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Common Cause, et al. v. Cord Byrd

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Common Cause, et al.)
)
v.) 4:22-cv-109
)
Cord Byrd)

)

TRANSCRIPTION OF AUDIO FILE
House State Legislative
Redistricting Subcommittee
The Florida Channel
January 11, 2022

DIGITAL EVIDENCE GROUP
1730 M Street, NW, Suite 812
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 232-0646

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1 (Beginning of Video Recording.)

2 CHAIRMAN BYRD: The State Legislative
3 Redistricting Subcommittee will come to order.
4 Sam, please call the roll.

5 MALE VOICE: Chair Byrd.

6 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Here.

7 MALE VOICE: Vicechair Robinson.

8 VICECHAIR ROBINSON: Here.

9 MALE VOICE: Ranking member Daley.

10 RANKING MEMBER DALEY: Here.

11 MALE VOICE: Representative Arrington.

12 REPRESENTATIVE ARRINGTON: Here.

13 MALE VOICE: Barnaby, excused. Bell

14 MS. BELL: Here.

15 MALE VOICE: Brannan.

16 MS. BRANNAN: Here.

17 MALE VOICE: Brannon. Chambliss.

18 MR. CHAMBLISS: Here.

19 MALE VOICE: Garrison.

20 MR. GARRISON: Here.

21 MALE VOICE: Hart.

22 MS. HART: Here.

23 MALE VOICE: Hawkins.

24 MR. HAWKINS: Here.

25 MALE VOICE: Maney.

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1 MR. MANEY: Here.

2 MALE VOICE: McClain.

3 MR. McClain: Here.

4 MALE VOICE: Melo. Excused. Mooney.

5 MR. MOONEY: Here.

6 MALE VOICE: Persons-Mulicka.

7 MS. PERSONS-MULICKA: Here.

8 MALE VOICE: Salzman (phonetic).

9 MS. SLAZMAN: Here.

10 MALE VOICE: Snyder (phonetic).

11 MR. SNYDER: Here.

12 MALE VOICE: Tant (phonetic).

13 MS. TANT: Here.

14 MALE VOICE: Valdes.

15 MS. VALDES: Present.

16 MALE VOICE: Woodson.

17 MS. WOODSON: Here.

18 MALE VOICE: A quorum is present, Mr.

19 Chair.

20 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you, Sam.

21 Members, a few reminders before we begin.

22 Please silence all electronic devices. And if

23 you are here today to give public testimony,

24 please take time now to fill out an appearance

25 form and turn it in to the Sergeant's staff.

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1 I'd also ask everyone to please silence
2 any electronic devices and turn on your
3 microphone when you are speaking and off when
4 you are finished.

5 Members, welcome to the first day of
6 regular session and our first subcommittee
7 meeting of the new year. I'm excited for this
8 next stage of our redistricting cycle.

9 For those of you who may be
10 returning -- are tuning in for the first time,
11 I would like to recap our progress.
12 Throughout interim committee weeks, this
13 committee took time to diligently educate
14 members and the public on the constitutional
15 and legal requirements for redistricting,
16 debuted and demonstrated a tailored map
17 drawing application that lives on the
18 legislature's joint redistricting website and
19 is available for any individual to use and
20 end-capped the year with a workshop of an
21 initial round of maps to tangibly illustrate
22 different policy choices that will come before
23 this committee for a vote.

24 For our first meeting of the regular
25 session, Chair Leek and I have chosen to

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1 devote it solely to hearing public testimony.
2 Contrary to come comments I've heard since
3 this meeting's agenda was announced, I'd like
4 to point out that this is actually the
5 committee's sixth opportunity to hear public
6 testimony, along with the continuous ability
7 to provide and view public input on Florida
8 Districting dot gov.

9 Once we conclude the public testimony
10 today, committee members should plan to shift
11 their focus to reviewing and preparing to
12 review and vote on our formal committee work
13 product, which will be debuted in the near
14 future.

15 Ranking Member Daley, I understand you
16 sent a letter at the end of last week. We are
17 working through that letter. But I wanted to
18 make sure to acknowledge publicly that we
19 received it, and we thank you for sending your
20 questions to the committee.

21 All of the educational efforts we've
22 under taken as a committee will have prepared
23 us to appropriately review, understand, and
24 ultimately vote on a work product that will
25 then move on to the full redistricting

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1 committee.

2 We are now going to move into the
3 purpose of today's meeting, which is public
4 comment. I would remind all speakers to keep
5 their comments on topic. And to the extent
6 your comments align with our constitutional
7 standards would be beneficial, as the maps we
8 must ultimately vote on have to in alignment
9 with these standards.

10 And as always, please address your
11 questions through the Chair. First up we have
12 Kathy Bryant, Marion County Board of County
13 Commissions. Commissioner Bryant, welcome.
14 You are recognized.

