

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF FLORIDA

Case No.: SC26 - _____
L.T. Case Nos. 1D2026-1539, 2026-CA-914

Equal Ground Education Fund, Inc., et al.,

Petitioners,

v.

**Cord Byrd, in his official capacity as Florida Secretary of State,
the Florida House of Representatives,
and the Florida Senate,**

Respondents.

**APPENDIX OF EMERGENCY PETITION
FOR CONSTITUTIONAL WRIT
Volume 5**

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**Pro hac vice
admission forthcoming*

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forthcoming*

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on June 4, 2026 I electronically filed the foregoing using the State of Florida ePortal Filing System, which will serve an electronic copy to counsel in the Service List below.

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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA

EQUAL GROUND EDUCATION FUND,
INC., MARCOS VILAR, BRANDON
NELSON, LISA BARIKA, KISHA
LINEBAUGH, ROCHELLE REBACK,
ELIZABETH WELLS, SUSAN WILSON,
ANDREA DAVNIE HILL, EMMA KURTZ,
LYNNELLE MAYS, STEVEN LICARI,
ANNE BLANFORD, SHARON LASCOLA,
JANET WECHTER, KERRY MARIE,
LINDA ROSENTHAL, DANIELLA
PIERRE, and PHILIP FORTMAN,

Plaintiffs,

v.

CORD BYRD, in his official capacity as
Florida Secretary of State, the FLORIDA
SENATE, and the FLORIDA HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES,

Defendants.

Case No. 2026 CA 000914

**PLAINTIFFS' NOTICE OF FILING *CORRECTED* EXHIBITS 13 AND 18 IN SUPPORT
OF PLAINTIFFS' MEMORANDUM OF LAW IN SUPPORT
OF MOTION FOR TEMPORARY INJUNCTION – VOLUME 1**

Plaintiffs hereby give notice of the filing of Corrected¹ Exhibits 13 and 18 to Plaintiffs'

Memorandum of Law in Support of Motion for Temporary Injunction, as follows:

Exhibits – VOLUME 1	
Exhibit 13	Tr. of <i>Hr'g on HB 1D Before Fla. H.R.</i> , 2026 Spec. Sess. D (Fla. Apr. 29, 2026)
Exhibit 18	Tr. of Meeting of H. Redistricting Comm. (Fla. Jan. 13, 2022), https://www.flhouse.gov/VideoPlayer.aspx?eventID=7654

¹ Corrected to attach correct certificate of authenticity to each exhibit.

Dated: May 11, 2026

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on May 11, 2026 I electronically filed the foregoing using the State of Florida ePortal Filing System, which will serve an electronic copy to all counsel of record and counsel in the Service List below.

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Corrected Exhibit 13



CERTIFICATION OF AUTHENTICITY

Date 05/02/2026

Client: Michelle DePass

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To Whom It May Concern:

I, Beth Worthy, President at GMR Transcription, do hereby certify under the penalty of perjury, under the laws of the state of California, that:

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Executed this 2nd day of May 2026.

Sincerely,

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Speaker Perez, Pro Tem Speaker Duggan, Clerk, Rep. Garrison, Rep. Persons-Mulicka, Rep. Eskamani, Rep. Rayner, Rep. Gantt, Rep. Driskell, Rep. Joseph, Rep. Cross, Rep. Nixon, Rep. Bartleman, Rep. Robinson, F., Rep. Harris, Rep. Daley, Rep. Hunschofsky, Rep. Sirois, Rep. Tant, Rep. Woodson, Rep. Young, Rep. Lopez, Rep. Skidmore, Rep. Blanco, Rep. Salzman, Rep. Franklin, Rep. Campbell, Rep. Tuendridge, Rep. Long, Rep. Weinberger

Speaker Perez: **[00:00:05]** The House will come to order. Members and visitors in the gallery, please rise for the prayer. The prayer today will be given by Speaker Pro Tem Duggan.

Speaker Duggan: **[00:00:28]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, members. Please pray with me. Hear, all Florida, The Lord your God is Lord alone. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. And love your neighbor as yourself. Lord, thank you for this day, for each other, and for the many blessings you have bestowed upon us. Please be in our midst today. Give grace and wisdom to your servants in the exercise of our duties. Grant us courage and foresight to provide for the needs of all our people.

Make us channels for your peace today and every day. And finally, Lord, teach us to rely on your strength, that we may faithfully serve you and honor your holy name. Amen.

Speaker Perez: **[00:01:26]** Amen. Thank you. Speaker Pro Tem Duggan, you are recognized for a moment of silence.

Speaker Duggan: **[00:01:37]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members, earlier this month, we lost a former member of this House, the Honorable Mark Weissman, who served District 90 from 2000 to 2002 after having served as a City Commissioner for the City of Parkland. Additionally, last week, Collier County lost its longest-serving commissioner in the county's modern history, Commissioner Donna Lou Fiala, often referred to as the People's Commissioner, for her accessibility and commitment to those she served. The Marco Island community also mourned the loss of a beloved leader last week, Councilman Eric C. Brechnitz, a longtime resident and dedicated advocate for his community.

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

Speaker Perez: **[00:02:34]** Members, please join me in a moment of

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silence. Thank you. The Clerk will unlock the machine, and the members will record their presence. Have all members recorded their presence? Have all members recorded their presence? The clerk will lock the machine and announce the presence of a quorum.

Clerk: **[00:03:19]** One hundred and nine members voting. A quorum is present, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[00:03:23]** Members and visitors in the gallery, please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. The Pledge of Allegiance will be led by Representative Snyder, from his desk.

Speakers: **[00:03:32]** I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. Are there corrections to the journal? Hearing none, show the journal approved. Are there matters on introduction and reference?

Clerk: **[00:03:56]** None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[00:03:57]** Are there communications?

Clerk: **[00:03:58]** None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[00:04:00]** Are there messages from the Senate?

Clerk: **[00:04:02]** None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[00:04:03]** Are there reports of standing committees and subcommittees?

Clerk: **[00:04:06]** On the desk, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[00:04:07]** Read the report.

Clerk: **[00:04:09]** The Honorable Daniel Perez, Speaker House of Representatives. "Dear Mr. Speaker, your Rules and Ethics Committee here will submit the special order for Wednesday, April 29th, 2026. Consideration of the House

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bills on special order shall include the Senate companion measures on the House calendar." Reading of the report, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[00:04:26]** Representative Garrison, you are recognized on the report.

Rep. Garrison: **[00:04:29]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The report sets a special order calendar and allocation of times for questions and debate contained in the letter, and I move adoption of the special order report for today, April the 29th of 2026.

Speaker Perez: **[00:04:39]** Are there questions? Is there debate? All in favor, say "Yay."

Speakers: **[00:04:43]** Yay.

Speaker Perez: **[00:04:43]** Opposed, no. Show the special order report adopted. Are there other reports?

Clerk: **[00:04:47]** None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[00:04:48]** Are there motions relating to committee and subcommittee references? Are there matters on reconsideration? Are there bills or joint resolutions on third reading?

Clerk: **[00:04:56]** None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[00:04:57]** Are there bills on the special order calendar?

Clerk: **[00:04:59]** On the desk, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[00:05:00]** Read the first bill.

Clerk: **[00:05:04]** By Representative Persons-Mulicka, House Bill 1. A bill to be entitled an act establishing the congressional districts of the state. By Representative Persons-Mulicka, House Bill 1D, a bill to be entitled an act establishing the congressional districts of the state.

Speaker Perez: **[00:05:23]** Representative Persons-Mulicka, you're

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recognized to explain the bill.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:05:26]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members, this bill establishes the congressional districts of our great state.

Speaker Perez: **[00:05:33]** Questions of the sponsor. Representative Eskamani.

Rep. Eskamani: **[00:05:38]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Representative Jenna Persons-Mulicka, my first question for you is, why was the session scheduled to last only a few days for a process that has previously taken us months to do?

Speaker Perez: **[00:05:51]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:05:53]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did not. I did not schedule a special session. I cannot answer that.

Speaker Perez: **[00:05:58]** Representative Eskamani.

Rep. Eskamani: **[00:06:00]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Why did the House and District Committee vote against placing the governor's office staff under oath before they gave us their testimony in committee?

Speaker Perez: **[00:06:09]** Representative Eskamani, I don't think Representative Persons-Mulicka has insight into the decisions of the chair of the committee. Please proceed with another question.

Rep. Eskamani: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My next question had to do with voting against extending time for more public commentary, but I'll move on to my next question. Do you believe that the Fair Districts Amendment applies the 2026 mask we have in front of us? And a yes or no answer is sufficient.

Speaker Perez: **[00:06:35]** Representative Eskamani, would you restate that? I'm sorry, you spoke so fast, I didn't understand.

Rep. Eskamani: **[00:06:39]** Yes, I can, Mr. Speaker. Do you believe the Fair Districts Amendment applies to the 2026 plan? And you can give us a yes or no if that's easier.

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Speaker Perez: [00:06:47] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:06:49] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can you clarify the question? Do you believe that the Fair Districts Act applies to any map that would be before us, or do you think, are you asking me whether this map that complies with the Fair Districts Act?

Speaker Perez: [00:07:01] Representative Eskamani.

Rep. Eskamani: [00:07:02] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Do these maps comply to the Fair Districts Amendments that Florida voters approved?

Speaker Perez: [00:07:09] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:07:11] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Representative, for that question. And there might be multiple questions on this front. So, let me be very, very clear. In the State of Florida, we have an evolving legal landscape. And we have evidence that the Florida Supreme Court will recede from precedents. They just did that this last summer. In 2022, we, the legislature, approved a map that was based on a viable legal theory interpretation of the Florida Constitution.

The Florida Supreme Court agreed with that viable interpretation, but there are still questions left unanswered. I believe that this map is based on a strong and viable interpretation of both the Florida and the United States Constitutions, and that is why I filed the map and I support it today.

Speaker Perez: [00:07:58] Representative Rayner.

Rep. Rayner: [00:08:01] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a yes or no question. Representative, did any legislator draw a single district line in the map that we are about to vote on?

Speaker Perez: [00:08:11] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Speaker Perez, Pro Tem Speaker Duggan, Clerk, Rep. Garrison, Rep. Persons-Mulicka, Rep. Eskamani, Rep. Rayner, Rep. Gantt, Rep. Driskell, Rep. Joseph, Rep. Cross, Rep. Nixon, Rep. Bartleman, Rep. Robinson, F., Rep. Harris, Rep. Daley, Rep. Hunschofsky, Rep. Sirois, Rep. Tant, Rep. Woodson, Rep. Young, Rep. Lopez, Rep. Skidmore, Rep. Blanco, Rep. Salzman, Rep. Franklin, Rep. Campbell, Rep. Tuendridge, Rep. Long, Rep. Weinberger

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:08:13] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And as a baseline, and for those who are watching us on the Florida Channel, I, as the bill sponsor, I do not have to answer a question with a yes or a no. But in this case, I will say no.

Speaker Perez: [00:08:26] Rayner.

Rep. Rayner: [00:08:27] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And understanding that, this is also a yes or no question. Did any legislator come up with any idea expressed in the plan we're about to vote on?

Speaker Perez: [00:08:38] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:08:40] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No.

Speaker Perez: [00:08:42] Representative Rayner.

Rep. Rayner: [00:08:43] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is it correct that the governor's office was the sole map drawer?

Speaker Perez: [00:08:50] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:08:53] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I personally do not know who drew the map except for based on the testimony that we received in our select committee. In our select committee, Jason Pereda said that he alone solely drew the map.

Speaker Perez: [00:09:11] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: [00:09:14] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mo Jazil testified that the 2022 plan is not yet unconstitutional. Do you agree, and that's a yes or no, that we are enacting a new map to get ahead of the court ruling that has not yet been issued?

Speaker Perez: [00:09:28] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:09:30] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And there is no yes or no, easy answer in, again, an evolving legal landscape. And let me add to my prior answer, in saying that the mid-cycle redistricting gives us the opportunity to ask the questions

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that end up in front of our courts, so that we have guidance when we come back in a few years after the next reapportionment. But standing here today, I am not a decider. It is not my job to answer legal constitutional questions or interpret the state or federal constitution.

That is the job for the judicial branch. Our job is to make a decision to use our judgment in voting for a map that we believe is viable under legal interpretation.

Speaker Perez: [00:10:23] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: [00:10:25] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And isn't it true that the pending case, Louisiana v. Callais, has not been decided by the U.S. Supreme Court?

Speaker Perez: [00:10:34] Representative Gantt, you cannot phrase the question in terms of, "Isn't it true," that's argumentative. But I think Representative Persons-Mulicka understands the thrust of the question, so I'll let her proceed to answer.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:10:45] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All that we know is that an opinion has yet to be issued.

Speaker Perez: [00:10:51] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: [00:10:53] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, if Callais is decided in a way that does not support the governor's legal theory that was presented in our committee, the 2026 plan would not be constitutional.

Speaker Perez: [00:11:10] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:11:12] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't answer that question because it's based on a hypothetical.

Speaker Perez: [00:11:17] Leader Driskell, do you have a question? Are you – yes.

Rep. Driskell: [00:11:22] Mr. Speaker, thank you. Rep, are you aware that Jason Peredo testified that he used partisan data to draw this map, this 2026 plan?

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Speaker Perez: [00:11:31] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:11:34] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware. I am aware of his testimony in front of the Senate Rules Committee.

Speaker Perez: [00:11:41] Leader Driskell.

Rep. Driskell: [00:11:43] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, if you use partisan data and we know that the law says that we're not supposed to do that, how can we now proceed with this map?

Speaker Perez: [00:11:50] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:11:53] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot speak to the intent of the map drawer, and I will not make any conclusions as to the intent of the map drawer.

Speaker Perez: [00:12:05] Leader Driskell.

Rep. Driskell: [00:12:06] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Do you believe that a map drawn using partisan data complies with the Fair District Amendment's prohibition on drawing districts with the intent to favor or disfavor a political party?

Speaker Perez: [00:12:16] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:12:18] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the map in front of us, based on the testimony that we heard in the two various committees, I believe that there is a likelihood that map will be upheld against legal challenges.

Speaker Perez: [00:12:33] Leader Driskell.

Rep. Driskell: [00:12:35] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Approximately 41% of Florida's registered voters are Republicans, yet the 2026 plan creates 24 of 28 Republican-leaning districts. Do you believe that outcome is consistent with the Fair Districts Amendment?

Speaker Perez: [00:12:48] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Speaker Perez, Pro Tem Speaker Duggan, Clerk, Rep. Garrison, Rep. Persons-Mulicka, Rep. Eskamani, Rep. Rayner, Rep. Gantt, Rep. Driskell, Rep. Joseph, Rep. Cross, Rep. Nixon, Rep. Bartleman, Rep. Robinson, F., Rep. Harris, Rep. Daley, Rep. Hunschofsky, Rep. Sirois, Rep. Tant, Rep. Woodson, Rep. Young, Rep. Lopez, Rep. Skidmore, Rep. Blanco, Rep. Salzman, Rep. Franklin, Rep. Campbell, Rep. Tuendridge, Rep. Long, Rep. Weinberger

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:12:49] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Representative Members, I have not reviewed the partisan performance of any single district within this map.

Speaker Perez: [00:12:57] Leader Driskell.

Rep. Driskell: [00:12:59] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, the Fair District Amendment requires congressional districts to be compact and to use existing political and geographical boundaries where feasible. Can you speak to the use of compactness and geographical boundaries in designing this map?

Speaker Perez: [00:13:15] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:13:16] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do have objective, factual, mathematical information that I'm happy to share with you. Do you have a specific question regarding compactness or boundaries?

Speaker Perez: [00:13:30] Leader Driskell.

Rep. Driskell: [00:13:31] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Speak to it with respect to District 14, please.

Speaker Perez: [00:13:38] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:13:40] Thank you. I can share with you that in District 14, that it includes one county, but not the whole county. So, that county ends up being split. And it includes two cities, one whole and one split.

Speaker Perez: [00:14:08] Leader Driskell.

Rep. Driskell: [00:14:09] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize. I meant the existing CD14 and how that changed going on to the new one.

Speaker Perez: [00:14:18] Representative Persons-Mulicka, do you have that info? You're recognized.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:14:24] Mr. Speaker, I do not have that information in

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

Speaker Perez: **[00:14:38]** Leader Driskell.

Rep. Driskell: **[00:14:39]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Have you reviewed any of the analysis comparing the compactness scores of the 2026 plans districts to those of the existing 2022 plan?

Speaker Perez: **[00:14:47]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:14:50]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Representative. And for the members who weren't on our committee, when you look at compactness, there's two things you look at. The first primary thing is visual compactness. Right? And that's often in the eye of the beholder. You might think one district looks compact and another member might think it doesn't look as compact.

