50’s map increases the number of districts wherein Latino voters are likely to end up on the winning side, electing preferred candidates. In the current map, 14 Latino-majority districts regularly observe candidates preferred by Latino voters winning. In the Proposition 50 map, our data analysis suggests this will likely increase to 16 Latino-majority districts where Latino voters are able to regularly elect their preferred candidates. Because of changes to CD 13 and CD 22, in particular, Proposition 50’s map enhances the opportunity for Latino voters’ preferred candidates to win, without significantly altering Latino voters’ decisive role in the other 14 Latino-majority districts. However, while our analysis suggests that Proposition 50’s map is more likely to allow for Latino voters’ preferred candidates to win in all 16 Latino-majority districts, we conclude that both the current Commission map and the proposed Proposition 50 map provide significant opportunities for Latino voters.



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In terms of Latino-influence districts, the proposed map includes more influence districts than the current map. This increase of two districts could provide opportunities for greater Latino representation. Our analysis also suggests that the number of Latino descriptive representatives will likely increase in 2026 if the Proposition 50 map passes, but this does not diminish the fact that Latino descriptive representation was significantly improved by the current map over its predecessor map.

We present this nonpartisan and educational analysis in order to understand how the current and proposed maps would affect Latino voters in California. We also want to emphasize that more research is needed on the effects of redistricting maps on Latino voters and Latino representation. Attempts to increase Latino representation in California have historically occurred via the courts and redistricting. Voters now face a choice at the ballot box that will have implications for the future of Latino representation in California.



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**BLOG POST · OCTOBER 8, 2025**

# How Would the Prop 50 Redistricting Plan Affect Racial and Geographic Representation?

Eric McGhee

**EXHIBIT**  
**16**

Governor Newsom and the California Legislature have put Proposition 50, a congressional redistricting plan, on a special election ballot this fall. Prop 50 aims to give California Democrats several additional US House seats as a response to redistricting in Texas that gives more seats to Republicans. To achieve this objective, Prop 50 supporters want to temporarily set aside the legal requirements that helped shape the existing plan. We have already evaluated the new plan's partisan impact. Here we assess two factors that the current plan—drawn by California's independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC)—is required to consider: racial and geographic representation. Because voters are being asked to suspend these requirements, it makes sense to evaluate the proposed map's impact in these areas.

The CRC's map had to satisfy the requirements of the Federal Voting Rights Act (VRA), which include drawing districts for voters of color who hold politically cohesive views and are numerous enough to make up a majority within a single geographical area. Historically, Latinos are the only group to clear this bar for the congressional map. The CRC's current congressional plan includes 16 majority-Latino districts, as does the Prop 50 plan. Neither Black nor Asian Californians have a majority district in either plan.

Districts can also have shares of voters of color that are large enough to “influence” (or help decide) electoral outcomes. Here, we use 30% as the threshold for influence. The CRC plan includes 6 Asian American, 2 Black, and 7 Latino districts that are at or above this threshold. Here, too, the proposed plan matches the current one almost exactly: it adds one more Latino influence district but otherwise replicates the status quo.

## The Prop 50 plan largely matches the CRC plan on racial representation

	Majority districts	Influence districts
<b>Asian American</b>		
Current districts	0	6
Proposed districts	0	6
<b>Black</b>		
Current districts	0	2
Proposed districts	0	2
<b>Latino</b>		
Current districts	16	7
Proposed districts	16	8

**SOURCES:** Statewide Database (2019–2023 ACS block-level data); Citizens Redistricting Commission (block equivalency files for current plan); California State Assembly Committee on Elections (block equivalency files for proposed plan).

**NOTES:** In “majority” districts, a majority of the citizen voting-age population (CVAP) identifies as part of a given group. In “influence” districts, a given group constitutes 30%–50% of the CVAP.

**FROM:** PPIC Blog, October 2025.

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The CRC is also required to consider certain geographic criteria: district compactness (simple shapes rather than strange ones) and the number of cities and counties split into separate districts. (It must also keep “communities of interest” whole, but since there is no consensus definition of this term, we do not analyze it here.) The Prop 50 plan is also very close to the CRC plan on these dimensions. The CRC plan keeps one more county intact (31) than the proposed plan (30), and the two plans include the same share of intact cities (88% in each, though the lists of split cities differ). According to one popular measure of compactness, the Prop 50 map is slightly less compact than the existing plan. However, it is worth noting that the current CRC plan is also less compact than the previous CRC plan.

# The Prop 50 plan’s geographic metrics are very similar to the CRC plan

	Intact counties (#)	Intact cities (%)	Compactness
Current districts	31	88	0.208
Proposed districts	30	88	0.189

**SOURCES:** US Census Bureau (county and city shapefiles); Citizens Redistricting Commission (shapefiles for current plan); California State Assembly Committee on Elections (shapefiles for proposed plan); PlanScore (compactness).  
**NOTES:** Compactness measured with the Polsby-Popper test; higher numbers indicate greater compactness.  
**FROM:** PPIC Blog, October 2025.  
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The proposed redistricting plan has a single overriding goal: to elect more Democrats. While its supporters propose to set aside current legal requirements, the Prop 50 map largely matches the existing map on the sort of criteria the CRC was required to consider. The metrics considered here are statewide, so they do not speak to representation for specific communities. The CRC listened to many hours of testimony about community interests, while the Prop 50 plan was drawn quickly and without such input. As such, some communities may have complaints about specific lines drawn by the proposed plan. But the plan as a whole is very similar to the current one in most respects: it deviates mostly by creating more Democratic seats.

## TOPICS

California State Legislature

elections

Gavin Newsom

Political Landscape

political representation

Proposition 50

redistricting

US House of Representatives

voters

# Special Election November 2025: Redistricting and the Consequences for Asian American Voters

## ASIAN AMERICAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER POLICY INITIATIVE

### Executive Summary

In November, Californians will go to the polls in a special election to decide if a newly redrawn state congressional district map will be adopted for the 2026, 2028 and 2030 elections. This report provides an analysis of the proposed congressional district map, focusing on the possible consequences for Asian American voters

This analysis finds:

- The proposed map does not dramatically change districts for most Asian American voters across the state.
- The proposed map likely will increase Asian American voting power since it will create 5 congressional districts where Asian Americans make up the largest racial group of eligible voters, two of which will hold near Asian American majorities.

### Background: What are We Voting for in the November 2025 Special Election?

Redistricting is the process where voters and land areas are assigned to a congressional district. Typically, in California, an Independent Redistricting Commission made up of California residents decides the map of how congressional district lines are drawn. The most recent redistricting occurred in 2021 and the next cycle was to be in 2031. But in November, California voters will decide if there will be a new congressional district map temporarily used for the 2026, 2028 and 2030 elections and then returning back to an Independent Redistricting Commission in 2031. Proponents of the new map include Governor Gavin Newsom and other Democrats, and opponents of the new map include former Republican Speaker Kevin McCarthy and other Republicans.

For the November special election, voters will take a position on **Proposition 50**: a **YES** vote will implement the proposed map temporarily until 2031, while a **NO** vote will retain the original map drawn by the Independent Redistricting Committee.

To help voters prepare for the special election in November, this report shares an analysis comparing how Asian American voters will likely be affected if the proposed map would be temporary implemented until 2031. The intent is not to endorse either position but rather provide information for voters about the possible effects of the proposed maps.

**EXHIBIT**  
**17**

## Similarities Between Current and Proposed Map

We find many similarities between the Current and Proposed Map. Table 1 compares the top 10 districts with the largest Asian American citizen voting age population (CVAP) in the Current Map (implemented by the Independent Redistricting Commission in 2021) and in the Proposed Map (to be implemented if voters approve the November special election).

The Current Map created 10 congressional districts with a population makeup of 20% or more Asian American CVAP. Districts with the largest Asian American CVAP were largely in the Bay Area, with CD 17 (D-Khanna) being comprised of a near majority of Asian Americans.

In the Proposed Map, there continues to be 10 districts with a population makeup of more than 20% Asian American CVAP. Overall, the Proposed Map mainly increased the share of Asian American voters of those existing districts that already had large Asian American populations. The most apparent change made in the Proposed Map was the increase in the share of Asian American CVAP in CD 47 (D-Min) in Orange County increasing the share of Asian American CVAP from 19.3% to 25.3%. In contrast, the share of Asian American CVAP in CD 7 (D-Matsui) in Sacramento dropped to 19.4% from 21.1%.

*Table 1: Congressional Districts with Largest Asian American CVAP: Comparison of Current and Proposed Map*

District	Representative	% Asian American CVAP in Current Map	% Asian American CVAP in Proposed Map	Difference
17	Khanna	46.6%	48.1%	+1.5
45	Tran	36.9%	40.8%	+4.0
15	Mullin	36.8%	38.5%	+1.7
28	Chu	35.3%	35.0%	-0.3
14	Swalwell	31.9%	37.6%	+5.7
11	Pelosi	31.6%	33.3%	+1.7
16	Liccardo	25.5%	29.1%	+3.6
12	Simon	21.4%	22.3%	+0.9
7	Matsui	21.1%	19.4%	-1.7
38	Sanchez	21.0%	26.4%	+5.4
47	Min	19.3%	25.3%	+6.1

Data Sources: <https://wedrawthelines.ca.gov/final-maps/>

A review of the maps also shows that several districts that were crafted for the Current Map by the 2021 Independent Redistricting Commission in response to public comment testimony around Asian American communities of interest are relatively or completely unchanged. For example, CA-16 in the Bay Area and CA-28 in the San Gabriel Valley were shared as important communities of interest to members of the public, and these districts are nearly kept the same in geographical terms in the new map. See Appendix A.

## Proposed Map Offers New Electoral Advantages to Asian American Voters

Most consequentially, the proposed map increases the total number of districts where Asian Americans represent the largest racial group among the district's eligible voters (see Table 2). In the Current Map, there are 3 districts with Asian Americans as the plurality group in their district. In the Proposed Map there are 5 districts where Asian Americans are the plurality group.

In these districts where Asian Americans represent the largest racial group of voters, their vote can be consequential to deciding the election outcome. The addition of 2 districts with Asian Americans as the plurality group in the Proposed Map offers a distinct electoral advantage for Asian American voters over what now exists in the Current Map.

