



IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING

TRANSCRIPTION OF VIDEO RECORDING

August 21, 2025

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Transcription of Video Recording on 08/21/2025

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CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE

CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 2025

TRANSCRIBED BY:

JULIE THOMPSON, CET

IN RE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING
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<p>1 PROCEEDINGS</p> <p>2 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please</p> <p>3 call the roll.</p> <p>4 THE SECRETARY: Allen, Alvarado-Gil,</p> <p>5 Archuleta, Arreguin, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon,</p> <p>6 Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo,</p> <p>7 Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limon,</p> <p>8 McGuire, McNemey, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla,</p> <p>9 Perez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-</p> <p>10 Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab,</p> <p>11 Weber Pierson, Wiener.</p> <p>12 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: A quorum is</p> <p>13 present. Would the members and our guests beyond the</p> <p>14 rail and in the gallery, please rise.</p> <p>15 We will be lead in prayer this morning by</p> <p>16 Senator Durazo, after which, please remain standing for</p> <p>17 the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.</p> <p>18 SENATOR DURAZO: Thank you, Madam</p> <p>19 President.</p> <p>20 Merciful and compassionate God, we ask you</p> <p>21 to abide with us in all the needs of our lives, enable</p> <p>22 our caring to be wise, our support honest, and our</p> <p>23 concerns thoughtful.</p> <p>24 May our loves as well as our fears be</p> <p>25 accurate. May our spirits be so open to your guidance</p>	<p>1 that we will become faithfully daring, expectantly</p> <p>2 patient and responsibly hopeful with each other and with</p> <p>3 your people in our neighborhoods, our state, and our</p> <p>4 nation. We ask this in your name. Amen.</p> <p>5 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Members, please</p> <p>6 join me in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.</p> <p>7 (Pledge of Allegiance)</p> <p>8 Majority Leader, you are recognized at</p> <p>9 your desk.</p> <p>10 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam</p> <p>11 President. We'll be calling a Democratic caucus in the</p> <p>12 Maddie Lounge immediately.</p> <p>13 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Seyarto,</p> <p>14 you are recognized.</p> <p>15 SENATOR SEYARTO: The Republicans will</p> <p>16 caucus as well.</p> <p>17 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senate will recess</p> <p>18 for caucus.</p> <p>19 (Recess taken for caucus)</p> <p>20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Members of Senate</p> <p>21 will now reconvene. We are back at privileges of the</p> <p>22 floor. There are none.</p> <p>23 Messages from the Governor will be deemed</p> <p>24 read. Messages from the Assembly will be deemed read.</p> <p>25 Reports of committees will be deemed read and amendments</p>
Page 4	Page 5
<p>1 adopted.</p> <p>2 Members, just a reminder, pursuant to our</p> <p>3 rules, we may not debate more than two times on one</p> <p>4 measure on the same day.</p> <p>5 We will now move to motions, resolutions</p> <p>6 and notices.</p> <p>7 Senator Gonzalez, you are recognized at</p> <p>8 your desk.</p> <p>9 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam</p> <p>10 President. I move that Senate Rule 29.10(d) be suspended</p> <p>11 as it relates to Senate Bill 2AT.</p> <p>12 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: This is not</p> <p>13 debatable.</p> <p>14 Senator Jones, you are recognized.</p> <p>15 SENATOR JONES: Thank you, Madam</p> <p>16 President. I object to the motion and ask for a roll</p> <p>17 call vote.</p> <p>18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>19 Senator Jones is asking for a no vote.</p> <p>20 Senator Gonzalez is asking for an aye vote.</p> <p>21 Secretary, please call the roll.</p> <p>22 THE SECRETARY: Allen.</p> <p>23 Alvarado-Gil.</p> <p>24 Archuleta</p> <p>25 Aye.</p>	<p>1 Arreguin.</p> <p>2 Aye.</p> <p>3 Ashby.</p> <p>4 Aye.</p> <p>5 Becker.</p> <p>6 Aye.</p> <p>7 Blakespear.</p> <p>8 Aye.</p> <p>9 Cabaldon.</p> <p>10 Aye.</p> <p>11 Caballero.</p> <p>12 Cervantes.</p> <p>13 Aye.</p> <p>14 Choi.</p> <p>15 No.</p> <p>16 Cortese.</p> <p>17 Aye.</p> <p>18 Dahle.</p> <p>19 No.</p> <p>20 Durazo.</p> <p>21 Aye.</p> <p>22 Gonzalez.</p> <p>23 Aye.</p> <p>24 Grayson.</p> <p>25 Aye.</p>

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1	Grove.	1	Seyarto.
2	Hurtado.	2	No.
3	Aye.	3	Smallwood-Cuevas.
4	Jones.	4	Aye.
5	No.	5	Stern.
6	Laird.	6	Aye.
7	Aye.	7	Strickland.
8	Limon.	8	No.
9	Aye.	9	Umberg.
10	McGuire.	10	Aye.
11	Aye.	11	Valladares.
12	McNerney.	12	No.
13	Aye.	13	Wahab.
14	Menjivar.	14	Aye.
15	Aye.	15	Weber Pierson.
16	Niello.	16	Aye.
17	No.	17	Wiener.
18	Ochoa Bogh.	18	Aye.
19	No.	19	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please
20	Padilla.	20	call the absent members.
21	Perez.	21	THE SECRETARY: Allen.
22	Reyes.	22	Aye.
23	Richardson.	23	Alvarado-Gil.
24	Aye.	24	Caballero.
25	Rubio.	25	Aye.

Page 8		Page 9	
1	Grove.	1	SENATOR SEYARTO: Thank you, Madam
2	No.	2	President. In an effort to minimize our lawlessness and
3	Padilla.	3	rule breaking, we simply ask for a no vote on this.
4	Aye.	4	Thank you.
5	Perez.	5	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.
6	Aye.	6	Senator Seyarto is asking for a no vote.
7	Reyes.	7	Senator Gonzalez is asking for an aye vote.
8	Rubio.	8	Secretary, please call the roll.
9	Aye.	9	THE SECRETARY: Allen.
10	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please	10	Aye.
11	call the absent members.	11	Alvarado-Gil.
12	Alvarado-Gil.	12	Archuleta.
13	Reyes.	13	Aye.
14	Aye.	14	Arreguin.
15	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes, 30. Noes 0.	15	Aye.
16	UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: 9.	16	Ashby.
17	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: 9. Sorry. That	17	Aye.
18	measure carries.	18	Becker.
19	Senator Gonzalez, you are recognized.	19	Aye.
20	SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam	20	Blakespear.
21	President. I move that Senate Rule 19 be suspended as it	21	Aye.
22	relates to Assembly Constitutional Amendment 8.	22	Cabaldon.
23	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: This is not	23	Aye.
24	debatable.	24	Caballero.
25	Senator Seyarto, you are recognized.	25	Aye.

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1	Cervantes.		1	Aye.	
2	Aye.		2	McNerney.	
3	Choi.		3	Aye.	
4	No.		4	Menjivar.	
5	Cortese.		5	Aye.	
6	Aye.		6	Niello.	
7	Dahle.		7	No.	
8	No.		8	Ochoa Bogh.	
9	Durazo.		9	No.	
10	Aye.		10	Padilla.	
11	Gonzalez.		11	Aye.	
12	Aye.		12	Perez.	
13	Grayson.		13	Aye.	
14	Aye.		14	Reyes.	
15	Grove.		15	Aye.	
16	No.		16	Richardson.	
17	Hurtado.		17	Aye.	
18	Aye.		18	Rubio.	
19	Jones.		19	Aye.	
20	No.		20	Seyarto.	
21	Laird.		21	No.	
22	Aye.		22	Smallwood-Cuevas.	
23	Limon.		23	Aye.	
24	Aye.		24	Stern.	
25	McGuire.		25	Aye.	

		Page 12			Page 13
1	Strickland.		1	non-debatable.	
2	No.		2	Senator Seyarto, you are recognized at	
3	Umberg.		3	your desk.	
4	Aye.		4	SENATOR SEYARTO: Thank you, Madam	
5	Valladares.		5	President. I'd like to make a substitute motion that ACA	
6	No.		6	8, because of its costs, be referred to the Committee on	
7	Wahab.		7	Appropriations for a full hearing and vote since it was	
8	Aye.		8	not done before.	
9	Weber Pierson.		9	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator, I	
10	Aye.		10	apologize, but your motion is not in order. It does need	
11	Wiener.		11	to be approved by the Rules Committee.	
12	Aye.		12	SENATOR SEYARTO: I wish to appeal that	
13	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes, 30. Noes,		13	ruling. It should be.	
14	9. The rules are suspended.		14	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: We will now appeal	
15	Senator Gonzalez, you are recognized at		15	vote to appeal the ruling of the chair. I put the	
16	your desk.		16	question to the body. Shall the ruling of the Chair be	
17	SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam		17	upheld?	
18	President. There is a resolution at the desk requesting		18	Secretary, please read -- call the roll.	
19	that Joint Rule 10.5 be suspended as it relates to		19	Senator Seyarto is asking for a no vote.	
20	Assembly Constitutional Amendment 8.		20	I am asking for an aye vote.	
21	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, can you		21	THE SECRETARY: Allen.	
22	please read the resolution?		22	Aye.	
23	THE SECRETARY: Resolve that Joint Rule		23	Alvarado-Gil.	
24	10.5 be dispensed with.		24	Archuleta.	
25	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: This is also		25	Aye.	

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p> <p>Arreguin. 1 Aye. 2 Ashby. 3 Aye. 4 Becker. 5 Aye. 6 Blakespear. 7 Aye. 8 Cabaldon. 9 Caballero. 10 Aye. 11 Cervantes. 12 Aye. 13 Choi. 14 No. 15 Cortese. 16 Aye. 17 Dahle. 18 No. 19 Durazo. 20 Aye. 21 Gonzalez. 22 Aye. 23 Grayson. 24 Aye. 25</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p> <p>Grove. 1 No. 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 Aye. 22 Perez. 23 Aye. 24 Reyes. 25</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p> <p>Aye. 1 Richardson. 2 Aye. 3 Rubio. 4 Aye. 5 Seyarto. 6 No. 7 Smallwood-Cuevas. 8 Aye. 9 Stern. 10 Aye. 11 Strickland. 12 No. 13 Umberg. 14 Aye. 15 Valladares. 16 No. 17 Wahab. 18 Aye. 19 Weber Pierson. 20 Aye. 21 Wiener. 22 Aye. 23 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please 24 call the absent members. 25</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p> <p>THE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil. 1 Cabaldon. 2 Aye. 3 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes, 30. Noes, 4 9. The ruling stands. 5 We'll go back to the motion that was made 6 by Senator Gonzalez. 7 Secretary, please call the roll. 8 THE SECRETARY: Allen. 9 Aye. 10 Alvarado-Gil. 11 Archuleta. 12 Aye. 13 Arreguin. 14 Aye. 15 Ashby. 16 Aye. 17 Becker. 18 Aye. 19 Blakespear. 20 Aye. 21 Cabaldon. 22 Aye. 23 Caballero. 24 Aye. 25</p>

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1	Cervantes.		1	McNerney.	
2	Aye.		2	Aye.	
3	Choi.		3	Menjivar.	
4	No.		4	Aye.	
5	Cortese.		5	Niello.	
6	Aye.		6	No.	
7	Dahle.		7	Ochoa Bogh.	
8	No.		8	No.	
9	Durazo.		9	Padilla.	
10	Aye.		10	Aye.	
11	Gonzalez.		11	Perez.	
12	Aye.		12	Aye.	
13	Grayson.		13	Reyes.	
14	Aye.		14	Aye.	
15	Grove.		15	Richardson.	
16	No.		16	Aye.	
17	Hurtado.		17	Rubio.	
18	Aye.		18	Aye.	
19	Jones.		19	Seyarto.	
20	Laird.		20	No.	
21	Aye.		21	Smallwood-Cuevas.	
22	Limon.		22	Aye.	
23	Aye.		23	Stern.	
24	McGuire.		24	Aye.	
25	Aye.		25	Strickland.	

		Page 20			Page 21
1	No.		1	Secretary, please read.	
2	Umberg.		2	THE SECRETARY: Assembly Bill 42 with	
3	Aye.		3	amendments, 1255 with amendments, 1003 with amendments,	
4	Valladares.		4	696 with amendments.	
5	No.		5	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Second reading	
6	Wahab.		6	will be deemed read. We will now move to assembly third	
7	Aye.		7	reading file item 226 AB 604 by Senator Gonzalez.	
8	Weber Pierson.		8	Secretary, please read.	
9	Aye.		9	THE SECRETARY: Assembly Bill 604 by	
10	Wiener.		10	Assembly Member Aguiar-Curry. An act relating to	
11	Aye.		11	redistricting and declaring the urgency thereof to take	
12	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes --		12	effect immediately.	
13	THE SECRETARY: Jones, no.		13	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Gonzalez,	
14	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes, 30. Noes,		14	you are recognized.	
15	9. Joint rules are suspended.		15	SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you, Madam	
16	Senator Valladares, you are recognized.		16	President and Senators. I rise today as a proud joint	
17	SENATOR VALLADARES: Thank you, Madam		17	author to present AB 604, which is a reasonable and	
18	President. I move to remove AB 1214 from the from the		18	rational response to the anti-Democratic actions of the	
19	consent file at the request of the author.		19	Republican party as they attempt to rig our congressional	
20	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: The desk will		20	elections.	
21	note.		21	AB 604 contains the census block data that	
22	Not seeing any other members wishing to		22	will define the temporary congressional districts that we	
23	remove anything from the consent file, we will now move		23	are being forced to adopt through the actions of the	
24	to consideration of the daily file. We will begin with		24	President and his complicit party leaders.	
25	second reading file.		25	Just yesterday, the Texas House passed an	

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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?</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>

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<p>Page 26</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Page 27</p> <p>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</p>
<p>Page 28</p> <p>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,</p>	<p>Page 29</p> <p>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</p>

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<p>Page 30</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Page 31</p> <p>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?</p>
<p>Page 32</p> <p>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,</p>	<p>Page 33</p> <p>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</p>