The second way you look at compactness is via mathematical score. And we have kind of three different mathematical theories that we have utilized. I have looked at the average statewide for the convex hull, the Polsby-Popper, and the REOC scores. And the current map, it changes very slightly. The proposed map, changes very slightly from the current map, but it's very consistent.

Speaker Perez: **[00:15:36]** Representative Rayner.

Rep. Rayner: **[00:15:38]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to jump back to the process. Am I correct to understand with regard to the drawing of the map that the governor's office made every policy decision, not in conjunction with you to this plan?

Speaker Perez: **[00:15:56]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:15:59]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I could not speak to the process or what happened when the map drawer was drawing the map. All that I can say is that I was

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not involved in the drawing of the map, and I have no reason to believe that anyone in the Florida House was involved in the drawing of the map.

Speaker Perez: **[00:16:18]** Representative Rayner.

Rep. Rayner: **[00:16:19]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, to be clear, I'm correct to understand that the legislature is deferring to the governor's office for Florida's congressional representation. Correct?

Speaker Perez: **[00:16:28]** Representative Persons Malaca.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:16:30]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is nothing in our state constitution or state law that prevents the governor from submitting a proposed congressional map. For our consideration and vote, we are the ones considering the map. We are the ones voting on the map. We have not deferred our duties under the Constitution.

Speaker Perez: **[00:16:52]** Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: **[00:16:55]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Do you agree with the governor's on-severability argument that if one provision of the Fair Districts Amendment is unenforceable, then the entire amendment fails?

Speaker Perez: **[00:17:05]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:17:08]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have said that I believe that the legal arguments presented are viable and that this map will likely be upheld under legal review.

Speaker Perez: **[00:17:19]** Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: **[00:17:21]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Following that answer, are you aware that the non-severability argument has not been adopted by any Florida court?

Speaker Perez: **[00:17:29]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:17:31]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, until last

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summer, the Florida Supreme Court had never answered the question as to whether our non-diminishment clause under our state constitution was a compelling reason to disregard the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. That was an unanswered question and the Florida Supreme Court just answered it. So, there are many unanswered questions in this evolving legal landscape.

Speaker Perez: **[00:18:02]** Representative Eskamani.

Rep. Eskamani: **[00:18:05]** Mr. Speaker, Representative Persons-Mulicka, did you see the version of the map that was leaked to Fox News that had party breakdown?

Speaker Perez: **[00:18:16]** Representative Eskamani, are you asking if she saw it before the map was introduced or ever saw it? You can clarify.

Rep. Eskamani: **[00:18:22]** Just ever saw it, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[00:18:24]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:18:26]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I saw the map pop up on new sites and on social media, but I did not study the map in detail.

Speaker Perez: **[00:18:35]** Representative Eskamani.

Rep. Eskamani: **[00:18:35]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that response. Looking at that map, do you believe that the outcome of that map that was leaked that had colors on it of red and blue is consistent with the Fair Districts Amendment?

Speaker Perez: **[00:18:47]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:18:50]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I have not performed, and our House staff has not performed political performance on any of the districts, so I cannot speak to the veracity of the map that was leaked to the news media.

Speaker Perez: **[00:19:04]** Representative Joseph, welcome back. You're

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recognized.

Rep. Joseph: **[00:19:07]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Did any legislator draw a single district line in the map we're about to vote on?

Speaker Perez: **[00:19:17]** Representative Joseph, that question was actually already asked.

Rep. Joseph: **[00:19:20]** Apologies. Apologies, Mr. Speaker. I will ask a different question. A moment ago, in response to some questions about compactness, you said, and I quote, "It changes very slightly." So, you acknowledge that the 2026 plan is less compact than the existing map. My question for you is, what legitimate redistricting principle justifies that reduction in compactness?

Speaker Perez: **[00:19:46]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:19:48]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to echo, welcome back, Representative, to the floor. First, I did not say that the map before us is less compact than the previous map. There are some changes, and one way that you look at compactness, mathematical scores, but those are not dispositive of the compactness issue.

The first rule in compactness is looking at it visually. I think this map before us is just as compact as the current map. But I will tell you under the mathematical scores, just to put in the record, the convex hull score stayed exactly the same, of 0.81 between the current map and the one proposed before you today. The Polsby-Popper in the current map is a 0.43. The one before us today is 0.41. And for the REOC score, the current map is 0.47, and in the map before us today, it's 0.46.

Speaker Perez: **[00:20:48]** Representative Joseph.

Rep. Joseph: **[00:20:50]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would you repeat the last score for me, please?

Speaker Perez: **[00:20:54]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

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Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:20:56] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Representative, the REOC score, that was 0.47 in the current map, and it's 0.46 in the proposed House Bill 1D map.

Speaker Perez: [00:21:10] Representative Joseph.

Rep. Joseph: [00:21:11] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, those slight decreases in compactness, I will reiterate based on the data you just shared, it decreased from 0.43 to 0.41 in the second category. And in the third category, it decreased from 0.47 to 0.46. So, I reiterate my question. Given the decrease in compactness, because that is a clear mathematical decrease, what legitimate redistricting principle justifies the reduction in compactness?

Speaker Perez: [00:21:45] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:21:47] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'll reiterate my answer, that a decrease in a mathematical score that is used as part of the evidence of compactness does not equate to a decrease in compactness.

Speaker Perez: [00:22:06] Representative Joseph, you're recognized.

Rep. Joseph: [00:22:07] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are you aware that the 2026 plan splits more counties and more municipalities than the existing 2022 plan?

Speaker Perez: [00:22:19] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:22:22] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

Speaker Perez: [00:22:24] Representative Rayner.

Rep. Rayner: [00:22:26] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Representative, do you know, was this map drawn by hand or using outside algorithms?

Speaker Perez: [00:22:36] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:22:38] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I cannot speak

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to the process that was used to draw the map.

Speaker Perez: [00:22:44] Representative Rayner.

Rep. Rayner: [00:22:46] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Were there any alternative plans included?

Speaker Perez: [00:22:50] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:22:53] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have seen one map. One map was transmitted to us.

Speaker Perez: [00:23:01] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: [00:23:03] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are you aware that the 2026 plan was drawn using the same 2020 census data as the existing map?

Speaker Perez: [00:23:15] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:23:18] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Representative, can you clarify that question regarding the data used?

Speaker Perez: [00:23:23] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: [00:23:25] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In committee, Jason Pereda, or however you say his last name, excuse me – stated that the 2020 census data is what they used to create this map. That's the clarification.

Speaker Perez: [00:23:42] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:23:44] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Representative, we are required under the Constitution of Florida statute to use the last federal census data to draw any redistricting map. And based on the testimony in committee, it's my understanding that Mr. Pereda did base the map and draw it on the 2020 census data.

Speaker Perez: [00:24:09] Representative Eskamani.

Rep. Eskamani: [00:24:11] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Representative, are

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you aware that no Florida court has held the Fair Districts Amendments to be unconstitutional?

Speaker Perez: [00:24:18] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:24:21] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've already answered that question.

Speaker Perez: [00:24:25] Representative Eskamani.

Rep. Eskamani: [00:24:27] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are you aware that no Florida court has held the 2022 map to be unconstitutional?

Speaker Perez: [00:24:34] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:24:37] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is correct. There are still pending court cases regarding the 2022 map. And in the Black Voters Matter case that was decided this past summer by the Florida Supreme Court, I want to note for the body that their holding was very specific to the questions and analysis that were asked in that case, and they looked only at Congressional District 5. They did not look at the map as a whole.

Speaker Perez: [00:25:09] Representative Eskamani.

Rep. Eskamani: [00:25:11] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Were there any public community-level town halls hosted about this map for public engagement?

Speaker Perez: [00:25:21] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:25:23] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am unaware of any.

Speaker Perez: [00:25:28] Representative Eskamani.

Rep. Eskamani: [00:25:30] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that it was stated during committee that the map drawer drew the maps two weeks ago. Were there any conversations about this map, privately or publicly, before the map maker started working on it?

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Speaker Perez: [00:25:45] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:25:46] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Representative, can you clarify that question? Conversations between whom?

Speaker Perez: [00:25:53] Representative Eskamani.

Rep. Eskamani: [00:25:54] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For example, did the President call any presiding officers? Did President Trump engage in this process directly?

Speaker Perez: [00:26:03] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:26:05] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can only speak as to any conversations that I might have had, and I had zero conversations with anybody before we took the map through this process over the last two days.

Speaker Perez: [00:26:22] Representative Joseph.

Rep. Joseph: [00:26:24] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A moment ago, when I asked the question about whether you're aware that this 2026 plan splits more counties and municipalities than the existing '22 map, and you said that you were aware of that. My follow-up question is, what legitimate redistricting principle justifies these additional splits, given the requirements of Tier 2 criteria?

Speaker Perez: [00:26:48] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:26:50] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I think there's a complete misunderstanding as to how you apply traditional redistricting principles to a map. When we apply those principles, each one of us will end up drawing a different map. There are nearly an infinite number of maps that can be drawn and be compliant with traditional redistricting principles. So, just because there's some changes in how a couple counties or cities might be split, that is not evidence that the principles were not followed.

It is a balancing act. It is a very precise exercise. Remember, every district has to have the mathematically

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exact number of people in it, down to this, a single person. That is a very difficult exercise. I will share with the Body, that under the proposed map, 382 cities are kept whole – 382 cities – and 30 cities, are split. And under the proposed map before you, 48 counties are kept whole – 48 – and only 19 are split. In some counties, they are split less under the proposed map, and in some counties, they are split more.

Speaker Perez: **[00:28:15]** Representative Joseph.

Rep. Joseph: **[00:28:17]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While I appreciate your explanation about how there can be myriad numbers of maps and different variations, my question was pretty specific. So, let me ask it a different way. Are you saying that there was no justification in the current version of the maps for making the increase of splits of more counties and cities than the map that it replaces?

Speaker Perez: **[00:28:46]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:28:48]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot speak to you regarding the theory that the map drawer used and what he employed. But if you go back and watch our committee meeting yesterday, or if you go watch the Senate Rules Committee of yesterday, you will see that the map drawer walked through his theory, and how he addressed each district, and why he took certain actions. I cannot speak for him, but you can go back and watch his testimony.

Speaker Perez: **[00:29:20]** Representative Joseph.

Rep. Joseph: **[00:29:22]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the bill sponsor, I'm asking these questions because you're the one presenting the legislation before us today. But since you brought up the draft of the bill and his testimony, I will ask a different question about his testimony specifically. It seems that Jason Pereda testified that he used partisan data in drawing every district on the map. Do you believe it is a coincidence that the map drawn with the partisan data also happens to be less compact and splits more political boundaries than the map it replaces?

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Speaker Perez: [00:29:58] Representative Persons-Malika.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:30:01] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I've answered this question a multitude of different ways as it was built into other questions. But again, I'm going to go back. I cannot speak towards the map drawer's intent. I cannot speak to how the map drawer balanced all of the traditional redistricting criteria in putting together the map that is before you. It is a very difficult exercise.

Again, there is an infinite number of maps that can be drawn compliant with redistricting criteria. But I believe the map before us today is a good map and based on viable legal theories and likely to be upheld.

Speaker Perez: [00:30:47] Leader Driskell.

Rep. Driskell: [00:30:49] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just point of information. This is not a question if we could stop the clock. Which is that typically, in this body –

Speaker Perez: [00:30:55] Please, stop the clock.

Rep. Driskell: [00:30:56] Thank you. Typically, in this body, when we're dealing with legislation and there are questions that the bill sponsors are unable to answer, we make staff available to provide that information. And I think with the importance of this map, that we should have the map drawer here or somebody on staff who can give us some answers. This is a generational map that is being drawn. It's very important, and we should comply with the process that we typically do.

Speaker Perez: [00:31:21] Your point is noted for the record. Thank you. Representative Eskamani, do you have a question?

Rep. Eskamani: [00:31:27] Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. The fastest growing county in Florida since 2020 is St. John's, yet its congressional districts, District 5 and 6, didn't really change at all. Why is that?

Speaker Perez: [00:31:39] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

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Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:31:42] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Representative. Thank you, everybody, for the questions. Again, I cannot speak as to why the map drawer made any type of decisions in drawing the map before us.

Speaker Perez: [00:31:55] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: [00:31:57] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What data do we have that shows a shift in population growth that justifies doing a mid-decade redistricting?

Speaker Perez: [00:32:08] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:32:10] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have not reviewed any recent population data. Again, the map that is before you is based on the 2020 census. It is within our prerogative and within our discretion to take up a map regarding congressional districts at any time.

Speaker Perez: [00:32:33] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: [00:32:35] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What part of the Florida Constitution allows and specifically, I'm asking for a section and a cite, or a citation. What part of the Florida Constitution, the Adopted Florida Constitution since 1968, allows us to do mid-district – mid-decade redistricting?

Speaker Perez: [00:32:53] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:32:55] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is no prohibition within our state constitution or state statute to doing mid-cycle redistricting.

Speaker Perez: [00:33:04] Representative Eskamani.

Rep. Eskamani: [00:33:07] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Was this map drawn by hand or using outside algorithms? Oh, and I'm sorry, Ms. Persons already answered. And you already spoke to how there were no alternative plans provided. But I guess, ultimately, one question I have is, where are the incumbents located in this map? And was there any double

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bunking or has anyone been drawn out of their district?

Speaker Perez: **[00:33:30]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:33:33]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have zero data regarding residences of incumbents, and I didn't hear any discussion in the committees regarding incumbents.

Speaker Perez: **[00:33:48]** Representative Cross.

Rep. Cross: **[00:33:50]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Representative, why did this body fail to provide meaningful opportunities for the public to offer input before the maps were presented?

Speaker Perez: **[00:34:00]** Representative Cross, that's outside the scope of this bill. Do you have another question?

Rep. Cross: **[00:34:03]** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will this body retain and make public all records and communications related to redistricting, including communications with the governor's office?

Speaker Perez: **[00:34:15]** Representative Cross, those are all public records, but outside the scope of the bill relating to the map. Do you have another question?

Rep. Cross: **[00:34:22]** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Representative, the governor's transmittal letter suggests that any consideration of race in drawing congressional districts is unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment. Is that the legislature's position as well?

Speaker Perez: **[00:34:36]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:34:38]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe I've answered this question, but I will note that the map before you, based on the testimony that we heard in committee, I, again, cannot speak to the intent of the map drawer or what the map drawer did or did not do. But he said race was not considered at all in drawing this map and that it's a race-neutral map. And I've said before, and I'll say again, I believe that this map is based on viable legal theories and

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will likely be upheld on a challenge.

Speaker Perez: [00:35:11] Representative Nixon.

Rep. Nixon: [00:35:13] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Rep, I'm confused because I thought we were the ones who were supposed to be drawing the map. And if you have no idea about any of the answers, you don't know the – you can't answer any of the questions that we have, why are you even sponsoring this bill?

Speaker Perez: [00:35:35] Representative Nixon, you cannot inquire into the motives of members during questions. Do you have another question? Recognized, Representative Nixon.

Rep. Nixon: [00:35:49] I'm good.

Speaker Perez: [00:35:53] Representative Bartleman.

Rep. Bartleman: [00:35:55] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would you acknowledge that it was stated on public record that this map was drawn on partisan data to favor a party?

Speaker Perez: [00:36:08] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:36:10] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I cannot speak as to what the map drawer did or did not do, or what the map drawer considered or did not consider, or to what his intent was or was not.

Speaker Perez: [00:36:26] Representative Bartleman.

Rep. Bartleman: [00:36:27] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would you acknowledge that the testimony yesterday, and that the map drawer acknowledged that partisan data was looked at in his testimony? Did you hear that?

Speaker Perez: [00:36:41] Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:36:44] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not going to draw any conclusions as to whether – as to what the intent of the map drawer was or was not. If you know the answer to the

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question, you do not need to be asking it.

Speaker Perez: **[00:36:59]** Representative Bartleman.

Rep. Bartleman: **[00:37:01]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's not my determination. You were in the same room I was, where the testimony was heard. And so, he said he looked at partisan data. You are very firm in your belief that he did not look at racial data, but you were unable to draw that same conclusion when it comes to partisan data, which he absolutely said on record he considered. When we drew maps back in 2022, did we look at partisan data when we drew maps last time?

Speaker Perez: **[00:37:35]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:37:38]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot speak to what we used or didn't use in 2022.

Speaker Perez: **[00:37:44]** Representative Robinson, F.

Rep. Robinson, F.: **[00:37:46]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I just wanted to go back to you were very firm on saying that he did not use racial data. How do we know that? What evidence or what is there to say that he did not use racial data? Because, you know, you said it, but how do we know?