Note that the public data provided about the Current and Proposed Maps use 2020 Census data to estimate the population. Our analysis tracking data from 2020 to 2023 finds that the Asian American population in the state has grown by 3% in only three years, with certain counties such as Orange County showing even faster growth than the state average. So Asian American pluralities are today likely larger than what is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Districts where Asian Americans are the Largest Racial Group: Comparison of Current vs Proposed

Current Districts by CVAP					
District	Rep	% Asian American	% White	% Latino	% Black
17	Khanna	46.6%	33.0%	15.4%	3.4%
45	Tran	36.9%	35.6%	23.0%	2.9%
28	Chu	35.3%	34.4%	23.7%	5.2%

Proposed Districts by CVAP					
District	Rep	% Asian American	% White	% Latino	% Black
17	Khanna	48.1%	30.6%	16.3%	3.2%
45	Tran	40.8%	26.4%	28.3%	2.9%
15	Mullin	38.5%	35.2%	20.6%	3.5%
14	Swalwell	37.6%	32.7%	20.2%	6.6%
28	Chu	35.0%	32.5%	25.8%	5.5%

Data Sources:  
<https://aelc.assembly.ca.gov/proposed-congressional-map>

## Districts with Significant Net Gain or Loss of Asian American Eligible Voters

Some districts in the Proposed Map were more dramatically changed from the current lines resulting in major changes for some voters being either moved into a new district with a new representative and out of their current one. Table 3 lists proposed districts that will have the largest net gain of Asian American eligible voters (districts where the most Asian Americans were moved into the district) and which had the largest net loss (districts where the most Asian American eligible voters were moved out of the district).

Our analysis generally finds that those congressional districts which saw the most competitive races in the last 2024 election are districts that the Proposed Map most dramatically changes for Asian American voters. For example, in Orange County, CD 47 (D-Min) had the largest net gain of Asian American voters. In the 2024 election, this district was decided by a little over 10,000 votes. The proposed CD47 will get a net gain of over 33,000 eligible Asian American voters and will make Asian Americans a critical voting bloc in this district. On the other hand, CD 40 (R-Kim) also in Orange County will be drawn with a sizable net loss of Asian American eligible voters.

Table 3: Proposed Districts that Result in the Largest Net Gain or Loss of Asian American Eligible Voters

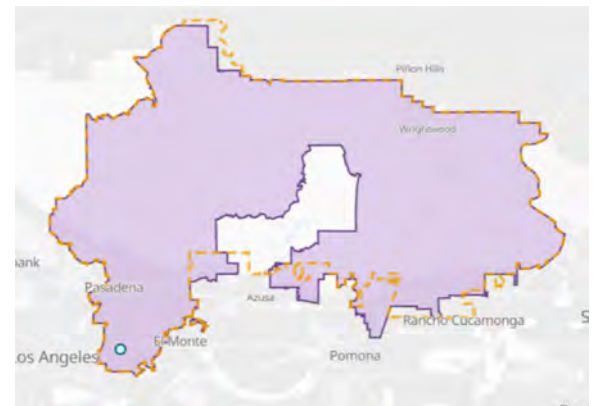
Proposed Districts with Largest Net GAIN of Asian American CVAP			Proposed Districts with Largest Net LOSS of Asian American CVAP		
District	Rep	Net Gain of Asian Americans	District	Rep	Net Loss of Asian Americans
47	Min	33,003	51	Jacobs	-31,923
49	Levin	29,834	40	Kim	-29,676
9	Harder	28,309	44	Barragan	-9,157
50	Peters	26,585	52	Vargas	-5,645
42	Garcia	26,271	1	LaMalfa	-4,143
3	Kiley	20,579	28	Chu	-1,563
14	Swalwell	20,461	18	Lofgren	-99

Data Sources:  
<https://wedrawthelines.ca.gov/final-maps/>

## Appendix A: Comparison of Current District Lines and Proposed District Lines

Voters can check how their districts may be changed with the Proposed Map at the website:  
<https://calmatters.org/politics/2025/08/find-out-if-youur-vote-could-be-affected-by-newsoms-redistricting-plans/>

Here is an example of CD 28 (D-Chu) provided by Cal Matters. The purple lines represent the Current Map district lines and the orange lines represent the Proposed Map district lines. Neighborhoods with large Asian American residents remain in the same district.



Source:  
<https://calmatters.org/politics/2025/08/find-out-if-your-vote-could-be-affected-by-newsoms-redistricting-plans/>

# Speaker Rivas Joins California, Texas Democrats to Fight Back Against Trump's Redistricting Power Grab

The Speaker said California voters will see the maps and make the ultimate decision — the most transparent process in the country

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Saturday, August 9, 2025

Nick Miller

Communications Director

916-319-2029

[Nick.Miller@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Nick.Miller@asm.ca.gov)

SACRAMENTO — As Donald Trump pushes to rig the rules of our democracy so Republicans can cling to power in Congress, Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas joined Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi, Governor Gavin Newsom, Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren, Senate President pro Tempore Mike McGuire, and Texas and California Democratic lawmakers to fight back against the unprecedented power grab.

"California Democrats will not allow Trump's Republican Party to rig the system and take permanent control of the U.S. House of Representatives," said **Speaker Robert Rivas (D-Salinas)**, "We are prepared and we will fight fire with fire. We will do whatever it takes to defend our democracy. We will do whatever it takes to protect the voices, the votes and the rights of every American."



Trump's attempt to cheat his way to Republican control of the House isn't just another redistricting fight — it's a brazen attack on representative government, and a threat to the people who lawmakers are sworn to protect.

Texas Democrats, who are taking action to block Republican efforts in their state, joined California leaders and lawmakers in downtown Sacramento and stood united in defending and empowering voters to resist and defend California.

**EXHIBIT**  
**18**

"The President has paved over the Rose Garden, he has paved over freedom of speech, he has paved over freedom of education — the list goes on and on. Independent judiciary, rule of law—paved over. But we will not let him pave over free and fair elections in our country," **House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi** said during Friday's press conference.

"Donald Trump is tipping the scales of justice toward injustice for us all — he realizes his agenda is so unpopular that he'd rather rig the next election and prevent voters from holding him accountable and provide a check on his deeply unpopular policies. California stands ready to flex its muscle to ensure the integrity of our democracy nationwide," **Governor Gavin Newsom** said.

"Today, we are at a flash point set in play by Donald Trump and Texas Republicans who see the writing on the wall that they'll lose the midterms — and they're trying to cheat to win," **Senate President pro Tempore Mike McGuire** said. "President Trump's cynical ploy to redraw congressional maps in Texas is rotten to its core. It is our sacred responsibility to defend our democracy and the people of the Golden State, so if Texas moves forward, we need to be prepared to do the same."

Members of the Assembly Democratic Caucus who attended Friday's event also echoed the Speaker's commitment to protecting California, democracy and working families, emphasizing the urgent need to confront Trump head-on.

"It's troubling that some people, including the president and national Republicans, think it's fine to mess with the system for political gain with mid-decade redistricting. Why? Because they know people don't support their agenda of gutting health care, killing programs that working people and the poor depend upon, separating immigrant families, and hurting American small businesses and consumers with reckless tariffs," said **Assembly Majority Leader Cecilia Aguiar-Curry (D-Winters)**. "Here in California, we believe in fair play and transparency, which is why we have independent redistricting to protect democracy. But, we can't roll over while Trump cheats."

"California will always defend the right to vote—and the will of the people. Voters made it clear: they want independent redistricting, not partisan power grabs. Unlike Texas, we won't silence that voice. We'll send this issue to the ballot box—where it belongs," **Assemblymember Anamarie Ávila Farías (D-Concord)** said.

"When an unprecedented power grab by the Trump administration threatens to destabilize the foundations of our Democracy, we can and must do everything necessary to stand in the way and fight for what is right. That is who we are in California," **Assemblymember Isaac Bryan (D-Los Angeles)** said.

"Redistricting should be about making sure every voice counts. President Trump and Texas Republicans are using it to drown out the voices they do not want to hear, especially communities of color and working families. Their manipulation of our democracy is wrong and we will not sit on the sidelines. We will call out the injustice, protect representation, and make sure our democracy reflects communities like mine," **Assemblymember Avelino Valencia (D-Anaheim)** said.

Speaker Rivas reinforced a commitment to California voters seeing all the maps and casting the ultimate decisions — the most transparent process in the country. Members also insisted on sustaining the independent commission.

The stakes could not be higher. This is an emergency. And California must fight back.



###

*For more information, follow Speaker Robert Rivas at the following social media channels:*

Instagram: **@CaSpeakerRivas**

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/CASpeakerRivas/](https://www.facebook.com/CASpeakerRivas/)

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# Legislative Democrats Announce Plan Empowering Voters to Protect California

Trump and Republicans sparked a national crisis. And California is fighting back.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Friday, August 15, 2025

Nick Miller  
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916-319-2029  
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SACRAMENTO - Today, Democrats in the California State Legislature announced new legislation to call a special election in November, empowering voters to protect our state's economy and democracy, and fighting back against reckless attacks by Trump and Republicans.

The legislation includes a state constitutional amendment to set a special election on November 4. It also makes public, for all voters to see and review, new proposed Congressional maps for California.

Voters will have the final say on the maps when they cast their ballots.

The proposed maps are now publicly available on the [Assembly Elections Committee website](#).

Californians also can provide input on the map [via a public portal](#) on the same website, which already has received more than 3,000 public comments since its launch on Wednesday.

## Democrats Empower Voters, Protect People and Communities, Promote Transparency

Republican redistricting efforts in Texas and other states are dividing communities, undermining voter freedom — and their maps are drawn without letting the people decide.

In California, lawmakers in the Assembly and Senate pushed for key provisions in the legislation to ensure fidelity to independent commissions, protections for the Voting Rights Act and preservation of California cities and communities:

- **California will keep the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.** The Legislature's plan makes sure the Commission maintains its full scope of work and authority after the 2030 Census and beyond, redrawing California's Congressional, state legislative and Board of Equalization lines every 10 years.
- **California only acts if Republicans try to rig the vote.** The legislation includes a trigger to ensure that maps will take effect only if other states effectuate partisan gerrymanders. Several Republican-controlled states, most notably Texas, are considering gerrymanders aimed to benefit their party. Unlike California, none are submitting those plans for voter approval.
- **Every state in the country should have independent redistricting.** The bills include provisions to express California's policy to support nonpartisan, independent redistricting nationwide and would call on Congress to initiate a federal constitutional amendment to require nonpartisan, independent redistricting nationwide.
- **Protecting the rights of all voters.** The new map retains the voting rights protections enacted by the independent commission.
- **Keeping cities and communities together.** The proposed Congressional map keeps more cities whole within a single district than the most recent map enacted by the commission.

## What Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas Says

"Trump sparked this national crisis when he called Texas to rig the election. California is fighting back. Democrats are empowering voters to protect working families and our democracy — with the most transparent process in the nation. Voters will see the maps and have the final say. The stakes couldn't be higher, but I'm confident we'll defeat this assault on our democracy and end Trump's attacks on California."

**EXHIBIT**  
**19**

“This is about more than drawing lines on a map, it’s about drawing a line in the sand to stop Texas and Trump from rigging the election. This is about protecting the people of the Golden State, our Democracy and making sure voters have a say. Access to health care matters. Reproductive rights and Planned Parenthood matters. Making life more affordable matters. So does keeping tariffs from killing California jobs. These are the stakes, this is what we will be voting on this week in the Legislature, and what the people of California will vote on in November.”

