

In the Matter Of:
FLORIDA CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING

HOUSE SESSION

April 29, 2026



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IN RE: 4/29/2026 HOUSE SESSION - THE FLORIDA
CHANNEL

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Florida Channel

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1 (Start of House Session.)

2 MR. SPEAKER: The House will come to
3 order.

4 Members and visitors in the gallery,
5 please rise for the prayer. The prayer today will
6 be given by Speaker Pro Tempore Duggan.

7 MR. DUGGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good
8 morning, members. Please pray with me.

9 Here, O Florida, the Lord your God is Lord
10 alone. Love the Lord your God with all your heart,
11 with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all
12 your strength. And love your neighbor as yourself.
13 Lord, thank you for this day, for each other, and
14 for the many blessings you have bestowed upon us.
15 Please be in our midst today. Give grace and wisdom
16 to your servants in the exercise of our duties.
17 Grant us courage and foresight to provide for the
18 needs of all our people. Make us channels for your
19 peace, today and every day. And finally, Lord,
20 teach us to rely on your strength, that we may
21 faithfully serve you and honor your holy name. Amen.

22 MR. SPEAKER: Amen. Thank you.

23 Speaker Pro Tempore Duggan, you are
24 recognized for a moment of silence.

25 MR. DUGGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

1 Members, earlier this month, we lost a
2 former member of this House, the Honorable Mark
3 Weissman, who served District 90 from 2000 to 2002,
4 after having served as a City Commissioner for the
5 City of Parkland. Additionally, last week, Collier
6 County lost its longest-serving Commissioner in the
7 County's modern history, Commissioner Donna Lou
8 Fiala, often referred to as the People's
9 Commissioner, for her accessibility and commitment
10 to those she served. The Marco Island community
11 also mourned the loss of a beloved leader last week,
12 Councilman Erik C. Brechnitz, a long-time resident
13 and dedicated advocate for his community.

14 On behalf of Representatives Hunschofsky
15 and Benarroch, I ask for a moment of silence for the
16 Honorable Mark Weissman, Commissioner Donna Lou
17 Fiala, and Councilman Erik C. Brechnitz.

18 MR. SPEAKER: Members, please join me in a
19 moment of silence.

20 MR. DUGGAN: Thank you.

21 MR. SPEAKER: The clerk will unlock the
22 machine and the members will record their presence.

23 Have all members recorded their presence?
24 Have all members recorded their presence?

25 The clerk will lock the machine and

1 announce the presence of a quorum.

2 THE CLERK: 109 members voting. A quorum
3 is present, Mr. Speaker.

4 MR. SPEAKER: Members and visitors in the
5 gallery, please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance to
6 the flag. The Pledge of Allegiance will be led by
7 Representative Snyder from his desk.

8 (The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

9 MR. SPEAKER: Are there corrections to the
10 journal?

11 Hearing none, show the journal approved.

12 Are there matters on introduction and
13 reference?

14 THE CLERK: None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

15 MR. SPEAKER: Are there communications?

16 THE CLERK: None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

17 MR. SPEAKER: Are there messages from the
18 Senate?

19 THE CLERK: None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

20 MR. SPEAKER: Are there reports of
21 standing committees and subcommittees?

22 THE CLERK: On the desk, Mr. Speaker.

23 MR. SPEAKER: Read the report.

24 THE CLERK: The Honorable Daniel Perez,
25 Speaker, House of Representatives. Dear Mr. Speaker,

1 Your Rules and Ethics Committee herewith submits
2 this special order for Wednesday, April 29, 2026.
3 Consideration of the House bills on special orders
4 shall include the senate companion measures on the
5 House calendar.

6 Reading of the report, Mr. Speaker.

7 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Garrison, you
8 are recognized on the report.

9 REPRESENTATIVE GARRISON: Thank you,
10 Mr. Speaker. The report sets a special order
11 calendar and allocation of times for questions and
12 debate contained in the letter, and I move adoption
13 of the special order report for today, April the
14 29th of 2026.

15 MR. SPEAKER: Are there questions? Is
16 there debate? All in favor, say "Yea."

17 (Collective "Yea".)

18 MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, "No."

19 Show the special order report adopted.

20 Are there other reports?

21 THE CLERK: None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

22 MR. SPEAKER: Are there motions relating
23 to committee and subcommittee references? Are there
24 matters on reconsideration? Are there bills or
25 joint resolutions on third reading?

1 THE CLERK: None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

2 MR. SPEAKER: Are there bills on the
3 special order calendar?

4 MR. DUGGAN: On the desk, Mr. Speaker.

5 MR. SPEAKER: Read the first bill.

6 THE CLERK: By Representative
7 Persons-Mulicka. House Bill 1. A bill to be
8 entitled an act establishing the congressional
9 districts of the state.

10 By Representative Persons-Mulicka, House
11 Bill 1-D. A bill to be entitled an act establishing
12 the congressional districts of the state.

13 MR. SPEAKER: Representative --
14 Persons-Mulicka, you are recognized to explain the
15 bill.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
17 you, Mr. Speaker.

18 Members, this bill establishes the
19 congressional districts of our great state.

20 MR. SPEAKER: Questions of the sponsor?
21 Representative Eskamani.

22 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Thank you,
23 Mr. Speaker.

24 Representative Jenna Persons-Mulicka. My
25 first question for you is why was the session

1 scheduled to last only a few days for a process that
2 has previously taken us months to do?

3 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
4 Persons-Mulicka.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
6 you, Mr. Speaker.

7 I did not schedule a special session. I
8 cannot answer that.

9 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani.

10 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Thank you,
11 Mr. Speaker.

12 Why did the House redistricting committee
13 vote against placing the governor's office staff
14 under oath before they gave us their testimony in
15 committee?

16 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani, I
17 don't think Representative Persons-Mulicka has
18 insight into the decisions of the chair of the
19 committee. Please proceed with another question.

20 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Thank you,
21 Mr. Speaker. My next question had to do with voting
22 against extending time for more public commentary,
23 but I'll move on to my next question.

24 Do you believe that the Fair Districts
25 Amendment supplies the 2026 maps we have in front of

1 us? And a yes or no answer is sufficient.

2 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani,
3 would you restate that? I'm sorry you spoke so
4 fast, I didn't understand.

5 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Yes, I can,
6 Mr. Speaker.

7 Do you believe the Fair Districts
8 Amendment supplies the 2026 plan? And you can give
9 us a yes or no if that's easier.

10 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
11 Persons-Mulicka.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
13 you, Mr. Speaker.

14 Can you clarify the question? Do you
15 believe that the Fair Districts Act applies to any
16 map that would be before us, or do you think -- are
17 you asking me whether this map complies with the
18 Fair Districts Act?

19 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani.

20 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Thank you,
21 Mr. Speaker.

22 Do these maps comply to the Fair Districts
23 Amendment that Florida voters approved?

24 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
25 Persons-Mulicka.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
2 you, Mr. Speaker.

3 Thank you, Representative, for that
4 question. there might be multiple questions on this
5 front so let me be very, very clear. In the state
6 of Florida, we have an evolving legal landscape, and
7 we have evidence that the Florida Supreme Court will
8 recede from precedence. They just did that this last
9 summer. In 2022, we, the legislature, approved a
10 map that was based on a viable legal theory
11 interpretation of the Florida Constitution. The
12 Florida Supreme Court agreed with that viable
13 interpretation, but there are still questions left
14 unanswered. I believe that this map is based on a
15 strong and viable interpretation of both the Florida
16 and the United States Constitutions. And that is
17 why I filed the map and I support it today.

18 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Rayner.

19 REPRESENTATIVE RAYNER: Thank you,
20 Mr. Speaker.

21 This is a yes or no question.
22 Representative, did any legislator draw a single
23 district line in the map that we are about to vote
24 on?

25 MR. SPEAKER: Representative

1 Persons-Mulicka.

2 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
3 you, Mr. Speaker.

4 As a baseline for those who are watching
5 us on the Florida channel, I as the bill sponsor, I
6 do not have to answer a question with a yes or no,
7 but in this case I will say no.

8 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Rayner.

9 REPRESENTATIVE RAYNER: Thank you,
10 Mr. Speaker.

11 Understanding that this is also a yes or
12 no question. Did any legislator come up with any
13 idea expressed in the plan we are about to vote on?

14 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
15 Persons-Mulicka.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
17 you, Mr. Speaker.

18 No.

19 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Rayner.

20 REPRESENTATIVE RAYNER: Thank you,
21 Mr. Speaker.

22 Is it correct that the governor's office
23 was the sole map drawer?

24 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
25 Persons-Mulicka.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
2 you, Mr. Speaker.

3 I personally do not know who drew the map
4 except for based on the testimony that we received
5 in our select committee. In our select committee,
6 Jason Parada said that he alone solely drew the map.

7 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

8 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you,
9 Mr. Speaker.

10 Mo Jazil testified that the 2022 plan is
11 not yet unconstitutional. Do you agree, and that's a
12 yes or no, that we are enacting a new map to get
13 ahead of the court ruling that has not yet been
14 issued?

15 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
16 Persons-Mulicka.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
18 you, Mr. Speaker.

19 And there is no yes or no easy answer. And
20 again, an evolving legal landscape. And let me add
21 to my prior answer in saying that a mid-cycle
22 redistricting gives us the opportunity to ask the
23 questions that end up in front of our courts so that
24 we have guidance when we come back in a few years
25 after the next reapportionment. But standing here

1 today, I am not a decider. It is not my job to
2 answer legal constitutional questions or interpret
3 the state or federal constitution. That is the job
4 for the judicial branch.

5 Our job is to make a decision to use our
6 judgment in voting for a map that we believe is
7 viable under legal interpretation.

8 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

9 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you,
10 Mr. Speaker.