Speaker Perez: **[00:38:03]** Representative Persons-Mulicka.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[00:38:05]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't. I did not say that I know for sure whether he did or did not. Again, I said I cannot speak as to what he did or did not do, but he said he did not use racial data.

Speaker Perez: **[00:38:21]** Thank you. Time for questions has expired. Are there amendments?

Clerk: **[00:38:24]** None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[00:38:25]** Show the bill rolled over for third reading. Representative Persons-Mulicka, you're recognized for a motion.

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Rep. Persons-Mulicka: [00:38:32] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the rules be waived and House Bill 1D be read a third time by title and placed on final passage.

Speaker Perez: [00:38:39] Representative Persons-Mulicka moves that the rules be waived and HB 1D be read a third time by title and placed on final passage. All in favor say, "Yay."

Speakers: [00:38:47] Yay.

Speaker Perez: [00:38:48] Opposed, "No."

Speakers: [00:38:49] No.

Speaker Perez: [00:38:50] Show the motion adopted. Read the bill a third time by title.

Clerk: [00:38:53] By Representative Persons-Mulicka, House Bill 1D, a bill to be entitled an act establishing the congressional districts of the state.

Speaker Perez: [00:39:02] Are there any amendments?

Clerk: [00:39:03] None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: [00:39:05] Members, we're going into structured debate on HB 1D. Debate will be limited to 45 minutes per side in 15-minute increments. Total debate time not to exceed 90 minutes. Representative Daley. Representative Gantt. You are recognized to begin a debate and the Clerk will start the debate clock.

Rep. Gantt: [00:39:22] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I yield to Rep. Harris.

Speaker Perez: [00:39:24] Representative Harris, you're recognized in debate.

Rep. Harris: [00:39:27] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to talk much about the legal issues, because I know there are people who are much more well-versed than I am to talk about that. I don't want to talk about how it splits counties.

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I do want to talk about how there was no meaningful consideration given to communities that have been historically marginalized or silenced. And I'm going to get emotional, because I think of **Akoi** and the generations of people who fought and died for the simple right to be represented.

And representation matters. And it matters most for those who have had to fight the hardest to have their voices heard. And I also think about the voters in this state, people with different viewpoints, different beliefs, who are now being drawn into districts where their voices can't be heard. We were cut out of this process. As a member of this House, I was cut out of this process. They will be cut out of this process. We know that Floridians expect and demand a fair process for redistricting because they voted on it.

Our constituents voted on it overwhelmingly. Nothing in the governor's supposed justification for this map has any meaningful addressing. The districts on this map have fewer geographical boundaries and split more cities and counties. There are no compelling state interests that justifies throwing out the previous map, which was also defended in courts with state funding. What we are doing today is spending taxpayer dollars to create a map that will most certainly – we are spending taxpayer dollars to create a map that will most certainly be challenged in court and then asking those same taxpayers to pay to defend it.

We are asking Floridians to have their constitutional rights weakened and pay for it. There's a lot at stake here. So, I'm going to make the moral argument. This is not just another vote. This is not just another bill. This is a moment that will define how seriously we take the Constitution we all collectively swore to uphold. And in this year, as the nation approaches its 250th anniversary, we should remember something very simple: History has its eyes on each and every single one of us. I urge you to vote "No."

Speaker Perez:

[00:41:56] Members. Please take your conversations to the bubble. Please attend to the debates. Representative Gantt, you're recognized in debate.

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Rep. Gantt: [00:42:02] I yield to Rep Daley.

Speaker Perez: [00:42:04] Rep Daley in debate.

Rep. Daley: [00:42:06] Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning, members. You know, if you know me, I don't get up on the floor very often, but I am on this issue because I find it particularly offensive. So, I'm rising in opposition today, not because of who this map helps or hurts politically, but because of how we got here. So, I'd like to go over a couple of things. One, first and foremost, there is no legitimate reason for this. We just drew these maps. We just went through an entire process a couple years ago. I know, I had to sit through them.

We went through an entire elaborate process. We voted to approve maps. The governor sent one Tweet, "I will..." whatever he said, "I'm going to veto these. These are dead on arrival." All of a sudden, we kowtowed and said, "Governor, please. Governor, give us a map that we'll vote on." And we did. And that's what we voted for. And that's the map that we have. That's the map that's been upheld by the court. So, was the governor wrong then, or is he wrong now?

Coming back at the 11th hour trying to do this in the middle of a decade. There's been no new census. There's been no court order. There's been no legal requirement to do this again. This isn't a correction, members. This is a choice. We are not responding to data, but to opportunity. I want to talk about Fair Districts for a second. Voters spoke very clearly in 2010, with overwhelming, over 60% support in both of those amendments. The amendments, as you know, require maps not to be drawn to favor or disfavor a political party.

This map flies in the face of Fair Districts and the Florida voters for reasons I'm just about to jump into. This is a process breakdown for me, members. Constitutionally, we, the legislature, we draw the maps. And yet, once again, we have kowtowed to the governor. The bill sponsor admitted

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not a single legislator drew a single line in this map. Couldn't answer half the questions because we didn't draw the map. Better yet, bill sponsor admitted that she didn't draw the map and is aware that the governor's staff used political data to draw these.

If that's not an admission of unconstitutionality under Fair Districts, I don't know what is. Let's talk for a second about the bigger picture. Because this isn't – for me, this isn't just about the map. It's about what happens when we normalize mid-district – excuse me, mid-decade redistricting. I would remind you that the strength of our system has never come from what those in power can do, but from what they choose not to do. I'm going to ask you to vote, "No" today for so many more reasons than I can go into, members. Be a patriot and vote, "No."

Speaker Perez: **[00:44:49]** Representative Leader Driskell, you are recognized in debate.

Rep. Driskell: **[00:44:52]** Thank you. Actually, not debate, Mr. Speaker, but a motion, or perhaps a point. Can we pause the time? Which is that, it's my understanding that the Louisiana v. Callais decision just issued by the United States Supreme Court, I would move for recess for at least two hours so that we can all have an opportunity to digest this landmark Supreme Court decision, which is, from what I understand, the basis of why we're even here today in mid-decade redistricting.

Speaker Perez: **[00:45:18]** Members, Leader Driskell moves for a temporary recess of two hours to consider the impact of the Callais decision on the pending legislation. All in favor of the motion say, "Yay."

Speakers: **[00:45:31]** Yay.

Speaker Perez: **[00:45:32]** All opposed say, "No."

Speakers: **[00:45:33]** No.

Speaker Perez: **[00:45:35]** The motion fails. Representative Gantt, you're

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recognized in debate.

Rep. Gantt: **[00:45:39]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can we have five seconds added back onto the clock?

Speaker Perez: **[00:45:44]** Yes.

Rep. Gantt: **[00:45:44]** Thank you. I yield to Rep Hunschofsky.

Speaker Perez: **[00:45:48]** Representative Hunschofsky in debate.

Rep. Hunschofsky: **[00:45:50]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members, I am stunned that this map is considered such a priority by the governor and leadership that we have been summoned here on the taxpayer dime to pass a map which violates Article III, Section 20 of the Florida Constitution, which prohibits the state from drawing congressional districts that intentionally favor or disfavor a political party or incumbent.

In fact, this section of the Constitution was established by the Florida Fair Districts, which was passed by the who? The Florida voters in 2010, with 62.93% support. Yet here we are with a map drawn according to the map drawer in the last two weeks, heard in one House committee for three hours, and now, limited to 30 minutes of questions and 45 minutes of debate on either side on the House floor. This map flies directly against the face of the people of Florida who said they wanted Fair Districts. And the people of Florida were not included in this discussion. They were not invited to the table in any meaningful way.

Members, democracy does not die in darkness. It happens in daylight, in front of all of us, when the powerful are so caught up in their unchallenged power that they decide that the power they hold or could hold is more important than the Constitution and the people they swore to serve. It also dies when those who seek power are complicit and along for the ride. Members, this is messed up.

Our priorities in this government are upside down, when we are putting individual power ahead of the people we

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serve. The Constitution is separation of powers, and different powers and responsibilities, so that no one group and no one person can abuse their power. Today, you all have a choice to make. Do you side with the people or Florida, or unaccountable power? Thank you.

Speaker Perez:

[00:48:49] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt:

[00:48:50] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, to make it plain, I'm going to put on my teacher's hat first. We're talking about severability. Severability is a legal principle that allows the court to remove an invalid or unconstitutional part of a law or contract while keeping the rest of it intact. If you think about it like surgery, instead of throwing the entire statute out, only one section of it is carved out. That is the current precedent, standing legal principle in the state of Florida.

The oppositions – or my opposition, absolutely – absolutely, the people of Florida's opposition, which is now, the governor of Florida with this map, their position is that the severability presumption and the Fair Districts Amendment does not apply because one part is not applicable. That is completely in contravention and completely not based on any legal precedent. And since when do we file or pass legislation so that we can say, "Well, we know it's unconstitutional and it's not based on case law, but we're going to do it anyway, so we could take it to court?"

That is not the role of the legislature. By the way, it's not the role of the legislature to abdicate our role and position in this particular redistricting. It is our role to invite the governor to participate with us, not to take over the entire process. So, when you look at severability in the legal principle, there is a seminal case in Florida law, *Ray v. Mortham*. And it states that severability is a judicial doctrine recognizing the obligation of the judiciary to uphold the constitutionally – or constitutionality of legislative enactments where it's possible to strike only the unconstitutional portions.

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So, the governor's position is that the entire amendment does not apply because one part is in disagreement with what they want to do in order to retain and keep power. That is not how it works, and that is not how we as a legislative body should be functioning. I'll also say when we talk about the Fair Districts Amendment, Article 3, Section 20 of the Florida Constitution states that no apportionment plan or individual district shall be drawn with the intent to favor or disfavor a political party or an incumbent.

The sponsor of this bill was very adamant and very 100% positive that partisan – I'm sorry, racial grounds were not used, but partisan grounds or partisan data was used as admitted by the sole map drawer. Floridians of all political affiliations came together in 2010, and passed the Fair Districts Amendment with a 63% vote. Some of you all did not get 63% of the vote in your district. Okay? But Floridians voted 63% to pass the amendments in a large part to protect the voices from partisan gerrymandering. We are not doing mid-decade redistricting. We are doing partisan gerrymandering. That is what this is. And I yield to Representative Eskamani.

Speaker Perez:

[00:52:07] Representative Eskamani.

Rep. Eskamani:

[00:52:08] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, this is how liberty dies, with a thunderous applause. I cannot believe we are here to vote on a map that was first leaked to Fox News that the bill sponsor cannot answer basic questions on because it's not her product, comes straight from the governor's office, who has made very public statements and Tweets regarding partisanship. And I quote from online, Team DeSantis, speaking to how Florida can add up to five Republican seats. They got to four. We got to four.

Members, this is not how the process should work. There should be public town halls. There should be community engagement. And it should happen every 10 years, not in the middle of a decade. This is unprecedented. And we should each be concerned because you would be with your hair on fire if the shoe was on the other side of the aisle.

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Right? We have a democratic system that is based upon voter input, that is founded on civic participation.

Voters approve these two Fair Districts Amendments knowing – knowing that this process was already corrupt and corrosive. Many of us weren't here during the first battle on those amendments, but maps had to be redrawn, reissued from 2012 to 2016. Our community in Central Florida was directly impacted by that. And the current maps are still being litigated. It's clear to me that this process has nothing to do with populationships, especially since it's still using the same census data that we used.

And no clear jumps that are even being made for that argument, because the argument is not credible. We should not be debating bills that we don't understand, that we have no background to, that we have no context to, that literally is born out of partisanship in an environment where we are still waiting for legal interpretation. It's disappointing, members, that we are now engaging within a political climate that is so polarizing that folks have to cheat to win. We're watching the trends nationally. If we truly believe in a marketplace of ideas, if we believe in competition, if we believe that the meritocracy, then we should allow the voters to choose their politicians, not politicians choose their voters.

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

Speaker Perez:

[00:55:26] Time for debate in this block has expired. Leader Sirois, you are recognized in debate.

Rep. Sirois:

[00:55:31] Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We yield back our time in this block. Thank you. Representative Gantt, you're recognized in debate.

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Rep. Gantt: [00:55:38] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I yield to Rep Tant.

Speaker Perez: [00:55:41] Representative Tant, you're recognized in debate.

Rep. Tant: [00:55:43] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know a lot of this is falling on deaf ears because people aren't listening. Many of my constituents in North Florida feel and have felt since the last census count that was done during COVID, that doors were not knocked on, and so there was not an accurate count even then. Given the fact that our own House staff has admitted that Florida's constitutionally approved Fair District Act passed by Floridians in 2010 was not considered, and this bill ignores Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, and that he has stated that it does in fact factor in partisan data.

Given the fact that our governor has stated that Florida has an unprecedented growth and many of us boast about the 900 people a day moving to our state. And in the absence of a legitimate census count, I am confident that Floridians' voices are being diluted, communities are being split, constituents ignored, and the voices are disenfranchised. The very process that this bill went through to get on the floor today is the indicia of how my constituents and yours will be treated with deliberate disregard, deliberate disrespect for people of Color, and deliberate disdain for registered parties, voters of all parties. But this bill is a hard no today, and you should vote against it, along with the rest, with me.

Speaker Perez: [00:57:04] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: [00:57:05] I yield to Rep. Woodson.

Speaker Perez: [00:57:07] Representative Woodson.

Rep. Woodson: [00:57:08] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a representative who was elected to be a voice for those who have entrusted me to do this work, I rise today with a simple question, one that I believe every member of this body and every

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Floridian watching ought to be asking. Where is the fairness? Where is the fairness in a process that gives us 24 hours to review maps that will shape our democracy for years to come? Where's the fairness in watching legislation that impacts millions without giving the people a real opportunity to be heard? Where's the fairness when the voices of our constituents are treated as an afterthought instead of the foundation? We all know because the people told us clearly in 2010 to the Fair Districts Amendment that districts shall not be drawn to favor or disfavor a political part.

Speaker Perez: **[00:58:10]** Representative Woodson, would you stand by? Members, would you hold it down, please? Representative Woodson has the floor. You're recognized.

Rep. Woodson: **[00:58:16]** Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. That wasn't a suggestion. That was the will of the voters. So, I'm asking again, where is the fairness? Where's the fairness when we engage in a mid-decade redistricting process that the people did not ask for? Where's the fairness when the process itself is flawed, rushed, and lacking transparency? Where's the fairness, again, for the working mother, the senior in Broward County, the student in College Park, who doesn't have the luxury of being here in Tallahassee, but will have to live with the consequences of what we do today.

Because make no mistake, this is not theoretical. This is not just about lines on a map. This is about the very essence of fairness. This is about real people, real communities, and fairness should not be partisan. Fairness is a principle. Members, I'm asking you today, where's the fairness in ignoring them? We should pause. We should take the time to get it right. And for one, I refuse to do that. So, today I will be voting no, not out of partisanship, but out of principle. Because until we can answer that question, "Where's the fairness?" We have no business voting on this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[00:59:38]** Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: **[00:59:40]** I yield to Rep Young.

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Speaker Perez: [00:59:42] Representative Young.

Rep. Young: [00:59:43] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members, I have a question. What has changed? What has changed since 2022? Is it the political climate that now requires us to redraw lines, not because communities moved, but because power shifted? Is it the political climate that now says fairness is optional when it becomes inconvenient? Is it the political climate that allows Washington's interests to reach down into this state and shape our representation? Is it the political climate that asks us to accept maps that dilute the voting power and strength of Black and Latino Florida?

Is it the political climate that tells us winning is more important than how we win? Because if none of these things has changed, then the question becomes, why are we here? Members, we are living in perilous times. Perilous times when government begins to choose who it wants to represent instead of allowing the people to choose who represents them. Perilous times, when those who present themselves as leaders cloak political intent in the sheep cloth language of process and necessity. Perilous times, when we normalize outcomes that we would have once challenged without hesitation.

If the standard becomes that maps can be redrawn whenever the political winds change, then there is no stability in representation. If the precedent becomes that outside influence can shape our districts, then there is no independence in this body. If the expectation becomes that constitutional guardrails can be stretched when convenient, then those guardrails will not be there when we need them. This is not a partisan warning. This is an institutional one. So, I would ask you to consider not just the outcome or vote, but the standard it sets.

Is this how we want Florida to govern itself? Is this the process we want to defend when the roles are reversed? Is this the message we want to send to voters who trusted us to follow the Constitution that they approved? So, this is not just a disagreement over policy. This is a question of

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whether we are willing to uphold the rules when they are inconvenient or when they benefit us. So, what has changed? I know what has changed. I'm glad you asked.