### Overview of the Legislation

The Legislature will consider three measures in order to call and facilitate the special election:

- A constitutional amendment which authorizes the replacement of the existing Congressional map
- A statute which contains the new proposed Congressional map for voter approval
- A statute to call the special election, appropriate funding for election administration, and make conforming changes to election calendars.

### How Trump and Republicans Continue to Harm California’s Families, Workers and Businesses

- Trump’s tariffs are making family essentials and basic household items more expensive.
- Trump’s budget slashes billions of dollars in funding for social services, threatening access to health care and food for millions of Californians.
- Trump’s immigration raids are damaging California’s economy as they terrorize our communities.
- Trump is arbitrarily and capriciously cutting off grant funding for California’s research universities, along with K-12 funds, punishing California students and stalling resources for afterschool programs and teacher training.
- Trump and the federal government are playing politics with California’s requests for relief following the devastating January fires in Los Angeles.

### Timeline of Anticipated Legislative Action

**Monday, August 18:** Legislation into print in Assembly and Senate

**Tuesday, August 19:** Assembly and Senate Elections Committees hear legislation

**Wednesday, August 20:** Assembly Appropriations Committees hears legislation

**Thursday, August 21:** Anticipated floor votes in both Assembly and Senate

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# California Assembly Democrats Support Empowering Voters to Stop Trump's Power Grab

As Trump and Republicans rig the vote in Texas and other states, California lawmakers are fighting back. Today, legislation to call a special election, giving Golden State voters the final say, passed the Senate and Assembly election committees.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Tuesday, August 19, 2025

Nick Miller  
Communications Director  
916-319-2029  
[Nick.Miller@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Nick.Miller@asm.ca.gov)

**SACRAMENTO** — Today, legislation to empower voters to fight back against Trump's attacks on California passed the Senate and Assembly Elections committees.

Assembly Democrats have rallied around new legislation, which would set a special election on November 4 and give voters the final say on adopting new California Congressional [maps](#).

The legislation also passed its first committee hearings on Tuesday with broad support, demonstrating a strong backing from Assembly Democrats as it advances through the process.

Republican-led redistricting schemes in Texas and other states are breaking apart communities and eroding public trust. GOP lawmakers are drawing maps behind closed doors, leaving voters out of the process entirely.

California is charting a different course. Assembly and Senate leaders' legislation upholds the independence of the redistricting commission, defends voting rights protections, and maintains the integrity of California's cities and neighborhoods.

- **California will keep the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.** The Legislature's plan makes sure the Commission maintains its full scope of work and authority after the 2030 Census and beyond, redrawing California's Congressional, state legislative and Board of Equalization lines every 10 years.
- **California only acts if Republicans try to rig the vote.** The legislation includes a trigger to ensure that maps will take effect only if other states effectuate partisan gerrymanders. Several Republican-controlled states, most notably Texas, are considering gerrymanders aimed to benefit their party. Unlike California, none are submitting those plans for voter approval.
- **Every state in the country should have independent redistricting.** The bills include provisions to express California's policy to support nonpartisan, independent redistricting nationwide and would call on Congress to initiate a federal constitutional amendment to require nonpartisan, independent redistricting nationwide.
- **Protecting the rights of all voters.** The new map retains the voting rights protections enacted by the independent commission, and retains both historic Black districts and Latino-majority districts.
- **Keeping cities and communities together.** The proposed Congressional map keeps more cities whole within a single district than the most recent map enacted by the commission.

## What Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas Says

"We believe in accountability. We believe in elections decided by voters, not bullies. We're putting the maps in front of the people first, and empowering voters to have the final say. Donald Trump will not decide the future of our democracy. The people will."

## What Majority Leader Cecilia Aguiar-Curry Says

**EXHIBIT  
20**

"AB 604 lays out new congressional districts only if voters pass ACA 8. Unlike the map proposed in Texas, the map in AB 604 respects California's constitutional requirement for maintaining communities of interest, with less break up of local jurisdictions. And, after the 2030 census, the independent California Citizens' Redistricting Commission will go back to drawing our congressional boundaries. With this bill we're seeking the public's input—because there's nothing more democratic than California voters deciding. So, if California voters approve this plan, the temporary maps only happen if DC Republicans and Republican-led states push through mid-decade partisan maps first. Their choice is to stand down, or support a fair system for every state. That's how this ends."

#### What Assemblymember Isaac Bryan Says

"California has faced blow after blow from an authoritarian who is using his position in the White House to dismantle our democracy, line his pockets with taxpayer dollars, and shield himself from all accountability. Trump is now openly, shamelessly interfering with state elections to hold on to power. Here in California we will not let that happen without a fight. We will stand up for Democracy."

#### What Former Elections Chair Assemblymember Marc Berman Says

"Donald Trump has unapologetically targeted California time and again over the past six months - targeting workers who power our economy, targeting California's best in the world UC system, targeting the healthcare systems that Californians rely on when they get sick. Realizing how unpopular these actions are, Trump and Republicans now want to rig our democracy to guarantee they remain in power. We did not choose this fight, we do not want this fight, but with our democracy on the line, California cannot run away from this fight. Enough is enough. Trump and Republicans still have the chance to back away from their un-American power grab. California's new maps will only go into effect if Republicans move forward with their reckless plans. As Californians, we do not bend the knee to those with authoritarian tendencies. If they don't back down, California will fight back – and we will win."

#### What Vice Chair of the Latino Caucus Assemblymember Juan Carrillos Says

"The president created this emergency when he called Texas to ask the governor to change the rules and redraw the districts. His goal is to manipulate the elections. California will not stand by while they attack our democracy."

#### Overview of the Legislation

The Legislature will consider three measures in order to call and facilitate the special election:

- ACA 8 (Rivas, McGuire), which authorizes the replacement of the existing Congressional map
- AB 604 (Aguiar-Curry), which contains the new proposed Congressional map for voter approval
- SB 280 (Cervantes, Pellerin) to call the special election, appropriate funding for election administration, and make conforming changes to election calendars.

###

*For more information, follow Speaker Robert Rivas at the following social media channels:*

*Instagram: @caspeakerrivas*

*Facebook: [www.facebook.com/CASpeakerRivas/](https://www.facebook.com/CASpeakerRivas/)*

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**Mike McGuire**

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR | DISTRICT 02

# Empowering Voters To Protect California

AUGUST 19, 2025

**SACRAMENTO**—Today, Democrats in the California State Legislature announced new legislation to call a special election in November, empowering voters to protect our state's economy and democracy, and fighting back against reckless attacks by Trump and Republicans.

The legislation includes a state constitutional amendment to set a special election on November 4. It also makes public, for all voters to see and review, new proposed Congressional maps for California.

Voters will have the final say on the maps when they cast their ballots.

The proposed maps are now publicly available on the [Senate and Assembly Elections Committee websites](#).

Californians also can provide input on the map [via a public portal](#) on the same website, which already has received more than 3,000 public comments since its launch on Wednesday.

## Our Democratic Approach Empowers Voters, Protects People and Communities, and Promotes Transparency

Republican redistricting efforts in Texas and other states are dividing communities, undermining voter freedom — and their maps are drawn in secret without letting the people decide.

In California, lawmakers in the Assembly and Senate pushed for key provisions in the legislation to ensure fidelity to independent commissions, protections for the Voting Rights Act, and preservation of California cities and communities:

- **California will keep the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.** The Legislature's plan makes sure the Commission maintains its full scope of work and authority after the 2030 Census and beyond, redrawing California's Congressional, state legislative and Board of Equalization lines every 10 years.

**EXHIBIT  
21**



**Mike McGuire**

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR | DISTRICT 66

controlled states, most notably Texas, are considering gerrymanders aimed to benefit their party. Unlike California, none are submitting those plans for voter approval.

- **Every state in the country should have independent redistricting.**

The bills include provisions to express California's policy to support nonpartisan, independent redistricting nationwide and would call on Congress to initiate a federal constitutional amendment to require nonpartisan, independent redistricting nationwide.

- **Protecting communities of color and historically marginalized voters.** The new map makes no changes to historic Black districts in Oakland and the Los Angeles area, and retains and expands Voting Rights Act districts that empower Latino voters to elect their candidates of choices.

- **Keeping cities and communities together.** The proposed Congressional map keeps more cities whole within a single district than the most recent map enacted by the commission.

#### What Senate President Pro Tem Mike McGuire Says

"This is about more than drawing lines on a map, it's about drawing a line in the sand to stop Texas and Trump from rigging the election. This is about protecting the people of the Golden State, our Democracy, and making sure voters have a say. Access to health care matters. Reproductive rights and Planned Parenthood matters. Making life more affordable matters. So does keeping tariffs from killing California jobs. These are the stakes, this is what we will be voting on this week in the Legislature, and what the people of California will vote on in November."

#### What Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas Says

"Trump sparked this national crisis when he called Texas to rig the election. California is fighting back. Democrats are empowering voters to protect working families and our democracy — with the most transparent process in the nation. Voters will see the maps and have the final say. The stakes couldn't be higher, but I'm confident we'll defeat this assault on our democracy and end Trump's attacks on California."



**Mike McGuire**

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR | DISTRICT 06

- A constitutional amendment which authorizes the replacement of the existing Congressional map
- A statute which contains the new proposed Congressional map for voter approval
- A statute to call the special election, appropriate funding for election administration, and make conforming changes to election calendars.

### How Trump and Republicans Continue to Harm California's Families, Workers and Businesses

- Trump's tariffs are making family essentials and basic household items more expensive.
- Trump's budget slashes billions of dollars in funding for social services, threatening access to health care and food for millions of Californians.
- Trump's immigration raids are damaging California's economy as they terrorize our communities.
- Trump is arbitrarily and capriciously cutting off grant funding for California's research universities, along with K-12 funds, punishing California students and stalling resources for afterschool programs and teacher training.
- Trump and the federal government are playing politics with California's requests for relief following the devastating January fires in Los Angeles.

### Timeline of Anticipated Legislative Action

**Monday, August 18:** Legislation into print in Assembly and Senate

**Tuesday, August 19:** Assembly and Senate Elections Committees hear legislation

**Wednesday, August 20:** Assembly Appropriations Committees hears legislation

**Thursday, August 21:** Anticipated floor votes in both Assembly and Senate



**Mike McGuire**

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR | DISTRICT 14

2025.01.14

*Mike McGuire is President pro Tempore of the California Senate. He represents the North Coast of California, which stretches from the Golden Gate Bridge to the Oregon border, including Del Norte, Trinity, Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino, Sonoma, and Marin Counties. Website of Senate Leader McGuire: <https://sd02.senate.ca.gov/>*

No. 115

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

AT SACRAMENTO

2025–26 REGULAR SESSION

# Senate Supplemental File #1



Compiled Under the Direction of  
ERIKA CONTRERAS  
Secretary of the Senate

By  
CLAUDIA FUENTES  
Daily File Clerk  
and  
MADISON HINOJOSA  
Assistant Daily File Clerk

SENATE CONVENES AT 9 A.M.