11 And isn't it true that the pending case,
12 Louisiana versus Callias, has not been decided by
13 the US Supreme Court?

14 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt, you
15 cannot phrase the question in terms of isn't it
16 true? That's argumentative. But I think
17 Representative Persons-Mulicka understands the
18 thrust of the question. So I'll let her proceed to
19 answer.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
21 you, Mr. Speaker.

22 All that we know is that an opinion has
23 yet to be issued.

24 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

25 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you,

1 Mr. Speaker.

2 So if Callias is decided in a way that
3 does not support the governor's legal theory that
4 was presented in our committee, the 2026 plan would
5 not be constitutional.

6 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
7 Persons-Mulicka.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
9 you, Mr. Speaker.

10 I can't answer that question because it's
11 based on a hypothetical.

12 MR. SPEAKER: Leader Driskell, do you have
13 a question? Are you -- Yes.

14 REPRESENTATIVE DRISKELL: Mr. Speaker.
15 Thank you.

16 Rep, are you aware that Jason Parada
17 testified that he used partisan data to draw this
18 map, this 2026 plan?

19 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
20 Persons-Mulicka.

21 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
22 you, Mr. Speaker.

23 I am aware of his testimony in front of
24 the Senate Rules Committee.

25 MR. SPEAKER: Leader Driskell.

1 REPRESENTATIVE DRISKELL: Thank you,
2 Mr. Speaker.

3 So if he used partisan data, and we know
4 that the law says that we're not supposed to do
5 that, how can we now proceed with this map?

6 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
7 Persons-Mulicka.

8 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
9 you, Mr. Speaker.

10 I cannot speak to the intent of the map
11 drawer, and I will not make any conclusions as to
12 the intent of the map drawer.

13 MR. SPEAKER: Leader Driskell.

14 REPRESENTATIVE DRISKELL: Thank you,
15 Mr. Speaker.

16 Do you believe that a map drawn using
17 partisan data complies with the Fair District
18 Amendment's prohibition on drawing districts with
19 the intent to favor or disfavor a political party?

20 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
21 Persons-Mulicka.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
23 you, Mr. Speaker.

24 I believe that the map in front of us,
25 based on the testimony that we heard in the two

1 various committees, I believe that there is a
2 likelihood that that map will be upheld against
3 legal challenges.

4 MR. SPEAKER: Leader Driskell.

5 REPRESENTATIVE DRISKELL: Thank you,
6 Mr. Speaker.

7 Approximately 41 percent of Florida's
8 registered voters are Republicans, yet the 2026 plan
9 creates 24 of 28 Republican-leaning districts.

10 Do you believe that outcome is consistent
11 with the Fair District's amendment?

12 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
13 Persons-Mulicka.

14 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
15 you, Mr. Speaker. Representative members, I have not
16 reviewed the partisan performance of any single
17 district within this map.

18 MR. SPEAKER: Leader Driskell.

19 REPRESENTATIVE DRISKELL: Thank you,
20 Mr. Speaker.

21 So the Fair District Amendment requires
22 congressional districts to be compact and to use
23 existing political and geographical boundaries where
24 feasible. Can you speak to the use of compactness
25 and geographical boundaries in designing this map?

1 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
2 Persons-Mulicka.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
4 you, Mr. Speaker.

5 I do have objective, factual mathematical
6 information that I'm happy to share with you. Do
7 you have a specific question regarding compactness
8 or boundaries?

9 MR. SPEAKER: Leader Driskell.

10 REPRESENTATIVE DRISKELL: Thank you, Mr.
11 Speaker.

12 Speak to it with respect to District 14,
13 please.

14 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
15 Persons-Mulicka.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
17 you.

18 I can share with you that in District 14
19 that it includes one county, but not the whole
20 county. So that county ends up being split and it
21 includes two cities, one whole and one split.

22 MR. SPEAKER: Leader Driskell.

23 REPRESENTATIVE DRISKELL: Thank you, Mr.
24 Speaker.

25 I apologize. I meant the existing CD14

1 and how that changed going on to the new one.

2 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
3 Persons-Mulicka, do you have that info? You're
4 recognized.

5 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA:
6 Mr. Speaker, I do not have that
7 information in front of me.

8 But Representative, if there is a specific
9 county that you would like me to look at, I can tell
10 you how that has changed between the current map and
11 the proposed map.

12 MR. SPEAKER: Leader Driskell.

13 REPRESENTATIVE DRISKELL: Mr. Speaker.
14 Have you reviewed any of the analysis
15 comparing the compactness scores of the 2026 plans
16 districts to those of the existing 2022 plan?

17 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
18 Persons-Mulicka.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
20 you, Mr. Speaker.

21 Thank you, Representative. And for the
22 members who weren't on our committee, when you look
23 at compactness, there's two things you look at. The
24 first primary thing is visual compactness, right?
25 And that's often in the eye of the beholder. You

1 might think one district looks compact and another
2 member might think it doesn't look as compact. The
3 second way you look at compactness is via
4 mathematical score. And we have kind of three
5 different mathematical theories that we have
6 utilized. I have looked at the average statewide
7 for the Convex Hall, the Polsby-Popper and the Reock
8 scores, and the current map, it changes very
9 slightly from -- the proposed map changes very
10 slightly from the current map, but it's very
11 consistent.

12 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Rayner.

13 REPRESENTATIVE RAYNER: Thank you, Mr.
14 Speaker.

15 I'm going to jump back to the process. Am
16 I correct to understand with regard to the drawing
17 of the map that the governor's office made every
18 policy decision not in conjunction with you to this
19 plan?

20 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
21 Persons-Mulicka.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
23 you, Mr. Speaker.

24 Again, I cannot speak to the process or
25 what happened when the map drawer was drawing the

1 map. All that I can say is that I was not involved
2 in the drawing of the map, and I have no reason to
3 believe that anyone in the Florida House was
4 involved in the drawing of the map.

5 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Rayner.

6 REPRESENTATIVE RAYNER: Thank you, Mr.
7 Speaker.

8 So to be clear, I'm correct to understand
9 that the legislature is deferring to the governor's
10 office for Florida's congressional representation,
11 correct?

12 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
13 Persons-Mulicka.

14 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
15 you, Mr. Speaker.

16 There is nothing in our state constitution
17 or state law that prevents the governor from
18 submitting a proposed congressional map. For our
19 consideration and vote, we are the ones considering
20 the map. We are the ones voting on the map. We
21 have not deferred our duties under the constitution.

22 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

23 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you, Mr.
24 Speaker.

25 Do you agree with the governor's

1 non-severability argument that if one provision of
2 the fair districts amendment is unenforceable, then
3 the entire amendment fails?

4 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
5 Persons-Mulicka.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
7 you, Mr. Speaker.

8 I have said that I believe that the legal
9 arguments presented are viable and that this map
10 will likely be upheld under legal review.

11 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

12 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you, Mr.
13 Speaker.

14 Following that answer, are you aware that
15 the non-severability argument has not been adopted
16 by any Florida court?

17 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
18 Persons-Mulicka.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
20 you, Mr. Speaker.

21 Well, until last summer, the Florida
22 Supreme Court had never answered the question as to
23 whether our non-diminishment clause under our state
24 constitution was a compelling reason to disregard
25 the equal protection clause of the 14th amendment.

1 That was an unanswered question, and the Florida
2 Supreme Court just answered it. So there are many
3 unanswered questions in this evolving legal
4 landscape.

5 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani.

6 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Mr. Speaker.

7 Representative Persons-Mulicka, did you
8 see the version of the map that was leaked to Fox
9 News that had party breakdown?

10 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani, are
11 you asking if she saw it before the map was
12 introduced or ever saw it? You can clarify.

13 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Just ever saw
14 it, Mr. Speaker.

15 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
16 Persons-Mulicka.

17 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
18 you, Mr. Speaker.

19 I saw the map pop up on news sites and on
20 social media, but I did not study the map in detail.

21 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani.

22 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Thank you, Mr.
23 Speaker.

24 Thank you for that response. Looking at
25 that map, do you believe that the outcome of that

1 map that was leaked, that had colors on it of red
2 and blue, is consistent with the Fair District's
3 amendment?

4 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
5 Persons-Mulicka.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
7 you, Mr. Speaker.

8 Again, I have not performed and our House
9 staff has not performed political performance on any
10 of the districts. So I cannot speak to the veracity
11 of the map that was leaked to the news media.

12 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Joseph,
13 welcome back. You're recognized.

14 REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH: Thank you, Mr.
15 Speaker.

16 Did any legislator draw a single district
17 line in the map we are about to vote on?

18 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Joseph, that
19 question was actually already asked.

20 REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH: Apologies, Mr.
21 Speaker. I will ask a different question.

22 A moment ago, in response to some
23 questions about compactness, you said, and I quote,
24 "It changes very slightly." So you acknowledge that
25 the 2026 plan is less compact than the existing map.

1 My question for you is, what legitimate
2 redistricting principle justifies that reduction in
3 compactness?

4 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
5 Persons-Mulicka.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
7 you, Mr. Speaker.

8 And I want to echo, welcome back,
9 Representative, to the floor.

10 First, I did not say that the map before
11 us is less compact than the previous map. There are
12 some changes, and one way that you look at
13 compactness, mathematical scores, but those are not
14 dispositive of the compactness issue. The first
15 rule of compactness is looking at it visually. I
16 think this map before us is just as compact as the
17 current map. But I will tell you, under the
18 mathematical scores, just to put in the record, the
19 Convex Hull score stayed exactly the same, a 0.81
20 between the current map and the one proposed before
21 you today. The Polsby-Popper in the current map is
22 a 0.43. The one before us today is 0.41. And for
23 the Reock score, the current map is 0.47. And in the
24 map before us today, it's 0.46.