What has changed is that those in leadership have begun to yield their authority, not just here in Florida, but at the national level to the executive branch, allowing decisions like this to be driven from the top-down instead of the ground-up. Government should be of the people, by the people, for the people, not controlled by elites clinging to strings of power they can feel slipping away.

That is not how this institution was designed to function, and that is not how democracy is supposed to work. Mr. Speaker, for the sake of this Body, for the sake of the Constitution, and for the sake of the people who sent us here to represent them, I ask that we vote this bill down.

Speaker Perez: **[01:02:15]** Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: **[01:02:17]** I yield to Rep. Nixon.

Speaker Perez: **[01:02:19]** Representative Nixon.

Rep. Nixon: **[01:02:20]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is deja vu, you all. It's deja vu. The same exact thing happened back in 2022, when you all unconstitutionally and illegally just gave away our power. Last time I checked, we were the ones who were supposed to be drawing the maps. And yet and still, we are allowing – you all continue to hold the water of a governor, who is a lame duck, and just trying to figure out what his next job is going to be.

And so, in 2022, we were right here diminishing representation instead of our one constitutional duty of passing a budget. We're here again. The budget hasn't passed. Why are we so pressed on premature reappointment instead of passing an already delayed budget? My mama said that everything that's free isn't good. And here, in the free state of Florida, we have a governor that wants to be a member of the state legislature. It's our only job, to do this. And what – I'm just so really confused that why we feel it's

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okay to continue to cheat so we can win.

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

Speaker Perez: **[01:04:19]** Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: **[01:04:21]** I yield to Rep. Joseph.

Speaker Perez: **[01:04:24]** Representative Joseph.

Rep. Joseph: **[01:04:26]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Listen, you all, I'm going to just talk to Floridians. Black, White, purple, red, blue, whatever. The governor is playing in your face. That's what the kids say. He tells us – he's given us these shifting explanations as to why we're here today. One, is to address the undercount and the population shifts. There's no new census data. Nothing has been addressed to change or address any population shifts because we're using the same exact information.

He talks about addressing court rulings. We just got one of the court rulings he was talking about, and you just heard our colleagues vote down our – meaning, the Democrats' request, to pause this process to address that court ruling. So, they're not interested in the court ruling. Okay. Maybe they're interested in another court ruling, the Black Voters Matter ruling. Right? That one found that the last time we did this process, we took away a Black seat in this state. The court found that was done inappropriately, but could not correct it because this administration did not give them the accurate data to restore the Black seat.

So, they're not addressing litigation. What else did he tell us he wanted to do? Oh, he wants to follow the law. Let's

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talk about what the law is. Unlike in a lot of other states, where people can vote by referendum, we have a different process in Florida. And constitutionally, it cannot be partisan. Specifically, the Fair Districts Amendment, which is found in Article 3, Section 20 of our State Constitution, specifically says that there can be no apportionate plan or individual district shall be drawn with the intent to favor or disfavor a political party or incumbent.

And you heard the bill sponsor and the person who drew the maps testify to the partisanship. And we know that the maps came out first to Fox News before anybody in this chamber or the other chamber got it. So, what are they doing? They're rigging the elections because, they don't know how to play fair because, they know they will lose. That's what we're dealing with right now. There's nothing routine about mid-cycle redistricting. It is illegal. Full stop.

Speaker Perez: **[01:06:56]** Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: **[01:06:57]** I yield to Rep Lopez.

Speaker Perez: **[01:06:59]** Representative Lopez, you're recognized.

Rep. Lopez: **[01:07:01]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. More than 55% of registered Florida voters oppose mid-decade redistricting, including independents, Democrats, and Republicans. So, let me speak to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the language we all share, taxpayer monies and the Constitution. The proclamation that calls us here expressly appropriate funds for any legal challenges thereto. We are being asked to pass a map and prefund the lawsuits defending it in the same breath with taxpayer money.

Whatever you think about the politics of redistricting, that is not limited government, that is not fiscal restraint, that is asking the small business owner in our state, the retiree on a fixed income, the family already squeezed by property insurance to underwrite a legal fight they did not ask for. There is no emergency in our district that this map solves. Only a bill the taxpayer will be paying for in court for years.

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When 60% of voters write a rule into the Constitution and 55% tell us today, they do not want this, the conservative answer and the progressive answer are the same answer: Respect the voters. To the constituents in our district who wrote, who called, who showed up, Republican, Democrats, independent, I hear you. Today, I will vote no on this bill, and I will encourage everybody to do the same. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[01:08:24]** Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: **[01:08:26]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I yield to Rep. Skidmore.

Speaker Perez: **[01:08:29]** Representative Skidmore.

Rep. Skidmore: **[01:08:31]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members, we've heard from the Democrats in the chamber about all the reasons why we shouldn't be engaged in this process. I really love quotes. I like to look back in history. In 1887, Lord Acton said in a letter to an Anglican bishop, "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." That has never been more evident than today, in this chamber. And do you know what's absent when corruption is present? Courage.

Courage. There's no courage in this room. There's no courage to say no to a dictator. There's no courage to say no to a has-been. There's no courage in this chamber to do the right thing. There are members in this chamber who know in their hearts that they took an oath to protect the Constitution, and they're going to violate that oath today. You have to look yourself in the mirror every day. I'm glad I don't have to look at you every day because I am so disappointed in your lack of courage, in your lack of conviction to do the right thing, to do what you were elected to do.

Which is to represent your constituents who do not want this map, who asked you not to do it, who told us very emphatically in 2010 not to do this thing that you're going

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to do today. And I say "You" because the Democrats are not doing it. The Democrats have the courage of their conviction, and the Democrats are going to prove to Floridians that we are on the right side of history, and we will remain there, and you have to live with your decision.

Speaker Perez: **[01:10:53]** Members, we're going to pause for a recognition. Representative Blanco, you're recognized for a recognition.

Rep. Blanco: **[01:11:00]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today we have from Miami, a group of folks who came up to talk about Cuba and the freedom of Cuba, the democracy of Cuba. I'd like to recognize in the East Gallery, Orlando Gutierrez and Jose Daniel Ferrer, who was a political prisoner for over 12 years. Gentlemen. Members, thank you. We recognize these leaders who have come together to provide a pathway to democracy and freedom for the Cuban people. Welcome to the Florida House and God bless.

Speaker Perez: **[01:11:48]** Welcome to the Florida House. Representative Salzman, you're recognized for a recognition.

Rep. Salzman: **[01:11:55]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members, I have two quick things. One, in the West Gallery, my constituent and dear friend, Matt Sharpstein is here. Guys, welcome to the Florida House, Matt. Give him a round of applause. He actually helped me in my very first election. He was one of the first people I talked to in 2019, and encouraged me to be here today, a dear friend. So, thank you for being here. Also, a friend of Meg's. I won't steal your thunder with your dear daughter.

And then, secondly, members, I just want to let you know that Pensacola is being represented in American Idol. We have a top five contender, Keyla Richardson. She was Top 7, she made it to Top 5 on Monday. We were here. So, next Monday, we're hoping that she makes it to Top 3. But just wanted to give a shout out to our very own Pensacola, our Floridian, Keyla Richardson, for being an America Idol Top 5. Thank you.

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- Speaker Perez: [01:12:56] Leader Sirois, you're recognized in debate.
- Rep. Sirois: [01:12:59] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We yield back.
- Speaker Perez: [01:13:02] Thank you. Representative Gantt, you're recognized in debate.
- Rep. Gantt: [01:13:04] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I yield to Leader Driskell.
- Speaker Perez: [01:13:06] Leader Driskell, you're recognized in debate.
- Rep. Driskell: [01:13:08] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members, my grandmother used to say, "Child, just because you can do a thing doesn't mean you should." And I would love it if we would stop dancing around what is happening here today. This bill is not redistricting reform. It's a partisan map drawn in secret, on demand from Washington, and shoved through this chamber on a clock designed to keep the public out of the room. And before any one of us votes, we owe our constituents the courtesy of saying this out loud.
- Earlier, the Florida Supreme Court told us they believe compliance with the Fair District Amendments is not a compelling state interest sufficient for consideration of race to pass strict scrutiny under the 14th Amendment. Just yesterday, the governor's office staff told us the same thing about the VRA. Race can never be considered in redistricting, so they did not consider race in any way because compliance with the Voting Rights Act cannot be a compelling state interest.
- But just moments ago, today, Justice Alito, in the Callais case, said the governor and his counsel are wrong. Justice Alito writing for the majority said, "Compliance with Section 2 as properly construed can provide such a reason." It's on Page 8 of the slip opinion that this chamber would not take a recess to go and read. I encourage you, go and read it.
- Speaker Perez: [01:14:24] Members, please hold it down. Leader Driskell.
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Rep. Driskell:

[01:14:26] The man who drew this map testified under oath that he used partisan data to draw every single district, every one. And when the governor's attorney was asked whether Democratic voters are being underrepresented in our congressional delegation, his answer was that this is a normative question. Members, if we vote yes on this bill, it's not just that we're being misled. We are blessing this mess. The timing tells the rest.

The governor announced his intention to redistrict shortly after the President of the United States asked Republican-led states to do exactly that. There is no neutral explanation for that sequence of events. The map drawer told us that he was applying traditional redistricting principles instead of race. But the 2026 plan is less compact than the current map. It splits more counties. It splits more cities. The work product contradicts the state as standard. So many communities are losing representation. To the people of Tampa Bay, I see what is being done to our representation. I will not be quiet about it, and I will not vote for it.

Members, this map was drawn in secret, defended on a theory that really no court accepts with respect to severability, designed with partisan data, and timed to a partisan request. And I guess it only remains to mention, I know we're all very busy and we all have lives, and I can tell just by the folks, the lack of attention in this room, that perhaps it's an inconvenient thing to destroy democracy today. That is what I feel like I'm being told. You're not listening. You don't care.

The people of Florida deserve better. You think that this is just about preserving a Republican majority in the midterm. I stopped by to tell you today that you are destroying democracy with this vote. The people of Florida deserve better. Not one of our constituents asked for this, not one. Shame on this House today.

Speaker Perez:

[01:16:18] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt:

[01:16:20] I yield. I yield to Rep Franklin.

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Speaker Perez: **[01:16:23]** Representative Franklin.

Rep. Franklin: **[01:16:25]** Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. When I stood in the well of this House and raised my right hand, I didn't take an oath to a political party. I took a solemn oath to the Constitution and to the people of the state. The oath is a covenant. It demands that we act with integrity, not with an eraser or a political agenda. To support a measure that undermines the very building blocks of our democracy, is to break faith with the very foundation of this office. This seat that I sit in today does not belong to me. It belongs to the legacy of those who fought to ensure that every voice is heard.

We are stewards of a sacred trust. When we entertain maneuvers that skirt the edge of legality, we aren't just moving lines, we are diminishing the dignity of the institution that we all swore to protect. My focus is focused on the mission. Let's lead, not rearrange. We have real problems here in Florida that require real solutions. We have healthcare gaps that need closing and economic engines that need fueling. As we know, years ago, over 60% of Floridians casted a vote to enshrine in the Florida Constitution, telling us not to do what we're doing today. And so, this unconstitutional distraction sacrifices the needs of many to fuel the ambitions of the few.

Speaker Perez: **[01:18:06]** Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: **[01:18:07]** Thank you. I yield to Rep Campbell.

Speaker Perez: **[01:18:10]** Representative Campbell.

Rep. Campbell: **[01:18:13]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members, there are moments in this chamber when the law is not enough. When the question before us is not just we can, but what we should do. This is one of those moments. A battle for the soul of America. Maps are not just lines. They tell people whether their count, whether their voice matters, whether the institution still believes in the simple, sacred promise that every citizen is equal.

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Today, that promise is being tested. This map fails on every metric. It fails morally, legally, technically, and objectively. But more than anything, it fails the people that sent us here. There is nothing routine about deciding whose voice is heard and whose is not. We are not mapmakers. We are stewards of democracy, and that only works if people believe it is fair. If we trade fairness for advantage, then some may win today. But we all lose something far much greater, the public's trust that this institution belongs to them. We are at an inflection point in history. I ask you to choose fairness and reject as met.

Speaker Perez: [01:19:51] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: [01:19:53] I yield to Rep Tuendridge.

Speaker Perez: [01:19:55] Representative Tuendridge.

Rep. Tuendridge: [01:19:57] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Everyone in this room had member projects that did not make it into the budget. In my district, Lake Clark Shores families are relying on a failing water system with asbestos in our pipes, leaving a significant number of homes under continuous boil-water notices. That project was unfunded. So, I have to ask, why are we spending millions on redistricting while our communities are still struggling with basic infrastructure, housing, and affordability needs?

The fiscal impacts of redistricting are huge. Special session costs, legal and litigation costs, administrative costs, implementation costs such as updating voter rolls and precincts, public outreach, and even issuing new voter cards. But the biggest cost is not on paper, it's constituent trust. I've spoken to people across my district on both sides of the aisle, and they don't understand why we are here working on something that does not impact their day-to-day lives. They're worried about issues like affordability, housing, and rent costs, and property insurance.

We should be repurposing the time, energy, and resources that we're spending on redistricting to focus on the real needs of our constituents because, at the end of the day, this

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is about priorities, and right now, this does not reflect theirs. We already redrew these maps in 2022 using the same census data we are relying on today. And according to Jason Pereda, this map also considered partisan data. So, why just four years later are we doing it again with no new census data, no court ruling requiring it, and no meaningful public input? Every dollar spent here is a dollar that will not be spent in our communities that deserve our full investment. This is the wrong priority at the wrong time. This can wait, but our constituents cannot. Thank you.

Speaker Perez: [01:21:43] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: [01:21:44] I yield to Rep. Rayner.

Speaker Perez: [01:21:45] Representative Rayner.

Rep. Rayner: [01:21:45] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members, democracies may die at the hands, not of generals, but of elected leaders. And right now, the democracy is dying, and my colleagues are laughing and talking like it's nothing as democracy is dying. And maybe it's a joke to you, but it's not a joke to us, the Democrats, and to the people of Florida. So, I'm going to call this what it is. This process is illegal. It is a partisan gerrymander. It is illegal. It is a partisan gerrymander. And for those of you who say you are in the party of law and order, you should have a problem with this.

This is not routine maintenance. This is not a compliance with the court order. This is a mid-decade illegal redraw of political lines without any lawful trigger, and it's not being driven by this legislature, but forces outside of this chamber. The process is flawed. The maps were drawn in secret by the governor's office. This is not speculation. This is what the people said in both hearings. And now, we are being asked to ratify them, not refine them, not meaningfully debate them. Ratify them.

This is not how this chamber works. What happened to the House being the House? We are not a rubber stamp. We are a co-equal branch of government. And then, let's be real.

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You all are doing this because you all's daddy in the White House is injecting national political objectives into what should be a state-driven process. And now, as we talk about the law, the voters were very clear when they talked about the Fair Districts Amendment. They didn't hedge, they didn't leave room for interpretation. No apportionment plan or individual district shall be drawn with the intent to favor or disfavor a political party and the incumbent.

That is the standard. Not if, not if it's convenient, not one that's politically advantageous. And what do we have before us? A map that was previewed on Fox News showing a partisan breakdown. But you want me to believe that the same map that was shown on Fox News that had a partisan breakdown and is the same map we're voting on is not partisan. Make it make sense. As my mother used to say, do not play in my face and I am not a stupid woman.

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

Speaker Perez: [01:24:32] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: [01:24:35] I yield to Rep. Long.

Speaker Perez: [01:24:36] Representative Long.

Rep. Long: [01:24:37] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members, I don't speak up much in here, mainly because I'm one of the newest members of this body. And I came into this year with a plan to keep my mouth shut and my head down. And my colleagues in the back here have already very well covered a lot of the concerns with this map. But I had to rise today because of what this map would do to my home. I live in Delray Beach, in southern Palm Beach County. I just served as vice mayor there. And this proposed map splits my city in half, carving up a community that shares schools and infrastructure, and anchoring half of its congressional representation to two other counties.

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My own house would be moved into District 25, a district that stretches across Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade, ranks last in compactness, has the lowest Polsby-Popper score on the map, which is the standard we use to measure whether districts are drawn fairly or distorted, as we all know. But this is bigger than my city. This map was not produced through a deliberative legislative process. We all know that. Right? Are we really pretending it was? Members had like, 24 hours to review it before it was presented to the committee yesterday by one guy, Jason Pereda, who allegedly drew the map.

Should that alone not give us pause here? This map wasn't driven by a new census, or population imbalance, or a court order. It's just something the governor wants, which means we don't have to do it. Floridians are struggling with the cost of living right now. Housing, insurance, gas, groceries. They expect us to pass a reasonable budget and focus on the issues that actually impact their lives. Instead, we're debating a map that by every traditional metric is worse than the one we have now. It is objectively less compact. It splits more counties, 19 instead of 17. It splits more cities, 30 instead of 16. It redraws more than 80% of the districts in this state.