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 2025**

(FLOOR SESSION)

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH DAY IN SESSION

(Please report any errors or omissions to Daily File Clerk: Phone 916–651–4171)

**ASSEMBLY BILLS—THIRD READING FILE**

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**267**

A.C.A. No. 8—Rivas et al. (McGuire)

An act relating to redistricting.

Vote required: 27

**2025**

Aug. 21—Assembly Rule 69(b)(1) suspended. Amended. Ordered to third reading. Assembly Rule 63 suspended. Adopted and to Senate.

Aug. 21—In Senate. To Com. on RLS. Senate Rule 19 suspended. (Ayes 30. Noes 9.) Joint Rule 10.5 suspended. (Ayes 30. Noes 9.)

Aug. 21—From committee: Ordered to third reading.

Date of Hearing: March 26, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS  
Gail Pellerin, Chair  
AB 604 (Berman) – As Introduced February 13, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Voter registration: residency confirmation.

**SUMMARY:** Repeals an obsolete provision of law related to residency confirmation of registered voters.

**EXISTING STATE LAW:**

- 1) Requires each county elections official to conduct a pre-election residency confirmation of each registered voter, as specified, prior to each primary election. (Elections Code §§2220, 2222, 2223, 2227)
- 2) Provides for the status of a voter's registration to be changed to inactive if change-of-address data received by the county elections official from the United States Postal Service (USPS) or its licensees indicates that the voter has moved and left no forwarding address or has moved out of the state, as specified. Requires the county elections official to send a forwardable address verification mailing to the voter in that case, as specified. (Elections Code §§2221, 2225, 2226)
- 3) Permitted a county elections official, until December 31, 2019, to send an alternate residency confirmation (ARC) postcard to any voter who had not voted in an election within the preceding four years, and who had not updated their residence address, name, or party preference during that time. Permitted a county elections official, until December 31, 2019, to make a voter's registration inactive if the voter failed to respond to an ARC postcard. This provision of law was made inoperative on January 1, 2020, but remains in state law until January 1, 2029, at which point it will be repealed by its own terms. (Elections Code §2224)
- 4) Provides that voters with an inactive voter registration status do not receive vote by mail (VBM) ballots or other election materials that otherwise are sent to registered voters, and are not included in voter registration numbers for the purposes of certain election administration related processes. (Elections Code §§2226, 3000.5)
- 5) Provides that any voter whose registration is inactive, and who offers to vote, who notifies the elections official of a continued residency, or who confirms the voter's registration record on the SOS's website, shall be removed from the inactive list and placed on the active voter list. (Elections Code §2226(c))

**EXISTING FEDERAL LAW:**

- 1) Requires each state, as specified, to do both of the following pursuant to the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA):
  - a) Provide that the name of a registrant may not be removed from the official list of eligible voters except at the registrant's request, as provided by state law by reason of criminal conviction or mental incapacity, or as provided by specified procedures outlined in the

NVRA.

- b) Conduct a general program that makes a reasonable effort to remove the names of ineligible voters from the official lists of eligible voters by reason of death of the registrant, or a change in the residence of the registrant, as specified. (52 U.S. Code §20507)
- 2) Requires all of the following, pursuant to NVRA and the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA):
- a) That a voter not be removed from the list of eligible voters in elections for federal office on the ground that the registrant has changed residence unless either of the following is true:
    - i) The registrant confirms their change in residence in writing, as specified; or,
    - ii) The registrant has failed to respond to a specified notice and has not voted or appeared to vote in an election between the time that the notice is sent and the date of the second federal general election after the notice is sent.
  - b) That a voting registrar shall correct an official list of eligible voters in elections for federal office in accordance with change of residence information obtained in conformance with the state program or activity to ensure the maintenance of an accurate and current voter registration roll for elections for federal office. (52 U.S. Code §20507)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** None. This bill is keyed non-fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

**COMMENTS:**

- 1) **Purpose of the Bill:** According to the author:

State and federal law require elections officials to follow specified procedures to confirm the residency of registered voters. These residency confirmation procedures are designed to keep voter registration rolls up-to-date by ensuring that voters' registrations are updated when voters move. If information from a residency confirmation process indicates that a voter has moved and not left a forwarding address, the voter's registration becomes inactive. A voter whose registration is inactive remains eligible to vote, but their registration eventually may be canceled if the voter does not vote or confirm their address with the elections official.

I authored AB 504 in 2019 to, among other changes, allow a voter to confirm their address by logging in to the Secretary of State's "My Voter Status" website, which ensures that the voter's registration remains active, or makes the registration active again if it was inactive. Because some of the changes made by AB 504 necessitated technology upgrades, the bill contained two nearly identical provisions of law, with one taking effect following passage and the second taking effect once the upgrades were completed. I'm authoring AB 604 to clean up the law and prevent any confusion as to which provision of code is in effect.

- 2) **Inactive Voters:** California law provides that a voter's registration may be changed to "inactive" status under specified circumstances. Voters whose registrations are inactive do not receive VBM ballots, but remain eligible to vote. The inactive list is one tool that California uses to protect voters from being disenfranchised inadvertently if elections officials receive inaccurate information about the residence address of a voter.

Under state law, a voter's registration is made inactive when the county elections official receives information from the USPS that indicates that the voter has moved and has not provided a new address, or has moved out of state. Additionally, until recently, a voter's registration could be made inactive even in situations where the elections official had not received information that suggested that a voter has moved. Specifically, until the beginning of 2020, state law allowed (but did not require) elections officials to conduct an ARC process under which voters who had not voted in at least four years were sent a residency confirmation postcard. If the voter failed to return that postcard, state law provided for the voter's registration to be made inactive.

When a county elections official changes a voter's registration status to inactive, state and federal law require the elections official to send a forwardable address verification mailing to the voter at the address at which the voter was registered to vote. If the voter responds to that mailing and confirms that they have not changed their residence, the voter's registration status is changed back to active. Alternately, if the voter responds and indicates that they have changed their residence, the voter's registration is either updated to the voter's new residence address if the new address is in California, or canceled if the new address is outside of California.

If a voter's registration status is changed to inactive and that voter does not respond to the address verification mailing sent by the elections official, then the voter's registration remains inactive. If that voter does not vote, attempt to vote, or otherwise confirm or update their voter registration between the date of that notice and the second federal general election that occurs after the date of the notice, then the voter's registration is canceled.

- 3) **Secretary of State's My Voter Status Website:** HAVA generally requires each state to implement a single, centralized, interactive computerized statewide voter registration list that is defined, maintained, and administered at the state level and that contains the name and registration information of every legally registered voter in the state. California's federally compliant statewide voter registration database is known as VoteCal.

When California launched VoteCal in September 2016, the SOS also launched a "My Voter Status" portal that allows eligible Californians to register to vote, check their voter registration status, and check the status of their VBM or provisional ballots, among other functions. To access the "My Voter Status" website, a voter must provide their name, driver's license or identification card number, the last four digits of their Social Security number, and their date of birth.

- 4) **Seeing Double and Previous Legislation:** AB 504 (Berman), Chapter 262, Statutes of 2019, was legislation sponsored by the SOS that made various changes to state laws related to the confirmation of voters' residence addresses. Among other changes, AB 504 eliminated the ARC process described above in an effort to bring state law into conformity with a United States Supreme Court ruling from the prior year.

AB 504 additionally provided that if a voter verifies their registration record through the SOS's My Voter Status website, that verification would serve as a confirmation of the voter's residency for the purposes of pre-election residency confirmation processes and voter list maintenance procedures. At the time AB 504 was enacted, however, the VoteCal system did not have the ability to notify the relevant county elections official when a voter confirmed their registration record on the SOS's My Voter Status website. Accordingly, AB 504 enacted two versions of Section 2226 of the Elections Code, which contains rules for voter list maintenance. One version of Section 2226 went into effect on January 1, 2020, and the second version specified that it would go into effect only after the SOS certified that necessary changes were made to VoteCal such that the relevant county elections official would be notified when a voter confirmed their registration record on the SOS's My Voter Status website. According to information from the SOS, those changes were made to VoteCal in 2020. As a result, the first version of Section 2226 of the Elections Code is no longer operative, and the second version of that code section is in effect.

This bill repeals the inoperative version of Section 2226 of the Elections Code.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

None on file.

**Opposition**

None on file.

**Analysis Prepared by:** Ethan Jones / ELECTIONS / (916) 319-2094

**(Without Reference to File)**

**CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS**

AB 604 (Aguiar-Curry and Gonzalez)

As Amended August 18, 2025

2/3 vote. Urgency

**SUMMARY**

Specifies the boundaries for California's congressional districts, to take effect only if the voters approve ACA 8 (Rivas and McGuire) of the current legislative session, and if another state voluntarily engages in mid-decade congressional redistricting, as specified.

**Senate Amendments**

Delete the Assembly-approved version of the bill, and instead:

- 1) Add legal descriptions of the boundaries of 52 congressional districts.
- 2) Provide that the district boundaries in this bill become operative only if ACA 8 (Rivas and McGuire) is approved by the voters, takes effect, and becomes operative because another state voluntarily puts a new congressional map into effect.
- 3) Provide that if any ambiguity or dispute arises regarding the location of a boundary line for the districts contained in this bill, the Secretary of State (SOS) and the elections official of each county shall rely on detailed maps posted by the Assembly Elections Committee and the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments of the congressional districts boundaries proposed by this bill.
- 4) Sunset the provisions of this bill once a new congressional map is certified by the Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC) pursuant to the California Constitution.
- 5) Add a severability clause, and add an urgency clause, allowing this bill to take effect immediately upon enactment.

**COMMENTS**

"Redistricting" is the process by which the boundaries of districts of a governmental body are adjusted. Redistricting generally occurs at the beginning of each decade following the decennial federal census, when new district lines are adopted based on the census data so that the populations of each district of a governmental body are roughly equal.

The California Legislature last redrew the boundary lines of the congressional, State Senatorial, Assembly, and Board of Equalization (BOE) districts in 2001 based on the results of the 2000 census. Those district lines were finalized and approved in September 2001.

In 2008, California voters approved Proposition 11, which created the CRC, and gave it the responsibility for drawing district lines for the state Senate, Assembly, and the BOE. It also changed the criteria used when drawing those lines. In 2010, voters approved Proposition 20, which expanded the CRC's duties to include drawing California's congressional districts, and made additional changes to the procedures and criteria to be used by the CRC. The passage of Propositions 11 and 20 meant that the California Legislature did not play a direct role in adopting

district boundaries for congressional, legislative, and BOE districts following the 2010 and 2020 federal censuses.