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<p>author, but you didn't have any participation in these maps. Again, that's not transparency and I'm urging The media to follow up with each and every one of these members as this moves forward -- if you get the two-thirds vote, which I believe you will -- to ask these questions.</p> <p>Now, if I had the power, as was stated --</p> <p>and by the way, I don't know one member of the Texas Legislature. Not one. I was elected here in California, not Texas. And it was stated in the opening, "You have the power to shut this down." If I had the power to stop this, I would stop it. I'm telling the media right now, if the Republicans in California had the power to stop this, we would stop this today. And they are misrepresenting what is the actual truth moving forward.</p> <p>Redistricting commission -- let's make it clear. The nonpartisan redistricting commission --</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Excuse me.</p> <p>Senator Strickland, if you can please address the body and not the media when you're speaking.</p> <p>SENATOR STRICKLAND: I'm looking around my other colleagues. I could look around my whole --</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Excuse me, Senator Strickland.</p> <p>SENATOR STRICKLAND: I'm only allowed to</p>	<p>look forward?</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Please look at me while you are making your address. Thank you.</p> <p>SENATOR STRICKLAND: That's a new rule that I haven't heard of before.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: I would appreciate if you comply.</p> <p>SENATOR STRICKLAND: I've been here over a decade.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Everything is through the presiding officer. Thank you.</p> <p>SENATOR STRICKLAND: It is through the presiding officer.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Exactly. So you can direct your comments to me or if you have a question, you can direct it --</p> <p>SENATOR STRICKLAND: So let's be clear --</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Excuse me.</p> <p>SENATOR STRICKLAND: Okay.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: If you have a question, you can direct it to that member. But if you're speaking, please direct it to the presiding officer. Thank you.</p> <p>SENATOR STRICKLAND: Thank you.</p> <p>Let's be clear. It was stated in the</p>
<p>opening that the Nonpartisan Redistricting Commission drew these lines and these maps. That's a false. They might have took it as a blueprint, but the Nonpartisan Redistricting Commission did not draw these maps as it was stated in the opening. Again, people are trying to be misled of what this actually is.</p> <p>Members, this week's actions demonstrate why we need a Nonpartisan Citizens' Redistricting Commission, and why it was passed in the first place.</p> <p>For my colleagues on the other side, who I deeply respect, sometimes I believe you think the ends justify the means. Let's go through what happened this week with no transparency, no input from the community across the state to draw these maps. And these maps were drawn behind closed doors with the Governor and, what I understand, legislative leadership. No one admits that they had any participation in these maps. They just came out with thin air.</p> <p>But again, let's look what happened this week in terms of transparency. You violated your own rule, the 30 day rule, to push this through. No one will admit that they drew these maps.</p> <p>And to the media, I'm saying you need to move forward as this moves forward, to the famous line, what did they know, and when did they know it? Which</p>	<p>lawmakers saw these maps and had influence on these maps? Who paid for these maps? And the lack of transparency keeps going on and on and on.</p> <p>Let's see what we have here today, currently, before you go to the voters in November. What we have here today is the gold standard for redistricting nationally. It should be the national model and not thrown out. It's something that we should brag about here in the state of California. The fact that the people pick the lines, not the politicians.</p> <p>We have full transparency. In fact, we have hundreds -- hundreds of hearings throughout the state of California, in every corner of the state of California, so citizens can participate in the drawing of these maps that keep communities together of whole cities and counties. And the lines are drawn in public in front of everybody, in front of the world.</p> <p>Members, fair districts lead to fair representation, and if you pass this bill moving forward, and if it passes in November, which I don't believe it will, but if it does, what you're striving for is predetermined elections, meaning that there won't be one competitive race for Congress in California for the next three cycles. Members, that's not good for Democrats, Independents, and Republicans. You're taking the voice</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p> <p>away from Californians in terms of having fair 1 representation and earning the trust of your voters. Not 2 having a predetermined election. 3 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 15 Even this week, the assembly elections 16 chair stated that the Democrats should do what we're 17 doing here today in 2030. It was quoted already. So 18 when you say to the people of California, this is 19 temporary, my experience is nothing's temporary here. I 20 don't believe one second that this will be temporary and 21 neither should the people of California. 22 23 Now, I do have a Joint Resolution 10. 24 It's not up yet. I put it across the desk. But it says 25 we should have nonpartisan redistricting districts and make it a model nationwide. I do believe it is wrong for Texas to do</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p> <p>this. I do believe it's wrong for Illinois to do this. 1 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 8 You're going to take what is the national model for 9 redistricting and putting power in the people, and you're 10 going to take it back to put in the power of the 11 politicians; so you don't have to really earn the vote of 12 your constituents because the election will be 13 predetermined. 14 15 I also support Congressman Kevin Kiley's 16 legislation that bans mid-decade redistricting 17 nationwide. Members, I heard that Speaker Pelosi and 18 other Democrats from the DCCC from California were here. 19 What would be more constructive is that you jump on board 20 to Kevin Kiley's bill, pass it on the national level, and 21 therefore, we won't have mid-decade redistricting. 22 23 So members, again, going back to the 24 census 2020, there's been massive population shifts since 25 2020. And when you look at these maps, for example, Los Angeles has lost representation in the last five years, but under these maps, they pick up a seat. The Inland Empire has gained population over the last five years,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p> <p>but they lose a seat. 1 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 9 And members, you know this is wrong. You 10 know what you're doing today is wrong. You know it's not 11 good for democracy in California. And you weren't 12 elected by anybody. You weren't elected by the people of 13 Illinois. You weren't elected by the people of Texas. 14 You weren't elected by the people of New York or North 15 Carolina. You were elected by the people of California, 16 and you were elected to defend the constitution. The 17 Constitution -- again, I believe my colleagues, whether 18 you knew it or not, violated the oath of the constitution 19 that you swore to. 20 21 And I do believe -- I understand, but the 22 ends don't justify the means. You know this is bad for 23 Independents, Democrats, and Republicans throughout the 24 State of California. I want you to look deep inside your 25 soul and you know this is wrong moving forward. You know this is not good for democracy in California, and I'm urging your no vote. Thank you.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 41</p> <p>SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you. 1 2 Madam President, may I respond? 3 4 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: So would you like 5 to respond in your close? 6 7 SENATOR GONZALEZ: I can do that too, but 8 I just wanted to make sure that it was known, if I may, 9 just to refute some of the misinformation that had been 10 put out. 11 12 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Can you hold on 13 for just one moment? 14 15 SENATOR STRICKLAND: You're going to 16 respond to every speaker? 17 18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Gonzalez, 19 unless someone has asked you a specific question, which 20 there was not a question, we're going to have you use 21 those in your close. 22 23 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Okay. 24 25 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Niello, you are recognized at your desk. SENATOR NIELLO: Thank you, Madam President. Members, I hope you will indulge me for a moment for a bit of digression into some political history. No misdirection, just the facts, ma'am. In 2008, Proposition 11 was put on the ballot to establish</p>

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<p>the commission for redistricting for state legislators, and I think also the BOE. And my friend from West Sacramento was correct in the -- I think the assembly elections committee yesterday when he said that that bill barely passed. It was definitely a squeaker. Maybe less than 1 percent over 50 percent. That's correct. There is a rest of the story, though, which I'll get to in a moment.</p> <p>Importantly, one main opponent to that Proposition was the California State Democratic Party. Well, what do you know? Now, fast forward, 2010. Proposition 20 was placed on the ballot to perhaps correct an incompleteness of the previous Proposition 11 to add congressional districts to the commission's responsibility. That's what we're talking about here, congressional districts. Not what Proposition 11 did, only state offices, but congressional districts.</p> <p>Now, the rest of the story. That proposition passed overwhelmingly. Over 60 percent of the vote. Interestingly, there was very little opposition to that proposition. Now, this is important. There was a reason for that. What is the easiest way to defeat a proposition? That's where misdirection comes in. Confusion.</p> <p>There was also, on that ballot,</p>	<p>Proposition 27, which proposed to completely abolish the redistricting commission. Get rid of it. Not maintain it, which we're talking about supposedly here, but get rid of it. The ostensible proponent for that in the literature was UCLA professor and former chair of the Fair Political Practices Commission, Daniel Lowenstein. But he said the real sponsors were democratic members of Congress.</p> <p>Well, what do you know? The contributors to that campaign, which ranged from 5000 to \$225,000, were Judy Chu, Anna Ashu, Zoe Lofgren, Nancy Pelosi, Doris Matsui. Our own colleague here from San Pedro who was in Congress at the time, Linda Sanchez, and Adam Schiff, as well as a number of others who are no longer in Congress.</p> <p>The confusion didn't work. What was the result of that competing measure? It was defeated by almost an exact mirror image by which Proposition 20 passed. It was defeated with 60 percent saying no. So now comes a convenient opportunity, very convenient opportunity. Governor Newsom wants five more democratic congressional seats.</p> <p>And Democrats see an opportunity for California taxpayers to pay for what they could not get with Proposition 27 in 2010. It has, after all, been</p>
<p>reported that the DCC has been involved with the current effort.</p> <p>A quarter billion dollars, or whatever the amount is to fund this partisan effort to thwart the will of the voters, is absolutely unacceptable. Members just history, not misdirection. Those are just the facts, ma'am. I urge a no vote.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>Senator Grayson, you are recognized at your desk.</p> <p>SENATOR GRAYSON: Thank you, Madam President. I do have a question to the author.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Will the author take a question?</p> <p>SENATOR GRAYSON: Thank you very much.</p> <p>First, I have two questions. I'll just ask them both and then answer all in one. The first one is the actions taken by Texas, are they permanent or temporary? And does Texas practice midcycle redistricting?</p> <p>And then -- so that was a two part question on the first one. And the second question is, for redistricting bills, I believe there was some reference made to that. Could there be -- could the author elaborate on what was talked about as far as some redistricting bills that had been opposed?</p>	<p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: You may proceed.</p> <p>SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you for the question. And yes, first question, Texas' actions -- their action yesterday is actually permanent. There is no temporary aspect to the gerrymandering they just approved yesterday through their House midcycle. Redistricting is a constant and there's no input for Texas voters to weigh in. Very opposite from what we're doing here. Ours is temporary until 2030. And of course, we are letting the voters decide whether to do this midcycle or not, which we are doing through a constitutional amendment. So we are absolutely doing that.</p> <p>On the second piece, thank you for your question on redistricting. Now, as mentioned, just as of last year, there have been over 30 bills last year and up until going back to about 2014, where a number of bills had been presented in this body to support an independent redistricting commission in various parts of the State of California, in places like San Luis Obispo, and Sacramento and Orange County, Riverside, Fresno, Kern. And all of those bills and efforts to establish an independent citizens' redistricting committee in all parts of the state of California had been voted no by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.</p>

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<p>Page 46</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Page 47</p> <p>1 power, simply for the sake of power.</p> <p>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?</p> <p>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.</p> <p>20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>21 Senator Choi, you are recognized.</p> <p>22 SENATOR CHOI: Thank you, Madam and the 23 Members.</p> <p>24 I rise today in strong opposition to this 25 proposal for special election to redraw our congressional</p>
<p>Page 48</p> <p>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?</p> <p>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.</p> <p>24 Think about what a quarter billion dollars 25 can do or represents. It could finance tens of thousands</p>	<p>Page 49</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>18 As a result of Orange County, where I 19 represent the county warm line program, has a laid off 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</p>

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<p>answering service.</p> <p>1 Instead of funding critical programs like</p> <p>2 this, we are being asked to throw these dollars away on a</p> <p>3 political maneuvering. This is not about the fairness.</p> <p>4 This is not about the people. And this is certainly not</p> <p>5 about protecting democracy that you all say that we must</p> <p>6 keep the democracy fairness of fairness. This is a</p> <p>7 partisan power grab, and it comes at the expense of</p> <p>8 Californians we are here to serve.</p> <p>9 So I ask you, my colleagues, will we tell</p> <p>10 Californians that their childcare, their education, their</p> <p>11 healthcare, their public safety programs don't matter as</p> <p>12 much as a rushed and unnecessary special election</p> <p>13 redrawing? Or we will stand with them and say no to this</p> <p>14 reckless use of taxpayer dollars.</p> <p>15 Senators and colleagues, let us show some</p> <p>16 fiscal responsibility and common sense. Please vote for</p> <p>17 no on this wasteful proposal. Thank you.</p> <p>18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>19 Senator Laird, you are recognized.</p> <p>20 SENATOR LAIRD: Thank you, Madam</p> <p>21 President.</p> <p>22 In 2021, a particularly egregious</p> <p>23 gerrymander was done in my district in San Luis Obispo</p> <p>24 County. It was for the board of supervisors' districts,</p> <p>25</p>	<p>Page 50</p> <p>1 and it was proposed by one party. A party that was</p> <p>2 losing registration was no longer the party with the</p> <p>3 greatest plurality in that county and they passed a map</p> <p>4 suggested by one political committee to egregiously</p> <p>5 gerrymander that county. Under the census, minor tweaks</p> <p>6 to the existing districts would have been in order.</p> <p>7 Instead, it was jam the Democrats into one district, make</p> <p>8 the other four districts in a way that they likely could</p> <p>9 go the other way, and preserve a majority that didn't</p> <p>10 exist in the electorate at large.</p> <p>11 And it was gross. There were some people</p> <p>12 that would vote in three -- every two years for three</p> <p>13 cycles for supervisor. There were some that were the</p> <p>14 opposite. There were -- thousands of people would have</p> <p>15 two supervisors at once. Thousands more would have no</p> <p>16 supervisor. It was a dislocation that was off the</p> <p>17 charts.</p> <p>18 And so what happened? I introduced, last</p> <p>19 year, Senate Bill 977 to say we would have independent</p> <p>20 redistricting for San Luis Obispo County. We would have</p> <p>21 the commission. That egregious line drawing would never</p> <p>22 happen again for that county.</p> <p>23 And then what happened in this body? In</p> <p>24 this body, nine senators thought that was just fine.</p> <p>25 That that egregious redistricting that would have been</p> <p>Page 51</p>
<p>Page 52</p> <p>1 rectified by commission is what they voted against. And</p> <p>2 it was said "Just the facts," on one speech, and then</p> <p>3 there were all the names that were given about those</p> <p>4 facts. Well, let me say in just the facts, it was</p> <p>5 senators from Jackson, Bieber, Bakersfield, San Diego,</p> <p>6 Sacramento, Yucaipa, and Murrieta that said, "We are fine</p> <p>7 with egregious gerrymandering. We do not want a</p> <p>8 commission. We do not want fairness in redistricting."</p> <p>9 Let's be clear about that.</p> <p>10 So when it was said, "What is known and</p> <p>11 when did we know it?" in 2024 we knew that was an</p> <p>12 egregious redistricting and nine Senators said it was</p> <p>13 just fine with them. It was said fair districts lead to</p> <p>14 fair representation, but nine Senators said not in San</p> <p>15 Luis Obispo County. It was said that politicians should</p> <p>16 not pick their voters but was fine for nine Senators in</p> <p>17 San Luis Obispo County. It was said that we are</p> <p>18 witnessing a partisan power grab. We witnessed one there</p> <p>19 and it was fine for nine Senators in San Luis Obispo</p> <p>20 County.</p> <p>21 So let's just call that what it is. We</p> <p>22 have born again commission lovers here. They had a</p> <p>23 chance to have the fair redistricting in different parts</p> <p>24 of the state, and it was rejected. And so I just think</p> <p>25 it's fair to expose that level of partisanship because</p>	<p>Page 53</p> <p>1 that's what's going on. And I think now we have a</p> <p>2 national crisis and we are responding and I asked for an</p> <p>3 aye vote on AB 604.</p> <p>4 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>5 Senator Grove, you are recognized at your</p> <p>6 desk.</p> <p>7 SENATOR GROVE: Thank you, Madam</p> <p>8 President.</p> <p>9 Colleagues, I rise in opposition of this</p> <p>10 redistricting package, all three bills that are coming</p> <p>11 before us today to redraw congressional lines. The move</p> <p>12 undermines the will of the people and the voters of this</p> <p>13 state. I don't wholeheartedly agree with the actual</p> <p>14 commission, the people that are on the board of the</p> <p>15 commission. But I don't agree that legislators should be</p> <p>16 able to draw their own lines either. And I'm a</p> <p>17 legislator, and I don't think I should be able to draw my</p> <p>18 own lines. I think the people should be able to pick the</p> <p>19 people they want to have them represented, and it should</p> <p>20 be that a standard across the United States.</p> <p>21 I listened to your comments, and I really</p> <p>22 wasn't going to speak, but I listened to all the comments</p> <p>23 and it's all about transparency, and this has been</p> <p>24 transparent. Colleagues, this bill -- this bill was put</p> <p>25 in print on Monday. We had a hearing on Tuesday. On</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 54</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 55</p> <p>lines?" 1 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</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 56</p> <p>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.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p> <p>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.</p>