That's not refinement. That is a wholesale redraw, allegedly by one guy who admitted that he used partisan data. And we barely had a chance to look at it, guys. This body has stood up as a co-equal branch of government before and said no. We can do it here again today. And listen, I know I'm new, but I don't expect our speeches to change any votes. I get it. But I do think everyone here understands exactly what this is. And we do have a choice about whether to go along with it. Thank you.

Speaker Perez: [01:27:16] Representative Gantt.

Rep. Gantt: [01:27:17] I yield to Rep Bartleman.

Speaker Perez: [01:27:18] Representative Bartleman.

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Rep. Bartleman: **[01:27:21]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Legislators, we took an oath to uphold the Constitution with integrity. We are beholden to Floridians, to our communities, to our neighbors, not to the federal branch of government and not to the executive branch of the Florida government. Facts are the facts and the truth is the truth. This map violates our constitution. The two-tiered data and testimony indicates partisan gerrymandering.

I am ashamed of what is happening here and in this country. Historically, our parties have always disagreed. But we played by rules. We had character, we had integrity, and we operated legally within a process. If you are a Democrat, a Republican, or an MPA, you are still an American. You are watching the eroding of our democracy and the foundation of this country. We owe it to Floridians to vote no.

Speaker Perez: **[01:28:23]** Time for debate and this block has expired. We're going to pause for a recognition. Representative Weinberger, you are recognized for a recognition.

Rep. Weinberger: **[01:28:30]** Good afternoon, members. I wanted to welcome my daughter, Riley Weinberger, here. She's on college break from Northeastern. Welcome to the Florida House.

Speaker Perez: **[01:28:48]** Welcome to the Florida House. Leader Sirois, you are recognized in debate.

Rep. Sirois: **[01:28:53]** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We yield back our time.

Speaker Perez: **[01:28:55]** Thank you. Time for debate has expired. Representative Persons-Mulicka, you are recognized to close.

Rep. Persons-Mulicka: **[01:29:03]** Waive close.

Speaker Perez: **[01:29:26]** Representative Persons-Malicka has waived close. The question now recurs on final passage of HB 1D. The Clerk will unlock the machine and the members will proceed to vote. Have all members voted? Have all

Speaker Perez, Pro Tem Speaker Duggan, Clerk, Rep. Garrison, Rep. Persons-Mulicka, Rep. Eskamani, Rep. Rayner, Rep. Gantt, Rep. Driskell, Rep. Joseph, Rep. Cross, Rep. Nixon, Rep. Bartleman, Rep. Robinson, F., Rep. Harris, Rep. Daley, Rep. Hunschofsky, Rep. Sirois, Rep. Tant, Rep. Woodson, Rep. Young, Rep. Lopez, Rep. Skidmore, Rep. Blanco, Rep. Salzman, Rep. Franklin, Rep. Campbell, Rep. Tuendridge, Rep. Long, Rep. Weinberger

members voted? The Clerk –

Speakers: **[01:29:41] [Inaudible].**

Speaker Perez: **[01:29:43]** The Clerk will lock the machine and announce the vote.

Clerk: **[01:29:46]** Eighty-three yays, 28 nays, Mr. Speaker. Show the bill passes. Read the next bill.

Clerk: **[01:29:52]** None on the desk, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Perez: **[01:30:17]** Representative Garrison, you are recognized for a motion.

Rep. Garrison: **[01:30:26]** Mr. Speaker, I move the House do now adjourn. Sine die.

Speaker Perez: **[01:30:32]** Representative Garrison moves that the House adjourn, sine die. All in favor say, "Yay."

Speakers: **[01:30:35]** Yay.

Speaker Perez: **[01:30:36]** Opposed, "No." Show the motion approved. The House is adjourned, sine die.

[00:00:00][End of Audio]

Duration: 91 minutes

Corrected Exhibit 18



CERTIFICATION OF AUTHENTICITY

Date 05/02/2026

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Executed this 2nd day of May 2026.

Sincerely,

Beth Worthy
President

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Chair Leek: Members, the Redistricting Committee will come to order. DJ, please call the roll.

DJ: Chair Leek.

Chair Leek: Here.

DJ: Vice Chair Fein. Vice Chair Fein. Ranking Member Geller. Ranking Member Geller. Representatives Andrade.

Rep. Andrade: Here.

DJ: Avila.

Chair Leek: There's Ranking Member Geller.

DJ: Avila. Bush. Bush. Byrd.

Rep. Byrd: Here.

DJ: Clemons.

Rep. Clemons: Here.

DJ: Drake has been excused. Driskell.

Rep. Driskell: Here.

DJ: Koff-Marcille.

Rep. Koff-Marcille: Here.

DJ: Rawls.

Rep. Rawls: Here.

DJ: Grant.

Rep. Grant: Here.

DJ: Jenny. Jenny. Latvala.

Rep. Latvala: Here.

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DJ: Mariano has been excused. Omphroy. Omphroy. Payne.

Rep. Payne: Here.

DJ: Robinson.

Rep. Robinson: Here.

DJ: Rommel.

Rep. Rommel: Here.

DJ: Saroy.

Rep. Saroy: Here.

DJ: Slossberg-King.

Rep. Slossberg-King: Here.

DJ: Thompson. Tuck.

Rep. Tuck: Here.

DJ: Quorum is present, Mr. Chair.

Chair Leek: Thank you, DJ. Members, a few reminders before we begin. Please silence all electronic devices. If anyone in the audience wishes to make a public comment, please fill out a form and turn it in to the Sergeant Staff. Also, as a reminder for our members and presenters, please ensure that you turn your microphone on when you are speaking and off when you are finished. Well, we're back. It's great to have this committee back together again. Session's kicked off and it's an exciting time for all of us, I know.

We are now within our constitutional time frame for approving district boundaries. The last time our committee met was to receive a legal presentation and prior to that, we learned about the map drawing application and constitutional standards. Since then, the House debuted Workshop Maps. I'm going to say again, Workshop Maps, whose purpose is to illustrate the policy decisions that may come before our committee, and the variety of ways district boundaries can be constructed. The subcommittee subsequently

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met to dive in and workshop these map options, yet our full redistricting committee has not had the opportunity to also workshop these maps. I feel this is a critical step for members of our committee, as well as it helps educate the members of the committee.

What we have prepared for the committee today is a presentation that will walk us through each region of the congressional and State House workshop maps, with some education reminders added throughout. The goal is to ensure that all of the concepts we discussed during our initial couple of meetings are refreshed, and everyone understands more thoroughly the composition of the current workshop products. I truly believe that when we're done today, you will view the district boundaries of these maps with a completely different level of understanding and perspective. I do want to point out to members that these workshop maps are most likely not the versions that will come before this committee for consideration in a vote.

Just like any other piece of legislation, the subcommittees will deliberate on maps that come before them and then vote to send work products to the full redistricting committee. As we move through the presentation, we will take questions at the end of the congressional portion and then following the conclusion of the State House portion of the presentation. I want to ensure we have enough time to get through both parts of the presentation, member questions, as well as public comments. With that, we will hear from Staff Director Leda Kelly for today's presentation. Leda.

Leda Kelly:

Thank you, Chair. Good morning, members. Great to be back with you. As the Chair just mentioned, the first thing we're going to do is review the constitutional standards, which I'm sure you're all very familiar with, but just to make sure everyone's on the same page. We'll then segue into a portion where we workshop the two congressional map options, followed by the portion where we workshop the two State House map options that are before you.

Once we conclude that and member questions, we'll segue into public input. On the desk in front of you, we did a printout of the maps. These are the maps that have been available since December, but we wanted to make sure you guys had a version that was a little perhaps easier to see and that you could either take notes on or just reference right in front of you. Again, that's the

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printout of the two congressional workshop options as well as the two State House options. Covering the first section, and I won't belabor this, but just to make sure we're all on the same page, Article 3, Section 16 of the Florida Constitution is the first section that deals with redistricting.

It directs us to approve new district boundaries in the second regular session following the redistrict, the United States Census, excuse me, which is this regular session that we entered into on Tuesday. For the Senate maps, you're required to have between 30 and 40 senatorial districts. In the House, you're required to have between 80 and 120 representative districts. Districts shall be contiguous and consecutively numbered. Then, there's additional language in Section 16 that dictates the timeline for establishing new districts following regular session.

Going into our next slide, this is a graphic that I know you guys have seen several times. It outlines the two tiers of constitutional standards that are contained within Sections 20 and 21, also within Article 3 of the Constitution. I'll read through these real quick and then we'll segue into the substantive part of today's presentation. Tier 1 Standards, the first one states, "No apportionment plan or individual district shall be drawn with the intent to favor or disfavor a political party or an incumbent."

The second standard states, "Districts shall not be drawn with the intent or result of denying or abridging the equal opportunity of racial or language minorities to participate in the political process or to diminish their ability to elect representatives of their choice," excuse me. The third one consists of that, "Districts shall consist of contiguous territory." Moving into Tier 2, the first standard states, "Districts shall be as nearly equal in population as is practicable. Districts shall be compact and finally districts shall, where feasible, utilize existing political and geographical boundaries." Members, as a reminder, Tier 1 predominates over Tier 2 should there be a conflict.

However, whenever you're working within the respective tier, all the standards are co-equal. With that, I'd like to segue into our congressional map workshops. The way we have chosen to go through our presentation today, just so you guys kind of know what to expect, we've divvied it up by regions of the state and we've actually been able to put Workshop A and Workshop B next

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to each other when there are differing options. You have a side-by-side comparison and again the map's in front of you if you'd like to see the larger portion of that. I will now turn it over to our Chief Map Drawer, Jason Parada, to take it away. Thank you.

Jason Poreda:

Thank you, Leda. Okay, so we'll begin with the congressional map and we're going to start in the Panhandle. We will work our way down to the south just to keep the order of the districts together as we go through the state and make it a little bit more organized as we look at both options throughout the state. First, Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4 in the congressional map are the same in both options, but we'll talk briefly about the four districts here. Districts 1 and 2 come together in Walton County due to equal population purposes, with the exact population requirement that we have with congressional districts.

District 1 achieved that within Walton County. Fortunately, we were able to use mostly an entire state road except where we deviated around the cities using the municipal lines of the City of Freeport and DeFuniak Springs to keep both of those cities whole in their districts, respectively. We also created a nice straight line within Walton County. The next district that I'm going to talk mostly about, again, they're all the same in both options, is Congressional District 3. Congressional Districts 2 and 4's shape is largely impacted by that particular congressional district. Congressional District 3 is protected by Tier 1 of our constitutional standards that Leda just mentioned before.

In order to ensure the Black populations within the district have the ability to elect a candidate of their choice, a functional analysis was conducted by staff to ensure this ability to elect candidates of their choice was not diminished when compared to the benchmark district in this area. This process for the analysis was done on a district-by-district basis where necessary. It is also the same process that the Florida Supreme Court used in its apportionment rulings from the last cycle as the appropriate type of analysis to determine the voting strength of the minority populations in a particular district and their ability to elect candidates of their choice within the district. Looking at the voting strength in both general and primary elections. This was done using election results, voter registration data, and voter turnout data for the five election cycles over the last decade.

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That is 10 elections in total, five primary elections and five general elections from 2012 to 2020. All of this data that was used for this analysis is available to everyone, including every member of the public within the Esri redistricting application. It was used only in those districts where necessary and appropriate. Congressional District 2 is made up almost entirely of whole counties throughout the rest of the region, and Congressional District 3 and Congressional District 2 come together in Leon County. Congressional District 2 is actually able to achieve its equal population standard within Leon County, where these two districts come together. That, unlike Congressional District 2, which is currently in the current map that has to achieve equal population in Marion County, splitting an additional county, we're able to achieve that within Leon County.

You can see Congressional District 3 goes from Duval County all the way over through Leon into Gadsden County. This includes all of Gadsden County, which is the only majority minority Black county in the state of Florida that is maintained within that protected congressional district. Congressional District 2 is made up almost entirely of whole counties except for where it borders along with District 3 in Leon County, Jefferson County, and Columbia County. Congressional District 3 then travels into Duval and takes a large portion of Duval County. Congressional District 4 contains all of Nassau County, the remaining portion of Duval County, and then it gets the remainder of its population down in St. Johns County. It achieves its equal population right around the city of St. Augustine, but we do keep the city of St. Augustine whole within, actually, the other congressional district that we'll talk about in a minute. We could have taken Congressional District 4 into Clay County, kind of wrapping around District 3, but that would have created a more visually uncompact shape.

The decision was to keep that district in St. Johns County, similar to the current district. In the next slide, we're going to talk about Districts 5, 6, and 11. This is where you can start to see some of the differences between the two congressional options that we have made available. You can see just a slight difference in the policy choice of whether or not to take Congressional District 5 south or take Congressional District 5 east to the coast, which impacts the other two districts that you see in this slide, including further down as we move further down the state. First, Congressional District 5 in this iteration keeps five whole counties together. Then, it gets

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the remaining portion of its population in Marion County, keeping the entire city of Ocala whole. By doing this and not taking it east in Option A, Congressional District 6 then takes the remaining portion of St. Johns County, including all of the city of St. Augustine, all of Flagler County, and then gets the remaining portion of its population in Volusia and Lake County.

Since we chose to go south with Congressional District 5, we're keeping Alachua County whole within Congressional District 5. That opened up the eastern coastal counties to be included in Congressional District 6. Congressional District 11 then includes the remaining portion of Marion County, so it's only split twice, all of Sumter County, and then the remaining portion of Lake County, and then into Citrus County to achieve equal population. Six is in Volusia County, and then 11 over in Citrus County achieves that. In Option B, the policy choice was made instead of keeping Alachua County whole and splitting Marion County. What if we flipped that? What if we tried to keep Marion County whole and split Alachua County, and took Congressional District 5? Instead of going south over to the east portion into the coast to take that remaining portion of St. John's County and include it, just to see what the different policy choice would be and the resulting change in all of the districts?

District 5 splits Alachua County goes over to the east coast. Congressional District 6 then, because it cannot start in St. John's County, starts all the way down in Volusia County, and then actually goes down and takes all of Seminole County because of the different choice made with Congressional District 5. Congressional District 11 then gets the remaining portion of its population in Volusia County, the top portion of Lake County, and then up into Alachua County, keeping Marion County whole. You can see just that simple choice of keep this county whole, or keep that county whole, or keep all of these counties together and go east or go south, which are just policy choices that the committee might see. When you see districts on a map, try to keep in mind that the decisions that were made with the districts are going to impact not just that district, but all of the districts in the region, sometimes even further on, further along the map. Particularly in a congressional map, because we have to achieve that equal population standard. In the next slide here, you can start to see that the impact of the previous decision in Congressional District 5 continues to impact Congressional Districts 7 and 10.

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However, I'm going to skip ahead real quick to talk about Congressional Districts 8, 9, and 16. You can see they are mostly the same in both options, where the counties of Polk, Osceola, Brevard, and Indian River are all kept whole in their respective districts. Congressional District 8 is all of Brevard and Indian River County. It then goes up into Volusia County to get the remaining portion of its population, which is about 2,800 people, including the entire city of Oak Hill, using 95 and some other good boundaries to do so. Congressional District 9 contains all of Osceola County, which is just under 390,000 people. Then, it gets the remaining portion of its population, about half of the district, from Orange County. Congressional District 9 also happens to be a majority-minority district now. It is not in the benchmark district, but keeping with this nice Tier 2 drawn, and keeping the county whole.

Then, using a lot of major roads in Orange County to achieve the rest of its population, it just happens to be a majority growth in the Hispanic population in Central Florida. Now, going over to 16, Polk County this decade was able to be kept whole. We then achieved equal population in District 16 by going into Hillsborough County, following a state road to keep a nice vertical district boundary there. Now, going back to Districts 7 and 10, you can see the decision of what to do with CD5. Also, how Congressional District 6 either took Seminole County or didn't take Seminole County impacts the shapes of those two districts. In either case, Orange County is split into three different districts, and in each case, there's a district wholly within Orange County. Option A, that is, Congressional District 10, and Option B, it's, Congressional District 7. These two districts, even though their shapes may look a little different, are the most analogous to each other, even though they have different numbers. They actually have a large portion of their shared population between the two options, despite the different shape.