Under current law, the districts drawn by the CRC after the 2020 census are scheduled to remain in place until the CRC adopts new maps following the 2030 census. Those new districts would take effect for regularly-scheduled elections in 2032 and beyond.

However, if ACA 8 (Rivas and McGuire) of the current legislative session is approved by voters and becomes operative because another state voluntarily engages in mid-decade congressional redistricting, the congressional district boundaries in this bill could be used for congressional elections in California as soon as the 2026 statewide elections.

More detailed information about the congressional districts proposed by this bill, including demographic details for each of the 52 proposed districts, an interactive map of the proposed district boundaries, and downloadable computer files (shapefiles and a block equivalency file) with geographic details about the proposed districts are available on the Assembly Elections Committee's website at <https://aelc.assembly.ca.gov/proposed-congressional-map>.

This bill contains a provision that specifies that if an ambiguity or dispute arises regarding the location of a boundary line in this bill, the SOS and county elections officials may rely on detailed maps posted by the Assembly Elections Committee and the Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments Committee of the congressional districts contained in this bill to resolve that ambiguity or dispute. This language is similar to language that was included in legislation (AB 632 (Cedillo), Chapter 348, Statutes of 2001 and SB 802 (Elections and Reapportionment Committee), Chapter 349, Statutes of 2001) when the California Legislature last redrew district boundary lines in 2001. As noted above, this committee's website already includes detailed information about the proposed districts, including an interactive map of the district boundaries.

### **According to the Author**

"AB 604 will protect Californians' interests in the national democratic process by presenting the voters with a temporary congressional district map to use if Texas or other states decide to conduct mid-decade, partisan gerrymandering of their congressional district maps. The temporary congressional district boundaries laid out in AB 604 follow the principles that California voters value most in establishing legislative districts. The proposed map maintains the geographic integrity of even more cities than the current map adopted by the Citizens Redistricting Commission. Importantly, the temporary map in AB 604 will also ensure that communities of interest remain intact — a key principle of the constitutional amendment establishing the Citizens Redistricting Commission — to exercise their collective voice and vote to elect officials who truly represent them. AB 604 does all of this without diluting or favoring the voting power of any one voter over another. And, unlike any other congressional maps in use across the country today, the district map in AB 604 will go directly to California voters for their approval. AB 604 not only appropriately responds to the mid-cycle redistricting attempts by President Trump and Republicans in Texas and other states, but also adheres to redistricting principles that Californians hold dear — from protecting the many types of communities of interest in our state, to not favoring incumbents, to maintaining the geographic integrity of neighborhoods. The temporary congressional district lines proposed in AB 604 provide an effective response to the partisan gerrymander attempted by Texas and other states without eroding fair representation for all California voters and communities."

### **Arguments in Support**

In support of this bill, Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California writes, "At President Trump's urging, Texas Republicans plan to redraw their Congressional district map in an unprecedented attempt to "rig" the election in their favor before voting even begins. This dangerous election gaming puts politics over people and California must fight back. This is California's only opportunity to "check" the Trump administration's abuses of power to restrict civil rights and attack individual freedoms. AB 604, proposes draft California maps that respond to Texas' action in a transparent, time-limited manner that voters must approve."

### **Arguments in Opposition**

In opposition to this bill, Alliance San Diego writes, "AB 604 is the vehicle for the legislature to approve new maps submitted by a partisan political action committee, which is problematic. The legislative timeline leaves no room for meaningful public input, and the bill does not include maps, but rather hundreds of pages of codes for census blocks, which are meaningless to the average member of the public. Given the manner in which redistricting bills are being presented to the public — as already decided — we are also concerned about violations of open meeting laws. The business of the public should be conducted in public, but that is not what appears to be happening right now."

### **FISCAL COMMENTS**

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, the SOS would incur administrative costs to the extent that specified ambiguities or disputes related to boundary lines occur. Workload to SOS would be driven by 1) the number of such ambiguities/disputes, and 2) their complexity and related resources needed to achieve resolution. Because both of these factors are unknown, the costs to SOS resulting from this bill cannot be determined. (General Fund).

### **VOTES:**

**ASM ELECTIONS: Vote not relevant**

**YES:**

**ASSEMBLY FLOOR: Vote not relevant**

**YES:**

**NO:**

**ABS, ABST OR NV:**

### **UPDATED**

VERSION: August 18, 2025

CONSULTANT: Ethan Jones / ELECTIONS / (916) 319-2094

FN: 0001179

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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair  
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

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### AB 604 (Aguiar-Curry) - Redistricting: congressional districts

**Version:** August 18, 2025

**Urgency:** Yes

**Hearing Date:** August 20, 2025

**Policy Vote:** E. & C.A. 4 - 1

**Mandate:** No

**Consultant:** Robert Ingenito

**Bill Summary:** AB 604 would specify the elements that define the congressional districts that would be adopted only if (1) ACA 8 of the 2025–26 Regular Session is approved by the voters and takes effect, and (2) specified constitutional provisions become operable.

**Fiscal Impact:** The Secretary of State (SOS) would incur administrative costs to the extent that specified ambiguities or disputes related to boundary lines occur. Workload to SOS would be driven by (1) the number of such ambiguities/disputes, and (2) their complexity and related resources needed to achieve resolution. Because both of these factors are unknown, the costs to SOS resulting from this bill cannot be determined. (General Fund).

**Background:** As summarized by the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments, the California Constitution requires that in the year following the year in which a national census is taken under the direction of Congress at the start of a decade, the Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC) shall adjust the lines of congressional, State Senatorial, Assembly, and Board of Equalization districts, pursuant to specified standards and procedures.

ACA 8 places on the ballot a measure, that if passed by the voters, would amend the Constitution to adopt the maps for congressional districts to be used for every congressional election for a term of office commencing on or after the date ACA 8 takes effect and prior to the operative date of new congressional boundary lines drawn by the CRC following the 2030 national census.

**Proposed Law:** This bill, among other things, would do the following:

- Contain the legal descriptions of California congressional districts that would be adopted only if (1) ACA 8 of the 2025–26 Regular Session is approved by the voters and takes effect, and (2) specified constitutional provisions become operable.
- Specify that in the event this bill does not list, lists more than once, or only partially accounts for a census tract or census block and, as a result, an ambiguity or dispute arises regarding the location of a boundary line, SOS and the elections official of each county shall rely on the detailed maps prepared by the Assembly Elections Committee and the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments.

**AB 604 (Aguiar-Curry)**

Page 2 of 2

- Remain in effect until CRC redistricts congressional districts following the 2030 national census.

**Related Legislation:**

- ACA 8 (Rivas and McGuire) would implement new congressional districts described in this bill, to take effect if and when Texas or another state redistricts its congressional seats, as specified. The measure is pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.
- SB 280 (Cervantes and Pellerin) would call a special election for November 4, 2025, require SOS to submit ACA 8 to the voters at that election as Proposition 50, and provide for the conduct of that election. The bill is pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.
- AB 632 (Cedillo, Chapter 348, Statutes of 2001) last adopted legal descriptions of congressional districts via legislative action.

**-- END --**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
ELECTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**  
**Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair**  
**2025 - 2026 Regular**

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<b>Bill No:</b>	AB 604	<b>Hearing Date:</b>	8/19/25
<b>Author:</b>	Aguiar-Curry		
<b>Version:</b>	8/18/25		
<b>Urgency:</b>	Yes	<b>Fiscal:</b>	Yes
<b>Consultant:</b>	Carrie Cornwell		

**Subject:** Redistricting: congressional districts

**DIGEST**

This bill contains the legal descriptions of California congressional districts that would be adopted pursuant to ACA 8 (Rivas and McGuire).

**ANALYSIS**

Existing law contained in Article XXI of the California Constitution requires that in the year following the year in which a national census is taken under the direction of Congress at the start of a decade, the Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC) shall adjust the lines of congressional, State Senatorial, Assembly, and Board of Equalization districts, pursuant to specified standards and procedures.

ACA 8 places on the ballot a measure, that if passed by the people, would amend the constitution to adopt the maps for congressional districts to be used for every congressional election for a term of office commencing on or after the date ACA 8 takes effect and prior to the operative date of new congressional boundary lines drawn by the CRC following the 2030 national census.

This bill:

- 1) Contains the legal descriptions of California congressional districts that would be adopted pursuant to ACA 8.
- 2) Specifies that in the event this bill does not list, lists more than once, or only partially accounts for a census tract or census block and, as a result, an ambiguity or dispute arises regarding the location of a boundary line, the Secretary of State and the elections official of each county shall rely on the detailed maps posted to the websites of the Legislature's two Elections Committees.
- 3) Remains in effect only until the CRC redistricts congressional districts following the 2030 national census.
- 4) Makes its provisions severable.
- 5) Is an urgency measure.

## **COMMENTS**

- 1) Author's Statement. This bill will protect Californians' interests in the national democratic process by presenting the voters with a temporary congressional district map to use if Texas or other states decide to conduct mid-decade, partisan gerrymandering of their congressional district maps.

The temporary congressional district boundaries laid out in this bill follow the principles that California voters value most in establishing legislative districts. The proposed map maintains the geographic integrity of even more cities than the current map adopted by the Citizens Redistricting Commission. Importantly, the temporary map in this bill will also ensure that communities of interest remain intact — a key principle of the constitutional amendment establishing the Citizens Redistricting Commission — to exercise their collective voice and vote to elect officials who truly represent them. This bill does all of this without diluting or favoring the voting power of any one voter over another. And, unlike any other congressional maps in use across the country today, the district map in this bill will go directly to California voters for their approval.

This bill not only appropriately responds to the mid-cycle redistricting attempts by President Trump and Republicans in Texas and other states, but also adheres to redistricting principles that Californians hold dear — from protecting the many types of communities of interest in our state, to maintaining the geographic integrity of neighborhoods. The temporary congressional district lines proposed in AB 604 provide an effective response to the partisan gerrymander attempted by Texas and other states without eroding fair representation for all California voters and communities.

- 2) Support and Opposition. Communications of support and opposition received relate to mid-decade redistricting in general, and not to a specific measure within this legislative package. Supporters in general assert that this legislation is a needed response to the actions others states, specifically Texas, are taking at the urging of President Trump. They also point out that this legislation asks the voters of the state to decide on whether to approve new congressional districts, rather than politicians making the decision. Supporters further note that the legislation reaffirms California's support of independent redistricting commissions both here and nationwide.