25 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Joseph.

1 REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH: Thank you, Mr.
2 Speaker.

3 Would you repeat the last score for me,
4 please?

5 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
6 Persons-Mulicka.

7 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
8 you, Mr. Speaker.

9 Representative, the Reock score, that was
10 0.47 in the current map, and it's 0.46 in the
11 proposed House Bill 1-D map.

12 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Joseph.

13 REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH: Thank you, Mr.
14 Speaker.

15 So those slight decreases in compactness,
16 I will reiterate based on the data you just shared,
17 it decreased from 0.43 to 0.41 in the second
18 category. And in the third category, it decreased
19 from 0.47 to 0.46.

20 So I reiterate my question: Given the
21 decrease in compactness, because that is a clear
22 mathematical decrease, what legitimate redistricting
23 principle justifies the reduction in compactness?

24 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
25 Persons-Mulicka.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
2 you, Mr. Speaker.

3 And I'll reiterate my answer that a
4 decrease in a mathematical score that is used as
5 part of the evidence of compactness does not equate
6 to a decrease in compactness.

7 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Joseph,
8 you're recognized.

9 REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH: Thank you, Mr.
10 Speaker.

11 Are you aware that the 2026 plan splits
12 more counties and more municipalities than the
13 existing 2022 plan?

14 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
15 Persons-Mulicka.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
17 you, Mr. Speaker.

18 Yes.

19 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Rayner.

20 REPRESENTATIVE RAYNER: Thank you, Mr.
21 Speaker.

22 Representative, do you know was this map
23 drawn by hand or using outside algorithms?

24 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
25 Persons-Mulicka.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
2 you, Mr. Speaker.

3 Again, I cannot speak to the process that
4 was used to draw the map.

5 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Rayner.

6 REPRESENTATIVE RAYNER: Thank you, Mr.
7 Speaker.

8 Were there any alternative plans included?
9 Representative Persons-Mulicka.

10 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
11 you, Mr. Speaker.

12 We have seen one map. One map was
13 transmitted to us.

14 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

15
16 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you, Mr.
17 Speaker.

18 Are you aware that the 2026 plan was drawn
19 using the same 2020 census data as the existing map?

20 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
21 Persons-Mulicka.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
23 you, Mr. Speaker.

24 Representative, can you clarify that
25 question regarding the data used?

1 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

2 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you, Mr.

3 Speaker.

4 In committee, Jason Parada, or however you
5 say his last name, excuse me, stated that the 2020
6 census data is what they used to create this map.
7 That's the clarification.

8 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
9 Persons-Mulicka.

10 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
11 you, Mr. Speaker.

12 Representative, we are required under the
13 Constitution of Florida statute to use the last
14 federal census data to draw any redistricting map.
15 And based on the testimony in committee, it's my
16 understanding that Mr. Parada did base the map and
17 draw it on the 2020 census data.

18 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani.

19 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Thank you, Mr.
20 Speaker.

21 Representative, are you aware that no
22 Florida court has held the Fair District's
23 Amendments to be unconstitutional?

24 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
25 Persons-Mulicka.

1 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
2 you, Mr. Speaker.

3 I've already answered that question.

4 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani.

5 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Thank you, Mr.
6 Speaker.

7 Are you aware that no Florida court has
8 held the 2022 map to be unconstitutional?

9 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
10 Persons-Mulicka.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
12 you, Mr. Speaker.

13 That is correct. There are still pending
14 court cases regarding the 2022 map. And in the
15 Black Voters Matter case that was decided this past
16 summer by the Florida Supreme Court, I want to note
17 for the body that their holding was very specific to
18 the questions and analysis that were asked in that
19 case, and they looked only at Congressional District
20 5. They did not look at the map as a whole.

21 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani.

22 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Thank you, Mr.
23 Speaker.

24 Were there any public community level town
25 halls hosted about this map for public engagement?

1 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
2 Persons-Mulicka.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
4 you, Mr. Speaker.

5 I am unaware of any.

6 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani.

7 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Thank you, Mr.
8 Speaker.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: I know
10 that I was stated during committee that the map
11 drawer drew the maps two weeks ago. Were there any
12 conversations about this map, privately or publicly,
13 before the mapmaker started working on it?

14 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
15 Persons-Mulicka.

16 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
17 you, Mr. Speaker.

18 Representative, can you clarify that
19 question? Conversations between whom?

20 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani.

21 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Thank you, Mr.
22 Speaker.

23 For example, did the President call any
24 presiding officers? Did President Trump engage in
25 this process directly?

1 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
2 Persons-Mulicka.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
4 you, Mr. Speaker.

5 I can only speak as to any conversations
6 that I might have had, and I had zero conversations
7 with anybody before we took the map through this
8 process over the last two days.

9 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Joseph.

10 REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH: Thank you, Mr.
11 Speaker.

12 A moment ago, when I asked the question
13 about whether you're aware that this 2026 plan
14 splits more counties and municipalities than the
15 existing 22 map, and you said that you were aware of
16 that.

17 My follow-up question is, what legitimate
18 redistricting principle justifies these additional
19 splits, given the requirements of Tier 2 criteria?

20 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
21 Persons-Mulicka.

22 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
23 you, Mr. Speaker.

24 Well, I think there's a complete
25 misunderstanding as to how you apply traditional

1 redistricting principles to a map. When we apply
2 those principles, each one of us will end up drawing
3 a different map. There are nearly an infinite
4 number of maps that can be drawn and be compliant
5 with traditional redistricting principles. So just
6 because there's some changes in how a couple
7 counties or cities might be split, that is not
8 evidence that the principles were not followed. It
9 is a balancing act. It is a very precise exercise.
10 Remember, every district has to have the
11 mathematically exact number of people in it, down to
12 this a single person. That is a very difficult
13 exercise.

14 I will share with the body that under the
15 proposed map, 382 cities are kept whole, 382 cities,
16 and 30 cities are split. And under the proposed map
17 before you, 48 counties are kept whole, 48, and only
18 19 are split. In some counties, they are split less
19 under the proposed map, and in some counties, they
20 are split more.

21 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Joseph.

22 REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH: Thank you, Mr.
23 Speaker.

24 While I appreciate your explanation about
25 how there can be myriad numbers of maps and

1 different variations, my question was pretty
2 specific. So let me ask it a different way.

3 Are you saying that there was no
4 justification in the current version of the maps for
5 making the increase of splits of more counties and
6 cities than the map that it replaces?

7 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
8 Persons-Mulicka.

9 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
10 you, Mr. Speaker.

11 I cannot speak to you regarding the theory
12 that the map drawer used and what he employed. But
13 if you go back and watch our committee meeting
14 yesterday, or if you go watch the Senate Rules
15 Committee of yesterday, you will see that the map
16 drawer walked through his theory and how he
17 addressed each district and why he took certain
18 actions. I cannot speak for him, but you can go
19 back and watch his testimony.

20 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Joseph.

21 REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH: Thank you, Mr.
22 Speaker.

23 As the bill sponsor, I'm asking these
24 questions because you're the one presenting the
25 legislation before us today. But since you brought

1 up the drafter of the bill and his testimony, I will
2 ask a different question about his testimony
3 specifically.

4 It seems that Jason Parada testified that
5 he used partisan data in drawing every district on
6 the map. Do you believe it is a coincidence that
7 the map drawn with the partisan data also happens to
8 be less compact and splits more political boundaries
9 than the map it replaces?

10 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
11 Persons-Mulicka.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
13 you, Mr. Speaker.

14 I think I've answered this question a
15 multitude of different ways as it was built into
16 other questions. But, again, I'm going to go back.
17 I cannot speak towards the map drawer's intent. I
18 cannot speak to how the map drawer balanced all of
19 the traditional redistricting criteria and putting
20 together the map that is before you. It is a very
21 difficult exercise. Again, there is an infinite
22 number of maps that can be drawn compliant with
23 redistricting criteria. But I believe the map
24 before us today is a good map, and based on viable
25 legal theories and likely to be upheld.

1 MR. SPEAKER: Leader Driskell.

2 REPRESENTATIVE RAYNER: Thank you, Mr.
3 Speaker. Just point of information. This is not a
4 question. If we could stop the clock.

5 Which is that typically in this body.

6 MR. SPEAKER: Please stop.

7 REPRESENTATIVE DRISKELL: Thank you.

8 Typically in this body, when we're dealing
9 with legislation and there are questions that the
10 bill sponsors are unable to answer, we make staff
11 available to provide that information. And I think
12 with the importance of this map, that we should have
13 the map drawer here or somebody on staff who can
14 give us some answers. This is a generational map
15 that is being drawn. It's very important. And we
16 should comply with the process that we typically do.

17 MR. SPEAKER: Your point is noted for the
18 record. Thank you.

19 Representative Eskamani, do you have a
20 question?

21 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Thank you so
22 much, Mr. Speaker.

23 The fastest growing county in Florida
24 since 2020 is St. John's. Yet its congressional
25 districts, District 5 and 6, didn't really change at

1 all. Why is that?

2 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
3 Persons-Mulicka.

4 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
5 you, Mr. Speaker.

6 Thank you, Representative. Thank you,
7 everybody, for the questions.

8 Again, I cannot speak as to why the map
9 drawer made any type of decisions in drawing the map
10 before us.

11 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

12 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you, Mr.
13 Speaker.

14 What data do we have that shows a shift in
15 population growth that justifies doing a mid-decade
16 redistricting?

17 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
18 Persons-Mulicka.

19 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
20 you, Mr. Speaker.

21 I have not reviewed any recent population
22 data. Again, the map that is before you is based on
23 the 2020 Census. It is within our prerogative and
24 within our discretion to take up a map regarding
25 congressional districts at any time.