The biggest difference, obviously, is that Seminole County contains Congressional District 7 in Option A. Whereas, because Congressional District 6 has Seminole County, it has to stay entirely within Orange. That's just kind of a difference, and again, that started back with deciding what to do with Congressional District 5 further up the state. You can see here in Option B, Congressional District 10 takes the remaining portion of Orange County and then goes east to take some portion of Lake County, all

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of Sumpter County. Then it also includes part of Citrus County to fill out the remaining population of its district. In either case, though, Orange County, as I said, is split three times. One whole district within the county, about 380,000 people of Orange County, is in Congressional District 9, but is divided a little bit differently. Congressional District 10 or 7, depending on what option you're in, takes the remaining portion of Orange County and includes it as part of its district.

Now, moving further west into the greater Tampa Bay area, you can see that in both options, the area that these four districts take up is exactly the same. You can see Citrus County is split in the same way in both options. Then, the districts down in Pinellas, Hillsborough County, and Pasco County are split a little bit differently to achieve different policy choices that we wanted to demonstrate before the committees. In either case, Hernando County is kept whole within Congressional District 12 in Option B or Congressional District 15 in Option A. In Workshop Option A, Congressional District 13 crosses the bay and goes into Hillsborough County. Actually, all four of these districts contain a piece of Hillsborough County. Part of the reason why we wanted to demonstrate this option was a way to improve compactness scores.

The compactness scores of Districts 12, 15, and 14 in Option A are actually all better than their counterparts in Option B. In Option B, that was a way of demonstrating that you could keep a district entirely within Pinellas County and then also entirely within Hillsborough County, and then attaching the rest of the populations of those counties north into Pasco County and beyond. That was a way of showing the trade-off of keeping districts wholly within counties compared to going toward the mathematical compactness scores. There's some other advantages with these particular districts that will help educate some of those policy choices in a more detailed manner throughout here. I'm going to turn it back over to Staff Director Leda Kelly to talk about some of those differences.

Leda Kelly:

Thank you, Jason. We're going to stay in this region. However, this is one of the chances we want to take to illustrate where, you know, whenever we talk about our Tier 2 requirements of using political and geographical boundaries where feasible, this is a good chance to illustrate that. The section that I have up here on the screen is zoomed in to Option A. We're kind of looking at the area

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where 12, 13, and 14 come together. As Jason mentioned, one of the abilities in this iteration was the ability to improve compactness scores. We've also illustrated by the red circles on the screen, helped to draw your attention to the major roadways that we've used in the area as well.

You'll hear us talk a lot about using, whether it's city boundaries or county boundaries or perhaps roadways as mechanisms to create our boundary lines. This was a good example of very common roadways in the area. The Courtney Campbell Causeway, Dale Mabry, and I-4, not only well known in the area, but they create these very nice clean lines as well. Also, staying in this same area, I want to zoom in. Now this is Option B, and this is the kind of place where District 12 and District 13 come together. Now, if you're looking at the map holistically, you may say, "Why is there a little, you know, jut up there? Why is that kind of an odd shape?" Whenever you zoom in and look at the actual boundary lines that have been selected, you see that it's the city of Clearwater.

As I'm sure members, you're all very familiar, a lot of municipal lines have very unique geography. Sometimes they're even discontinuous from themselves. However, as you look at this example that's on the screen, the aqua blue color is actually the city of Clearwater. You can see we followed those city boundaries between Districts 12 and 13 to actually create what our congressional district boundary is. Again, just trying to draw some illustration of why things may look unique. I encourage you to dig that next level to see what those boundaries may be. I'll turn it back over to the team. Thank you.

Kyle Langan:

Okay, moving into southwest Florida, we'll start with District 17. We were able to take the remaining about 112,000 people in Hillsborough County and pair that with Manatee County, which is kept whole. We're still about 250,000 people short, which we're able to go down into Sarasota County to form kind of a nice squarish-looking district. That small indent in the southern portion follows the Venice Municipal line. We were able to keep those cities whole in their respective districts. District 18 is a combination of seven whole counties and the remaining population from Sarasota. It extends into Lee County to achieve an equal population.

We're able to keep Highland, Charlotte, DeSoto, Hardy, Glades,

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and Hendry counties all whole within District 18 in both options. Then, District 19 is made up of that remaining population of Lee County and drops down into Collier County to achieve equal population. Again, following major roadways and trying to keep as many cities whole as possible within the districts. Moving over to the East Coast, this area is dictated mostly by CD20, which is a Tier 1 protected district. We wanted to illustrate that there are multiple ways to draw Tier 1 compliant districts. In Option A, CD20, after running a functional analysis, ensures the minority group's ability to elect a candidate of their choice is able to be kept entirely within Broward County. It includes the city of Miramar and some of the northern Broward cities in order to protect those populations' ability to elect their vote. It dictates kind of how the other districts are shaped around it.

In Option B, CD20 is more similar to how the current benchmark version looks, connecting the communities in northern Palm Beach County with those in Broward County. We were able to, in each option, keep District 25 wholly within Broward County, and District 22 is kept wholly within Palm Beach County. In both options, there are districts kept wholly within each county. District 21 includes all of St. Lucie and Martin Counties, and then gains its remaining population from Palm Beach County in different orientations based on what was done with CD20. CD23, in both options, is the only district that crosses the Broward County and Palm Beach County line.

Leda Kelly:

Members, I'd like to take a minute to talk about compactness. I think this is a really good example of the different types of compactness scores that we have. The first one I want to remind and refresh everyone about is actually what is referred to as the eyeball test, or visual compactness. I'd like you to look at both CD20s that are on the screen. As Kyle described, the one in Workshop A on the left is contained wholly within Broward County. The one on the right is contained between Broward and Palm Beach County.

Whenever you look at this, everyone has, and it's a subjective test, but everyone kind of has a reaction to what they feel is more compact, more visually appealing, and passes the "eyeball test". I want you to think for yourself which one you personally think is more compact. I want you to keep that in the back of your mind, and we'll come back to that here in a second. The next thing I'd like

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to talk through is the actual types of mathematical compactness scores we have, and how some of these have to be used in combination with one another. Compactness scores, kind of as Jason alluded to in some of our previous districts, are not an end-all be-all.

They do need to be used in context of not only what you're drawing, but the surrounding region as well. There's no one compactness score that is superior to other compactness scores, including the eyeball test. Members, this slide was added after the meeting packet was sent out. It will be reflected in the action packet, but I wanted to be able to include it so you guys had a very quick and easy point of reference. The three compactness scores, and I won't spend a long time going over them, but they do measure different functionality of a different district, if you will.

The first one is the Reock Score. This one is commonly used, and it establishes what is the smallest circle you can put around a district. It's a ratio between the size of the district and the size of that circle. This is very commonly used within the redistricting industry. The second one on the screen is the Convex-Hull Score. Sometimes you'll hear people refer to this as the rubber band test, because as opposed to being a circle, it's the smallest polygon that you can fit around a district. As you can see, the black lines encompassing the red district on the screen may look like a rubber band.

The third test that's up here is the Polsby Popper score, and that's a ratio of the circumference of the circle to the perimeter of the district. All of these tests are measured on a scale of zero to 1, and the closer to 1 you are, the more mathematically compact your district is. Now, this slide, I'd like to illustrate how sometimes mathematical compactness, and going back to what you guys, you know, thought as far as the eyeball test, aren't always in harmony with one another. That's okay. They're not intended to be. You can see here Option A, which coincides with our Workshop A, and Option B, you can see the Reock Scores, Convex-Hull, and Polsby Popper for them, don't necessarily line up between the two districts.

However, whenever you look at this, Option B has two out of the three that outperform Option A. Now, with that being said, Option B is the option, if you'll remember back to when I had you guys do

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kind of your own mental check-in. That's the option that spans between Palm Beach and Broward County. I would venture to say, just looking at it face value, would most people would say, I didn't believe that that would be more mathematically compact than the other option.

Again, there's not one right answer. There's not one wrong answer, and both types of compactness methodologies have to be used, you know, in tandem with one another. However, this is just a very good and clear visual example to demonstrate that, so we wanted to take time to do so. I will now turn it back over to Kyle. Thank you.

Kyle Langan:

All right, moving into Miami-Dade County, we'll start with District 24. That's another protected Black district. It has been created in both options to ensure the minority population has the ability to elect a candidate of their choice. The main differences between the two options in 24, which is pretty small on the screen, but in the northern part of where the district crosses into Broward County, and kind of where it borders District 20 to the north. Those are the kind of major differences, most notable differences in the two options.

Again, that's just based on how it interacts with the population up against CD20. CD27 in both options is the district we were able to contain wholly within Miami-Dade County. Twenty-six and 28 both use the remaining populations of Miami-Dade County, and pair 28 with Monroe County and 26 with Collier County. All three districts, 26, 27, and 28, are all protected majority-minority Hispanic districts. With staff performing functional analysis, they all protect the minority's ability to elect a candidate of their choice.

Leda Kelly:

These next two slides are just pieces of geography that I'd like to point out that are obviously very unique to Florida. However, we do still have to incorporate them whenever we're going through the redistricting process. As I am sure everyone is aware, the Everglades spans a large portion of the southern part of our state. Within this, as you can see on the screen, this is an image of South Florida. The red numbers, if you can see that, if not, it's in your packet, are the number of people that live within those respective census blocks.

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You can see there's zeros within a lot of those blocks, and then some minute populations, 15, 29 people. There's a person in one of these blocks. Even though that is a largely unpopulated area, there are census blocks there, and we do have to account for that whenever we're redistricting. If I flip back to the previous slide, you can see District 28 spans a large portion of South Florida. A lot of that may be unpopulated census blocks. However, we are legally required to allocate every single census block, all 390,000 of them, to a district during the course of our redistricting process.

My other piece of, I call this my fun fact for Florida, there's six states in the country that have discontinuous territory that is legally allowed to be incorporated with a district. For us, that is the Dry Tortugas National Park down off of Key West. Again, normally, all of our districts have to be contiguous, which we've covered several times. However, this is a very unique piece of Florida geography that we have to account for, and we do so accordingly. With that, Mr. Chair, that concludes our Congressional Presentation.

Chair Leek: Thank you, members. We'll open it up to questions from members. Ranking Member Geller.

Rep. Geller: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and Happy New Year to you and everyone. I understand that these maps are just workshop maps, they're not formal maps. Who actually physically prepared these workshop maps?

Chair Leek: I believe your question is who actually ran the mouse and the software?

Rep. Geller: Yeah.

Chair Leek: Okay.

Rep. Geller: I mean, as we've heard, there were some choices that had to be made at certain points, which is unavoidable. I want to know who was doing the choosing.

Chair Leek: Yeah, I think it's a collective effort of staff.

Rep. Geller: Well, I'm asking who specifically.

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Chair Leek: Well, looking at the titles, I would go to Chief Map Drawer, and then I would also add Kyle and Leda into that. Our staff, the three here doing the presentation.

Rep. Geller: The three who are doing the presentation are the people who did the drawing.

Chair Leek: That's correct.

Rep. Geller: Thank you.

Chair Leek: Representative Driskell, you're recognized?

Rep. Driskell: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and good morning. I had a question going back to it was page 16 in my packet, but now that we added that additional slide, it may be page 17. However, we were talking about Districts 24, 26, 27, and 28. Just for example, we were talking about District 24, and it was referenced that this is a Black district, that no matter whether you look at Workshop A or B maps, you can still elect candidates of their choice. I was curious about that, and could you talk about, I guess, I had two questions. The first is, what was the approach in drawing this as a Black seat? Was it that you looked at the Black voting age population? Just what was taken into account in drawing this particular seat?

Chair Leek: Thank you, Ms. Kelly, you're recognized?

Leda Kelly: Thank you, Chair, and thank you, Representative. With this district, and with the other districts as well, it's not just one necessary step. There's several steps that go into it. The first, and we've mentioned this before, is just looking at the general population, and any shifts or changes that may have occurred over the last decade.

Also, what's reflected in the benchmark map for this decade, and what we are charged to do with. Especially, in the congressional map, that plus or minus one equalizing population. From there, we looked at the benchmark map to understand, you know, whether that was a performing district. Also, as I believe it was Jason outlined earlier, the Florida Supreme Court over the last decade was able to outline some of the methodology and what factors go into that. I know you mentioned that this district would be specific to the Black voting-age population, but we also looked at

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registered voters, voter turnout, and then election results. This decade, we were very thankful.

Our data set on that front was very expansive compared to what was in the last decade. We have election cycles going from 2012 to 2020, and that includes primary and general elections. You get data points like the ability to control a primary, you know, the Black Democrats' ability to control a primary, or, you know, respective with Hispanic districts as well. You also get all of our statewide elections, in which, most cycles, I believe, had 14 elections. We have a very extensive data set that we were able to use in conjunction with how the Supreme Court outlined that during the last decade. I hope that answers your question. Thank you.

Chair Leek: Yeah, Representative Driskell, that was an excellent question. I also think that was an excellent answer. Thank you, guys, both. However, that's what we're doing here today, right? We have put workshop maps in front of you that take different approaches that are both legally compliant. However, one focuses more on compactness, and one focuses just roughly more on political and geographical distinctions. However, that question, I thought, was very, very good and helpful. Representative Driskell.

Rep. Driskell: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for that explanation. As we move forward as a committee, would it be possible as we look at the maps, to also get that data about the minority voting age population when we're looking at Hispanic maps and looking at, I mean, Hispanic districts and Black districts?

Chair Leek: Yeah, I think it's already available. The answer is yes.

Rep. Driskell: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One more question.

Chair Leek: Representative Driskell.

Rep. Driskell: Yes, one of the things that I don't think we've talked about much is language minorities. However, I know that that can be a particular criterion to consider, especially down in South Florida, where we have so much diversity. Could you share with the committee whether language minorities have been taken into account? Also, if so, how?

Chair Leek: Thank you. Ms. Kelly.

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Leda Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, ma'am. Thank you, Representative Driskell, for that question. For language minorities, I assume you're asking about the Haitian population. I know that's come up in a couple of our committees.

Rep. Driskell: Yes.

Leda Kelly: Yeah, perfect. Thank you. Whenever we receive the information from the Census Bureau, thank you for this question, because this is a piece of information I feel like members may not just be aware of. Whenever we receive our data set from the Census Bureau, it comes in specific categories. Now, this past cycle, the Census Bureau allowed for the first time the ability to fill in what your racial affiliation may be. A lot of people opted to fill in Haitian if they felt like they self-identified as Haitian. However, whenever the population data comes to us, the Census Bureau does not give us that delineated breakdown of what those additional responses may be.

We receive it at a categorical level of single race, White, Black, Asian American, other, and I'm drawing a blank on the last one, but there's a fifth category as well. Whenever we look at our population, as far as how the data is given to us, the Census Bureau doesn't actually provide that level of information broken down by the census block, which is what we're required to draw on. Now, there's been some questions about the ACS data. I'd like to talk about that for a second. The American Community Survey is an additional data set that the Census Bureau provides. It's an official Census Bureau product. However, it's not done on a one-for-one basis like the census count is. The American Community Survey is a true survey. It's an estimation of the population, and they have a one-year running survey and a five-year running survey.

Within that, though, they don't sample every single individual household like the census. They'll send a certain amount of census surveys, excuse me, surveys out from the Census Bureau to households within an area. Whenever they receive that data back, they then run their algorithms and extrapolate what may be in that region. However, for the purposes of redistricting, we need to know the individual person down to the census block level. That presents somewhat of a challenge for us. What we've encouraged members who have come to us or have raised these questions is, we obviously want to ensure we're protecting all the appropriate

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communities that we're required to protect. If you have feedback from, whether it's our workshop maps or anything in that region that you'd like to share, we highly encourage you to come to staff because we want to make sure we're taking that into account.

Chair Leek: I think it's worth noting here also, again, that we are legally required to use the census data as given to us. Representative Driskell for a follow-up.

Rep. Driskell: Thank you, Mr. Chair, which I'm wondering if that puts us in a bind. It's my understanding of the constitutional factors that we have to consider language minorities. Is it that the census does not give us that data at all? Is it that they don't include that information in the initial data set, and we have to drill down deeper? I mean, what do we need to do to get that data to make sure that we are constitutionally compliant when it comes to language minorities?

Chair Leek: Yeah, and that's, I mean, that's a great question. I will say the fact that we have co-equal factors in different tiers necessarily creates tension, but still legally compliant. Beyond that, I'll defer to Ms. Kelly.

Leda Kelly: Absolutely. To your initial question about how it is presented, the Census Bureau doesn't provide that as part of the PL 94-171 data set that we receive and are legally required to use for redistricting. It's not like, you know, we didn't just drop down a tab and use that data set. It's actually not included at all. One thing I will say, though, is whenever you think about how, you know, communities and populations respond to the census data or even self-identify within the elections world as well, their voter registration, things of that nature. I would assume most of the Haitian community would self-identify as Black, which is a racial population we've obviously worked to ensure is protected within that. We are inherently working to protect that community, even though we don't have any concrete data that speaks specifically to the Haitian population.