Opponents' concerns center on the financial burden of the special election, the short timeframe for public comment on this legislative package, and that California's congressional delegation already includes relatively few Republican members. The League of Women Voters of California (LWV) notes that it stands "entirely apart from political parties on mid-cycle redistricting and squarely in the fight against President Trump's authoritarian and dangerous policies that threaten the civil rights and liberties of all Americans." The LWV here and in other states, however, opposes all attempts to gerrymander congressional lines on a partisan basis.

### **RELATED/PRIOR LEGISLATION**

ACA 8 (Rivas and Cervantes) proposes a constitutional amendment that would, if approved by the voters, implement new congressional districts described in this bill, which would only take effect if and when Texas or another state redistricts its congressional seats, as specified.

SB 280 (Cervantes and Pellerin) calls a special election for November 4, 2025, requires the Secretary of State to submit ACA 8 to the voters at that election as Proposition 50, and provides for the conduct of that election.

AB 632 (Cedillo), Chapter 348, Statutes of 2001, last adopted legal descriptions of congressional districts via legislative action.

### **POSITIONS**

Please see comment #2 for more details about support and opposition.

**Support:** AAPI Equity Alliance  
AFSCME California  
Alliance for a Better Community  
Altadena Chamber of Commerce  
Arab Resource & Organizing Center Action  
Asian American Drug Abuse Program  
Battleground California  
CA Church IMPACT  
CAUSE Action Fund  
California Donor Table  
California Federation of Labor Unions, AFL-CIO  
California Professional Firefighters  
California Teachers Association  
Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative  
Climate Action Campaign  
Democracy Strategy Partners  
Democratic Party of Orange County  
Democratic Party of San Fernando Valley  
Indivisible California: StateStrong (CASS)  
Little Manila Rising  
Los Angeles County Young Democrats  
Outdoor Outreach  
Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California  
Reproductive Freedom for All California  
San Francisco Democratic Party  
SEIU California  
TruEvolution  
UDW/AFSCME Local 3930  
United Way Santa Cruz County  
The Unity Council  
Voices for Progress  
WDN Action

**AB 604 (Aguiar-Curry)**

Page 4 of 4

Women's March Foundation  
Thousands of individuals

**Oppose:** California Business Roundtable  
California Consumer Advocates for Affordability and Safety  
California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
California Manufacturers and Technology Association  
Govern for California  
Greater San Fernando Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Independent Voter Education  
Independent Voter Project  
NFIB  
Protect the Voters FIRST Act  
Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce  
The Two Hundred for Homeownership  
United Latinos Action  
Unity Party of California  
Thousands of individuals

**-- END --**

**SENATE RULES COMMITTEE**

AB 604

Office of Senate Floor Analyses  
(916) 651-1520 Fax: (916) 327-4478

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**THIRD READING**

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Bill No: AB 604  
Author: Aguiar-Curry (D) and Gonzalez (D)  
Amended: 8/18/25 in Senate  
Vote: 27 - Urgency

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ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS & C.A. COMMITTEE: 7-0, 3/26/25  
AYES: Pellerin, Macedo, Bennett, Berman, Solache, Stefani, Tangipa

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 75-1, 4/1/25 – See last page for vote.

SENATE ELECTIONS & C.A. COMMITTEE: 4-1, 8/19/25  
AYES: Cervantes, Allen, Limón, Umberg  
NOES: Choi

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS: 5-2, 8/20/25  
AYES: Caballero, Cabaldon, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab  
NOES: Seyarto, Dahle

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**SUBJECT:** Redistricting: congressional districts

**SOURCE:** Author

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**DIGEST:** This bill contains the legal descriptions of California congressional districts that would be adopted pursuant to ACA 8 (Rivas and McGuire).

**ANALYSIS:**

Existing law contained in Article XXI of the California Constitution requires that in the year following the year in which a national census is taken under the direction of Congress at the start of a decade, the Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC) shall adjust the lines of congressional, State Senatorial, Assembly, and Board of Equalization districts, pursuant to specified standards and procedures.

ACA 8 places on the ballot a measure, that if passed by the people, would amend the constitution to adopt the maps for congressional districts to be used for every congressional election for a term of office commencing on or after the date ACA 8 takes effect and prior to the operative date of new congressional boundary lines drawn by the CRC following the 2030 national census.

This bill:

- 1) Contains the legal descriptions of California congressional districts that would be adopted pursuant to ACA 8.
- 2) Specifies that in the event this bill does not list, lists more than once, or only partially accounts for a census tract or census block and, as a result, an ambiguity or dispute arises regarding the location of a boundary line, the Secretary of State and the elections official of each county shall rely on the detailed maps posted to the websites of the Legislature's two Elections Committees.
- 3) Remains in effect only until the CRC redistricts congressional districts following the 2030 national census.
- 4) Makes its provisions severable.
- 5) Is an urgency measure.

## Comments

- 1) *Author's Statement.* This bill will protect Californians' interests in the national democratic process by presenting the voters with a temporary congressional district map to use if Texas or other states decide to conduct mid-decade, partisan gerrymandering of their congressional district maps.

The temporary congressional district boundaries laid out in this bill follow the principles that California voters value most in establishing legislative districts. The proposed map maintains the geographic integrity of even more cities than the current map adopted by the Citizens Redistricting Commission. Importantly, the temporary map in this bill will also ensure that communities of interest remain intact — a key principle of the constitutional amendment establishing the Citizens Redistricting Commission — to exercise their collective voice and vote to elect officials who truly represent them. This bill does all of this without diluting or favoring the voting power of any one voter over another. And, unlike any other congressional maps in use across the

country today, the district map in this bill will go directly to California voters for their approval.

This bill not only appropriately responds to the mid-cycle redistricting attempts by President Trump and Republicans in Texas and other states, but also adheres to redistricting principles that Californians hold dear — from protecting the many types of communities of interest in our state, to maintaining the geographic integrity of neighborhoods. The temporary congressional district lines proposed in AB 604 provide an effective response to the partisan gerrymander attempted by Texas and other states without eroding fair representation for all California voters and communities.

- 2) *Support and Opposition.* Communications of support and opposition received relate to mid-decade redistricting in general, and not to a specific measure within this legislative package. Supporters in general assert that this legislation is a needed response to the actions others states, specifically Texas, are taking at the urging of President Trump. They also point out that this legislation asks the voters of the state to decide on whether to approve new congressional districts, rather than politicians making the decision. Supporters further note that the legislation reaffirms California’s support of independent redistricting commissions both here and nationwide.

Opponents’ concerns center on the financial burden of the special election, the short timeframe for public comment on this legislative package, and that California’s congressional delegation already includes relatively few Republican members. The League of Women Voters of California (LWV) notes that it stands “entirely apart from political parties on mid-cycle redistricting and squarely in the fight against President Trump’s authoritarian and dangerous policies that threaten the civil rights and liberties of all Americans.” The LWV here and in other states, however, opposes all attempts to gerrymander congressional lines on a partisan basis.

### **Related/Prior Legislation**

ACA 8 (Rivas and Cervantes, 2025) proposes a constitutional amendment that would, if approved by the voters, implement new congressional districts described in this bill, which would only take effect if and when Texas or another state redistricts its congressional seats, as specified.

SB 280 (Cervantes and Pellerin, 2025) calls a special election for November 4, 2025, requires the Secretary of State to submit ACA 8 to the voters at that election as Proposition 50, and provides for the conduct of that election.

AB 632 (Cedillo, Chapter 348, Statutes of 2001) last adopted legal descriptions of congressional districts via legislative action.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

**SUPPORT:** (Verified 8/21/25)

*Please see comment #2 for more details about support and opposition.*

Eleni Kounalakis, California Lieutenant Governor  
Paloma Aguirre, San Diego County Supervisor, District 1  
Terra Lawson-Remer, San Diego County Supervisor, District 3  
AAPI Equity Alliance  
AFSCME California  
Alliance for a Better Community  
Altadena Chamber of Commerce  
Arab Resource & Organizing Center Action  
Asian American Drug Abuse Program  
Battleground California  
Black Women Organizing for Political Action  
Borderlands for Equity  
CA Church IMPACT  
CAUSE Action Fund  
California Donor Table  
California Federation of Labor Unions, AFL-CIO  
California Nurses Association  
California Professional Firefighters  
California Teachers Association  
Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative  
Child Care Providers United  
Climate Action Campaign  
Compass Family Services  
Democracy Strategy Partners  
Democratic Party of Orange County  
Democratic Party of San Fernando Valley  
El Concilio California  
HB Huddle  
Imperial Valley Equity and Justice  
Indivisible California: StateStrong  
Indivisible El Dorado  
Indivisible Stanislaus

Inland Empire United  
Little Manila Rising  
Los Angeles County Young Democrats  
Outdoor Outreach  
Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California  
Reproductive Freedom for All California  
San Francisco Democratic Party  
Search to Involve Pilipino Americans  
SEIU California  
South Asian Network  
Starting Over Strong  
Teamsters California  
TruEvolution  
UDW/AFSCME Local 3930  
United Food and Commercial Workers Western States Council  
United Way Santa Cruz County  
The Unity Council  
Voices for Progress  
WDN Action  
Women's March Foundation  
Thousands of individuals

**OPPOSITION:** (Verified 8/21/25)

*Please see comment #2 for more details about support and opposition.*

Alliance San Diego  
California Business Roundtable  
California Common Cause  
California Consumer Advocates for Affordability and Safety  
California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
California Manufacturers and Technology Association  
CalTax  
Greater High Desert Chamber of Commerce  
Govern for California  
Greater San Fernando Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Independent Voter Education  
Independent Voter Project  
NFIB  
Protect the Voters FIRST Act  
Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce

The Two Hundred for Homeownership  
United Latinos Action  
Unity Party of California  
Thousands of individuals

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 75-1, 4/1/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Essayli, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NOES: DeMaio

NO VOTE RECORDED: Alvarez, Bennett, Davies, Wicks

Prepared by: Carrie Cornwell / E. & C.A. / (916) 651-4106  
8/21/25 9:52:28

\*\*\*\* END \*\*\*\*

**Elections and Constitutional  
Amendments**

**AB 604 (Aguiar-Curry)  
Oppose**

**Vote requirement: 27 (Urgency)**

Version Date: 08/18/2025

**Summary**

Replaces for the next 3 elections cycles (2026, 2028, 2030), as long as the voters approve ACA 8, the existing congressional district map established in 2021 by the non-partisan California Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC) with a highly partisan gerrymandered congressional district map drawn to eliminate 5 Republican congressional seats while making numerous Democrat seats far less competitive (see: <https://selc.senate.ca.gov/proposed-congressional-map>)

*Note: This measure is part of a 3 bill package intended to implement the Governor, Legislative Democrats and Congressional Democrats' unfair, unjustified, unconstitutional, highly-partisan, power grab intended to overturn the will of the people and eliminate up to 5 Republican congressional seats while making several existing Democrat even less competitive.*

*Other bills in the package include: 1) ACA 8 (Rivas and McGuire), which would ask the voters to approve Governor Newsom, Legislative Democrats and Congressional Democrats' plan to set aside the existing congressional district map established in 2021 by the non-partisan California Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC) in favor of a highly partisan gerrymandered congressional district map drawn to eliminate 5 Republican congressional seats while making numerous Democrat seats far less competitive.; and, 2) SB 280 (Cervantes), which would call the special election for November 4, 2025 and place the ACA 8 as Proposition 50 before the voters while also waiving numerous Election Code requirements relative to elections administrative timelines and partially funding the special election.*

**Vote History**

**Senate Appropriations Committee: 5-2 (08/20/2025)**

(NO: Dahle, Seyarto)

**Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments: 4-1 (08/19/2025)**

(NO: Choi)

**Senate Appropriations: 5-2 (08/20/2025)**

(NO: Seyarto, Dahle)

**Support & Opposition Received**

Support: AFSCME California; Battleground California; Borderlands for Equity; California Federation of Labor Unions, AFL-CIO; California Nurses Association; California Professional Firefighters; California Teachers Association; El Concilio California; Imperial Valley Equity & Justice Coalition; Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis; Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California; San Diego County Board of Supervisors Chair, Terra Lawson-remmer; SEIU California; South Asian Network; Teamsters California; UDW/AFSCME Local 3930; UFCW - Western States Council.