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<p>Page 58</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Page 59</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Page 60</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Page 61</p> <p>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</p>

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<p>and space technologies are designed, built, and tested.</p> <p>It's carved into five different congressional districts.</p> <p>This means no single representative is fully going to be accountable to the needs of my community in the Antelope Valley.</p> <p>And let's talk about Sonoma County, chopped into three districts, silencing the ability of that community to speak with one voice. This isn't just bad mapping. This scheme is bad governance. The voters of California created an independent redistricting commission precisely to prevent this kind of power grab. They voted for fairness, transparency, and independence.</p> <p>The Constitution says maps are not to be drawn for politicians, for incumbents, or for parties. But here we are with maps engineered in secret, rushed forward, and designed to benefit a few select few. This is in clear conflict of interest, and it undermines public trust and our elections. It tells voters that their voices matter less than political insiders and it confirms every fear they already have about Sacramento.</p> <p>Colleagues, this isn't about Democrats or Republicans. In my district, I represent more Democrats than I do Republicans. I want every single voter to be represented fairly. This is about the constitution. This is about transparency. It's about whether the</p>	<p>Page 62</p> <p>1 and space technologies are designed, built, and tested.</p> <p>2 It's carved into five different congressional districts.</p> <p>3 This means no single representative is fully going to be</p> <p>4 accountable to the needs of my community in the Antelope</p> <p>5 Valley.</p> <p>6 And let's talk about Sonoma County,</p> <p>7 chopped into three districts, silencing the ability of</p> <p>8 that community to speak with one voice. This isn't just</p> <p>9 bad mapping. This scheme is bad governance. The voters</p> <p>10 of California created an independent redistricting</p> <p>11 commission precisely to prevent this kind of power grab.</p> <p>12 They voted for fairness, transparency, and independence.</p> <p>13 The Constitution says maps are not to be</p> <p>14 drawn for politicians, for incumbents, or for parties.</p> <p>15 But here we are with maps engineered in secret, rushed</p> <p>16 forward, and designed to benefit a few select few. This</p> <p>17 is in clear conflict of interest, and it undermines</p> <p>18 public trust and our elections. It tells voters that</p> <p>19 their voices matter less than political insiders and it</p> <p>20 confirms every fear they already have about Sacramento.</p> <p>21 Colleagues, this isn't about Democrats or</p> <p>22 Republicans. In my district, I represent more Democrats</p> <p>23 than I do Republicans. I want every single voter to be</p> <p>24 represented fairly. This is about the constitution.</p> <p>25 This is about transparency. It's about whether the</p> <p>Page 63</p> <p>1 people of California get what they voted for, a fair and</p> <p>2 open process. Not maps drawn in back rooms for political</p> <p>3 convenience.</p> <p>4 The people of California deserve better.</p> <p>5 They deserve fair maps. They deserve good government,</p> <p>6 and they deserve leaders who will honor California's</p> <p>7 constitution, not undermine it. I cannot support this</p> <p>8 plan. And I think it's ironic to hear, in response to my</p> <p>9 colleague from Santa Cruz, how history is repeating</p> <p>10 itself. How right now we're seeing that across the</p> <p>11 nation and even in California, that Democrats have lost</p> <p>12 2.1 million voters and Republicans have picked up 2.4</p> <p>13 million. And further makes me question this paragraph.</p> <p>14 Is history repeating itself?</p> <p>15 I urge you to vote to uphold the</p> <p>16 constitution of California today. I urge you to be the</p> <p>17 voice -- to be the voice that your constituents elected</p> <p>18 you to be. To uphold their rights, their voices,</p> <p>19 respectfully ask for a no vote.</p> <p>20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>21 Senator Umberg, you are recognized.</p> <p>22 SENATOR UMBERG: Well, thank you, Madam</p> <p>23 President.</p> <p>24 Let me speak to some self-evident,</p> <p>25 irrefutable proofs. Truth number one is that all 39</p>
<p>Page 64</p> <p>1 members of the California State Senate sitting here today</p> <p>2 are here because they want to improve the lives of</p> <p>3 Californians. Irrespective of whether they have a D or</p> <p>4 an R behind their name, they're here to improve the lives</p> <p>5 of Californians.</p> <p>6 Truth number two, we would not be here but</p> <p>7 for the President of the United States ordering Texas to</p> <p>8 create five new seats. And why? Why? Because he's</p> <p>9 concerned about the Congress potentially being a check on</p> <p>10 his power.</p> <p>11 Truth number three. Truth number three is</p> <p>12 that the \$811 million that the President has asked to be</p> <p>13 taken from California K-12 education, to include after</p> <p>14 school programs that were referenced by my colleague from</p> <p>15 Irvine, that that diminishes the quality of life of</p> <p>16 Californians.</p> <p>17 Next truth, the billion dollars right now</p> <p>18 that is attempted to be extorted from UCLA diminishes the</p> <p>19 quality of life of Californians.</p> <p>20 Next truth. The 57,861 individuals</p> <p>21 detained by masked agents, many unknown, that diminishes</p> <p>22 the quality of life in California and in particular, the</p> <p>23 47,000 plus who have not had a conviction for anything</p> <p>24 other than being of a certain race and having a certain</p> <p>25 occupation. That is the only criteria that was used to</p>	<p>Page 65</p> <p>1 detain those 47,000 individuals. That diminishes the</p> <p>2 quality of life in California.</p> <p>3 The \$164 billion taken over the next 10</p> <p>4 years in terms of health care, that diminishes the</p> <p>5 quality of life here in California. And in terms of the</p> <p>6 cost-benefit analysis, whatever it costs for this</p> <p>7 election, if we can save but a small portion of the</p> <p>8 amounts that the President wishes to remove, to take, to</p> <p>9 punish California, it is a cost-benefit analysis that we</p> <p>10 should engage in.</p> <p>11 Now, James Madison in Federalist 47 said</p> <p>12 look, here's what we do is we as our government, we</p> <p>13 create a government with checks and balances, and the</p> <p>14 Congress is supposed to be a check on the executive, a</p> <p>15 check on the -- but this Congress has been absolutely</p> <p>16 supine in terms of being a check, including the nine</p> <p>17 members of the Republican delegation from California have</p> <p>18 basically decided to disarm.</p> <p>19 Now, what is the response? The response</p> <p>20 is to actually respond to what the President's trying to</p> <p>21 do. Again, we wouldn't be here but for that.</p> <p>22 Now, let me also commend and congratulate</p> <p>23 those of the Republican party who have stood up to the</p> <p>24 President. I heard my colleague from Huntington Beach</p> <p>25 today talk about Texas, say that what they're doing is</p>

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<p>Page 66</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Page 67</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Page 68</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Page 69</p> <p>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</p>

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<p>Page 70</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Page 71</p> <p>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</p>
<p>Page 72</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Page 73</p> <p>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.</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 74</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 75</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 76</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>10 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you. 11 Senator Becker, you are recognized.</p> <p>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."</p> <p>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.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 77</p> <p>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."</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Becker, 19 I'm sorry, can you please address your comments to me as 20 the presiding officer.</p> <p>21 SENATOR BECKER: Oh, thank you. You mean 22 turn around?</p> <p>23 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Yes, thank you.</p> <p>24 SENATOR BECKER: Okay. I often do it this 25 way for the cameras.</p>

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<p>Page 78</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Page 79</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Page 80</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Page 81</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>24 This proposal undermines the voters' trust 25 since the commission was created by the voters to ensure</p>

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<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>24 Second, it waives the rigorous criteria 25 outlined in the state constitution that prioritizes</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>25 Finally, the plan flouts the</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>24 I had a podcast I was listening to just 25 this morning talking about whether or not term limits</p>	<p>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."</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>

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<p>Page 86</p> <p>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 8 So why come after California? Why make us 9 an example to the rest of the country by attacking our 10 immigrants, by putting tariffs that have hurt our farmers 11 and that now is going to start to hurt our residents? By 12 taking away benefits that are really important in our 13 state as we've tried to meet the needs of our country? 14 So California didn't start this fight, and my party 15 didn't start this fight either. 16 17 Let me be clear: I don't shy away from a 18 good competition. I love sports--soccer, football, 19 baseball. I love it all. In my family, we have our 20 favorite teams that we watch, and we follow, and that we 21 support, and I can tell you, they are raucous games when 22 we have people on different sides supporting different 23 teams. So I don't have a problem with opposition or with 24 conflict, but what I do insist on is that the game be 25 fair. 26 27 I do insist that everybody know what the 28 rules are at the beginning of the game and then it's not</p>	<p>Page 87</p> <p>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 8 Folks, that's not what's happening in our 9 country today. The President knows that what he's doing 10 is hurting people, and it is. It is. It's hurting every 11 day, average Americans, and that hurt is real. The 12 prices have gone up. There's uncertainty in the market. 13 It's hard to get a loan. Housing isn't selling. That's 14 not because of what we've done. That's because of the 15 pressure of tariffs and messing around with the market. 16 17 So the President's afraid he can't win. 18 He's afraid he can't win an election in two years to 19 ensure that he maintains control, control over everything 20 that's going on in the country. So he's taken an action 21 to rig the election. It won't be a fair competition. 22 It's playing dirty. It's cheating. It's cheating and 23 it's making sure that he continues to be in charge even 24 if the voters want change. Even if the voters want 25 change, he's rigging it. 26 27 It's a power grab. We didn't pick this 28 fight, but my residents have asked me to take action, to</p>
<p>Page 88</p> <p>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 6 Look, it didn't have to be this way. We 7 all could have worked together, all of us on this floor, 8 across party lines, to denounce and condemn the 9 President's attempt to rig the next election. We could 10 have done it together to put public pressure as leaders 11 and as elected officials to say we want a fair game, no 12 shenanigans, no cheating, no dirty games. 13 14 But listen, my good friends on the other 15 side of the aisle, you haven't said a peep. You've said 16 nothing to condemn the President's attacks on California 17 and on our residents. Nothing, nothing, nothing. And I 18 get it. You don't want to contradict your President, and 19 so you've taken sides. Well, I choose the people in my 20 district. I choose to defend Californians. I choose to 21 fight for a fair election. I choose to listen to the 22 people who say, "We need you to take action." So I ask 23 you for your aye vote today. 24 25 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you. 26 27 Senator Cervantes, you are recognized. 28 29 SENATOR CERVANTES: Thank you, Madam 30 President and members. As we know, the proposed maps in</p>	<p>Page 89</p> <p>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 7 These maps do a better job of avoiding 8 splitting counties and cities than those created by the 9 commission. And let me just say, how is it okay when 10 their party adopts redistricting, but when it's the other 11 party, it's a problem? Please. Spare us the hypocrisy. 12 13 That said, I am puzzled by the admiration 14 that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are 15 showing for independent citizens' redistricting 16 commissions. Except for our colleague from Huntington 17 Beach who has not been present for any of these bills, 18 every Republican of this Senate body has voted against 19 bills creating county citizens' redistricting 20 commissions. 21 22 The Legislature is entitled to propose 23 amendments to the state constitution, and unlike Texas, 24 we are taking it to the voters. We are acting now to 25 save our future. I respectfully ask for an aye vote on 26 AB 604. 27 28 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you. 29 30 Senator Jones, you are recognized.</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 90</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 91</p> <p>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?</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 92</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 93</p> <p>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,</p>