Chair Leek: Okay, one more follow-up?

Rep. Driskell: Okay.

Chair Leek: All right, Representative.

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Rep. Driskell: Thank you. It's kind of more of a comment, but I don't know if we're going to have comments, or should I wait, Mr. Chair?

Chair Leek: Go ahead.

Rep. Driskell: Okay. The comment is just, and thank you for that, because we absolutely should be doing what we can to protect the Black districts. It's just that I think within language minorities, you know, the Black population is not a monolith. Also, the Haitian community, I'm not a part of it, but I would imagine has maybe some specific, you know, issues that are specific to them. Then it sounds like, Mr. Chair, going back to, I think, a comment that you made two questions ago, that perhaps it's that we need to hear some community feedback about those maps. Also, hear from the community that may be the language minority about what, you know, what they think of the maps, etc., and if they feel protected or not.

Chair Leek: Yeah, thank you. I'll reiterate the, you know, something I've said many, many times before. First of all, we have, right? We have heard some of the representatives. However, if you represent those communities or you have an interest in those communities, please reach out to the constituents in those communities, bring back their input, and we're happy to take it. Also, let me, this is probably a good time for me to also say, you know, thank you to those members who have sought out staff, sought out me, sought out the vice chair, sought out the subcommittee chairs to give input.

We appreciate that. The goal for the entire thing is to be able to ask questions like Representative Driskell is asking right now. That means that you have a level of understanding that is going to be necessary for each of us to make the decisions on the maps as we move forward. Thank you. Let me make sure there's not somebody else. Representative Geller. All right. Ranking Member Geller.

Rep. Geller: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to follow up on a couple of those very excellent questions that Rep. Driskell asked. First, returning to language minorities, and I guess, I don't know if I should direct this, Mr. Chair, to you or to the staff director. We'll make the call.

However, if I'm following this correctly, which is always, you know, questionable, frankly. I see that there are three Black districts that are being protected. One is from Leon to Duval. One

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is in the Orlando area, and one is in Dade County. Then there's one additional one, a fourth one. That's the one we looked at with very different iterations for No. 20. Is that accurate so far?

Chair Leek: Ms. Kelly. Yep. I'm having a little trouble understanding you.

Rep. Geller: Oh, let me try and talk more closely into the mic.

Chair Leek: I think you said there are four.

Rep. Geller: I think it's four total. I counted three, and then added in the one that is different configurations. One from Leon to Duval. One in Orlando. One in Miami. Then there's that 120 that we looked at with two very different iterations. Is that correct for Black districts?

Chair Leek: I think that the question is, are there four protected districts? Those four.

Leda Kelly: Let me clarify just to make sure. The Black protected Districts are 3, 20, which was the South Florida one with different iterations, and 24.

Rep. Geller: There's not one in the Orlando area? Did I misunderstand that?

Leda Kelly: Correct.

Rep. Geller: Okay. With that said, and if this was said, I didn't hear it. There was a brief reference. Which, if any, are either protected or expected Spanish language districts?

Chair Leek: We're trying to do – the reason there's some hesitation here is we're trying to take the question that you have and overlay the law on it to make sure that we're talking about the same things. However, Ms. Kelly, if you can answer that.

Leda Kelly: Yes, I will try. Thank you, Chair. Representative, so with regards to the Black districts, which ones are protected Spanish language?

Rep. Geller: Not with regard to the Black district. Overall, which, if any, of these districts are, in terms of language affinity, language community, which are either protected or expected Hispanic

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districts where Spanish-speaking citizens can be sure that they're able to have representatives of their choice?

Chair Leek: I'm not sure what the expected part means, but we can certainly answer the protected part.

Leda Kelly: Switching gears, are protected Hispanic districts, I feel like is what you're asking about. Whenever you're looking at the map there, 25, 26, and 27 in South Florida are protected Hispanic districts. We also talked about Congressional District 9, which is not a protected district. It's not quite performing, but it is a majority-minority district with the natural population that we all know has influxed there over the decade.

Rep. Geller: Nine is viewed as a Hispanic district?

Chair Leek: Ms. Kelly, you're recognized.

Leda Kelly: I'm so sorry, Representative. Could you repeat that question?

Rep. Geller: The proposed Congressional District 9 is viewed as – let me let you define how it's viewed in terms of the Hispanic language. I don't want to use the wrong words. I'll let you choose the words that define what 9 is in terms of the Spanish language community.

Chair Leek: Ms. Kelly?

Leda Kelly: It is a majority-minority district, which means that over 50% of its population self-identifies as Hispanic.

Rep. Geller: Then, is there a Black district that meets that same standard in the Orlando area? It's not language-based, but it's community and affinity-based, and minority choice of representation.

Chair Leek: Ms. Kelly?

Leda Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Not over 50% in the Orlando area, no, sir.

Rep. Geller: Final, I think, follow-up, Mr. Chair, if I may. Then, moving to South Florida again, let me ask, I heard the very thoughtful exchange between you and Rep. Driskell. However, let me just say for the record that there are numerous Haitian Americans either in my own district or immediately contiguous to my district in

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Northeast Dade and Southeast Broward. It would be difficult for me to recount for the record the number of them that I've heard from expressing great concern about whether or not their particular language group, Haitian Creole, is going to have attention paid to it. Or a district drawn that will be sensitive to electing Haitian Creole speakers. Having heard what you said, I'm not asking for a repetition, but I would like a little more explication that I can go back and tell the many, many Haitian Creole speakers who've contacted me about this.

Chair Leek: Okay. I think there was a question at the end there. I think that question repeated the question that Representative Driskell asked, and the explanation was given. We'll give you that explanation again, but that's –

Rep. Geller: I'm hoping –

Chair Leek: We've got a whole other set of maps to get through. Before we start repeating answers, if you don't mind, we'll –

Rep. Geller: Chair, let me just be clear. As I said, I heard that answer. I was hoping for a little more, because I don't want us to waste time just repeating.

Chair Leek: Okay.

Rep. Geller: Hoping for a little more info.

Chair Leek: If you don't mind getting with Ms. Kelly.

Rep. Geller: Whatever she – okay.

Chair Leek: If you can do that. I think the explanation that she gave was actually very thorough. I'm not sure there is more to provide, but maybe there is a different way to frame it so that it – yeah, listen, guys. The stuff we are doing here is very, very technical and very, very legal. It requires a degree of precision that doesn't necessarily make it easy to communicate. We're trying, but there might be a better way to do that if you don't mind getting with Ms. Kelly. I'd appreciate it. Thank you, Chair. Representative Omphroy, you're recognized.

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Rep. Omphroy: Thank you so very much, Chair. I appreciate it. I appreciate this presentation. I thought it was extremely thorough. I actually identify with the demographics that's being spoken about currently. I am a Caribbean American. I represent the largest Caribbean American population in the state of Florida. My grandmother is Haitian and Portuguese, so I identify with the Haitian population because I am such. I can tell you that I have one question.

I know that on the census report, my aunt, when she was a member of this Florida house, worked on the census and lobbied for the designation of the different Caribbean American ethnic groups within the state of Florida. We know that we were able to self-identify. I just want to clarify, did they tell you about the self-identified people in that population group, or did they just keep that as additional fodder? Then, I would ask, Chair, if I could have a follow-up after the question is answered.

Chair Leek: Thank you, Representative Omphroy. Just to be clear, the information that we have comes from the federal government, not the state government.

Rep. Omphroy: No, I meant the federal government because they asked us in the census to identify. I was asked to identify what I was. I could say that I was Jamaican. I could say that I was Haitian. I could say that I was from Barbados. I could say that I was from, you know, it was allowed this year, was something that was fought for within my community that I represent the majority of. I'm wondering, did they not transfer that information? Or was that information they gathered and then didn't do anything with, as far as transferring it down to the state?

Chair Leek: Thank you. I'm going to defer to Ms. Kelly here in a second, but I think this may also help you, Representative Geller. I think we're talking about the difference between the survey versus the census level data.

Leda Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Representative. The boxes that you were able to fill in handwritten in your self-identification on the Census Bureau it was still sent back with your census form. Whether you filled it out handwritten or if you did it online this decade, which first time ever they allowed that. There's many other things that the Census Bureau uses that information for.

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As far as redistricting goes, that information was not delineated and sent to us. However, there's a whole world of demographers and statisticians who use that information and are completely separate in different ways. Where it may be showing up, I can't speak to that. I'm not well-versed in those data sets. However, as far as redistricting, that next level of detailed information is not part of our PL data set.

Chair Leek: Representative Driskell, I see the look on your face. Let me see if I can explain this. That information while collected is not collected in the same detail as the information that is necessary and legally required for us to use in redistricting. While that survey was given to you, some people responded, and some people did not. It is not the same detailed information that we are required to use for redistricting. Is that fair?

Rep. Omphroy: I had one more follow-up. Sorry.

Chair Leek: Representative Omphroy.

Rep. Omphroy: Thank you so very much, Chair. In our mapping out of things, culturally, you know, I'm just going to say in Broward County, 40% of the Black population identifies as being Caribbean American. The largest group being the Jamaican population at 13.7%, if I'm not mistaken. Also, the Haitian population is at 13.1%, right? I happen to be grateful to be part of both of those populations. Did we have to take into account cultural groups regarding the census? The Caribbean American population is looked at as a cultural group. I just want to put that out there also. Thank you.

Chair Leek: Thank you. Let me try to answer that if I can. The question was, does any state have to take that into account? The Supreme Court has told us, "No, you have to follow Tier 1 and Tier 2." That communities of interest is not one of the criteria within it. Now, that information is available to us through whatever means it is. It doesn't mean that we can't take it into account, but it cannot supplant any of the legal requirements that we must take into account. Just a second. I want to check and make sure that the stuff I'm saying is right. Was that right? Thank you. Representative Driskell, you're recognized.

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Rep. Driskell: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think you may have just answered the question that was formulated in my mind based on the exchange we just had with you and Rep. Omphroy, which is, so it sounds like that information is available to us. We are not required to use it, but we could make a policy decision as a legislative body to use it.

Chair Leek: Yeah, kind of. Remember, because it's survey information. It's not as precise as is necessary for the required legal data that we have to use, right? It is a community of interest that is not really measured in any other way than a survey. I'll turn it over to Ms. Kelly at that point. She says I'm right. I always like it when that happens.

Rep. Driskell: Thank you. That was helpful.

Chair Leek: Ranking Member Geller, recognized.

Rep. Geller: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Also, a quick follow-up on that as well. As I understand it, we've used the term protected districts. That's why I was curious about, you know, what we're doing in terms of Spanish language. Also, if there is any effort made to identify and provide that for the language group of Haitian Creole. In view of what we were just hearing, I think, and again, please, I know much less about this than our staff director, certainly. Also, maybe you as well, Mr. Chair. However, I understand that what we are protecting is based on what exists going into this process that we cannot have retrogression from.

We have to at least maintain, I think that is called benchmark. I'd just like to know how we decided and what criteria were applied for what is a benchmark district that has to be protected, particularly in terms of the two that we talked about in the Orlando area. A Black district, but maybe not a benchmark district. Also, a Hispanic district with maybe more ability to elect, but maybe not a benchmark district. How did we decide what had to be protected as opposed to what was just there and could be affected?

Chair Leek: Okay, so this gets into the weeds of what is a protected district. You've heard terms like majority-minority, you know, performing district, coalition districts. There are a whole host of districts that may fall into that protected district category, for the specifics of what. I think Ms. Kelly answered this before, but there is no one piece of data that makes it protected. However, for the specifics of

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those districts that you referenced, I think I'm going to have to defer to Ms. Kelly.

Rep. Geller: Benchmark.

Chair Leek: Benchmark is another legal term, but we'll let Ms. Kelly explain it.

Leda Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Representative. That's actually the first thing I wanted to clarify. The benchmark is related to, you can think of it as the current map, right? Current map, and you can view the current map with the data from the last decade, and you can view the current map with the data from this decade. Whenever we go in and analyze, you know, what is happening in that area, in that district, and this goes back to the question I answered for Rep. Driskell. I won't repeat just for the sake of time, but you're able to look at that area with the voting age population, your registered voters, voter turnout, as well as the election results. All those data points together help to identify whether or not it would be performing, and therefore, as you said, related to Tier 1, would be required for protection moving forward from the benchmark map.

Rep. Geller: Thank you.

Chair Leek: Members, we're going to move on here. I'm just going to start by saying, you know, for those of you who had to suffer through these types of conversations and discussions in law school, I'm sorry you're having to do it again. For those of you who did not have to suffer this in law school, I'm doubly sorry. Let's move into the next presentation, please. Ms. Kelly, you're recognized.

Leda Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I'm going to turn it over to the team.

Jason Poreda: Thank you. Okay, so we're going to move into our two options for the State House map. We will again start in the Panhandle and work our way down into the Monroe County area, kind of weaving throughout the state, so we can hit every region. Here you see the majority of the Panhandle with Districts 1 through 9 in the current map. Or I'm sorry, 1 through 9 in the two options that we have before you. Their orientations are all very similar. Districts 5 and 6 are actually the same in both, both whole county combinations. District 6 is actually Bay County in and of itself. District 5 is made up of five other entirely whole counties and nothing else.

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We're able to do some of these things because, in the State House map, unlike the congressional map, we have a little bit more flexibility with population deviation off our ideal. As a result of that, we're able to keep some counties whole and not include any other piece of a county or city in order to make up what is the entirety of a district. We also have the ability to combine certain counties together and put a certain number of districts within them to help us maintain the county boundaries. One example of that is Districts 1 through 4, where you see that three-county combination of Escambia, Santa Rosa, and Okaloosa can fit four house districts within the allowed population deviation. Within Districts 1 through 4, you can see that Districts 3 and 4 are very similar.

However, Districts 1 and 2 just show some difference in both options, keeping the city of Pensacola whole, but different options for orienting those two districts in that region. Also, the policy choice of either doing a Pensacola very tightly compact district, which would then make District 1 have to wrap around it and go into Santa Rosa County. Or to kind of split the difference and include Pensacola with a district that crosses over to Santa Rosa County. That's just a simple Tier 2 policy choice that we wanted to demonstrate in this. Another example of that is Districts 7, 8, and 9. District 8 is one of our protected Black districts. It's a majority-minority Black district that we performed a functional analysis to ensure the ability to elect for the minority community in that region.

That is a district that exists in the benchmark and that we recreated here. Unlike the previous decade, where after creating that district and protecting that minority community, there was enough population left over in Leon County to fit a district entirely within Leon. Unfortunately, with population shifts over the decade and because district populations have increased from an ideal population of about 156,000 to about 180,000, there's not enough population left in Leon County to satisfy the entirety that would be enough of a house district. Leon County will have to be connected to other neighboring counties in some way, shape, or form.

We've presented two different options for how that policy choice could be made. In Option A, most of Tallahassee and South Leon County is connected to the counties to the west. Then, the northern portion of Leon County is connected to Jefferson County and the other counties to the east. In Option B, most of Leon County is

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connected with Jefferson and Madison, and then the remaining counties are all connected together, with a small portion of Leon County. Those are just two different options presented to us with this new mathematical challenge that we have with Leon County in this particular area.

Leda Kelly:

Jason, I'll step in real quick. Members, this is another example that I'd like to show for keeping cities whole. Before I switch to the next slide, District 4, which is the yellow district. You can see on the east and west it follows county lines, very clean, as well as on the south. Then, on the northern portion, it follows portions of I-10. However, there's this little bump up. You may ask, "Why is there a little bump up?"

Well, whenever you zoom in and actually look at what city geography is there, incorporated city, this is the city boundaries of Crestview. As you can see, instead of continuing along I-10, which would split the city of Crestview south of the interstate and north of the interstate. That little bump up is created to respect those city boundaries and to allow that city to be kept whole within District 4. Again, just another quick example of why a district may look the way it does.

Jason Poreda:

Thank you, Leda. Now, continuing further east, we'll go with Districts 10 through 18, which is the greater Jacksonville area. You can see here in our Option A and Option B, we've presented two different ways of looking at the Duval and Nassau County area. Then, also, Districts 10 and 11 show how keeping a district wholly within Clay County is still possible, but connecting it to the other neighboring counties, you can do so in a different way. Both are Tier 2 compliant, it's just a matter of a policy choice of whether or not we split the county vertically or horizontally. This could be an opportunity to look at compactness scores and figure out which orientation is best. Or there could be another orientation that may not be as extreme as totally horizontal or totally vertical.