Opposition: Alliance San Diego; California Business Roundtable, CalTax.

## **Fiscal Effect**

### **VERY MAJOR STATE COSTS**

This bill is one of three bills included in the Governor's and Democrats' gerrymandering redistricting package. Considering all three bills together, the package would result in state costs in the range of \$240 million General Fund or more. Below is the fiscal estimate for each of three bills included in the package.

**AB 604: Requires Use of New Maps.**Unknown, but potentially significant state costs within the Secretary of State for administrative activities. The bill could also result in unknown, but potentially major state reimbursable mandate costs if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill requires a higher level of service from local election officials.

**SB 280: Implements the Special Election.**Appropriates unspecified amounts, to be determined by the Director of Finance (i.e., the Newsom Administration), to the Secretary of State and to the Controller to fund counties for the election costs. If the election follows the typical course, staff estimates the bill would result in very major state costs of more than \$30 million for the Secretary of State to administer the election. Costs for local election officials to administer are likely to reach \$235 million or higher, including staffing, outreach, equipment, vote center management, and ballot costs.

This estimate is based on the costs of the 2021 gubernatorial special election, which cost \$200 million, including \$174 million for county administration and \$26 million for the Secretary of State. Costs for a new special election are likely to be higher due to nearly 16 percent general California inflation since 2021, an increase in postage costs, and an increase in the number of registered voters.

**ACA 8: Amends the State Constitution.**The Secretary of State would incur significant state costs in the range of \$738,000 to \$984,000 General Fund for printing and mailing costs to place the measure on the ballot in a statewide election. The SOS indicates the printing and mailing costs associated with placing a measure on the statewide ballot are approximately \$123,000 per page, depending on the length of the

ballot.

Fiscal Consultant: *Chantele Denny, Kirk Feely*

### **Arguments in Support**

Help Undermine Trump Presidency: The Governor, Legislative Democrats and Congressional Democrats all claim publicly that this package of bills is intended to counter a President Trump led effort to protect the House of Representative Republican Majority in 2026. They claim they are just "fighting fire with fire." However, by "fighting fire with fire" what they are really doing is attempting to improve the chances for Democrats to take the House of Representatives Majority in 2026 from the Republicans. This would enable them to stall President Trump's agenda by paralyzing his administration with investigations and impeachments much like House Democrats did in his first administration. While this may be bad for Californians and the rest of the nation, the Governor, Legislative Democrats and Congressional Democrats hate President Trump and will stop at nothing to "get Trump." ACA 8, if approved by the voters, would be a conduit for this, which for them would be a good thing.

### **Arguments in Opposition**

Disenfranchises Republican Voters with A Hyper-Partisan Gerrymandered Map Intended to Eliminate 5 California Republican Congressional Districts: The Congressional map in AB 604 is an unfair, unjustified, unconstitutional, highly-partisan, power grab intended to overturn the will of the people and eliminate up to 5 Republican congressional seats while making several existing Democrat even less competitive. If ACA 8 is approved by the voters and the map in AB 604 is adopted, congressional districts (CDs) CD 1, (Congressman LaMalfa), CD 3 (Congressman Kiley), CD 22 (Congressman Valadao), CD 41 (Congressman Calvert) and CD 48 (Congressman Issa) will all become Democrat districts. This will potentially drop California's current Republican Congressional Delegation from 9 to 4 out of 52 seats. (see: <https://selc.senate.ca.gov/proposed-congressional-map>)

Democrats could potentially hold 48 of California's 52 congressional seats (92%), but won only 58% of the 2024 presidential vote (Harris 58%, Trump 38%). Further, the most recent statewide voter registration numbers indicate that Republicans represent 25% of the state's total registered voters, but under the Governor's redistricting plan Republicans would only be represented by 7% of the California congressional delegation.

Finally, 15.4% of registered Republican voters in California reside in the five congressional districts targeted for flipping to Democratic control under the proposed maps. These districts have been redrawn to disenfranchise Republican voters by diluting their electoral influence and reducing GOP representation.

Drafted without Constitutional Safeguards Intended to Promote Fair and Representative District Maps: The Democrats' mid-cycle redistricting plan in California undermines the state's constitution by seeking a voter-approved amendment that would temporarily waive key provisions of Article XXI, allowing politicians to redraw lines for partisan gain rather than adhering to established democratic principles.

First, the plan ignores Article XXI, Section 1's mandate that redistricting occur only "in the year following the year in which the national census is taken under the direction of Congress at the beginning of each decade." By pushing for changes mid-decade—outside the post-census window—this proposal disrupts the decennial rhythm designed to ensure districts reflect accurate, updated population data, opening the door to arbitrary manipulations whenever political winds shift.

Second, it waives the rigorous criteria outlined in Article XXI, Section 2(d), which prioritize geographical and social considerations to promote fairness. These include requiring districts to be geographically contiguous (criterion 3), respecting the integrity of cities, counties, neighborhoods, and "communities of interest" by minimizing their division (criterion 4), and ensuring compactness where practicable (criterion 5). The legislature's secretive, rushed map-drawing process discards these standards, potentially fracturing cohesive communities and creating convoluted districts that prioritize electoral outcomes over logical boundaries.

Finally, the plan flouts Article XXI, Section 2(e)'s explicit prohibition against partisan gerrymandering, which states that districts "shall not be drawn to favor or discriminate against an incumbent, political candidate, or political party." By suspending the independent Citizens Redistricting Commission and empowering a Democrat-dominated legislature to redraw maps explicitly to counter Republican gains elsewhere, this scheme invites blatant favoritism, eroding the impartiality voters enshrined to prevent self-serving power grabs.

According to Congressman Doug LaMalfa representing the 1st Congressional District, one of the 5 districts gerrymandered under the Democrat redistricting plan, *"If you want to know what's wrong with these maps – just take a look at them. How on earth does Modoc County on the Nevada and Oregon Border have any common interest with Marin County and the Golden Gate Bridge? Voters took this power from Sacramento for just this reason. This is naked politics at its worst. This action by the state will set off a series of retaliation in other states across the country with Florida, Missouri and Indiana looking to push back against California. Mid-Decade redistricting is wrong, no matter where it's being done. Defying the voters voice is wrong. We should be listening to Californians who have said in multiple statewide elections that politicians shouldn't be the ones doing the redistricting. California is already in a huge budget deficit, we don't need to spend another \$235 million or more to learn voters still hate the idea."*

Drafted with Zero Transparency or Public Input: The California Citizens Redistricting Commission's process for establishing the current congressional maps after the 2020

census arguably exemplified transparency and public engagement, standing in stark contrast to the Democrats' secretive, rushed plan for mid-cycle redistricting in 2025.

The independent commission, created by voter-approved Propositions 11 (2008) and 20 (2010), conducted a months-long, open process with extensive public input. It held 196 public meetings, gathered 3,870 verbal comments, and collected 32,410 written submissions from Californians before finalizing the maps in December 2021. This ensured diverse stakeholder voices shaped fair districts, with deliberations publicly accessible and maps iteratively refined based on feedback.

In sharp contrast, Democrats' 2025 plan under Governor Gavin Newsom involves maps drafted behind closed doors by politicians, political consultants, and party insiders, with no initial public involvement or transparency in the drawing phase. Proposed maps were released on August 15, 2025, just days before anticipated legislative votes, providing only about five days for public notice and input on pre-decided districts—with no plans for modifications based on feedback. Democrat Legislators aim to approve these maps quickly, then place a constitutional amendment on a special November 4, 2025, ballot to temporarily suspend the commission and implement the changes for 2026-2030 elections. This "ram-through" process discards the commission's voter-mandated transparency in favor of partisan opacity, undermining public trust and the democratic safeguards Californians established to prevent such power grabs.

## **Other Issues**

Just Few of Many Issues with the Dem Gerrymander: Minutes after the Dem Congressional gerrymander was leaked, Matt Rexroad, a respected redistricting expert, tweeted the following (note the text in parentheses are musings of the consultant who drafted this analysis not Mr. Rexroad): 1) District 1 map included Marin with Modoc. (What do the two populations have in common? It is placing the State of Jefferson with wealthy Bay Area Leftist) It also doesn't touch the northern border of California (This appears to be a violation of Redistricting 101); 2) Newport is divided into two districts with the north part of the city being drawn into a congressional district with Long Beach. (Not a lot in common here); 3) Mission Viejo is divided into 3 separate congressional districts (Severely breaking up a community of interest); and 4) District 3 includes West Sacramento with Roseville (Two cities whose geography and population have little in common). The district also looks like a elephant head (This could show personal animosity and might be a big middle finger to Congressman Kiley and Republicans in general) (see: <https://selc.senate.ca.gov/proposed-congressional-map>).

## **Digest**

Replaces for the next 3 elections cycles (2026, 2028, 2030), as long as the voters approve ACA 8, the existing congressional district map established in 2021 by the non-partisan California Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC) with a highly partisan

gerrymandered congressional district map drawn to eliminate 5 Republican congressional seats while making numerous Democrat seats far less competitive (see: <https://selc.senate.ca.gov/proposed-congressional-map>).

## **Background**

**Existing law:** California's existing redistricting law, enshrined in Article XXI of the state Constitution, establishes the Citizens Redistricting Commission—a 14-member independent body selected through a rigorous, nonpartisan process—to draw state legislative and congressional districts **every decade** based on census data, **prioritizing equal population, geographic contiguity, and respect for communities of interest while prohibiting partisan favoritism**. Mid-decade changes are generally barred to prevent abuse.