1 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

2 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you, Mr.
3 Speaker. What part of the Florida Constitution
4 allows -- and specifically I'm asking for a section
5 or a citation.

6 What part of the Florida Constitution, the
7 adopted Florida Constitution since 1968, allows us
8 to do mid-decade redistricting?

9 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
10 Persons-Mulicka.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
12 you, Mr. Speaker.

13 There is no prohibition within our state
14 constitution or state statute to do mid-cycle
15 redistricting.

16 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani.

17 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Thank you, Mr.
18 Speaker.

19 Was this map drawn by hand or using
20 outside algorithms? Oh, wait I'm sorry, this was
21 already answered and you already spoke to how there
22 were no alternative plans provided. But I guess
23 ultimately one question I have is, where are the
24 incumbents located in this map, and was there any
25 double bunking or has anyone been drawn out of their

1 district?

2 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
3 Persons-Mulicka.

4 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
5 you, Mr. Speaker.

6 I have zero data regarding residences of
7 incumbents and I didn't hear any discussion in the
8 committees regarding incumbents.

9 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Cross.

10 REPRESENTATIVE CROSS: Thank you, Mr.
11 Speaker.

12 Representative, why did this body fail to
13 provide meaningful opportunities for the public to
14 offer input before the maps were presented?

15 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Cross, that's
16 outside the scope of this bill. Do you have another
17 question?

18 REPRESENTATIVE CROSS: Yes, thank you, Mr.
19 Speaker.

20 Will this body retain and make public all
21 records and communications related to redistricting,
22 including communications with the governor's office?

23 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Cross, those
24 are all public records, but outside the scope of the
25 bill relating to the map. Do you have another

1 question?

2 REPRESENTATIVE CROSS: Yes, thank you, Mr.
3 Speaker.

4 Representative, the governor's transmittal
5 letter suggests that any consideration of race in
6 drawing congressional districts is unconstitutional
7 under the 14th Amendment.

8 Is that the legislature's position as
9 well?

10 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
11 Persons-Mulicka.

12 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
13 you, Mr. Speaker.

14 I believe I've answered this question, but
15 I will note that the map before you, based on the
16 testimony that we heard in committee, I again cannot
17 speak to the intent of the map drawer or what the
18 map drawer did or did not do, but he said race was
19 not considered at all in drawing this map and that
20 it's a race-neutral map.

21 And I've said before and I'll say again, I
22 believe that this map is based on viable legal
23 theories and will likely be upheld on a challenge.

24 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Nixon.

25 REPRESENTATIVE NIXON: Thank you, Mr.

1 Speaker.

2 Rep, I'm confused because I thought we
3 were the ones who were supposed to be drawing the
4 map. And if you have no idea about any of the
5 answers, you don't know the -- you can't answer any
6 of the questions that we have, why are you even
7 sponsoring this bill?

8 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Nixon, you
9 cannot inquire into the motives of members during
10 questions. Do you have another question?
11 Thank you representative Nixon.

12 REPRESENTATIVE NIXON: I'm good.

13 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Bartleman.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BARTLEMAN: Thank you, Mr.
15 Speaker.

16 Would you acknowledge that it was stated
17 on public record that this map was drawn on partisan
18 data to favor a party?

19 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
20 Persons-Mulicka.

21 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
22 you, Mr. Speaker.

23 Again, I cannot speak as to what the map
24 drawer did or did not do, or what the map drawer
25 considered or did not -- or did not consider, or to

1 what his intent was or was not.

2 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Bartleman.

3 REPRESENTATIVE BARTLEMAN: Thank you, Mr.
4 Speaker.

5 Would you acknowledge that the testimony
6 yesterday and the map drawer acknowledged that
7 partisan data was looked at in his testimony? Did
8 you hear that?

9 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
10 Persons-Mulicka.

11 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
12 you, Mr. Speaker.

13 I am not going to draw any conclusions as
14 to whether -- as to what the intent of the map
15 drawer was or was not. If you know the answer to
16 the question, you do not need to be asking it.

17 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Bartleman.

18 REPRESENTATIVE BARTLEMAN: Thank you, Mr.
19 Speaker.

20 That is not my determination. You were in
21 the same room I was where the testimony was heard,
22 and so he said he looked at partisan data. You are
23 very firm in your belief that he did not look at
24 racial data, but you were unable to draw that same
25 conclusion when it comes to partisan data, which he

1 absolutely said on record he considered.

2 When we drew maps back in 2022, did we
3 look at partisan data when we drew maps last time?

4 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
5 Persons-Mulicka.

6 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
7 you, Mr. Speaker.

8 I cannot speak to what we used or didn't
9 use in 2022.

10 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Robinson F.

11 REPRESENTATIVE ROBINSON F.: Thank you,
12 Mr. Speaker.

13 And I just wanted to go back to you were
14 very firm on saying that he did not use racial data.
15 How do we know that? What evidence or what is there
16 to say that he did not use racial data? Because
17 that -- you know, you said it, but how do we know?

18 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
19 Persons-Mulicka.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
21 you, Mr. Speaker.

22 I didn't -- I did not say that I know for
23 sure whether he did or did not. Again, I said I
24 cannot speak as to what he did or did not do, but he
25 said he did not use racial data.

1 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Time for
2 questions is expired.

3 Are there amendments?

4 THE CLERK: None on the desk, Mr.
5 Speaker.

6 MR. SPEAKER: The bill rolled over for
7 third reading.

8 Representative Persons-Mulicka, you're
9 recognized for a motion.

10 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Thank
11 you, Mr. Speaker.

12 I move that the rules be waived and House
13 Bill 1-D be read a third time by title and placed on
14 final passage.

15 MR. SPEAKER: Representative
16 Persons-Mulicka moves that the rules be waived and
17 HB 1-D be read a third time by title and placed on
18 final passage. All in favor say "Yea."

19 (Collective "Yea".)

20 MR. SPEAKER: Opposed "No."

21 (Collective "No".)

22 MR. SPEAKER: Show the motion adopted.
23 Read the bill a third time by title.

24 THE CLERK: By Representative
25 Persons-Mulicka, House Bill 1-D, a bill to be

1 entitled an act establishing the congressional
2 districts of the state.

3 MR. SPEAKER: Are there any amendments?

4 THE CLERK: None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

5 MR. SPEAKER: Members, we're going into
6 structured debate on HB 1-D. Debate will be limited
7 to 45 minutes per side in 15-minute increments.
8 Total debate time not to exceed 90 minutes.

9 Representative Daly, Representative Gantt,
10 you are recognized to begin the debate, and the
11 clerk will start the debate clock.

12 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you, Mr.
13 Speaker. I yield to Rep Harris.

14 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Harris,
15 you're recognized in debate.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HARRIS: Thank you, Mr.
17 Speaker.

18 I don't want to talk much about the legal
19 issues because I know there are people who are much
20 more well-versed than I am to talk about that. I
21 don't want to talk about how it splits counties. I
22 do want to talk about how there was no meaningful
23 consideration given to communities that have been
24 historically marginalized or silenced. An I'm going
25 to get emotional, because I think of Ocoee and the

1 generations of people who fought and died for the
2 simple right to be represented. And representation
3 matters. And it matters most for those who have had
4 to fight the hardest to have their voices heard. And
5 I also think about the voters in this state, people
6 with different viewpoints, different beliefs, who
7 are now being drawn into districts where their
8 voices can't be heard. We were cut out of this
9 process.

10 As a member of this House, I was cut out
11 of this process. They will be cut out of this
12 process. We know that Floridians expect and demand
13 a fair process for redistricting because they voted
14 on it. Our constituents voted on it overwhelmingly.
15 Nothing in the governor's supposed justification for
16 this map has any meaningful addressing. The
17 districts on this map have fewer geographical
18 boundaries and split more cities and counties.
19 There are no compelling state interests that
20 justifies throwing out the previous map, which was
21 also defended in courts with state funding.

22 What we are doing today is spending
23 taxpayer dollars to create a map that will most
24 certainly -- we are spending taxpayer dollars to
25 create a map that will most certainly be challenged

1 in court, and then asking those same taxpayers to
2 pay to defend it. We are asking Floridians to have
3 their constitutional rights weakened and pay for it.
4 There's a lot at stake here. So I'm going to make
5 the moral argument. This is not just another vote.
6 This is not just another bill. This is a moment
7 that will define how seriously we take the
8 constitution we all collectively swore to uphold.
9 And in this year, as the nation approaches its 250th
10 anniversary, we should remember something very
11 simple; history has its eyes on each and every
12 single one of us. I urge you to vote no.

13 MR. SPEAKER: Members, please take your
14 conversations to the bubble. Please attend to the
15 debates.

16 Representative Gantt, you're recognized in
17 debate.

18 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: I yield to Rep.
19 Daley.

20 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Daley in
21 debate.

22 REPRESENTATIVE DALEY: Thank you, Mr.
23 Speaker. And good morning, members. You know, if
24 you know me, I don't get up on the floor very often,
25 but I am on this issue because I find it

1 particularly offensive. So I'm rising in opposition
2 today, not because of who this map helps or hurts
3 politically, but because of how we got here. So I'd
4 like to go over a couple of things.

5 One, first and foremost, there is no
6 legitimate reason for this. We just drew these maps.
7 We just went through an entire process a couple
8 years ago. I know, I had to sit through them. We
9 went through an entire elaborate process. We voted
10 to approve maps. The governor sent one tweet. I
11 will -- whatever he said, I'm going to veto these.
12 These are dead on arrival. All of a sudden, we
13 kowtowed and said, Governor, please, governor, give
14 us a map that we'll vote on. And we did. And
15 that's what we voted for. And that's the map that
16 we have. That's the map that's been upheld by the
17 court. So was the governor wrong then, or is he
18 wrong now? Coming back at the 11th hour, trying to
19 do this in the middle of a decade.