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<p>Page 94</p> <p>1 similar to the opening remarks of the author.</p> <p>2 The important thing that I think to share</p> <p>3 here is I rise in strong opposition to AB 604. The</p> <p>4 gas-lighting that has been -- or Gav-lighting, if you</p> <p>5 prefer that term better -- that's been going on this</p> <p>6 morning is just -- the mental gymnastics that you have to</p> <p>7 do to come up with these arguments that you're making for</p> <p>8 what we're trying to do here on the floor in the State of</p> <p>9 California, it's just amazing to me how you do that.</p> <p>10 And I want to share -- and again, other</p> <p>11 Senators have said -- I appreciate every single one of</p> <p>12 you. I count every single Senator on this floor a</p> <p>13 friend, all 30 Democrats. I honor you. I admire you.</p> <p>14 This is not an easy job, but sometimes we have to call it</p> <p>15 like it is. We have to call balls and strikes according</p> <p>16 to the gamesmanship analogies that were used earlier.</p> <p>17 What's happening here is simple: Gavin</p> <p>18 Newsom and Democrat politicians are trying to ram through</p> <p>19 a corrupt redistricting scheme to rig California's</p> <p>20 elections. This scheme is unconstitutional. It's</p> <p>21 undermining both the letter and the spirit of the</p> <p>22 California Constitution. It ignores the principles of</p> <p>23 germane law, election integrity, twisting the rules to</p> <p>24 benefit one party.</p> <p>25 It tramples on the will of California</p>	<p>Page 95</p> <p>1 voters. California voters, the same people that elected</p> <p>2 all of us to office. Those voters created an independent</p> <p>3 redistricting commission precisely to keep politicians</p> <p>4 from drawing their own lines. And those voters, it was</p> <p>5 so important to them, they put it in the Constitution.</p> <p>6 This effort slices up communities,</p> <p>7 connecting desperate areas and splitting apart regions</p> <p>8 with common interests, violating the very standard the</p> <p>9 redistricting is supposed to uphold. Democrats are</p> <p>10 rushing this through under the guise of urgency. There</p> <p>11 is no emergency that justifies this abuse of process. It</p> <p>12 discards years of work by the Citizens Redistricting</p> <p>13 Commission and replaces it with raw, partisan power</p> <p>14 plays.</p> <p>15 Importantly, Democrat legislators continue</p> <p>16 to refuse to answer the one simple question that's been</p> <p>17 asked dozens, if not hundreds of times, and I'll ask one</p> <p>18 more time on this floor: who drew the maps? They claim</p> <p>19 it's a transparent process, yet fail to answer the most</p> <p>20 transparent question, and it comes at an outrageous cost.</p> <p>21 It has been mentioned more than \$250 million for a</p> <p>22 special election at a time when California is facing a</p> <p>23 \$20 billion deficit, and you all are cutting vital</p> <p>24 services.</p> <p>25 The result is the maps that destroy</p>
<p>Page 96</p> <p>1 representative proportionality are rigged for partisan</p> <p>2 gain, not fair representation.</p> <p>3 Senate Republicans are united against this</p> <p>4 abuse of power. We're standing together to defend</p> <p>5 Californians, to uphold our Constitution, the California</p> <p>6 Constitution, and to fight for fair and honest elections.</p> <p>7 And let's make two more points before I</p> <p>8 close. The interesting thing is you all keep bringing up</p> <p>9 Texas. Texas right now -- the Republicans in Texas right</p> <p>10 now have an effort afoot to make it easier for the</p> <p>11 Legislature to override -- do a veto override in Texas.</p> <p>12 Republicans are trying to make it easier in Texas to</p> <p>13 conduct a veto override. I'm asking you just to try.</p> <p>14 Now, the other interesting thing about</p> <p>15 this effort is we all know this is going to fail on the</p> <p>16 ballot. This is a loser from the beginning. So what's</p> <p>17 the win? What's the upside for all of us here on the</p> <p>18 Senate floor to go blindly along with the Governor's plan</p> <p>19 here? It's going to fail, and what's the only gain?</p> <p>20 I'll tell you what the only gain is.</p> <p>21 Governor Gavin Newsom is getting more headlines. He's</p> <p>22 getting more name ID, and he's creating a brand across</p> <p>23 the country so that he can run for President; and you're</p> <p>24 helping him.</p> <p>25 To my colleagues across the aisle, I</p>	<p>Page 97</p> <p>1 strongly encourage you to stand against this self-serving</p> <p>2 Governor with courage rather than acting like a march of</p> <p>3 the lemmings. I urge a no vote on AB 604.</p> <p>4 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you. Seeing</p> <p>5 no further discussion or debate, Senator Gonzalez, would</p> <p>6 you like to close?</p> <p>7 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yes. Thank you so</p> <p>8 much, Madam President, and I do want to say to my</p> <p>9 colleagues on both sides of the aisle, thank you so much</p> <p>10 for this very robust debate.</p> <p>11 This is exactly what democracy means and</p> <p>12 what we want the public to see, the discourse, even if we</p> <p>13 agree to disagree or we disagree and disagree beyond</p> <p>14 measure, that is exactly what we're here for. We were</p> <p>15 all elected to take an oath to defend our democracy and</p> <p>16 to ensure that the folks that we support and represent</p> <p>17 all can see a better quality of life, and that's why</p> <p>18 we're here today.</p> <p>19 And as my colleagues on the other side of</p> <p>20 the aisle, except for one, I think of one missing member</p> <p>21 from Jackson, you know, what I will say is, I hear you on</p> <p>22 integrity. I hear you on transparency. I hear you on</p> <p>23 all of that.</p> <p>24 And this is where I'm really confused</p> <p>25 because, with all due respect, it is very hypocritical to</p>

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<p>Page 98</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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?</p>	<p>Page 99</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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?</p>
<p>Page 100</p> <p>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.</p> <p>9 So again, Californians will have the final 10 say. I appreciate all the debate here. I respectfully 11 ask for an aye vote.</p> <p>12 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>13 Secretary, please call the roll.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Page 101</p> <p>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.</p>

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1	Limon.	1	Aye.
2	Aye.	2	Stern.
3	McGuire.	3	Aye.
4	Aye.	4	Strickland.
5	McNerney.	5	No.
6	Aye.	6	Umberg.
7	Menjivar.	7	Aye.
8	Aye.	8	Valladares.
9	Niello.	9	No.
10	No.	10	Wahab.
11	Ochoa Bogh.	11	Aye.
12	No.	12	Weber Pierson.
13	Padilla.	13	Aye.
14	Aye.	14	Wiener.
15	Perez.	15	Aye.
16	Aye.	16	SECRETARY: No.
17	Reyes.	17	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please
18	Aye.	18	call the absent members.
19	Richardson.	19	THE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil.
20	Aye.	20	Jones.
21	Rubio.	21	No.
22	Aye.	22	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes, 30. Noes,
23	Seyarto.	23	9. That measure passes.
24	No.	24	Members, we are now going to take a very
25	Smallwood-Cuevas.	25	brief 20-minute recess for lunch. Stay in the building.

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1	We will come back in 20 minutes. We are now on recess.	1	Constitutional Amendment 8.
2	(Recess taken)	2	I got to say, it does pain me a bit to say
3	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: The Senate will	3	what I'm about to say. And I want to also take a moment
4	now come back to session. We have a message from the	4	to acknowledge Brian Jones. I have deep respect for
5	Assembly. Secretary, please read.	5	Leader Jones, and I know this has been a tough week on
6	THE SECRETARY: Madam President, I am	6	all sides. And I do want to acknowledge him and say
7	directed to inform your honorable body that the Assembly	7	thank you for the partnership.
8	on this day adopted Assembly Constitutional Amendment 8,	8	And I also want to say I take this very
9	Sue Parker, Chief Clerk of the Assembly.	9	seriously. I think that all folks know I don't really
10	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: We have a referral	10	care if you have an R or D behind your name. It's about
11	for Rules. Secretary, please read.	11	representing California. And as I said last night,
12	THE SECRETARY: The Committee on Rules has	12	people don't know us if we're a Republican or Democrat.
13	ordered the following bill to third reading. Assembly	13	They know us as Californians, and that's what we need to
14	Constitution Amendment 8.	14	remember as we make our way through this and come back
15	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: We will now move	15	next week.
16	to supplemental file number 1, which is file number	16	I'm really honored to represent one of the
17	262ACA8. Secretary, please read.	17	most rural districts in the State of California. Third
18	THE SECRETARY: Assembly Constitutional	18	of the California coastline. There are four counties in
19	Amendment 8 by Assembly Member Rivas, an act relating to	19	the district of seven that voted for Kamala Harris.
20	redistricting.	20	There are three counties in the district that supported
21	SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Pro tem	21	President Trump.
22	McGuire, you are recognized.	22	What I know when I go into Weaverville or
23	SENATOR MCGUIRE: Thank you so much, Madam	23	High Palm, Crescent City, or Fort Bragg in rural
24	President, and good afternoon, members. I stand with	24	California, no matter if you're a Democrat or a
25	Senator Cabaldon who will complete the presentation on	25	Republican, you want a few key things for your family.

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 106</p> <p>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.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 107</p> <p>1 California didn't pick this fight. This was not on our 2 bingo card six weeks ago, let alone six months ago. 3 Actions of Republicans in Texas, compounded by the 4 inaction of some Republican leaders here in California, 5 that's why we're here today. All of this could have been 6 avoided. To be able to stop this, talk to Texas. Talk 7 to our President. 8 I have been astounded this week. I've 9 seen Republican colleague after Republican colleague go 10 on television, hold press conferences, go live on the 11 social media, expressing outrage about California. But 12 what about Texas? What about Donald Trump, who started 13 all this, who started this circus? 14 You know, sometimes in life, I'm a firm 15 believer that you just got to stand for the greater good, 16 and you got to tell your boss no. You got to tell your 17 boss no. 18 Today, I hope that we can do something 19 constructive. We should do everything in our power to 20 ensure free and fair elections. But let me be very 21 clear. This action about redistricting, we all know 22 this. We talk behind the scenes. We have a beer 23 together. We go out to coffee. When I talk to folks 24 when are on the other side of the aisle, they know why 25 we're here. Can't say it publicly, but we all know why</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 108</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 109</p> <p>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</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 110</p> <p>redistricting. I've supported independent redistricting on the local level here in California. I support national redistricting. Sounds like now that it may be a bipartisan bill.</p> <p>What I do not support, what we cannot support in California, is unilateral disarmament when the fairness of the 2026 elections is being threatened. And yes. Donald Trump wants to rig the damn election. Other states want to play games. California is the only state committed to fairness whose potential redistricting goes away the minute others drop theirs. In Texas, it's permanent.</p> <p>One of our colleagues in the Assembly said the other day, "When I go to a restaurant, I don't have to meet the chef." You all saw that. Senators, I also don't believe we need to meet the chef, but we do need to meet this moment. And the stakes are so high, and I want to end it right here.</p> <p>Here's what's at stake. Millions of Californians are going to lose their health care next year. Millions. Tens of millions of Americans are going to lose their health care next year because of Donald Trump.</p> <p>I've never seen a President come after fire aid and assistance like this President has</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 111</p> <p>threatening to be able to cancel cleanup and recovery because he doesn't like our Governor or doesn't like the politics of the state.</p> <p>I never thought I had to explain to my four-and-a-half-year-old who saw on a friend's television why someone was being thrown in a moving van. This is what we're fighting for today.</p> <p>One of the main reasons I believe that we should be voting for this constitutional amendment will be waiting for me this evening at our kitchen table to tell me about his first week in school.</p> <p>As much as some want to say this is about politics, this vote today is about people. It's about standing strong for people who are under assault by an authoritarian who's coming for our jugular. All we have now, the only choice, is to fight. This is a cynical ploy, and it's just the start. First, they come for the districts. Then they come for your ballots. Next, it will be your family.</p> <p>Today's vote is about the future. It's about fairness. It's about trusting voters. I would respectfully ask for an aye vote, and I yield my time to Senator Cabaldon.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Cabaldon, you are recognized.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 112</p> <p>SENATOR CABALDON: Thank you, Madam President.</p> <p>This bill, this package of bills has been among the three most heavily reported bills in the California and in the country. The notion --</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Cabaldon, can you address the presiding officer, please?</p> <p>SENATOR CABALDON: For a point?</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Can you address the presiding officer, please?</p> <p>Oh, I usually stand there. Okay. All right. Thank you, Madam President.</p> <p>This package of bills has been among the most heavily reported. It's widely known across the State of California that this effort is underway, which is odd, because when I talk to my own constituents and I mentioned the word "redistricting," a glazed look goes over their eye.</p> <p>Very few Californians spend their time or their worries or their concerns or their hopes thinking about redistricting. They are thinking about food on the table, and rent, and public safety, and their ability to walk free on the streets of this state.</p> <p>But I hear about it constantly in my own district, and I hear about it in places that you might</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 113</p> <p>not expect. And it reminds me of one of my favorite parts of the year -- and I know I share this with many of my colleagues from both parties -- Little League opening day.</p> <p>The parade goes down the neighborhood on Meadow Road, turns the corner. We all end up at Memorial Park for the first day of the Little League season. And once the ceremony is over, the certificates have been presented, then the teams go onto the field.</p> <p>And you sit -- for me as a mayor, now as a Senator. You sit with the parents, ready to watch the game. And the first inning comes up, and the other team keeps striking out. And the second inning, they've stricken out every time. When they pitch, sometimes they intentionally hit our players, and you're starting to get a little worried.</p> <p>By the fifth inning though, something weird happens. You see that on their side -- on the other team's players, the first base is now been taken over by one of the dad's. One of the mom's is subbed in at second base. Another mom is at shortstop. Another dad is at third base and another at catcher.</p> <p>And you look at the field. You say, this is not -- this is Little League. Where are the kids at? You can't just sub in five adults to play a Little League</p>

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<p>game. That's not fair. It's also not safe. What you've created is a Little League I would never be a part of.</p> <p>We don't sit in the stands in that moment and argue with each other, you know what I'm going to do about this? I'm going to go to the next Little League board meeting in two months to complain because what we really need is a policy that prevents this from happening. You don't pen a harshly worded letter to the other team.</p> <p>You stand up. You do something. In that moment, most likely, what most Americans would do is we're sending five of our parents out there. We're pulling our kids off the field. We are taking action to ensure that that cheating, that endangerment, does not happen.</p> <p>If, when the Olympics are at the Rose Bowl here in California -- I'm sorry -- yeah -- the Rose Bowl in California and the soccer team come on the field and we're playing against Russia, and they sub in five people, five additional players onto their team, you can be damn right we'll be calling for our team to be doing the same. We won't be waiting to file a complaint after the game is over that we lost because someone cheated right in front of our eyes, right in broad daylight.</p> <p>That's why Californians every day, more</p>	<p>and more Californians are like, I don't know that much about redistricting, but this ain't right. This cannot happen, and California cannot stand for it. That's what this is all about.</p> <p>And so what's different here is it's not a trophy that's on the line. What is on the line is everything that we've heard described by the pro tem and others on this floor. The HR 1 cuts, the massive cuts that will hit California, but many of them that won't take place until after the congressional election. So we have a shot to stop them from happening. What's on the line is our freedom on the street and the terrorism that's happening with ICE. The attacks on UCLA, on our very elections, and reproductive freedom across the board, we have a chance to do something about it.</p> <p>Because right now, everyone at the Little League game is always asking me, "What can I do as an American? What can I do to prevent the erasure of our democracy, the decline of our institutions and our protections?"</p> <p>Now, until we have to both fix the rules, we do have to go to that Little League meeting, and that's exactly what ACA 8 does. It's first provision is California calls upon the Congress of the United States to place a constitutional amendment before all of the</p>
<p>states for a national independent redistricting system. That is number one in ACA 8. And so we are doing that. And we must also get on the field and protect our kids and our families and our communities.</p> <p>Now, it's ironic because we stand here today, 99 years after the very first redistricting initiative went on the ballot here in the California. Redistricting is one of the most contested ballot initiatives over and over and over again that Californians typically face. And we've been doing it now for a century.</p> <p>And that ballot measure, which created an independent Citizens Commission in Redistricting was rejected almost two to one. When it was proposed again a decade and a half later, it was rejected by 10 points. It was rejected and rejected and rejected and rejected and rejected.</p> <p>In the 1980s, it was rejected four times, four times. And then in the 2000s, it was rejected right before it barely passed.</p> <p>And so when we talk about that the voters have enshrined this in the constitution as something that can never change, the voters have been changing their minds about redistricting almost since the admission of this state into the union.</p>	<p>And in fact, in 2008 when the voters passed the initiative that the senator from Fair Oaks noted, there were two other ballot measures on that 2008 ballot that are noteworthy here.</p> <p>One was the voters' overwhelming support for high-speed rail, which we've heard previously on this floor. Senators from the other side of the aisle, Republican senators saying we should toss that out. We should throw that one out. But this one that passed by less is somehow divinely inspired and can never be changed by the voters themselves.</p> <p>The second measure that was on that ballot was Proposition 8, the infamous Proposition 8, which said that we were amending the Constitution to prevent folks from marrying the person that they loved, marriage equality. That's what happened in 2008 by a larger margin through this commission. And yet, last year, the voters of California overwhelmingly reversed that decision.</p> <p>Democracy is an everchanging progress. It's a book that we are writing together, and the only ones that can tell us to respect the will of the voters are the voters. And the only way we can know what their will is in this critical time for the preservation of our democracy is by passing this constitution to let the</p>