**Proposition 11 (2008):** Authored via voter initiative and backed by then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, this measure created the Citizens Redistricting Commission to handle state legislative districts, passing with 50.9% approval to end legislative gerrymandering.

**Proposition 20 (2010):** Also a voter initiative supported by Schwarzenegger and reform groups, it expanded the commission's authority to congressional districts, passing with 61.3% support to further insulate map-drawing from partisan influence.

**2021 Congressional Maps:** The current Congressional Redistricting Maps were established by the California Citizens Redistricting Commission in 2021. Under this map Republicans currently hold 9 of the 52 congressional seats spanning the state from Northern California to Southern California. These district include CDs 1, 3, 5, 20, 22, 23, 40, 41, and 48

## **Related Legislation**

**ACA 8 (Rivas and McGuire)** This Constitutional Amendment would ask the voters to approve Governor Newsom, Legislative Democrats and Congressional Democrats' plan to set aside the existing congressional district map established in 2021 by the non-partisan California Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC) in favor of a highly partisan gerrymandered congressional district map drawn to eliminate 5 Republican congressional seats while making numerous Democrat seats far less competitive. Currently pending in the Assembly Elections Committee.

**SB 280 (Cervantes and Pellerin)** calls a special election for November 4, 2025, requires the Secretary of State to submit ACA 8 to the voters at that election as Proposition 50, and provides for the conduct of that election. Currently pending in the Assembly Elections Committee.

Senate Republican Policy Office/*Cory Botts*

**SEAN P. TRENDE**

1146 Elderberry Loop

Delaware, OH 43015

strende@realclearpolitics.com

**EDUCATION**

Ph.D., The Ohio State University, Political Science, 2023. Dissertation titled *Application of Spatial Analysis to Contemporary Problems in Political Science*, September 2023.

M.A.S. (Master of Applied Statistics), The Ohio State University, 2019.

J.D., Duke University School of Law, *cum laude*, 2001; Duke Law Journal, Research Editor.

M.A., Duke University, *cum laude*, Political Science, 2001. Thesis titled *The Making of an Ideological Court: Application of Non-parametric Scaling Techniques to Explain Supreme Court Voting Patterns from 1900-1941*, June 2001.

B.A., Yale University, with distinction, History and Political Science, 1995.

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

Law Clerk, Hon. Deanell R. Tacha, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, 2001-02.

Associate, Kirkland & Ellis, LLP, Washington, DC, 2002-05.

Associate, Hunton & Williams, LLP, Richmond, Virginia, 2005-09.

Associate, David, Kamp & Frank, P.C., Newport News, Virginia, 2009-10.

Senior Elections Analyst, RealClearPolitics, 2010-present.

Columnist, Center for Politics Crystal Ball, 2014-17.

Visiting Scholar, American Enterprise Institute, 2018-present.

## BOOKS AND BOOK CHAPTERS

Larry J. Sabato, ed., *The Red Ripple*, Ch. 15 (2023).

Larry J. Sabato, ed., *A Return to Normalcy?: The 2020 Election that (Almost) Broke America* Ch. 13 (2021).

Larry J. Sabato, ed., *The Blue Wave*, Ch. 14 (2019).

Larry J. Sabato, ed., *Trumped: The 2016 Election that Broke all the Rules* (2017).

Larry J. Sabato, ed., *The Surge: 2014's Big GOP Win and What It Means for the Next Presidential Election*, Ch. 12 (2015).

Larry J. Sabato, ed., *Barack Obama and the New America*, Ch. 12 (2013).

Barone, Kraushaar, McCutcheon & Trende, *The Almanac of American Politics* 2014 (2013).

*The Lost Majority: Why the Future of Government is up for Grabs – And Who Will Take It* (2012).

## PREVIOUS EXPERT TESTIMONY AND/OR DEPOSITIONS

*Dickson v. Rucho*, No. 11-CVS-16896 (N.C. Super. Ct., Wake County) (racial gerrymandering).

*Covington v. North Carolina*, No. 1:15-CV-00399 (M.D.N.C.) (racial gerrymandering).

*NAACP v. McCrory*, No. 1:13CV658 (M.D.N.C.) (early voting).

*NAACP v. Husted*, No. 2:14-cv-404 (S.D. Ohio) (early voting).

*Ohio Democratic Party v. Husted*, Case 15-cv-01802 (S.D. Ohio) (early voting).

*Lee v. Virginia Bd. of Elections*, No. 3:15-cv-357 (E.D. Va.) (early voting).

*Feldman v. Arizona*, No. CV-16-1065-PHX-DLR (D. Ariz.) (absentee voting).

*A. Philip Randolph Institute v. Smith*, No. 1:18-cv-00357-TSB (S.D. Ohio) (political gerrymandering).

*Whitford v. Nichol*, No. 15-cv-421-bbc (W.D. Wisc.) (political gerrymandering).

*Common Cause v. Rucho*, No. 1:16-CV-1026-WO-JEP (M.D.N.C.) (political gerrymandering).

*Mecinas v. Hobbs*, No. CV-19-05547-PHX-DJH (D. Ariz.) (ballot order effect).

*Fair Fight Action v. Raffensperger*, No. 1:18-cv-05391-SCJ (N.D. Ga.) (statistical analysis).

*Pascua Yaqui Tribe v. Rodriguez*, No. 4:20-CV-00432-TUC-JAS (D. Ariz.) (early voting).

*Ohio Organizing Collaborative, et al v. Ohio Redistricting Commission, et al*, No. 2021-1210 (Ohio) (political gerrymandering).

*NCLCV v. Hall*, No. 21-CVS-15426 (N.C. Sup. Ct.) (political gerrymandering).

*Szeliga v. Lamone*, Case No. C-02-CV-21-001816 (Md. Cir. Ct.) (political gerrymandering).

*In the Matter of 2022 Legislative Districting of the State*, Misc. No. 25 (Md. Ct. App.) (political gerrymandering)

*Montana Democratic Party v. Jacobsen*, DV-56-2021-451 (Mont. Dist. Ct.) (early voting; ballot collection).

*Carter v. Chapman*, No. 464 M.D. 2021 (Pa.) (map drawing; amicus).

*NAACP v. McMaster*, No. 3:21-cv-03302 (D.S.C.) (racial gerrymandering).

*Alexander v. NAACP*, Case No. 3:21-cv-03302-MBS-TJH-RMG (D.S.C.) (racial gerrymandering).

*Graham v. Adams*, No. 22-CI-00047 (Ky. Cir. Ct.) (political gerrymandering).

*Harkenrider v. Hochul*, No. E2022-0116CV (N.Y. Sup. Ct.) (political gerrymandering).

*LULAC v. Abbott*, Case No. 3:21-cv-00259 (W.D. Tex.) (racial/political gerrymandering/VRA).

*Moore et al., v. Lee, et al.*, (Tenn. 20th Dist.) (state constitutional compliance).

*Milligan v. Allen*, Case No. 2:21-cv-01530-AMM (N.D. Ala.) (VRA).

*Nairne v. Ardoin*, NO. 22-178-SDD-SDJ (M.D. La.) (VRA).

*Robinson v. Ardoin*, NO. 22-211-SDD-SDJ (M.D. La.) (VRA).

*Republican Party v. Oliver*, No. D-506-CV-2022-00041 (N.M. Cir. Ct. (Lea County)) (political gerrymandering).

*Palmer v. Hobbs*, Case No. 3:22-CV-5035-RSL (W.D. Wash) (VRA; remedial phase only).

*Clarke v. Evers*, No. 2023AP001399-OA (Wisc.) (Political gerrymandering; remedial phase only).

*Stone v. Allen*, No. 2:21-cv-1531-AMM (N.D. Ala.) (VRA).

*Milligan v. Allen*, No. 2:21-cv-01530-AMM (S.D. Ala.) (VRA).

*Pierce v. NC State Board of Elections*, Case No. 4:23-cv-193 (E.D.N.C.) VRA.

*Harkenrider v. Hochul*, No. E2022-0116CV (N.Y. Sup. Ct.) (political gerrymandering).

*LULAC v. Abbott*, Case No. 3:21-cv-00259 (W.D. Tex.) (racial/political gerrymandering/VRA).

*Moore et al., v. Lee, et al.*, (Tenn. 20th Dist.) (state constitutional compliance).

*Agee et al. v. Benson, et al.*, (W.D. Mich.) (racial gerrymandering/VRA).

*Faatz, et al. v. Ashcroft, et al.*, (Cir. Ct. Mo.) (state constitutional compliance).

*Coca, et al. v. City of Dodge City, et al.*, Case No. 6:22-cv-01274-EFM-RES (D. Kan.) (VRA).

*Pierce v. NC State Board of Elections*, Case No. 4:23-cv-193 (E.D.N.C.) (VRA).

*Williams v. Hall*, Civil Action No. 23 CV 1057 (M.D.N.C.) (VRA, Racial Gerrymandering).

*Hodges v. Passidomo*, Case No. 8:24-cv-879-CEH-TPB-ALB (M.D. Fla.) (Racial Gerrymandering).

*Coads v. Nassau County*, Index No. 611872/2023 (N.Y. Sup. Ct., Nassau County) (political gerrymandering, racial gerrymandering, NYVRA).

## **COURT APPOINTMENTS**

Appointed as Voting Rights Act expert by Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission (2020)

Appointed Special Master by the Supreme Court of Virginia to redraw maps for the Virginia House of Delegates, the Senate of Virginia, and for Virginia's delegation to the United States Congress for the 2022 election cycle.

Appointed redistricting expert by the Supreme Court of Belize in *Smith v. Perrera*, No. 55 of 2019 (one-person-one-vote).

## **INTERNATIONAL PRESENTATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

Panel Discussion, European External Action Service, Brussels, Belgium, Likely Outcomes of 2012 American Elections.

Selected by U.S. Embassies in Sweden, Spain, and Italy to discuss 2016 and 2018 elections to think tanks and universities in area (declined Italy due to teaching responsibilities).

Selected by EEAS to discuss 2018 elections in private session with European Ambassadors.

## **TEACHING**

American Democracy and Mass Media, Ohio Wesleyan University, Spring 2018.

Introduction to American Politics, The Ohio State University, Autumns 2018, 2019, 2020, Spring 2018.

Political Participation and Voting Behavior, Springs 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023.

Survey Methodology, Fall 2022, Spring 2024.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

James G. Gimpel, Andrew Reeves, & Sean Trende, “Reconsidering Bellwether Locations in U.S. Presidential Elections,” *Pres. Stud. Q.* (2022) (forthcoming, available online at <http://doi.org/10.1111/psq.12793>).

## **REAL CLEAR POLITICS COLUMNS**

Full archives available at [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/authors/sean\\_trende/](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/authors/sean_trende/)