20 There's been no new census. There's been
21 no court order. There's been no legal requirement
22 to do this again. This isn't a correction, members.
23 This is a choice. We are not responding to data,
24 but to opportunity. I want to talk about fair
25 districts for a second. Voters spoke very clearly

1 in 2010 with overwhelming, over 60% support in both
2 of those amendments. The amendments, as you know,
3 require maps not to be drawn to favor or disfavor a
4 political party. This map flies in the face of fair
5 districts and the Florida voters for reasons I'm
6 just about to jump into. This is a process breakdown
7 for me, members.

8 Constitutionally, we, the legislature, we
9 draw the maps, and yet, once again, we have kowtowed
10 to the governor. The bill sponsor admitted not a
11 single legislator drew a single line in this map.
12 Couldn't answer half the questions because we didn't
13 draw the map. Better yet, bill sponsor admitted
14 that she didn't draw the map and is aware that the
15 governor's staff use political data to draw these.
16 If that's not an admission of unconstitutionality
17 under fair districts, I don't know what is.

18 Let's talk for a second about the bigger
19 picture, because this isn't, for me, this isn't just
20 about the map. It's about what happens when we
21 normalize mid-district, excuse me, mid-decade
22 redistricting. I would remind you that the strength
23 of our system has never come from what those in
24 power can do, but from what they choose not to do.

25 I'm going to ask you to vote no today for

1 so many more reasons than I can go into, members.

2 Be a patriot and vote no.

3 MR. SPEAKER: Leader Driskell, you are
4 recognized in debate.

5 REPRESENTATIVE DRISKELL: Thank you.
6 Actually, not debate, Mr. Speaker, but a motion or
7 perhaps a point. Can we pause the time, which is
8 that it's my understanding that the Louisiana v.
9 Callais decision just issued by the United States
10 Supreme Court, I would move for recess for at least
11 two hours so that we can all have an opportunity to
12 digest this landmark Supreme Court decision, which
13 is, from what I understand, the basis of why we're
14 even here today in mid-decade redistricting.

15 MR. SPEAKER: Members, Leader Driskell
16 moves for a temporary recess of two hours to
17 consider the impact of the Callais decision on the
18 pending legislation. All in favor of the motion,
19 say "Yea".

20 (Collective "Yea".)

21 MR. SPEAKER: All opposed, say "No."

22 (Collective "No".)

23 MR. SPEAKER: The motion fails.

24 Representative Gantt, you're recognized in
25 debate.

1 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you, Mr.
2 Speaker. Can we have five seconds added back onto
3 the clock?

4 MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

5 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you. I yield
6 to Rep Hunschofsky.

7 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Hunschofsky,
8 in debate.

9 REPRESENTATIVE HUNSCHOFSKY: Thank you,
10 Mr. Speaker.

11 Members, I am stunned that this map is
12 considered such a priority by the governor and
13 leadership that we have been summoned here on the
14 taxpayer dime to pass a map which violates Article
15 III, Section 20 of the Florida Constitution, which
16 prohibits the state from drawing congressional
17 districts that intentionally favor or disfavor a
18 political party or incumbent. In fact, this section
19 of the Constitution was established by the Florida
20 Fair Districts, which was passed by the who? The
21 Florida voters in 2010 with 62.93% support. Yet
22 here we are with a map drawn according to the map
23 drawer in the last two weeks, heard in one House
24 committee for three hours, and now limited to 30
25 minutes of questions and 45 minutes of debate on

1 either side on the House floor.

2 This map flies directly against the face
3 of the people of Florida who said they wanted fair
4 districts, and the people of Florida were not
5 included in this discussion. They were not invited
6 to the table in any meaningful way. Members,
7 democracy does not die in darkness. It happens in
8 daylight in front of all of us when the powerful are
9 so caught up in their unchallenged power that they
10 decide that the power they hold or could hold is
11 more important than the Constitution and the people
12 they swore to serve. It also dies when those who
13 seek power are complicit and along for the ride.

14 Members, this is messed up. Our
15 priorities in this government are upside down when
16 we are putting individual power ahead of the people
17 we serve. The Constitution is separation of powers
18 and different powers and responsibilities so that no
19 one group and no one person can abuse their power.
20 Today you all have a choice to make.

21 Do you side with the people or Florida or
22 unaccountable power? Thank you.

23 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

24 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you, Mr.
25 Speaker.

1 So, to make it plain, I'm going to put on
2 my teacher's hat first. When we're talking about
3 severability, severability is a legal principle that
4 allows the court to remove an invalid or
5 unconstitutional part of a law or contract while
6 keeping the rest of it intact. If you think about
7 it like surgery, instead of throwing the entire
8 statute out, only one section of it is carved out.
9 That is the current precedent, standing legal
10 principle in the state of Florida.

11 The opposition or the -- my opposition,
12 absolutely, absolutely, the people of Florida's
13 opposition, which is now the governor of Florida
14 with this map, their position is that the
15 severability presumption and the Fair Districts
16 Amendment does not apply because one part is not
17 applicable. That is completely in contravention and
18 completely not based on any legal precedent. And
19 since when do we file or pass legislation so that we
20 can say, Well, we know it's unconstitutional and
21 it's not based on case law, but we're going to do it
22 anyway so we can take it to court. That is not the
23 role of the legislature. By the way, it's not the
24 role of the legislature to abdicate our role and
25 position in this particular redistricting.

1 It is our role to invite the governor to
2 participate with us, not to take over the entire
3 process. So when you look at severability in the
4 legal principle, there is a seminal case in Florida
5 law, Ray v. Mortham, and it states that severability
6 is a judicial doctrine recognizing the obligation of
7 the judiciary to uphold the constitutionally -- or
8 constitutionality of legislative enactments where
9 it's possible to strike only the unconstitutional
10 portions.

11 So the governor's position is that the
12 entire amendment does not apply because one part is
13 in disagreement with what they want to do in order
14 to retain and keep power. That is not how it works,
15 and that is not how we as a legislative body should
16 be functioning.

17 I'll also say when we talk about the Fair
18 Districts Amendment, Article 3, Section 20 of the
19 Florida Constitution states that no apportionment,
20 plan, or individual district shall be drawn with the
21 intent to favor or disfavor a political party or an
22 incumbent. The sponsor of this bill was very
23 adamant and very 100% positive that partisan -- I'm
24 sorry, racial grounds were not used, but partisan
25 grounds or partisan data was used as admitted by the

1 soul map drawer. Floridians of all political
2 affiliations came together in 2010 and passed the
3 Fair Districts Amendment with a 63% vote. Some of
4 y'all did not get 63% of the vote in your district.
5 Okay? But Floridians voted 63% to pass the
6 amendments in a large part to protect the voices
7 from partisan gerrymandering. We are not doing
8 mid-decade redistricting. We are doing partisan
9 gerrymandering. That is what this is.

10 And I yield to Representative Eskamani.

11 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Eskamani.

12 REPRESENTATIVE ESKAMANI: Thank you, Mr.
13 Speaker.

14 So this is how liberty dies, where the
15 thunderous applies. I cannot believe we are here to
16 vote on a map that was first leaked to Fox News,
17 that the bill sponsor cannot answer basic questions
18 on because it's not her product, comes straight from
19 the governor's office who has made very public
20 statements and tweets regarding partisanship. And I
21 quote from online Team DeSantis, speaking to how
22 Florida can add up to five Republican seats. They
23 got to four. They got to four.

24 Members, this is not how the process
25 should work. There should be public town halls.

1 There should be community engagement. And it should
2 happen every 10 years, not in the middle of a
3 decade. This is unprecedented. And we should each
4 be concerned, because you would be with your hair on
5 fire if the shoe was on the other side of the aisle,
6 right? We have a democratic system that is based
7 upon voter input, that is founded on civic
8 participation. Voters approved these two Fair
9 District Amendments knowing, knowing that this
10 process was already corrupt and corrosive. Many of
11 us weren't here during the first battle on those
12 amendments, but maps had to be redrawn, reissued
13 from 2012 to 2016. Our community in Central Florida
14 was directly impacted by that, and the current maps
15 are still being litigated.

16 It's clear to me that this process has
17 nothing to do with population shifts, especially
18 since it's still using the same census data that we
19 used. And no clear jumps are even being made from
20 that argument because the argument is not credible.
21 We should not be debating bills that we don't
22 understand, that we have no background to, that we
23 have no context to, that literally is born out of
24 partisanship. In an environment where we are still
25 waiting for legal interpretation.

1 It's disappointing, members, that we are
2 now engaging within a political climate that is so
3 polarizing that folks have to cheat to win. We're
4 watching the trends nationally. If we truly believe
5 in a marketplace of ideas, if we believe in
6 competition, if we believe that the meritocracy,
7 then we should allow the voter to choose their
8 politicians, not politicians choose their voters.

9 And so I ask you members to stand with us
10 and the state constitution, to stand with us and
11 with the voters. I'm reminded that each one of us,
12 when we got sworn in, and we just saw this
13 yesterday, we take that oath with the judge before
14 us to respect the state and U.S. Constitution. If
15 you vote yes on these maps, you are breaking your
16 oath to the people of Florida and to our foundation
17 as a country and as a state. Please vote down.

18 Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

19 MR. SPEAKER: Time for debate in this
20 block has expired.

21 Leader Sirois, you are recognized in
22 debate.

23
24 REPRESENTATIVE SIROIS: Thank you very
25 much, Mr. Speaker. We yield back our time in this

1 block.

2 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Representative
3 Gantt, you're recognized in debate.

4 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you, Mr.
5 Speaker. I yield to Rep Tant.

6 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Tant, you're
7 recognized in debate.