15 COMMISSIONER BRYANT: Good afternoon,
16 Chair Byrd and committee members. I'm Marion
17 County Commissioner Kathy Bryant. First, I
18 would like to thank the committee for their
19 work on redistricting and bring to your
20 attention some concerns that Marion County has
21 about the proposed redistricting maps.

22 Marion County's identity is defined by
23 our historic areas such as, first and
24 foremost, Fort King, which was the first
25 county seat of Marion County as well as being

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1 the county seat when Marion County was
2 recognized by the State of Florida.

3 Secondly, but just as important, Silver
4 Springs, which is an amazing tourist
5 attraction and draws hundreds and thousands --
6 or I'm sorry, hundreds of thousands of
7 visitors to Marion County each year.

8 Not to mention Orange Springs, Juniper
9 Springs, Fort McCoy, Lake Wear, Lake Kure,
10 Salt Springs, and the Ocala National Forest.
11 With that said, the proposed redistricting of
12 Marion County could possibly affect Marion
13 County's minority representation.

14 By dividing the City of Ocala, breaking
15 apart the Ocala National Forest and Marion
16 County's springs areas, our minority
17 population would be splintered into small
18 pieces across several districts, which could
19 lead to these groups having less of an impact
20 on any single election.

21 Additionally, passing these areas to
22 surrounding counties will be a disservice to
23 these communities and will reduce the
24 dedicated attention necessary for maintaining,
25 promoting, and protecting our water resources,

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1 economic vitality, and the needs and interests
2 of our residents and businesses.

3 I am requesting the committee pay
4 special attention to House Districts 20 and 27
5 and not break Marion County lines, not divide
6 the City of Ocala, and ensure that the Ocala
7 National Forest and its springs remain whole.

8 It would be a detriment to our county
9 if voters in Alachua, Putnam, or Volusia
10 counties overly influence the decisions in
11 these areas. Thank you so much for your time
12 today. We respectfully request that the
13 redistricting lines follow the county lines so
14 that Marion County citizens are fairly
15 represented at the state level. And again,
16 thank you for your time today.

17 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you, Commissioner
18 Bryant, for being with us. Appreciate that.
19 All right. Next up, we have Ralph Thomas,
20 Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners.
21 Mr. Thomas, you are recognized. Welcome.
22 Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER THOMAS: Thank you, Mr.
24 Chairman. Thank you, committee members. My
25 name is Ralph Thomas. I'm a county

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1 commissioner in Wakulla County. We adopted a
2 resolution in Wakulla County specifically in
3 support of map H007. House District 7, as you
4 know, is the largest geographical district in
5 the -- in the state. Nine counties.

6 It's always been, historically, a very
7 rural district. Some of the, you know,
8 smallest and poorest cities and counties in
9 the state. And just believe that, in order
10 for us to continue to -- to have a voice in
11 Tallahassee, the best option is Map 7, so we
12 can maintain the rural nature of that
13 district.

14 Bringing us into Map 5 would force us
15 to compete with, you know, very important
16 issues of urban Tallahassee. But although
17 important, completely different than the
18 issues we have to deal with in the rural North
19 Florida. So we definitely would appreciate
20 your support of Map 7.

21 Thank you very much.

22 CHAIRMAN BRYD: Thank you, Commissioner
23 Thomas. Is there anyone else from the public
24 wishing to address the committee today?
25 Anyone else? Speak now or forever hold your

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1 peace. All right. Then members, this
2 concludes our business. Yes, Ranking Member
3 Daley, for what purpose do you ask a question?

4 MR. DALEY: Sorry, Chair. You know, my
5 only point in speaking today, and I thank you
6 for the time -- for the opportunity for the
7 public to weigh in. I think my concern is,
8 there were first couple meetings of this
9 committee that coincided with the
10 congressional map committee. We got away from
11 that for a meeting or two. And now we seem to
12 be back at it.

13 So I can't help but wonder if there are
14 folks who are currently in the congressional
15 redistricting committee that was noticed at
16 the same exact time that are not here today.
17 So in the future, if we could just make sure
18 that we put them at separate times. I'd like
19 to reiterate that request again. Thanks, Mr.
20 Chair.

21 CHAIRMAN BYRD: Thank you. And I'll be
22 certain to pass on that -- or your comments to
23 Chair Leek when we schedule in the future. So
24 I'd like to thank all members of the public
25 that traveled here today to share your

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1 thoughts on the workshop maps and the
2 redistricting process.

3 I look forward to this next stage of
4 our process. And with that, I hope everyone
5 has a great session. This concludes our
6 committee agenda for today. And with that
7 Representative Woodson moves we rise. Meeting
8 is adjourned.

9 (End of Video Recording.)

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I, Wendy Sawyer, do hereby certify that I was authorized to and transcribed the foregoing recorded proceedings, and that the transcript is a true record, to the best of my ability.

DATED this 5th day of March, 2023.



WENDY SAWYER, CDLT

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