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<p>voters decide.</p> <p>I want to speak briefly to the notion of this mid-decade redistricting that we've heard about repeatedly this morning as well and the outrage over the idea that we might do redistricting in the middle of the decade, as though this were the first time this idea's been considered.</p> <p>Republicans and their agents submitted mid-decade redistricting initiatives nearly every single year in the 1980s, and then again in the 90s, and the 2000s. The outrage -- the hypocritical outrage here is palpable. The only folks who proposed mid-decade redistricting before today have been the Republicans of California. And so the outrage that this is unconstitutional, how can it be unconstitutional to ask the voters of California if they choose to, if they decide to, if they elect to amend the Constitution to accomplish this?</p> <p>And also, Texas did not consider the 2020 census data or any updates. In fact, the Chairman of the Election Committee in Texas said, "Well, I don't have that census data. I haven't looked at it."</p> <p>This process, on the other hand, has examined every available data source. That census from 2020 and all the data since, all of the testimony in</p>	<p>Page 118</p> <p>Page 119</p> <p>relevant areas in California where the lines are changing to look to see what did regular people say about their communities of interest to the Redistricting Commission.</p> <p>And then finally, the notion that this is expensive. Another example of fake outrage because we heard no outrage about the cost -- the annual petitions to the Secretary of State for a recall of the Governor or someone else. Every single year, we've had these petitions submitted with zero, dead silence, about the cost of that election, which is exactly the same as the cost is this.</p> <p>So please spare me the sanctimony about the cost of the election when you've remained silent every single time that another recall election has been proposed.</p> <p>Now, I also represent Sonoma County, just as a response to the senator from Santa Clarita, and many other communities that have constantly been shifted from district to district over time. And Sonoma County will be doing just fine under this map. I can speak to my constituents. We can handle -- we can handle having three members of Congress. It's a feature, not a bug.</p> <p>But let's not think that today's redistricting map, it comes from a commission that did outstanding work, but it ain't -- it's not from some</p>
<p>Page 120</p> <p>divine text, right. Let's go up to one of the closest districts from here. Maybe stop in Citrus Heights at the Jolly Cone and just head up the freeway. You've now met about five percent of the voters in this congressional district.</p> <p>Head up the Highway 50 a little bit. You'll end up in Folsom. Maybe stop at the auto malls or maybe the old town. Then head over to Roseville and to Rocklin and Placer County. You've now met half the voters -- over half the voters of this district.</p> <p>But you got to keep on going. Because in that district, you got to keep driving on Highway 80 up all the way to almost Mount Lassen. And then you have to turn around, get back on the freeway, get back on 12 freeways in order to get to Death Valley, Death Valley.</p> <p>So please, don't tell me about, you know, splitting Lodi, which is a fan community of mine just nearby here in three when the current map places hundreds of thousands of people in Sacramento County, steps away from this building, in the same congressional district as Death Valley itself.</p> <p>And so these maps represent a step forward for representation. They respect communities of interest. They fully comply with the Voting Rights Act.</p> <p>But most importantly, they meet the moment</p>	<p>Page 121</p> <p>that we are here because of Trump, and we're here -- President Trump, and we're here because of what Texas is doing, seeking to cheat and steal the game. We are doing this not in response to Texas alone but to parry Texas, to neutralize and to nullify their illegal actions to cheat this congressional election and undo the will of the voters in 2026.</p> <p>California, we are the fourth largest economy. We are the most populous state in the country. It is our duty to America to be the last line of defense, and I ask for an aye vote on ACA 8.</p> <p>Thank you, Madam President.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>Senator Valladares, you are recognized.</p> <p>SENATOR VALLADARES: Thank you, Madam President. And I do believe I have amendments at the desk.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please read the amendments.</p> <p>THE SECRETARY: Amendments by Senator Valladares, set one.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: You may proceed.</p> <p>SENATOR VALLADARES: Thank you. Members, ladies and gentlemen of the Senate. I rise to present important amendments to ACA 8.</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 122</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 123</p> <p>1 problem supporting this amendment. Because if everything 2 is above board here, then what do you have to object to?</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>19 Senate Gonzalez -- Senator Gonzalez, 20 you're recognized.</p> <p>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</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 124</p> <p>1 disenfranchising voters in Texas. And it also requests 2 --</p> <p>3 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Excuse me. Point 4 of order.</p> <p>5 SENATOR VALLADARES: If the majority 6 leader could please speak to Germanists of the 7 amendments.</p> <p>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?</p> <p>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?</p> <p>21 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Again --</p> <p>22 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Point of order.</p> <p>23 SENATOR GONZALEZ: So, I will ask that --</p> <p>24 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment. 25 Excuse me. Just a moment.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 125</p> <p>1 What is your point of order?</p> <p>2 SENATOR STRICKLAND: The speaker is not 3 addressing the amendments directly before us in this 4 body. I believe the amendments have no -- nothing 5 written about the President of the United States. So --</p> <p>6 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>7 Just a moment, please.</p> <p>8 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Yeah.</p> <p>9 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Gonzalez, 10 the amendments that we have before us are dealing with 11 whether or not the members of the Legislature will be 12 able to run as a candidate for 10 years. Your comments 13 must stick to the amendments that we are voting on or 14 that have been --</p> <p>15 SENATOR GONZALEZ: Thank you.</p> <p>16 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: -- presenting 17 before us. Thank you.</p> <p>18 SENATOR GONZALEZ: I think the floor is 19 yours.</p> <p>20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator 21 Valladares, would you like to respond?</p> <p>22 SENATOR VALLADARES: Thank you. Again, to 23 clarify, this is a really simple amendment. It is three 24 lines. This is about fairness. This is about holding 25 ourselves, elected members of a Legislature, to the same</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 126</p> <p>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.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>Senator Gonzalez, you are recognized.</p> <p>SENATOR GONZALEZ: Madam President, I ask that we lay the amendments on the table asking for an aye vote.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Secretary, please call the roll.</p> <p>THE SECRETARY: Allen.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Alvarado-Gil.</p> <p>Archuleta.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Arreguin.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Ashby.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Becker.</p> <p>Aye.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 127</p> <p>Blakespear.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Cabaldon.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Caballero.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Cervantes.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Choi.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Cortese.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Dahle.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Durazo.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Gonzalez.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Grayson.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Grove.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Hurtado.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Jones.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 128</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Laird.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Limon.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>McGuire.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>McNerney.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Menjivar.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Niello.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Ochoa Bogh.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Padilla.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Perez.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Reyes.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Richardson.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Rubio.</p> <p>Aye.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 129</p> <p>Seyarto.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Smallwood-Cuevas.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Stern.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Strickland.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Umberg.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Valladares.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Wahab.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Weber Pierson.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Wiener.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes 30, noes 9.</p> <p>The amendments are laid at the table. We will continue our debate.</p> <p>Senator Wiener, you are recognized.</p> <p>SENATOR WIENER: Thank you very much, Madam President. Because this is really about California punching back against Donald Trump. Donald Trump has</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 130</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>25 The Republicans in Congress voted to kick</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 131</p> <p>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.</p> <p>4 The Supreme Court is not checking him.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 132</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 --</p> <p>18 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Point of order.</p> <p>19 SENATOR WIENER: -- and disappearing them.</p> <p>20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.</p> <p>21 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Point of order.</p> <p>22 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.</p> <p>23 What is your point of order?</p> <p>24 SENATOR STRICKLAND: I deeply respect my 25 colleague from San Francisco and his passion about a lot</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 133</p> <p>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 --</p> <p>6 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you so much, 7 Senator Strickland. You've stated your point of order. 8 Just a moment.</p> <p>9 SENATOR WIENER: Madam President, it's 10 directly relevant.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>17 Senator Wiener, you may continue. Thank 18 you.</p> <p>19 SENATOR WIENER: Thank you very much. 20 Madam President.</p> <p>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</p>