8 REPRESENTATIVE TANT: Thank you, Mr.
9 Speaker.

10 I know a lot of this is falling on deaf
11 ears because people aren't listening. Many of my
12 constituents in North Florida feel and have felt
13 since the last census count that it was done during
14 COVID, the doors were not knocked on, and so there
15 was not an accurate count even then. Given the fact
16 that our own House staff has admitted that Florida's
17 constitutionally approved Fair District Act passed
18 by Floridians in 2010 was not considered, and this
19 bill ignores Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965. And
20 that he has stated that it does, in fact, factor in
21 partisan data. Given the fact that our governor has
22 stated that Florida has an unprecedented growth and
23 many of us boast about the 900 people a day moving
24 to our state. And in the absence of a legitimate
25 census count, I am confident that Floridians' voices

1 are being diluted, communities are being split,
2 constituents ignored, and the voices are
3 disenfranchised.

4 The very process that this bill went
5 through to get on the floor today is the indicia of
6 how my constituents and yours will be treated with
7 deliberate disregard, deliberate disrespect for
8 people of color, and deliberate disdain for
9 registered parties, voters of all parties.

10 This bill is a hard no today, and you
11 should vote against it along with the rest, with me.

12 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

13 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: I yield to Rep.
14 Woodson.

15 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Woodson.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WOODSON: Thank you, Mr.
17 Speaker.

18 As a representative who was elected to be
19 a voice for those who have entrusted me to do this
20 work, I rise today with a simple question, one that
21 I believe every member of this body and every
22 Floridian watching ought to be asking, where is the
23 fairness? Where is the fairness in a process that
24 gave us 24 hours to review maps that will shape our
25 democracy for years to come? Where is the fairness

1 in watching legislation that impacts millions
2 without giving the people a real opportunity to be
3 heard? Where is the fairness when the voices of our
4 constituents are treated as an afterthought instead
5 of the foundation? We all know, because the people
6 told us clearly in 2010, through the Fair District
7 Amendment, that districts shall not be drawn to
8 favor or disfavor a political party.

9 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Woodson,
10 would you stand by for a second?

11 Members, would you hold it down, please?
12 Representative Woodson has the floor.

13 You're recognized.

14 REPRESENTATIVE WOODSON: Thank you so
15 much, Mr. Speaker.

16 That wasn't a suggestion. That was the
17 will of the voters. So I'm asking again, where is
18 the fairness? Where is the fairness? When we
19 engage in a mid-decade redistricting process that
20 the people did not ask for? Where's the fairness
21 when the process itself is flawed, rushed, and
22 lacking transparency? Where's the fairness, again,
23 for the working mother, the senior in Broward
24 County, the student in College Park, who doesn't
25 have the luxury of being here in Tallahassee, but

1 will have to live with the consequences of what we
2 do today?

3 Because make no mistake, this is not
4 theoretical. This is not just about lines on a map.
5 This is about the very essence of fairness. This is
6 about real people, real communities, and fairness
7 should not be partisan. Fairness is a principle.

8 Members, I'm asking you today, where's the
9 fairness in ignoring them? We should pause. We
10 should take the time to get it right. And for one,
11 I refuse to do that. So today, I will be voting no,
12 not out of partisanship, but out of principle.

13 Because until we can answer that question, where's
14 the fairness, we have no business voting on this
15 bill.

16 Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

17 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

18 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: I yield to Rep.
19 Young.

20 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Young.

21 REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: Thank you, Mr.
22 Speaker.

23 Members, I have a question. What has
24 changed? What has changed since 2022? Is it the
25 political climate that now requires us to redraw

1 lines, not because communities moved, but because
2 power shifted? Is it the political climate that now
3 says fairness is optional when it becomes
4 inconvenient? Is it the political climate that
5 allows Washington's interests to reach down into
6 this state and shape our representation? Is it the
7 political climate that asks us to accept maps that
8 dilute the voting power and strength of black and
9 Latino Florida's? Is it the political climate that
10 tells us winning is more important than how we win?
11 Because if none of these things has changed, then
12 the question becomes, why are we here?

13 Members, we are living in perilous times.
14 Perilous times when government begins to choose who
15 it wants to represent instead of allowing the people
16 to choose who represents them. Perilous times when
17 those who present themselves as leaders cloak
18 political intent in the sheep cloth language of
19 process and necessity. Perilous times when we
20 normalize outcomes that we would have once
21 challenged without hesitation.

22 If the standard becomes that maps can be
23 redrawn whenever the political winds change, then
24 there is no stability in representation. If the
25 precedent becomes that outside influence can shape

1 our districts, then there is no independence in this
2 body. If the expectation becomes that
3 constitutional guardrails can be stretched when
4 convenient, then those guardrails will not be there
5 when we need them. This is not a partisan warning.
6 This is an institutional one.

7 So I would ask you to consider not just
8 the outcome or vote, but the standard it sets. Is
9 this how we want Florida to govern itself? Is this
10 the process we want to defend when the roles are
11 reversed? Is this the message we want to send to
12 voters who trusted us to follow the constitution
13 that they approved? So this is not just a
14 disagreement over policy. This is a question of
15 whether we are willing to uphold the rules when they
16 are inconvenient or when they benefit us.

17 So what has changed? I know what has
18 changed. I'm glad you asked. What has changed is
19 that those in leadership have begun to yield their
20 authority, not just here in Florida, but at the
21 national level to the executive branch, allowing
22 decisions like this to be driven from the top down
23 instead of the ground up. Government should be of
24 the people, by the people, for the people, not
25 controlled by elites clinging to strings of power

1 they can feel slipping away. That is not how this
2 institution was designed to function, and that is
3 not how democracy is supposed to work.

4 Mr. Speaker, for the sake of this body,
5 for the sake of the constitution, and for the sake
6 of the people who sent us here to represent them, I
7 ask that we vote this bill down.

8 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

9 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: I yield to Rep.
10 Nixon.

11 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Nixon.

12 REPRESENTATIVE NIXON: Thank you, Mr.
13 Speaker.

14 This is deja vu, y'all. It's deja vu. The
15 same exact thing happened back in 2022 when you all
16 unconstitutionally and illegally just gave away our
17 power. Last time I checked, we were the ones who
18 were supposed to be drawing the maps. And yet and
19 still, we are allowing, y'all continue to hold the
20 water of a governor who is a lame duck and just
21 trying to figure out what his next job is going to
22 be. And so, in 2022, we were right here diminishing
23 representation instead of our one constitutional
24 duty of passing a budget. We're here again. The
25 budget ain't passed. Why are we so pressed on

1 premature reappointment instead of passing an
2 already delayed budget?

3 My mama said that everything that's free
4 ain't good. And here in the free state of Florida,
5 we have a governor that wants to be a member of the
6 state legislature. That is -- it's our only job to
7 do this, and I'm just so really confused that why we
8 feel it's okay to continue to cheat so we can win.
9 Well, y'all want to cheat so you can win.

10 And I know a lot of folks are talking
11 trash about what Virginia did, but Virginia took
12 their vote to the voters. Back in 2010, our voters
13 said we did not want to gerrymander partisanship.
14 We didn't want to allow partisan gerrymandering. And
15 you always talk about decorum, but y'all violate the
16 law. Make it make sense. It's wrong. It is wrong.
17 It is dead wrong. And I look forward to the
18 pendulum swinging come November.

19 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

20 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: I yield to Rep.
21 Joseph.

22 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Joseph.

23 REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH: Thank you, Mr.
24 Speaker.

25 Listen, y'all. I'm going to just talk to

1 Floridians. Black, white, purple, red, blue,
2 whatever, the governor is playing in your face.
3 That's what the kids say. He tells us, he's given
4 us these shifting explanations as to why we're here
5 today. One is to address the undercount in the
6 population shifts. There's no new census data.
7 Nothing has been addressed to change or address any
8 population shifts, because we're using the same
9 exact information. He talks about addressing court
10 rulings. We just got one of the court rulings he
11 was talking about, and you just heard our colleagues
12 vote down our, meaning the Democrats' request, to
13 pause this process to address that court ruling. So
14 they're not interested in the court ruling.

15 Okay. Maybe they're interested in another
16 court ruling. The Black Voters Matter ruling,
17 right? That one found that the last time we did
18 this process, we took away a black seat in this
19 state. The court found that that was done
20 inappropriately, but could not correct it because
21 this administration did not give them the accurate
22 data to restore the black seat. So they're not
23 addressing litigation.

24 What else did he tell us he wanted to do?
25 Oh, he wants to follow the law. Let's talk about

1 what the law is. Unlike in a lot of other states
2 where people can vote by referendum, we have a
3 different process in Florida, and constitutionally,
4 it cannot be partisan. Specifically, the Fair
5 Districts Amendment, which is found in Article 3,
6 Section 20 of our state constitution, specifically
7 says that there can be no apportionate plan or
8 individual district shall be drawn with the intent
9 to favor or disfavor a political party or incumbent.
10 And you heard the bill sponsor and the person who
11 drew the maps testify to the partisanship. And we
12 know that the maps came out first to Fox News before
13 anybody in this chamber or the other chamber got it.
14 So what are they doing? They're rigging the
15 elections because they don't know how to play fair
16 because they know they will lose.

17 That's what we're dealing with right now.
18 There's nothing routine about mid-cycle
19 redistricting. It is illegal. Full stop.

20 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

21 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: I yield to Rep.
22 Lopez.

23 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Lopez, you're
24 recognized.