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<p>Page 134</p> <p>1 California and other states that don't support his 2 fascism.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>23 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Wiener, 24 let's -- 25 SENATOR WIENER: Yes.</p>	<p>Page 135</p> <p>1 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: -- go back to the 2 -- the bill before us.</p> <p>3 SENATOR WIENER: Yes.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>10 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>11 Senator Reyes, you are recognized.</p> <p>12 SENATOR REYES: Thank you, Madam 13 President.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>
<p>Page 136</p> <p>1 to -- many of them are going to lose this. That is an 2 injustice.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Page 137</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>16 Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 138</p> <p>1 we have a responsibility to correct what is wrong.</p> <p>2 If it is unjust, it is incorrect. We are</p> <p>3 here to protect democracy. And I've got to tell you that</p> <p>4 we take this responsibility -- I take this responsibility</p> <p>5 very seriously. And I am so proud to have returned to</p> <p>6 this floor at this time to exercise my right to join with</p> <p>7 my colleagues in exercising this responsibility and to</p> <p>8 correct something that is so wrong and so unjust. Thank</p> <p>9 you, Madam President.</p> <p>10 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>11 Senator Strickland, you are recognized.</p> <p>12 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Thank you,</p> <p>13 Ms. President, members. I would like to bring it back to</p> <p>14 the bill that's before us instead of rehash the</p> <p>15 Presidential campaign. And I also -- I want to point out</p> <p>16 on the open of this debate, Mr. Leader, who I have deep</p> <p>17 respect for, said we had fake outrage.</p> <p>18 I'm here to say there's nothing fake about</p> <p>19 our outrage on our side of the aisle. I hear a lot of</p> <p>20 different terminologies being used by the other side.</p> <p>21 The word "authoritarian" came up very, very frequently.</p> <p>22 Well, it's authoritarian to have a predetermined</p> <p>23 election, and that's exactly what will happen if we pass</p> <p>24 and the people pass ACA 8. We will have predetermined</p> <p>25 elections where there's no competition in California, and</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 139</p> <p>1 that is authoritarian.</p> <p>2 I do trust the voters of California. And</p> <p>3 a lot of the members here say, well, why don't you just</p> <p>4 trust the voters of California, because they get to</p> <p>5 decide the final say in November? I do trust the voters.</p> <p>6 However, I don't trust the truth in advertising. We need</p> <p>7 to have truth in advertising. And when you look at</p> <p>8 what's going to be called the title and summary with the</p> <p>9 Attorney General, the first lines are going to be, do you</p> <p>10 want to keep the non-partisan Citizens Redistricting</p> <p>11 Commission?</p> <p>12 Members, you know, that's not true. You</p> <p>13 know, that's not truth in advertising. And I'm glad one</p> <p>14 of my colleagues called out the high-speed rail because</p> <p>15 at the time when that came forward, I said there was no</p> <p>16 truth in advertising to that bill. Because they said it</p> <p>17 won't be \$33 billion, and it won't go from San Francisco</p> <p>18 to Los Angeles.</p> <p>19 SENATOR CORTESE: Point of order.</p> <p>20 SENATOR STRICKLAND: By the way --</p> <p>21 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.</p> <p>22 SENATOR STRICKLAND: -- I'm responding --</p> <p>23 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.</p> <p>24 Just a moment.</p> <p>25 SENATOR STRICKLAND: -- to --</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 140</p> <p>1 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.</p> <p>2 What is your point of order?</p> <p>3 SENATOR CORTESE: Point of order. There's</p> <p>4 nothing on the floor before us today that has anything to</p> <p>5 do with high-speed rail and the arguments that a</p> <p>6 colleague from Huntington Beach has made in the past</p> <p>7 about high-speed rail. And I just ask that he stick to</p> <p>8 the matters on the floor. Thank you.</p> <p>9 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Madam President, I'm</p> <p>10 responding to a member.</p> <p>11 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Just a moment.</p> <p>12 Just a moment.</p> <p>13 SENATOR STRICKLAND: It's truth in</p> <p>14 advertising.</p> <p>15 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you. So</p> <p>16 seeing that a senator did mention high-speed rail</p> <p>17 earlier, we are going to allow for latitude to allow</p> <p>18 Senator Strickland to include those in his remarks.</p> <p>19 However, please try to keep your remarks as close to --</p> <p>20 SENATOR STRICKLAND: I will.</p> <p>21 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: -- the measure</p> <p>22 that we are debating as close as possible. Thank you.</p> <p>23 SENATOR STRICKLAND: Thank you, Madam</p> <p>24 President.</p> <p>25 Again, I have faith in the California</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 141</p> <p>1 people and the California voters, but when they're misled</p> <p>2 in terms of what they're actually voting for, like the</p> <p>3 high-speed rail and like what's before us here today,</p> <p>4 when you're telling the people of California, you're</p> <p>5 preserving the non-partisan Citizens Redistricting</p> <p>6 Commission, you're not being truthful to the people of</p> <p>7 California.</p> <p>8 And again, we've done this without</p> <p>9 transparency. We haven't done it in the light of day,</p> <p>10 but again, I firmly believe when it comes down to it, the</p> <p>11 people of California -- if this bill moves forward, the</p> <p>12 people of California will fight to preserve what is the</p> <p>13 non-partisan Citizens Redistricting Commission, a gold</p> <p>14 standard, because they don't want the authoritarian</p> <p>15 politics to have predetermined elections.</p> <p>16 They want to have a voice, and they will</p> <p>17 not have a voice in California if this bill moves</p> <p>18 forward. And instead of people in Congress earning the</p> <p>19 votes of their citizens, the elections will be</p> <p>20 predetermined. And I can't think of anything more</p> <p>21 authoritarian than having predetermined elections. And</p> <p>22 for that reason, I urge a no vote on ACA.</p> <p>23 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>24 Senator Padilla, you're recognized.</p> <p>25 SENATOR PADILLA: Thank you very much,</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 142</p> <p>Madam President and colleagues. I rise in support.</p> <p>1 You know, to be honest, Madam President,</p> <p>2 I'm reminded of a famous line from a classical movie</p> <p>3 we're all familiar with, The Wizard of Oz. Pay no</p> <p>4 attention to the man behind the curtain.</p> <p>5 The question before the Senate on this</p> <p>6 amendment is first whether we should adopt its content,</p> <p>7 what it does, and whether we should submit it to the</p> <p>8 voters of California for their good judgment to decide</p> <p>9 whether or not to adopt it and to put it into operation.</p> <p>10 But really, Madam President, this is a conversation about</p> <p>11 the why and not the what.</p> <p>12 I think we know the what, what a contrast</p> <p>13 it presents. Sitting President of the United States</p> <p>14 phones up the Governor of Texas with their time-honored</p> <p>15 tradition of gerrymandering and being in court defending</p> <p>16 that they don't violate the Voting Rights Act,</p> <p>17 disenfranchising voters, doing it their way, which</p> <p>18 they're entitled to do. But in this case, having a</p> <p>19 sitting President ask that they do it now, mid-census,</p> <p>20 with an eye towards the next midterm elections for</p> <p>21 representation in the United States House of</p> <p>22 Representatives.</p> <p>23 And so here we are with this question in</p> <p>24 response to that, but doing it slightly differently. Not</p> <p>25</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 143</p> <p>because a President called us up and said, can you find</p> <p>1 me some more districts? But putting the question before</p> <p>2 the people enfranchising and empowering the voters of</p> <p>3 California to make this critical decision and paying them</p> <p>4 the respect and honesty as to the why.</p> <p>5 And we should think about the why. Why is</p> <p>6 it important in the midterms for the US House of</p> <p>7 Representatives that there be an even exchange of debate</p> <p>8 and ideas, and opportunity for the people of this country</p> <p>9 to decide what that house looks like instead of giving</p> <p>10 greater weight to one point of view before the game is</p> <p>11 even played and diminishing the voices of another point</p> <p>12 of view? The why is pretty obvious. It's to continue</p> <p>13 the trajectory and the policies of regression, and</p> <p>14 reduction, and undoing that we are witnessing in this</p> <p>15 time at a level we've never seen in modern American</p> <p>16 history.</p> <p>17 That's why it's important to balance the</p> <p>18 equation so that all voices in our congressional midterms</p> <p>19 have an opportunity to be heard. Not for its own sake,</p> <p>20 but because of what is at stake.</p> <p>21 There was a young democratic President in</p> <p>22 January of 1961 named John Kennedy, who talked about</p> <p>23 being part of a generation of leaders, new leaders that</p> <p>24 were not and were unwilling to witness or permit the slow</p> <p>25</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 144</p> <p>undoing of the basic human rights for which this nation</p> <p>1 has always been committed here at home and around the</p> <p>2 world.</p> <p>3 And two decades later, a Republican</p> <p>4 President named Ronald Reagan, upon taking his oath,</p> <p>5 talked incredibly and articulately well about the fact</p> <p>6 that freedom and the dignity of the individual must be</p> <p>7 and has been more available and assured here in this</p> <p>8 country than in any other place on earth.</p> <p>9 The question is really about the why. Why</p> <p>10 did President Trump ask Texas to act? Why is it</p> <p>11 important that they rigged the game before it's played?</p> <p>12 It's not for its own sake. It's for what they want to</p> <p>13 continue to do, the slow undoing. The slow undoing that</p> <p>14 we've witnessed in the undoing of individual liberties</p> <p>15 and protections, ignoring courts of law. The snatching</p> <p>16 of persons by unidentified masked agents off the streets,</p> <p>17 something people haven't seen since behind the Iron</p> <p>18 Curtain during the Cold War in the most oppressive states</p> <p>19 in the world, pushing millions out of the social safety</p> <p>20 net. Those who can least afford it, and those who are</p> <p>21 most vulnerable.</p> <p>22 The undoing that is the biggest tax</p> <p>23 giveaway in American history to the wealthiest Americans</p> <p>24 at the expense of the most vulnerable. The retreating</p> <p>25</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 145</p> <p>from American leadership abroad in the world. The</p> <p>1 failure to defend territorial integrity, sovereignty, and</p> <p>2 democracy. To stand for something that we pledge</p> <p>3 allegiance to every day, the slow undoing.</p> <p>4 And the question today, colleagues, are we</p> <p>5 -- are we part of a new generation of leaders in 2025 who</p> <p>6 are unwilling to witness or permit that continued slow</p> <p>7 undoing of everything we hold dear? Are we going to be</p> <p>8 part of a generation of leaders that are determined to be</p> <p>9 sure that the freedom and dignity of the individual must</p> <p>10 be available and assured here in America, more so than in</p> <p>11 any other place on earth? That's what this debate is</p> <p>12 really about. We must be that generation of leaders.</p> <p>13 And I respectfully ask for aye vote.</p> <p>14 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>15 Senator Rubio, you are recognized.</p> <p>16 SENATOR RUBIO: Thank you, Madam</p> <p>17 President, ladies and gentlemen of the Senate.</p> <p>18 Today, I rise first and foremost as a</p> <p>19 teacher, just thinking about what this moment means to my</p> <p>20 students, as a former council member, just thinking of</p> <p>21 how this moment is going to impact my community, and as a</p> <p>22 formerly elected city clerk who ran elections, what this</p> <p>23 means to democracy. And I rise in strong support of ACA</p> <p>24 8, and now, of course, as a state senator, caring very</p> <p>25</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 146</p> <p>1 much about what happens in this beautiful state to the 2 beautiful people of California.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 147</p> <p>1 that ballroom that's going to have gold plating.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>25 Government should always be about service</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 148</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>15 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you. 16 Senator Smallwood-Cuevas, you are 17 recognized.</p> <p>18 SENATOR SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS: Thank you, 19 Madam President and colleagues. I rise in strong support 20 of ACA 8.</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 149</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>

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<p>Page 150</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Page 151</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>
<p>Page 152</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>13 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you. 14 Senator Arreguin, you are recognized. 15 SENATOR ARREGUIN: Thank you, Madam 16 President.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Page 153</p> <p>1 implementation of these congressional boundaries if the 2 voters approve this measure.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 154</p> <p>administration.</p> <p>1 I've also heard concerns about the cost of</p> <p>2 this special election, but let's put this in the context</p> <p>3 of what's at stake. Potentially billions of cuts to</p> <p>4 state grants and funding by the Trump administration.</p> <p>5 Within the first month, the Trump administration tried to</p> <p>6 freeze federal funds to California. And let's also</p> <p>7 remember that we are the largest donor to the federal</p> <p>8 government. One in four taxes are paid by Californians.</p> <p>9</p> <p>10 Thanks to the actions of Democrats in this</p> <p>11 Legislature by providing emergency funding and the</p> <p>12 actions of our Attorney General, we unfroze \$168 billion</p> <p>13 in federal funds, approximately a third of our state's</p> <p>14 budget. We also took action to prevent 11 billion in</p> <p>15 health and human services cuts, and 7 billion in</p> <p>16 transportation cuts.</p> <p>17 That doesn't even account for the</p> <p>18 devastating cuts that will be realized by the passage of</p> <p>19 HR 1 to our federal Medicaid budget, which will kick</p> <p>20 millions of Californians off of healthcare coverage, the</p> <p>21 cuts to SNAP, which will mean that children and families</p> <p>22 will starve in our state, the threatened cuts to</p> <p>23 education funding, and other essential programs. This</p> <p>24 will further crater our state's budget.</p> <p>25</p> <p>What's at stake is also our state's</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 155</p> <p>economic prosperity. This administration's trade</p> <p>1 policies are having a direct impact on our state's budget</p> <p>2 and are wreaking havoc on our state's economy.</p> <p>3</p> <p>4 So when we talk about budget deficits,</p> <p>5 where do we think they come from? My constituents in</p> <p>6 Senate District 7 in the East Bay and people across the</p> <p>7 nation are outraged seeing the federal government</p> <p>8 destroying their livelihoods. From dismantling our</p> <p>9 safety nets, eliminating healthcare coverage, reversing</p> <p>10 the progress that we've made on civil rights and on</p> <p>11 environmental protections, and the kidnapping of our</p> <p>12 hardworking immigrant neighbors.</p> <p>13</p> <p>14 Our constituents call on us to take</p> <p>15 meaningful action during these unprecedented times. And</p> <p>16 ACA 8 is that action to give voters an opportunity to</p> <p>17 take a stand.</p> <p>18</p> <p>19 Now, I'm a proud supporter of independent</p> <p>20 redistricting, something that our state will retain, even</p> <p>21 if the voters approve this map. And I believe that all</p> <p>22 states should have independent commissions, something</p> <p>23 that congressional Republicans have long opposed.</p> <p>24</p> <p>25 And so as the author had mentioned, ACA 8</p> <p>specifically calls on Congress to adopt legislation and</p> <p>to put on before all the states a constitutional</p> <p>amendment to allow for independent commissions</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 156</p> <p>1 nationwide. But why have Republicans in Congress opposed</p> <p>2 these efforts? Why are they afraid of giving power to</p> <p>3 redistrict to the people? Do they not believe in free</p> <p>4 and fair elections? To me, the answer is simple.</p> <p>5 Because if the people had their way, Congress would</p> <p>6 actually reflect the will of the people.</p> <p>7</p> <p>8 So Trump's solution is to push our 250-</p> <p>9 year experiment in democracy to the brink in order to</p> <p>10 hold on to power.</p> <p>11</p> <p>12 So the question before us is a simple one.</p> <p>13 Will we enable this assault on our democracy, a necessary</p> <p>14 step to continue the President's attacks on immigrants,</p> <p>15 the LGBTQ plus community, on reproductive rights, on</p> <p>16 anyone who dares to stand against authoritarianism? Or</p> <p>17 will we say enough is enough and take action to counter</p> <p>18 these attacks?</p> <p>19</p> <p>20 During this critical moment, I urge you to</p> <p>21 stand on the side of democracy. Colleagues, the country</p> <p>22 is watching what we are doing here today, and history</p> <p>23 will remember what we do. With that, I respectfully ask</p> <p>24 for your aye vote on ACA 8.</p> <p>25</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>Senator Cortese, you are recognized.</p> <p>SENATOR CORTESE: Well, thank you, Madam</p> <p>President. I rise in support of ACA 8.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 157</p> <p>We are here today because our democracy is</p> <p>1 under attack, as we've heard over and over and over</p> <p>2 again. But what does that really mean in specifics?</p> <p>3 We've seen the dangers of unchecked power. What does</p> <p>4 that really mean today in this context? You know, after</p> <p>5 the last national elections, the President of the United</p> <p>6 States was able to consolidate power to the executive</p> <p>7 branch in the House and the Senate, and he has a very</p> <p>8 favorable judicial branch.</p> <p>9</p> <p>10 Most of us are taught in eighth-grade</p> <p>11 civics that those three branches of government are</p> <p>12 supposed to check themselves, but democracy was in play.</p> <p>13 The American people voted, and we are where we are. But</p> <p>14 when you talk about trusting the voters, what I've seen</p> <p>15 over and over and over again in my lifetime, especially</p> <p>16 my voting lifetime, is that the American people are the</p> <p>17 other branch of government.</p> <p>18</p> <p>19 The American people will check and will</p> <p>20 swing the pendulum back when they see the three branches</p> <p>21 of government become too extreme. And that's happened.</p> <p>22 And the President of the United States was surrounded by</p> <p>23 his own advisors, who said that your extreme policies are</p> <p>24 going to cost us the midterm elections. And when you</p> <p>25 cost us the midterm elections, you cost us the</p> <p>consolidation of power. This, as my colleague from</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 158</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 159</p> <p>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.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 160</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 161</p> <p>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</p>

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<p>percent of the vote.</p> <p>It continues down the line, and this ACA to gerrymander even further, the seats that you have in California, where Republicans got 40 percent of the vote and we occupy 17 percent of the congressional seats. And to allow these maps with no other choice other than the voters to say no for this to happen, based on the rhetoric that is coming out of this body, that it's President Trump.</p> <p>It's a court case. The documents are right there. I'd be glad to send it all to you. Most of you are attorneys. I barely have a high school diploma, and I was able to read that and determine where the lawsuit came from. Respectfully ask for a no vote.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>Senator Perez, you are recognized.</p> <p>SENATOR PEREZ: Thank you, Madam President.</p> <p>I'm proud to rise in support of ACA 8 as well as a co-author of the Election Rigging Response Act. You know, I think it's really important that we articulate why we are here today and why we are even taking up ACA 8.</p> <p>Over the last several weeks, we have seen Texas Republicans, along with Governor Greg Abbott, take</p>	<p>actions to try to redraw their maps to add an additional five Republican seats. In addition to that, they have threatened Texas Democrats, enforcing police force against them to go searching for them, threatening to utilize the FBI, and in one case, even locking a Texas legislator in the chambers, refusing to allow her to leave unless she signed and agreed to have 24-hour surveillance.</p> <p>We have Texas members of the Legislature, democratic members that are being followed by police officers in the grocery store. This is complete absurdity and complete madness. And while I heard clearly from my Republican colleagues that they do not believe that President Donald Trump reached out to Governor Greg Abbott, we have seen otherwise. That the President has reached out to Texas Governor Greg Abbott to ask him to deliver these five Republican seats. That he's reached out to the states of Missouri, Florida, Ohio, Indiana, and possibly even Kansas in order to redistrict the maps so that he can turn the 2026 election in his favor.</p> <p>Now, why is this happening? That is because the President has moved forward a set of policies that is wildly unpopular. We have seen the cost of living skyrocket. We have seen ICE raids across our</p>
<p>community.</p> <p>We had a man die in Camarillo. Mr. Alanis (phonetic), who died while running from an ICE raid, fell more than 30 feet to his death. Just a few days ago, a man died in my district. Roberto Carlos Montoya Valdez was killed when he was running from an ICE raid and was struck by a vehicle. This is unacceptable, and I want to emphasize this, that lives are on the line. That is what is on the line.</p> <p>We are not just talking simply about funding. We talk a lot about numbers in this House and the millions of dollars that have been cut from education, from healthcare, from food programs, the millions of dollars that are being spent on additional ICE raids, on surveillance, and policing of our communities.</p> <p>But what has that ultimately resulted in? That has ultimately resulted in people dying. People losing access to critical healthcare. Less people showing up to their doctors' appointments. Less people having access to healthy and nutritious food. And ultimately, that is going to have an impact on the 2026 elections because voters know, Americans know, regardless of party, they are seeing that these policies are not yielding results for them. That this is an</p>	<p>administration that is more interested in investing in billionaires, in trillionaires, and their interest in giving them huge tax breaks than everyday working people like you and me, and it is utterly unacceptable.</p> <p>Now, what we have done here today in introducing ACA 8 is allow us to neutralize what is happening in Texas so that we can create an additional five Democratic seats to stop this mess and stop this chaos.</p> <p>But what does it also do? It protects our independent redistricting commission. Something that was approved by the voters, and it was not easy to get it approved. It was put on the ballot several times. We finally earned the support of the voters. You have both Democrats and Republicans that serve on that Commission. They will be redrawing the lines come 2030 again. And that is important. That is critical.</p> <p>And I want to highlight that it is Democratic states that have independent redistricting commissions. It is not Republican states. In fact, here in the United States, the five most gerrymandered states are Republican states. And we need to call that out to continue to pretend as if partisan gerrymandering was just something that came up, as if California created this. To watch the Vice President, JD Vance, continue to</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 166</p> <p>1 spread this misinformation is utterly unacceptable.</p> <p>2 What do we know? That back in 2021, when</p> <p>3 Democrats introduced a measure to ban partisan</p> <p>4 gerrymandering, it was Senate Republicans who killed it.</p> <p>5 And we could have stopped this mess then, but they have</p> <p>6 refused to allow such a measure to pass.</p> <p>7 And we know that come 2026, voters are</p> <p>8 going to turn out, and they're going to send a message.</p> <p>9 They're going to send a message that they do not support</p> <p>10 cuts to food stamps. That they do not support cuts to</p> <p>11 Medicare programs. That they do not support ICE raids in</p> <p>12 their communities, robbing their neighbors in broad</p> <p>13 daylight and causing deaths left and right of hardworking</p> <p>14 people - farm workers, day laborers, blue collar workers</p> <p>15 that look like my father and my grandfather. That they</p> <p>16 do not support Republicans leaving session early in</p> <p>17 Congress to prevent the release of the Epstein files.</p> <p>18 We are going to hear loud and clear come</p> <p>19 2026, and that's what this moment is about. California</p> <p>20 is stepping up. We did not want this battle. And I want</p> <p>21 to make very clear, and folks that have worked with me</p> <p>22 know, I have been very invested in independent</p> <p>23 redistricting. We have moved measures like this forward</p> <p>24 at the local level. But unfortunately, this is a moment</p> <p>25 that requires us to respond. California didn't pick this</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 167</p> <p>1 battle, but we can end it. And that is our job here</p> <p>2 today. I urge an aye vote on ACA 8, and I'm so proud to</p> <p>3 be supporting and co-authoring this message. Thank you</p> <p>4 so much.</p> <p>5 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>6 Senator Niello, you are recognized.</p> <p>7 SENATOR NIELLO: Thank you, Madam</p> <p>8 President.</p> <p>9 With regard to some final comments of my</p> <p>10 friend from Pasadena relative to who supports and doesn't</p> <p>11 support redistricting, at least in this state, I would</p> <p>12 just make reference to my past historical notes when I</p> <p>13 spoke to the previous bill.</p> <p>14 But I have a question of the author.</p> <p>15 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Will the author</p> <p>16 take a question?</p> <p>17 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes, Madam President.</p> <p>18 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>19 You may proceed.</p> <p>20 SENATOR NIELLO: And in connection with</p> <p>21 that, I'd like permission to read.</p> <p>22 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Seeing no</p> <p>23 objection, you may proceed.</p> <p>24 SENATOR NIELLO: I am reading from Article</p> <p>25 21, Redistricting of the State Constitution,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 168</p> <p>1 Redistricting of Senate Assembly Congressional and Board</p> <p>2 of Equalization Districts. This is Section 2J.</p> <p>3 "If the Commission does not approve a</p> <p>4 final map by at least the requisite votes or" -- and this</p> <p>5 is the relevant section -- "if voters disapprove a</p> <p>6 certified final map in a referendum, the Secretary of</p> <p>7 State shall immediately petition the California Supreme</p> <p>8 Court for an order directing the appointment of special</p> <p>9 masters to adjust the boundary lines of that map in</p> <p>10 accordance with the redistricting criteria and</p> <p>11 requirements set forth in three other previous</p> <p>12 subdivisions. Upon its approval of the master's map, the</p> <p>13 court shall certify the resulting map to the Secretary of</p> <p>14 State, which map shall constitute the certified final map</p> <p>15 for the subject type district."</p> <p>16 Now, within the allowance of ACA 8 and the</p> <p>17 issues we're speaking today, it does ask the voters to</p> <p>18 disapprove the certified final maps, but with other maps</p> <p>19 being substituted, which is in direct conflict with that</p> <p>20 specified by this constitutional requirement. So my</p> <p>21 question is: how does that not make this</p> <p>22 unconstitutional?</p> <p>23 SENATOR CABALDON: Thank you, Madam</p> <p>24 President. First let me emphasize that the Senate has</p> <p>25 paid close attention to each word and each provision of</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 169</p> <p>1 the constitutional amendment in the construction of this</p> <p>2 bill, along with our colleagues in the assembly but also</p> <p>3 to point out what might be the obvious - that this is</p> <p>4 Assembly Constitutional Amendment Number 8, and</p> <p>5 therefore, its provisions already being not inconsistent</p> <p>6 with the constitution will amend the constitution, and</p> <p>7 they will be, by definition -- if the voters choose to</p> <p>8 enact them, they will be constitutional.</p> <p>9 SENATOR NIELLO: So in other words, you</p> <p>10 are actually amending Article 21.</p> <p>11 SENATOR CABALDON: No. So Article 21 --</p> <p>12 Article 21 of the constitution will be -- remains in</p> <p>13 place as a result of ACA 8. ACA 8 adds new provisions to</p> <p>14 the constitution and an alternative procedure that is</p> <p>15 temporary and for this one purpose and this one time, an</p> <p>16 alternative that the voters have the ability through</p> <p>17 their votes to enact. And the Senate has complied in</p> <p>18 every respect with the entire constitution in the</p> <p>19 drafting of this measure.</p> <p>20 SENATOR NIELLO: So this also amends or</p> <p>21 basically eliminates Section 2J.</p> <p>22 SENATOR CABALDON: Now, Section 2J</p> <p>23 remember --</p> <p>24 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Excuse me.</p> <p>25 SENATOR CABALDON: -- let us --</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 170</p> <p>1 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Excuse me.</p> <p>2 SENATOR CABALDON: Oh sorry, Madam</p> <p>3 President.</p> <p>4 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Will the Senator</p> <p>5 take another question?</p> <p>6 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes, Madam President.</p> <p>7 Section 2J -- as you know, my colleague</p> <p>8 from Fair Oaks, Section 2J exists in the article that</p> <p>9 describes the procedure by which the commission</p> <p>10 constructs the maps each -- after each decennial census.</p> <p>11 And in fact, that is the first line of that article is</p> <p>12 each 10 years after the census this -- the following is</p> <p>13 about what is to occur.</p> <p>14 This ACA 8 creates a different provision</p> <p>15 of the constitution, this alternative procedure that</p> <p>16 would be temporary for this one-time purpose. And so as</p> <p>17 long as it's not inconsistent with other provisions of</p> <p>18 the constitution, this measure gives the people the power</p> <p>19 to design the proper approach for this one time temporary</p> <p>20 measure. So it is not inconsistent with it. It fully</p> <p>21 complies with the constitution.</p> <p>22 SENATOR NIELLO: Well, thank you for that.</p> <p>23 On my own time, all of the testimony here</p> <p>24 by everybody that we believe we have an excellent system</p> <p>25 for redistricting after each census. And we will most</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 171</p> <p>1 certainly go back to that after 2030. Nonetheless,</p> <p>2 again, referring back to my little history dissertation</p> <p>3 earlier today and the involvement, reported involvement</p> <p>4 of the DCCC in this action that is going on that has been</p> <p>5 developed behind the scenes. One has to be awfully</p> <p>6 suspicious of significant changes to this process and</p> <p>7 whether, indeed, the intent or the power to continue on</p> <p>8 our previous track after 2030 is of great concern to me,</p> <p>9 and I think should be of great concern to everybody who</p> <p>10 votes in favor of this ACA and the other two bills that</p> <p>11 we have, and of great concern to the voters of California</p> <p>12 once this goes on the ballot.</p> <p>13 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>14 Senator Wahab, you are recognized.</p> <p>15 SENATOR WAHAB: Thank you.</p> <p>16 I first just want to state that I try</p> <p>17 really hard to represent my entire district, both</p> <p>18 Republicans, Democrats, as well as independents, non-</p> <p>19 voters, new immigrants, and anybody that lives in my</p> <p>20 district. And I believe that is the role of when we</p> <p>21 create policy, it is for the entire State of California</p> <p>22 representing all people, just as when we do a census.</p> <p>23 It's about all people.</p> <p>24 And it was referenced about lawsuits. In</p> <p>25 2023, the Supreme Court ruled in Abbott versus Perez,</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 172</p> <p>1 that Texas's redistricting plan violated the voting</p> <p>2 writers -- the Voting Rights Act, mandating that voters</p> <p>3 of color be placed in districts with more opportunity to</p> <p>4 select their preferred candidates. And continuously we</p> <p>5 have seen that Texas has been violating the Voting Rights</p> <p>6 Act since 1965, and even this most recent action in</p> <p>7 August of this month, of 2025, we are seeing violations</p> <p>8 being made.</p> <p>9 And I heard multiple times today a number</p> <p>10 of things - that you know it's wrong, what's being done;</p> <p>11 and there's zero transparency; and it's a power grab.</p> <p>12 And I call that into question. So when President Trump</p> <p>13 calls for Texas to do a partisan mid-decade redraw, which</p> <p>14 handed themselves plus five GOP seats behind closed</p> <p>15 doors, is that okay? Shutting down Democrats in these</p> <p>16 rushed maps? Is that okay? The fact that California is</p> <p>17 different. We're giving voters the final say and</p> <p>18 opportunity to use their voice by voting on this effort.</p> <p>19 The highest form of transparency for all voters.</p> <p>20 We hear that it's unconstitutional or</p> <p>21 overturning the will of the voters. And the US</p> <p>22 Constitution does not forbid mid-decade redistricting.</p> <p>23 In fact, California's constitution requires voter</p> <p>24 approval, which is exactly what we are doing. We are</p> <p>25 following the rules and going to the voters. The</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 173</p> <p>1 Commission remains in place even after this. This is a</p> <p>2 temporary safeguard until 2030. And again, it's up to</p> <p>3 the voters, not politicians deciding whether to authorize</p> <p>4 this action; that's respecting the will of the people.</p> <p>5 We are going to the voters.</p> <p>6 So I've heard Democrats are hypocrites,</p> <p>7 but the real hypocrisy, I will say, is claiming to</p> <p>8 support housing, childcare, and healthcare, but voting no</p> <p>9 consistently on funding those items. Calling themselves</p> <p>10 the party of law and order but excusing President Trump's</p> <p>11 attempt to overturn the 2020 election and pardoning the</p> <p>12 January 6th rioters. Claiming to care about women and</p> <p>13 children, but blocking the release of the Epstein files</p> <p>14 of sexual abuse of children and women.</p> <p>15 Call for the release of the Epstein files.</p> <p>16 I want to see the Epstein files. I'm sure many of my</p> <p>17 colleagues, as much as we talk about it, as much as we</p> <p>18 talk about human trafficking, children, women, women of</p> <p>19 color, and the abuse of power, call for the release of</p> <p>20 the Epstein files. And he died under President Trump's</p> <p>21 administration with a failure of cameras, dereliction of</p> <p>22 duty of guards, and much more, and the other party is</p> <p>23 silent.</p> <p>24 And then people want to say, especially in</p> <p>25 California, especially at the national level, that</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 174</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>16 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>17 Seeing no further discussion or debate, 18 Senator Cabaldon, would you like to close?</p> <p>19 SENATOR CABALDON: Yes. Thank you, Madam 20 President.</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 175</p> <p>1 all of the states for nationwide redistricting reform.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>25 Now, in the elections committee hearing</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 176</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 177</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>

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<p>our votes if this measure allows the ACA to go on the ballot.</p> <p>And it still matters because HR 1 and the census changes, everything else is still pending in terms of implementation. And so let us not in a year when one of our residents says, "I'm not getting my Social Security" and none of the helplines -- they've all been turned off. DOGE fired everybody. Let us not say, well, you know, what about the cost of that special election when somebody says, my hospital in the rural parts of my district is gone. Who's going to stand up and say, but did you know that that one bill had an urgency clause in it?</p> <p>When my Navy son has been abducted off the streets in LA, who of us is going to say, but the amendments really weren't germane? When we lose our votes, either directly through the mail or our seats in Congress, which of us is going to say, well, you know, the voters might have gotten it wrong if we gave them their voice. When Marines and National Guard are ordered, against their will, to occupy, I don't know, West Sacramento, San Diego, Murrieta, any other part of California as they have -- already doing in DC and as they started here in California, will we say that the voters just couldn't be trusted to make a hard</p>	<p>complicated decision like this? No. This is what this vote is about.</p> <p>Let the voters make the decision. We've heard them, and we are responding. And they are the ultimate judges of whether this is the right way forward. The voters of California are sovereign. Regardless of Article J, they are sovereign. They have the authority. They have the legitimacy. And with ACA they will have the power to make this right.</p> <p>Madam President, I urgent aye vote.</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>Secretary, please call the roll.</p> <p>THE SECRETARY: Allen.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Alvarado-Gil.</p> <p>Archuleta.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Arreguin.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Ashby.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Becker.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Blakespear.</p> <p>Aye.</p>
<p>Cabaldon.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Caballero.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Cervantes.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Choi.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Cortese.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Dahle.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Durazo.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Gonzalez.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Grayson.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Grove.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Hurtado.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Jones.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Laird.</p>	<p>Aye.</p> <p>Limon.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>McGuire.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>McNerney.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Menjivar.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Niello.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Ochoa Bogh.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Padilla.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Perez.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Reyes.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Richardson.</p> <p>Rubio.</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>Seyarto.</p> <p>Smallwood-Cuevas.</p> <p>Aye.</p>