25 REPRESENTATIVE LOPEZ: Thank you, Mr.

1 Speaker.

2 More than 55 percent of registered Florida
3 voters oppose mid-decade redistricting, including
4 independents, Democrats, and Republicans. So let me
5 speak to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in
6 the language we all share, taxpayer monies and the
7 constitution. The proclamation that calls us here
8 expressly appropriate funds for any legal challenges
9 thereto. We are being asked to pass a map and
10 pre-fund the lawsuits defending it in the same
11 breath with taxpayer money. Whatever you think
12 about the politics of redistricting, that is not
13 limited government. That is not fiscal restraint.
14 That is asking the small business owner in our
15 state, the retiree on a fixed income, the family
16 already squeezed by property insurance, to
17 underwrite a legal fight they did not ask for.
18 There is no emergency in our district that this map
19 solves. Only a bill the taxpayer will be paying for
20 in court for years.

21 When 60 percent of voters write a rule
22 into the constitution and 55 percent tell us today
23 they do not want this, the conservative answer and
24 the progressive answer are the same answer.
25 Respect the voters. To the constituents in our

1 district who wrote, who called, who showed up,
2 Republicans, Democrats, independents, I hear you.

3 Today I will vote no on this bill and I
4 will encourage everybody to do the same.

5 Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

6 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

7 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you, Mr.
8 Speaker. I yield to Rep Skidmore.

9 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Skidmore.

10 REPRESENTATIVE SKIDMORE: Thank you, Mr.
11 Speaker.

12 Members, we've heard from the Democrats in
13 the chamber about all the reasons why we shouldn't
14 be engaged in this process. I really love quotes.
15 I like to look back in history. In 1887, Lord Acton
16 said in a letter to an Anglican bishop, power tends
17 to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.
18 That has never been more evident than today in this
19 chamber. And do you know what's absent when
20 corruption is present? Courage. Courage. There's
21 no courage in this room. There's no courage to say
22 no to a dictator. There's no courage to say no to a
23 has been. There's no courage in this chamber to do
24 the right thing. There are members in this chamber
25 who know in their hearts that they took an oath to

1 protect the Constitution and they're going to
2 violate that oath today.

3 You have to look yourself in the mirror
4 every day. I'm glad I don't have to look at you
5 every day because I am so disappointed in your lack
6 of courage, in your lack of conviction to do the
7 right thing, to do what you were elected to do,
8 which is to represent your constituents who do not
9 want this map, who asked you not to do it, who told
10 us very emphatically in 2010 not to do this thing
11 that you're going to do today. And I say you
12 because the Democrats are not doing it. The
13 Democrats have the courage of their conviction, and
14 the Democrats are going to prove to Floridians that
15 we are on the right side of history and we will
16 remain there, and you have to live with your
17 decision.

18 MR. SPEAKER: Members, we're going to
19 pause for a recognition.

20 REPRESENTATIVE BLANCO: Representative
21 Blanco you're recognized for a recognition.

22 Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

23 Today we have from Miami a group of folks
24 who came up to talk about Cuba and the freedom of
25 Cuba, democracy of Cuba. I'd like to recognize in

1 the East Gallery Orlando Gutierrez and Jose Daniel
2 Ferrer who was a political prisoner for over
3 12 years.

4 Gentlemen, members, thank you.

5 We recognize these leaders who have come
6 together to provide a pathway to democracy and
7 freedom for the Cuban people. Welcome to the
8 Florida House and God bless.

9 MR. SPEAKER: Welcome to the Florida
10 House.

11 Representative Salzman, you're recognized
12 for a motion -- for a recognition.

13 REPRESENTATIVE SALZMAN: Thank you Mr.
14 Speaker.

15 Members I have two quick things. One in
16 the West Gallery, my constituent and dear friend
17 Matt Sharpstein is here. You guys, welcome to the
18 Florida House. Matt, give him a round of applause.
19 He actually helped me in my very first election. He
20 was one of the first people I talked to in 2019 and
21 encouraged me to be here today, a dear friend.
22 So thank you for being here. Also a friend of Meg's.
23 I won't steal your thunder with your dear daughter.

24 And then secondly, members, I just want to
25 let you know that Pensacola is being represented by

1 an American Idol. We have a top five contender,
2 Keyla Richardson. She got, she was top seven. She
3 got, made it to top five on Monday. We were here.
4 So next Monday we're hoping that she makes it to top
5 three. But just wanted to give a shout out to our
6 very own Pensacola, our Floridian, Keyla Richardson
7 for being an America Idol top five.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. SPEAKER: Leader Sirois, you're
10 recognized in debate.

11 REPRESENTATIVE SIROIS: Thank you, Mr.
12 Speaker. We yield back.

13 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

14 Representative Gantt, you're recognized in
15 debate.

16 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you, Mr.
17 Speaker. I yield to Leader Driskell.

18 MR. SPEAKER: Leader Driskell, you're
19 recognized in debate.

20 REPRESENTATIVE DRISKELL: Thank you, Mr.
21 Speaker.

22 Members, my grandmother used to say,
23 child, just because you can do a thing doesn't mean
24 you should. And I would love it if we would stop
25 dancing around what is happening here today. This

1 bill is not redistricting reform. It's a partisan
2 map drawn in secret on demand from Washington and
3 shoved through this chamber on a clock designed to
4 keep the public out of the room. And before any one
5 of us votes, we owe our constituents the courtesy of
6 saying this out loud. Earlier, the Florida Supreme
7 Court told us they believed compliance with the Fair
8 District Amendments is not a compelling state
9 interest sufficient for consideration of race to
10 pass strict scrutiny under the 14th Amendment. Just
11 yesterday, the governor's office staff told us the
12 same thing about the VRA. Race can never be
13 considered in redistricting. So they did not
14 consider race in any way because compliance with the
15 Voting Rights Act cannot be a compelling state
16 interest. But just moments ago, today, Justice
17 Alito in the Callais case said the governor and his
18 counsel are wrong. Justice Alito, writing for the
19 majority, said, Compliance with Section 2 as
20 properly construed can provide such a reason. It's
21 on Page 8 of the Slip Opinion that this chamber
22 would not take a recess to go and read. I encourage
23 you. Go and read it.

24 MR. SPEAKER: Members, please hold it
25 down. Leader Driskell.

1 REPRESENTATIVE DRISKELL: The man who drew
2 this map testified under oath that he used partisan
3 data to draw every single district, every one.
4 And when the governor's attorney was asked whether
5 Democratic voters are being underrepresented in our
6 congressional delegation, his answer was that this
7 is a normative question. Members, if we vote yes on
8 this bill, it's not just that we're being misled.
9 We are blessing this mess. The timing tells the
10 rest. The governor announced his intention to
11 redistrict shortly after the president of the United
12 States asked Republican-led states to do exactly
13 that. There is no neutral explanation for that
14 sequence of events.

15 The map drawer told us that he was
16 applying traditional redistricting principles
17 instead of race. But the 2026 plan is less compact
18 than the current map. It splits more counties. It
19 splits more cities. The work product contradicts the
20 status standard. So many communities are losing
21 representation. To the people of Tampa Bay, I see
22 what is being done to our representation. I will
23 not be quiet about it, and I will not vote for it.
24 Members, this map was drawn in secret, defended on a
25 theory that really no court accepts with respect to

1 severability, designed with partisan data, and timed
2 to a partisan request.

3 And I guess it only remains to mention, I
4 know we're all very busy and we all have lives, and
5 I can tell just by the folks, the lack of attention
6 in this room, that perhaps it's an inconvenient
7 thing to destroy democracy today. That is what I
8 feel like I'm being told. You're not listening.
9 You don't care. The people of Florida deserve
10 better. You think that this is just about
11 preserving a Republican majority in the midterm. I
12 stopped by to tell you today that you are destroying
13 democracy with this vote. The people of Florida
14 deserve better. Not one of our constituents asked
15 for this, not one. Shame on this House today.

16 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

17 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: I yield to Rep.
18 Franklin.

19 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Franklin.

20 REPRESENTATIVE FRANKLIN: Thank you so
21 much, Mr. Speaker.

22 When I stood in the well of this House and
23 raised my right hand, I didn't take an oath to a
24 political party. I took a solemn oath to the
25 Constitution and to the people of this state. The

1 oath is a covenant. It demands that we act with
2 integrity, not with an eraser or a political agenda.
3 To support a measure that undermines the very
4 building blocks of our democracy is to break faith
5 with the very foundation of this office. This seat
6 that I sit in today does not belong to me. It
7 belongs to the legacy of those who fought to ensure
8 that every voice is heard. We are stewards of a
9 sacred trust. When we entertain maneuvers that
10 skirt the edge of legality, we aren't just moving
11 lines, we are diminishing the dignity of the
12 institution that we all swore to protect.

13 My focus is focused on the mission. Let's
14 lead, not rearrange. We have real problems here in
15 Florida that require real solutions. We have health
16 care gaps that need closing and economic engines
17 that need fueling. As we know, years ago, over 60%
18 of Floridians casted a vote to enshrine in the
19 Florida Constitution telling us not to do what we're
20 doing today. And so this unconstitutional
21 distraction sacrifices the needs of many to fuel the
22 ambitions of the few.

23 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

24 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: Thank you.

25 I yield to Rep. Campbell.

1 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Campbell.

2 REPRESENTATIVE CAMPBELL: Thank you, Mr.
3 Speaker.

4 Members, there are moments in this chamber
5 when the law is not enough. When the question before
6 us is not just we can, but what we should do. This
7 is one of those moments. A battle for the soul of
8 America. Maps are not just lines. They tell people
9 whether their count, whether their voice matters,
10 whether the institution still believes in the
11 simple, sacred promise that every citizen is equal.
12 Today, that promise is being tested. This map fails
13 on every metric. It fails morally, legally,
14 technically, and objectively. But more than
15 anything, it fails the people that sent us here.

16 There is nothing routine about deciding
17 whose voice is heard and whose is not. We are not
18 map makers. We are stewards of democracy, and that
19 only works if people believe it is fair. If we
20 trade fairness for advantage, then some may win
21 today, but we all lose something far much greater,
22 the public's trust that this institution belongs to
23 them. We are at an inflection point in history.