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<p>1 Stern.</p> <p>2 Aye.</p> <p>3 Strickland.</p> <p>4 No.</p> <p>5 Umberg.</p> <p>6 Aye.</p> <p>7 Valladares.</p> <p>8 No.</p> <p>9 Wahab.</p> <p>10 Aye.</p> <p>11 Weber Pierson.</p> <p>12 Aye.</p> <p>13 Wiener.</p> <p>14 Aye.</p> <p>15 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Secretary, please</p> <p>16 call the absent members</p> <p>17 THE SECRETARY: Alvarado-Gil.</p> <p>18 Richardson.</p> <p>19 Aye.</p> <p>20 Seyarto.</p> <p>21 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes 30, noes 8.</p> <p>22 That measure passes.</p> <p>23 Members we have messages from the</p> <p>24 Assembly.</p> <p>25 Secretary, please read.</p>	<p>1 THE SECRETARY: "Assembly chamber August</p> <p>2 21, 2025. Madam President, I am directed to inform your</p> <p>3 honorable body that the Assembly amended and on this day</p> <p>4 passed as amended Senate Bill 280 and respectfully</p> <p>5 request your honorable body to concur and send amendments</p> <p>6 to Parker, Chief Clerk of the Assembly above bill order</p> <p>7 to unfinished business.</p> <p>8 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>9 Members, we will now move to Senate</p> <p>10 supplemental file number two.</p> <p>11 Secretary, please read.</p> <p>12 THE SECRETARY: Senate Bill 280 by Senator</p> <p>13 Cervantes in equating to elections, making an</p> <p>14 appropriation, therefore, and declaring the urgency</p> <p>15 thereof to take effect immediately.</p> <p>16 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Senator Cervantes,</p> <p>17 you are recognized.</p> <p>18 SENATOR CERVANTES: Thank you, Madam</p> <p>19 President and members.</p> <p>20 Today I am proud to present Senate Bill</p> <p>21 280, which calls for a statewide special election on</p> <p>22 November 4 of this year. This special election gives</p> <p>23 Californians the power to decide whether we redraw our</p> <p>24 congressional districts to protect fair representation</p> <p>25 through Assembly Constitutional Amendment 8.</p>
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<p>1 SB 280 also appropriates the funding</p> <p>2 necessary for the Secretary of State and our county</p> <p>3 registrars to administer this election. The bill also</p> <p>4 makes the necessary statutory changes to allow the June</p> <p>5 2026 statewide primary to be held on time.</p> <p>6 Members, this is not politics as usual.</p> <p>7 This is a rigged game. We are here because the federal</p> <p>8 administration and Republicans in Congress know they are</p> <p>9 losing. They see the scoreboard. They know their</p> <p>10 playbook is unpopular and instead of competing fairly,</p> <p>11 they are changing the rules of the game. Think about it.</p> <p>12 They send mass federal agents into our community,</p> <p>13 snatching people up because their skin tone looks like</p> <p>14 mine.</p> <p>15 They slashed healthcare from millions</p> <p>16 while handing billionaires a tax break and slapping</p> <p>17 working families with tariff taxes on everyday essentials</p> <p>18 like coffee and bananas. They know voters will hold them</p> <p>19 accountable. So what do they do? They redraw the field.</p> <p>20 Just yesterday in Texas, Republicans have</p> <p>21 redrawn congressional maps so that instead of voters</p> <p>22 choosing their representatives, politicians get to choose</p> <p>23 their voters.</p> <p>24 Let's be clear, the goal is to lock in</p> <p>25 power, but in California we aren't just spectators in the</p>	<p>1 stand, we are stepping up to the plate. California is</p> <p>2 ready to defend fairness, to defend representation, and</p> <p>3 to defend democracy.</p> <p>4 Now, some of our colleagues will ask: why</p> <p>5 the urgency? Why the special election? Because this is</p> <p>6 a five alarm fire blazing in our democracy. And if you</p> <p>7 don't see that, it's because you're choosing to ignore</p> <p>8 it. And let's not pretend that this timeline is unusual.</p> <p>9 Republicans were more than happy to rush</p> <p>10 through the failed recall of Governor Newsom in 75 days.</p> <p>11 The clock ran then, and it can run now. Yes. This</p> <p>12 election will cost money, but let's be clear, the price</p> <p>13 tag is less than President Trump's golden White House</p> <p>14 ballroom.</p> <p>15 What's the cost of protecting fair play in</p> <p>16 America? It's nothing compared to letting President</p> <p>17 Trump cheat the country. We will not let him move the</p> <p>18 goalpost. The truth is a republic where people fear</p> <p>19 practicing their beliefs or worry their vote won't be</p> <p>20 counted, is no republic at all. That is not a democracy.</p> <p>21 On November 4th, the voters of California</p> <p>22 can punch back. They can say no more to power grabs.</p> <p>23 They can say no more to cheating. They can take back</p> <p>24 their agency. Take it back at the ballot box. Take back</p> <p>25 your power on November 4th. Take it back for California</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 186</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 187</p> <p>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</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 188</p> <p>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.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 189</p> <p>1 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you. 2 Seeing no further discussion or debate, 3 Senator Cervantes, would you like to close? 4 SENATOR CERVANTES: Thank you, Madam 5 President. 6 On November 4th, Californians have a 7 choice. Let Trump cheat or punch back. Take back your 8 agency. Take it back at the ballot box. Take it back 9 for California and for the country. 10 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you. 11 Secretary, please call the roll. 12 THE SECRETARY: Allen. 13 Aye. 14 Alvarado-Gil. 15 Archuleta. 16 Aye. 17 Arreguin. 18 Aye. 19 Ashby. 20 Aye. 21 Becker. 22 Aye. 23 Blakespear. 24 Aye. 25 Cabaldon.</p>

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<p>1 Aye. 2 Caballero. 3 Aye. 4 Cervantes. 5 Aye. 6 Choi. 7 No. 8 Cortese. 9 Aye. 10 Dahle. 11 No. 12 Durazo. 13 Aye. 14 Gonzalez. 15 Aye. 16 Grayson. 17 Aye. 18 Grove. 19 No. 20 Hurtado. 21 Aye. 22 Jones. 23 No. 24 Laird. 25 Aye.</p>	<p>1 Limon. 2 Aye. 3 McGuire. 4 Aye. 5 McNehey. 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.</p>	
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<p>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.</p>	<p>1 Senator McGuire, are you prepared to make 2 these amendments? 3 SENATOR MOGUIRE: 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.</p>	

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 194</p> <p>Archuleta.</p> <p>1 Aye.</p> <p>2 Arreguin.</p> <p>3 Aye.</p> <p>4 Ashby.</p> <p>5 Aye.</p> <p>6 Becker.</p> <p>7 Aye.</p> <p>8 Blakespear.</p> <p>9 Aye.</p> <p>10 Cabaldon.</p> <p>11 Aye.</p> <p>12 Caballero.</p> <p>13 Aye.</p> <p>14 Cervantes.</p> <p>15 Aye.</p> <p>16 Choi.</p> <p>17 No.</p> <p>18 Cortese.</p> <p>19 Aye.</p> <p>20 Dahle.</p> <p>21 No.</p> <p>22 Durazo.</p> <p>23 Aye.</p> <p>24 Gonzalez.</p> <p>25</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 195</p> <p>Aye.</p> <p>1 Grayson.</p> <p>2 Aye.</p> <p>3 Grove.</p> <p>4 No.</p> <p>5 Hurtado.</p> <p>6 Aye.</p> <p>7 Jones.</p> <p>8 No.</p> <p>9 Laird.</p> <p>10 Aye.</p> <p>11 Limon.</p> <p>12 Aye.</p> <p>13 McGuire.</p> <p>14 Aye.</p> <p>15 McVerney.</p> <p>16 Aye.</p> <p>17 Menjivar.</p> <p>18 Aye.</p> <p>19 Niello.</p> <p>20 No.</p> <p>21 Ochoa Bogh.</p> <p>22 No.</p> <p>23 Padilla.</p> <p>24 Aye.</p> <p>25</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 196</p> <p>Perez.</p> <p>1 Aye.</p> <p>2 Reyes.</p> <p>3 Aye.</p> <p>4 Richardson.</p> <p>5 Aye.</p> <p>6 Rubio.</p> <p>7 Aye.</p> <p>8 Seyarto.</p> <p>9 Smallwood-Cuevas.</p> <p>10 Aye.</p> <p>11 Stern.</p> <p>12 Aye.</p> <p>13 Strickland.</p> <p>14 No.</p> <p>15 Unberg.</p> <p>16 Aye.</p> <p>17 Valladares.</p> <p>18 No.</p> <p>19 Wahab.</p> <p>20 Aye.</p> <p>21 Weber Pierson.</p> <p>22 Aye.</p> <p>23 Wiener.</p> <p>24 Aye.</p> <p>25</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 197</p> <p>SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Ayes 30, noes 8.</p> <p>1 The amendments are adopted.</p> <p>2 There are additional floor amendments at</p> <p>3 the desk. If there are no objections, they will be</p> <p>4 deemed adopted. Seeing no objection, they are deemed</p> <p>5 adopted.</p> <p>6 Are there any other motions, resolutions?</p> <p>7 Anyone else want to remove an item?</p> <p>8 Senator Hurtado, you are recognized.</p> <p>9 SENATOR HURTADO: Under motions and</p> <p>10 resolutions. Thank you, Madam President.</p> <p>11 At the request of the author, please pull</p> <p>12 file item 250 AB 1069 bans off the consent calendar.</p> <p>13 Thank you.</p> <p>14 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: The desk will</p> <p>15 note.</p> <p>16 Senator Allen?</p> <p>17 SENATOR ALLEN: Thank you, Madam</p> <p>18 President. I'd like to request the author remove file</p> <p>19 item 231 AB 290 by Bower K. Hahn (phonetic) from the</p> <p>20 consent calendar for amendments.</p> <p>21 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: The desk will</p> <p>22 note.</p> <p>23 Senator Cervantes?</p> <p>24 SENATOR CERVANTES: At the request of the</p> <p>25</p>


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<p>author, I'd like to pull item 1511, AB 1511.</p> <p>1</p> <p>2 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: The desk will</p> <p>3 note.</p> <p>4 Senator Umberg?</p> <p>5 SENATOR UMBERG: Thank you, Madam</p> <p>6 President.</p> <p>7 Please remove file item number 238 AB 515</p> <p>8 from the consent calendar at the request of the author.</p> <p>9 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: The desk will</p> <p>10 note.</p> <p>11 Senator Cervantes, were you removing that</p> <p>12 bill from the consent calendar?</p> <p>13 SENATOR CERVANTES: Calendar, yes.</p> <p>14 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>15 Okay. All right.</p> <p>16 If there is no other business, Senator</p> <p>17 McGuire, the desk is clear.</p> <p>18 SENATOR MCGUIRE: First of all, Madam</p> <p>19 President, I want to take a moment to say thank you.</p> <p>20 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: I'm sorry, Senator</p> <p>21 McGuire.</p> <p>22 Senator Grove, you are recognized.</p> <p>23 SENATOR GROVE: Thank you. I apologize</p> <p>24 Mr. Pro tem. I had requested a point of personal</p> <p>25 privilege. They didn't call me. I apologize deeply.</p>	<p>Page 198</p> <p>Colleagues, on a lighter note after today,</p> <p>1</p> <p>2 for those of you that are Raiders fans or Saints fans,</p> <p>3 Derek Carr would be here on the floor on Monday. Please</p> <p>4 wear appropriate attire. Thank you.</p> <p>5 Sorry Erica -- Ms. Contreras.</p> <p>6 Only team colors.</p> <p>7 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>8 Now there is no other business.</p> <p>9 Senator McGuire, the desk is clear.</p> <p>10 SENATOR MCGUIRE: Thank you so much, Madam</p> <p>11 President.</p> <p>12 I want to take a moment to say thank you,</p> <p>13 first and foremost to our presiding officers of the week,</p> <p>14 Madam President and, of course, to Mr. Senator. Can we</p> <p>15 please give them a round of applause. Thank you to the</p> <p>16 good doctor and of course to Mr. Grayson who did a</p> <p>17 phenomenal job as well. This has been one heck of a week</p> <p>18 for presiding officers.</p> <p>19 Number two, I want to take a moment to say</p> <p>20 thank you to the senators who are in this chamber. We</p> <p>21 had some passionate, intense, and at times spicy debate</p> <p>22 today, but I think once we leave these chambers, we</p> <p>23 recognize, again, we are Californians first. Yes. We're</p> <p>24 going to have to fight the election rigging, but we also</p> <p>25 know that we have a lot to fix. And over the next three</p>
<p>Page 200</p> <p>weeks, we're going to continue to focus on where</p> <p>1</p> <p>2 California voters also want us to be - making life more</p> <p>3 affordable for them and their home. Lowering the cost of</p> <p>4 electricity bills, lowering the cost of housing, making</p> <p>5 sure that we continue to invest in strong public schools</p> <p>6 and making our communities more wildfire safe. That is</p> <p>7 where I think that we can all come together as</p> <p>8 Californians to be able to move this great state forward.</p> <p>9 I'm incredibly appreciative of the</p> <p>10 senators in this room. If you take a look at bodies like</p> <p>11 this across the nation, across the world, debates like</p> <p>12 this can get physical. And we are so lucky to be able to</p> <p>13 live in a country where we can have these discussions,</p> <p>14 have these discussions and debates and go home, still</p> <p>15 holding hands together on several issues that are in</p> <p>16 front of us. And I just want to say thank you to Leader</p> <p>17 Jones, to the Republican Caucus, the Democratic Caucus,</p> <p>18 for their incredible work. I hope that you get some rest</p> <p>19 this weekend.</p> <p>20 We have a long three weeks. We're going</p> <p>21 to jam about six months into the next three weeks. So</p> <p>22 gear up, drink some coffee. The next floor session is</p> <p>23 scheduled for Monday, August 25th.</p> <p>24 Madam majority leader into our floor team,</p> <p>25 thank you so much as well for all of the hard work.</p>	<p>Page 201</p> <p>We'll see you next Monday.</p> <p>1</p> <p>2 SENATOR WEBER PIERSON: Thank you.</p> <p>3</p> <p>4 The Senate is in recess until 3:30, at</p> <p>5 which time adjournment motion will be made. We will</p> <p>6 reconvene Monday, August 25, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.</p> <p>7</p> <p>8 (MEETING ADJOURNED)</p> <p>9</p> <p>10</p> <p>11</p> <p>12</p> <p>13</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p>

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<p style="text-align: right;">Page 202</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPTIONIST</p> <p>1</p> <p>2 I certify that the foregoing is a true and</p> <p>3 accurate transcript of the digital recording provided to</p> <p>4 me in this matter.</p> <p>5 I do further certify that I am neither a</p> <p>6 relative, nor employee, nor attorney of any of the</p> <p>7 parties to this action, and that I am not financially</p> <p>8 interested in the action.</p> <p>9</p> <p>10 Date: 11/1/2025 </p> <p>11</p> <p>12</p> <p>13 Julie Thompson, CET-1036</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p>	

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