24 I ask you to choose fairness and reject
25 this map.

1 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

2 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: I yield to Rep.
3 Tendrich.

4 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Tendrich.

5 REPRESENTATIVE TENDRICH: Thank you, Mr.
6 Speaker.

7 Everyone in this room had member projects
8 that did not make it into the budget. In my
9 district, Lake Clark Shores families are relying on
10 a failing water system with asbestos in our pipes,
11 leaving a significant number of homes under
12 continuous boil water notices. That project was
13 unfunded. So I have to ask, why are we spending
14 millions on redistricting while our communities are
15 still struggling with basic infrastructure, housing,
16 and affordability needs? The fiscal impacts of
17 redistricting are huge, special session costs, legal
18 and litigation costs, administrative costs,
19 implementation costs, such as updating voter rolls
20 and precincts, public outreach, and even issuing new
21 voter cards. But the biggest cost is not on paper,
22 it's constituent trust.

23 I've spoken to people across my district
24 on both sides of the aisle, and they don't
25 understand why we are here working on something that

1 does not impact their day-to-day lives. They're
2 worried about issues like affordability, housing and
3 rent costs, and property insurance. We should be
4 repurposing the time, energy, and resources that
5 we're spending on redistricting to focus on the real
6 needs of our constituents, because at the end of the
7 day, this is about priorities. And right now, this
8 does not reflect theirs.

9 We already redrew these maps in 2022 using
10 the same census data we are relying on today. And
11 according to Jason Parada, this map also considered
12 partisan data. So why, just four years later, are
13 we doing it again, with no new census data, no court
14 ruling requiring it, and no meaningful public input?
15 Every dollar spent here is a dollar that will not be
16 spent in our communities that deserve our full
17 investment. This is the wrong priority at the wrong
18 time. This can wait, but our constituents cannot.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

21 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: I yield to Rep.

22 Rayner.

23 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Rayner.

24 REPRESENTATIVE RAYNER: Thank you, Mr.

25 Speaker.

1 Members, democracies may die at the hands,
2 not of generals, but of elected leaders. And right
3 now, the democracy is dying, and my colleagues are
4 laughing and talking like it's nothing, as democracy
5 is dying. And maybe it's a joke to you, but it's
6 not a joke to us, the Democrats, and to the people
7 of Florida. So I'm going to call this what it is.
8 This process is illegal. It is a partisan
9 gerrymander. It is illegal. It is a partisan
10 gerrymander. And for those of y'all who say you are
11 in the party of law and order, you should have a
12 problem with this. This is not routine maintenance.
13 This is not a compliance with the court order. This
14 is a mid-decade illegal redraw of political lines
15 without any lawful trigger, and it's not being
16 driven by this legislature, but forces outside of
17 this chamber. The process is flawed.

18 The maps were drawn in secret by the
19 governor's office. This is not speculation. This
20 is what the people said in both hearings. And now we
21 are being asked to ratify them. Not refine them,
22 not meaningfully debate them, ratify them. This is
23 not how this chamber works. What happened to the
24 House being the House? We are not a rubber stamp.
25 We are a co-eco-branch of government. And then

1 let's be real. Y'all are doing this because y'all's
2 daddy in the White House is injecting national
3 political objectives into what should be a state
4 driven process.

5 And now, as we talk about the law, the
6 voters were very clear when they talked about the
7 Fair Districts Amendment. They didn't hedge. They
8 didn't leave room for interpretation. No
9 apportionment plan or individual district shall be
10 drawn with the intent to favor or disfavor a
11 political party and the incumbent. That is the
12 standard. Not if, not if it's convenient, not when
13 it's politically advantageous. And what do we have
14 before us? A map that was previewed on Fox News
15 showing a partisan breakdown. But you want me to
16 believe that the same map that was showed on Fox
17 News that had a partisan breakdown and is the same
18 map we're voting on is not partisan. Make it make
19 sense. As my mother used to say, do not play in my
20 face and I am not a stupid woman.

21 So y'all, you are doing this in the face
22 of the people. You're doing an illegal partisan
23 gerrymander. And I'm going to tell you this, for
24 those who vote in favor of this map, history will
25 not look well upon you. Vote no on this map.

1 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

2 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: I yield to Rep

3 Long.

4 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Long.

5 REPRESENTATIVE LONG: Thank you, Mr.

6 Speaker.

7 Members, I don't speak up much in here,
8 mainly because I'm one of the newest members of this
9 body. And I came into this year with the plan to
10 keep my mouth shut and my head down and my
11 colleagues in the back here have already very well
12 covered a lot of the concerns with this map. But I
13 had to rise today because of what this map would do
14 to my home. I live in Delray Beach, the southern
15 Palm Beach County. I just served as vice mayor
16 there. And this proposed map splits my city in half,
17 carving up a community that shares schools, and
18 infrastructure and anchoring half of it
19 congressional representation to two other counties.

20 My own house would be moved into District
21 25, a district that stretches across Palm Beach,
22 Broward, and Miami-Dade, ranks last in compactness,
23 has the lowest Polsby-Popper score on the map, which
24 is the standard we use to measure whether districts
25 are drawn fairly or distorted, as we all know. But

1 this is bigger than my city.

2 This map was not produced through a
3 deliberative legislative process. We all know that,
4 right? Are we really pretending it was? Members
5 had, like, 24 hours to review it before it was
6 presented to the committee yesterday by one guy,
7 Jason Parada, who allegedly drew the map. Should
8 that alone not give us pause here? This map wasn't
9 driven by a new census, or population imbalance, or
10 a court order. It's just something the governor
11 wants, which means we don't have to do it.

12 Floridians are struggling with the cost of
13 living right now, housing, insurance, gas,
14 groceries. They expect us to pass a reasonable
15 budget and focus on the issues that actually impact
16 their lives. Instead, we're debating a map that, by
17 every traditional metric, is worse than the one we
18 have now. It is objectively less compact. It
19 splits more counties, 19 instead of 17. It splits
20 more cities, 30 instead of 16. It redraws more than
21 80 percent of the districts in this state. That's
22 not refinement. That is a wholesale redraw,
23 allegedly by one guy who admitted that he used
24 partisan data. And we barely had a chance to look
25 at it, guys.

1 This body has stood up as a co-equal
2 branch of government before and said no. We can do
3 it here again today. And, listen, I know I'm new,
4 but I don't expect our speeches to change any votes.
5 I get it. But I do think everyone here understands
6 exactly what this is. And we do have a choice about
7 whether to go along with it.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Gantt.

10 REPRESENTATIVE GANTT: I yield to Rep
11 Bartleman.

12 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Bartleman.

13 REPRESENTATIVE BARTLEMAN: Thank you, Mr.
14 Speaker.

15 Legislators, we took an oath to uphold the
16 Constitution with integrity. We are beholden to the
17 Floridians, to our communities, to our neighbors,
18 not to the federal branch of government and not to
19 the executive branch of the Florida government.
20 Facts are the facts and the truth is the truth.
21 This map violates our Constitution. The two-tier
22 data and testimony indicates partisan
23 gerrymandering. I am ashamed of what is happening
24 here and in this country. Historically, our parties
25 have always disagreed, but we played by rules. We

1 had character. We had integrity. And we operated
2 legally within a process.

3 If you are a Democrat, a Republican, or an
4 MPA, you are still an American. You are watching
5 the eroding of our democracy and the foundation of
6 this country. We owe it to Floridians to vote no.

7 MR. SPEAKER: Time for debate. And this
8 block has expired. We're going to pause for a
9 recognition.

10 REPRESENTATIVE WEINBERGER: Representative
11 Weinberger, you are recognized for recognition.

12 Good afternoon, members. I wanted to
13 welcome my daughter, Riley Weinberger, here. She's
14 on college break from Northeastern. Welcome to the
15 Florida House.

16 MR. SPEAKER: Welcome to the Florida
17 House.

18 Leader Sirois, you are recognized in
19 debate.

20 REPRESENTATIVE SIROIS: Thank you,
21 Mr. Speaker. We yield back our time.

22 MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Time for debate
23 has expired.

24 Representative Persons-Mulicka, you are
25 recognized to close.

1 Representative Persons-Mulicka has waived
2 close.

3 REPRESENTATIVE PERSONS-MULICKA: Waive
4 close --

5 MR. SPEAKER: The question now recurs on
6 final passage of HB 1-D. The clerk will unlock the
7 machine and the members will proceed to vote.

8 Have all members voted? Have all members
9 voted? The clerk will unlock the machine and
10 announce the vote.

11 THE CLERK: 83 yays, 28 nays, Mr. Speaker.

12 MR. SPEAKER: Show the bill passes.

13 Read the next bill.

14 THE CLERK: None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

15 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Garrison, you
16 are recognized for a motion.

17 REPRESENTATIVE GARRISON: Mr. Speaker, I
18 move the House do now adjourn. Sine die.

19 MR. SPEAKER: Representative Garrison
20 moves that the House adjourns. Sine die. All in
21 favor say "Yea."

22 (Collective "Yea".)

23 MR. SPEAKER: Proposed no, show the motion
24 approved, the house is adjourned. Sine die.

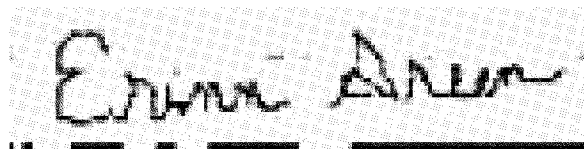
25 (The House Session Concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

I, ERINN GREEN, Professional Court
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Dated this 30th day of April, 2026.



ERINN L. GREEN, Court Reporter
Notary Public, State of Florida
Expires: January 23, 2028

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