However, this is a way of presenting to the committee different policy choices that could be used while still keeping the same county combination together and keeping a district wholly within Clay, but splitting up the county in a slightly different way. In Nassau-Duval, going back to that, you can see this is an example of how we can keep Nassau County whole. However, we can connect it to the east side of Duval County, keeping five other

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districts wholly within Duval County. Or going the other way and taking Nassau County into Duval County on the west side and keeping the five districts wholly within Duval County pushed over more toward the east side. Another thing I want to point out here is that Districts 13 and 14 are both Tier 1 protected districts within Duval County. They're the Black population there.

We ran functional analysis on both of these districts to ensure the minority community's ability to elect candidates of their choice in both districts. District 18 is solely within St. John's County, and this is just a different way of showing how we can use good boundaries. One uses a river, one uses a road. Then, both options keep the city of St. Augustine whole, but in what will be the remaining portion of St. John's County, not in House District 18. Yeah. Now, we move into the area just south of that area I was just discussing. District 18 is kind of used as a bridge here. We'll continue talking about St. John's in that area and then move east to kind of talk about how some of those decisions will impact the rest of this region.

As I mentioned before, District 18 is the northern portion of St. John's County. Then, you can see below that in Option A and Option B, Districts 18, 19, and 20 look very similar, but there are some subtle differences between the two. In both of our options, we kept Flagler County whole and then connected it to a portion of that St. John's area and actually all of the city of St. Augustine. Both options look very similar, but they do follow different boundary lines to go north to kind of present different options to the committee. One follows a railway, and one follows a highway.

However, they both keep the city whole. We did explore some options of trying to keep St. John's County in just two different districts. However, to do that, that would force us to split either Flagler County or Putnam County, or in some cases both. It would also negatively impact the compactness of a lot of the districts to the south. We decided to present some subtle differences between Districts 19 and 20 in these options, even though they look somewhat similar. District 20 contains all of Putnam County in both options. A little bit of that western portion of St. John's County that's not in District 18 or 19, and then continues into Marion County in a similar but slightly different way. I'll point out District 21, the green district there in the middle.

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That is another Tier 1 protected Black performing district that we have performed a functional analysis on. In both options, even though they look different, we've ensured the minority community's ability to elect candidates of their choice there in that district. We were actually able in both options, to just split Alachua County into two different districts, in this case 21 and 22. One of the differences between these two options and how we build that minority protected district is how much population is in that district, which is in Alachua County. In Option A, District 21 has a little bit more of Alachua County. That enables District 22 to have all of Levy and all of Gilchrest County and then get the remaining portion of its population needed to get close to the population deviation just within Alachua. In Option B, because District 22 has more of Alachua County, District 21 has a little less, and it's only able to include all of Gilchrest County.

The trade-offs here are that District 21 in Option B is a little bit more visually compact. It's more mathematically compact as well. However, the trade-off is that in Option B, Levy County has to get split a little bit by Congressional District 24. District 24 is also not wholly within Marion County, like it is in Option A. Also, Lake County, as you go further down to Districts 25 and 26, in Option A are both wholly within Lake County. Whereas on Option B, only District 25 is wholly within Lake County.

Another difference between the two options is that in Option A, there are five districts in Marion County. In Option B, there are only four, but there's no district wholly within the county. These are different Tier 2 trade-offs after drawing the Tier 1 protected district in between that you can make that will affect how an entire region can come together. I'll talk a little bit now about going south in the Sumter, Pasco, and Hernando counties. Those three counties kept together are approximately the right population for five house districts. We've kept three districts wholly in Pasco, one wholly in Hernando, and then added the rest to keep Sumter whole in both options that are the same in both options. Moving a little bit back to the east, kind of working underneath Districts 18, 19, and 20, which I discussed earlier, is in Volusia County.

You can see that because we keep Flagler County whole and Putnam County whole, we do some different stuff with Marion in two different options. However, as we get into Volusia County, the districts look similar, but there are some subtle differences with

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how the boundaries come together. However, because we keep Flagler County whole, District 28 is going to be very similar in both options, with some subtle differences and following different municipal lines. However, the overall shape of the district is more or less the same or very similar to each other. A lot of these municipal lines in western Volusia County, out toward Deltona and Deland, we keep as many of those cities whole as possible.

In Option A, we keep all of those cities whole, either in District 27 or 29. District 29 does split one of the cities over there in the west, but in either case, because of the overlapping municipal lines on the east coast, we do have to split, I believe, Port Orange in both options. However, we keep as many cities in Volusia County whole. Another portion of Volusia County is attached to District 27, which is either just in Lake in Option B or Lake and Marion in Option A. Then, the remaining portion of Volusia County will be connected down to the Space Coast, which I'll turn over to Kyle. Oh, I'm sorry, yeah, something else.

Leda Kelly:

Before I switch to the next slide, I'd like to draw everyone's attention to District 23, which is composed in part of Citrus County. You can see on the western coast, there's a little portion of it that kind of hangs out into the Gulf, and you may be wondering what that is. Earlier, we talked about the Everglades and the census blocks that comprise over the Everglades. The Census Bureau also identifies water blocks for us as well.

While there may be no population, on this, we do also still have to assign these water blocks to the respective districts that we're creating. That is what may create some of that unique geography, like what you're seeing in the Citrus County area. On the west coast of Florida, these water blocks go out nine miles. Then on the East Coast, they go out three miles offshore. Again, just drawing your attention to that. Thank you.

Kyle Langan:

Okay, moving over onto the east coast, we'll start with District 30, which takes the remaining portion of southern Volusia and combines it with the northern portion of Brevard County. It does split, as Jason said, Port Orange. This has a piece of Port Orange in the northern part and also splits Titusville and Brevard County. The next three districts are similar with varying boundary lines, Districts 31, 32, and 33. Some of those choices are whether or not

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you follow a primary roadway, a riverway, or use municipal lines, but they all form rather compact stack districts.

All three are kept wholly within Brevard County, leaving the remaining population of Brevard County to be paired with Indian River County, which is able to be kept whole in District 34. That kind of makes up our space coast. Moving into the Orange, Osceola, and Seminole areas, we'll start with Districts 40 and 41. Both are protected Tier 1 Black districts. HD 40 is a majority-minority protected Black district. Both are the same in both options, and our functional analysis ensures that the minority populations within both districts are protected in their ability to elect a candidate of their choice.

Districts 46 and 43 are majority minority protected Hispanic districts, that one is kept entirely within Orange County and 46 entirely within Osceola County. Our functional analysis ensures the minority community's ability to elect a candidate of their choice is not diminished. There are additional, because of the Hispanic growth and along this I-4 corridor, we've made some very Tier 2-compliant compact districts, both Districts 47 and 44. Following those major roadways, using the municipal lines of St. Cloud in District 47 and Belle Isle in District 44, we made some very compact districts that are also majority minority Hispanic districts.

District 35 takes the remaining portion of Osceola County and combines it with the western population of Orange County. Most of the other districts in Orange County are similar because they're shaped by the minority districts that are protected by Tier 1. The main differences in the Seminole County area are Districts 38 and 37. In Option A, 38 follows some of the Winter Springs boundary lines, which creates a split in some additional cities. When we use major roadways, we're able to keep some of those cities whole versus splitting them in Option B. It's kind of some Tier 2 trade-offs whether or not you use municipal lines to keep the cities whole or follow some good clean boundary lines along the primary roads, which results in splitting some of these cities.

Those are some of those options in this Central Florida region. Moving into Polk County, we have two very different configurations. Starting in Option A, the boundaries are a little more jagged in all of them. However, we are able to keep all

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municipalities whole within each district in Polk County. For example, District 51 in Workshop A keeps all of Lakeland whole within it. District 48 keeps the cities of Davenport and Haines City whole within it.

Likewise, in 50, Auburndale is kept whole, and 49, we have Lake Wales and some of the Southern Polk cities all kept whole within that. Now, in Option B, we chose to use more primary roadways. I believe we used the CSX Railway to divide 50 and 49, but these are all other Tier 2 co-equal boundaries to use. It results in more visually compact districts. However, we split more cities following these roadways.

Leda Kelly:

Just to extrapolate more on what Kyle was just saying, the slide that I've clicked over to is Option A. On the right, you can, I'm sorry, on the left, you can see the original image we were just looking at. On the right, the yellow illuminated areas are those incorporated municipalities throughout Polk County. As you can see, if you at least squint, all of the city boundaries are maintained when creating those individual districts. Similarly, moving on to this was Option B that was presented on the screen. Just highlighting how, by perhaps doing a more visually compact formulation of Polk County, following major railways, roadways, as Kyle mentioned, we do end up splitting many more cities.

This is the compactness results for Polk County as well. Again, Option A on the right, we'd work to keep cities whole, and Option B on the left was using more railways and roadways. You can see those additional coequal Tier 2 trade-offs. Option B has better mathematical compactness as well, but by choosing mathematical compactness, you'd also be choosing to split more cities. Again, they're not always mutually exclusive, and there are trade-offs you have to make within, especially Tier 2.

Kyle Langan:

Moving into the west coast, we have Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Manatee. In this three-county combination, we were able to figure out that we could fit 16 districts wholly within these three counties. Starting out with Districts 62 and 63, both of these are protected Tier 1 performing Black districts. A functional analysis ensures that the minority candidates in each district can elect the candidate of their choice. District 62 is the only district that crosses the Pinellas and Hillsborough County line. We were able to keep five additional districts wholly within Pinellas.

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In Workshop A, the Pinellas districts, we chose to stick more towards the roadway boundaries and the clean lines to create some smaller compact-shaped districts. Then, in Workshop B, we chose the option of keeping more cities whole, being able to keep Clearwater wholly within a district, Safety Harbor wholly within a district, Pinellas Park and Seminole in some different districts as well. In Hillsborough, some of the similar decision points were made and illustrated here between 67 and 68. In both iterations, follow primary roadways. However, in one orientation, we have Plant City that is split in Option A, whereas Plant City is kept whole in Option B. Another difference between the two is the interaction with Manatee County.

In Option A, we have two districts that cross the Manatee-Hillsborough line in 70 and 69. Whereas in Option B, we have only one district that crosses that line. We're able to fit both 71 and 72, both wholly within Manatee County. Moving a little further south, we'll start with Sarasota County. We have two different orientations, one's more horizontal, and the other's with two districts more vertical. Both are able to keep the city of Sarasota whole.

However, the compactness is affected in these two orientations, using, I believe, that's I-75 to divide the two in a more vertical nature. Those are kind of some of those policy decisions. However, using 75 in Option B splits the city of Venice. Moving into District 76, we have part of Charlotte County, part of Lee County, and all of DeSoto County, and that kind of makes a nice square district. We have some differences down in Lee County around the Cape Coral District, 79, and Fort Myers, and how those cities can be kept whole, but in kind of different orientations based on how District 77 is shaped around that area.

Districts 82 and 81 down in Collier, and 82 includes parts of Hendry, there's a different boundary line there. One is Alligator Alley, which divides it more in a horizontal nature in Workshop B. Workshop A, it follows 75 South, and then it kind of keeps that more of a coastal district. Those kinds of illustrate some decisions that affect the compactness score of both districts, and how they interact with each other. Then, District 83 is a four-county combination of just whole counties that makes a district in the central part of the state.

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Leda Kelly: As we segue over to the east coast of Florida, I wanna take a second to talk about Lake Okeechobee. I know members may have questions about how that is divided, and can be attributed to the surrounding districts, whatever those may look like. Within Lake Okeechobee, the Census Bureau has divided it into five regions. Whenever we go to assign our neighboring districts and create those neighboring districts, those districts will reach out to their respective point within Lake Okeechobee. Again, unfortunately, negatively impacts our compactness score just a little bit, with that point being created. However, we obviously have to account for those blocks that are included throughout Lake Okeechobee.

Jason Poreda: Thank you, and now we'll move back over to the east coast of Florida, starting with St. Lucie and Martin County, with Districts 84, 85, and 86. You can see, actually, the city of Port St. Lucie is one of the cities that's actually too big for a House district. These are two different options for keeping a district wholly within St. Lucie County, and then how we bridge that and get the remaining population that we need for the other districts into Martin County. District 85, in both options, is primarily within the city of Port St. Lucie, but in one option, in Option A, 85 is the district that crosses that county line.

Whereas in Option B, it's 84 that kind of goes around the other side of it and wraps down into Martin. The majority of the rest of Martin County is in District 86. However, in order for population purposes, in order to get within the appropriate deviation that we need for a house district, so a little bit of that district has to go down into Palm Beach County to get the remaining portion of its population. You can see that the remaining districts are all entirely within Palm Beach County. In fact, these three counties together, the outside county line of all these county combinations are kept together. We actually don't even cross the Palm Beach-Broward County line, similar to how the current map does.

We're able to duplicate that concept here with all of these districts. Looking at Palm Beach County a little bit closer, you can see that a lot of the district's orientations are actually governed a lot by how District 88 is drawn in kind of the northeast side of Palm Beach County. Now, District 88 is a majority minority, protected Tier 1 Black district that we have there in that area of the county. In Option B, the district follows a more similar orientation to the current benchmark district. In Option A, we were able to take that

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district and not have the extension that goes so far south, breaking a lot of city lines as we go south. As a result, Districts 93, 89, 92, 90, and 91, further south of that, we're able to keep all the cities in Palm Beach County from District 88 down to the Broward County line whole in their respective districts. We're also able to create slightly more compact shapes because we don't have District 88 kind of extending further south, creating a long district along the coast, like in District 90.

However, these are two different options. In both District 88, we performed a functional analysis to ensure the minority group's ability to elect a candidate of their choice in both options. This is a way of presenting two different versions of a Tier 1 protected district and how that may impact all of the other districts around it within Palm Beach County, but both are valid choices. Moving into Broward County, you can see two slightly different orientations trying to give the committee two different options for how we're orienting these districts. I'll first draw your attention to Districts 97, 98, and 99. Those are three Black performing protected districts in North Broward County. Districts 97 and 99 are majority-minority Black.

All three of these districts had a functional analysis performed on them to ensure the minority group's ability to elect candidates of their choice, similar to the benchmark districts that exist there in that region. In South Broward, Districts 104 and 105 are similarly protected Black districts. These two districts are in Broward and cross the Miami-Dade County line. These are the only two districts that cross the Broward-Miami-Dade County line. We performed a functional analysis on both Districts 104 and 105 to ensure the minority group's ability to elect candidates of their choice in each district.

This is all similar to the benchmark districts that are in this region. Districts 95, 96, and 103 are the kind of western side of Broward. I'll draw your attention specifically to 96 and 103. A lot of those more or less populated blocks in the Florida Everglades that Leda talked about earlier. We have to account for them all, and there's different ways of doing that. Here, we showed you two different ways in which you could include all of those types of blocks in one district.

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Or you can break them up into two different districts, creating longer rectangular districts. However, either option is the same. Otherwise, those districts are the same, and all of those extra blocks that were added have no population in them. It is truly just a choice, perhaps a good opportunity to look at compactness scores and pick which option is better, or whatever is visually better. However, that is a policy choice that the committee can make.

Leda Kelly:

Sticking in the Broward County area, I know we've mentioned this several times. However, South Florida especially gives us a really good way to illustrate how some of our municipal lines, not only sometimes have very unique geography, but also sometimes interlock with one another. It is also a factor whenever we talk about keeping cities whole or keeping counties whole, and how we can look at that. This is the Broward County area. This is Davie, Cooper City, Pembroke Pines, and Southwest Ranches. Each city has a different color that's been used to illustrate its city boundaries.

You can see with Davie and Southwest Ranches, there's a section of the blue municipal lines that drops in between two discontinuous pieces of the red boundary lines. There's an area between the red and the green that is unincorporated altogether. That is not a formal city line. We use this just to illustrate that Florida's 412 incorporated municipalities all have very unique lines, and we'll work to preserve them when possible.

However, this is just a good illustration of how that may not always be possible given their actual makeup. This next slide is also just a, I'll call this a fun Florida fact as well. There's actually four cities in the state of Florida that cross county lines. If it comes to pass that this is a decision of keeping a city whole versus keeping a county whole, these would be four unique situations where those may not be able to be done in tandem. We have Longboat Key, Marineland, Flagler Beach, and Fanning Springs.

Jason Poreda:

Thanks, Leda. Now, we will move down into Dade County. As I said before, Districts 104 and 105 cross the Miami-Dade County line, the Miami-Dade-Broward County line. Those are the only two districts that do that. Here you can see the remaining districts other than District 120, which we'll get to at the end. All of the remaining districts are entirely within Miami-Dade County. I'll

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start with Districts 107, 108, and 112 here in our options. Those are all Tier 1 protected Black districts that are performing.

Districts 107 and 108 are majority minority Black districts. All three of those districts had functional analysis performed on them to ensure those minority groups in all three of those districts have the ability to elect candidates of their choice. Districts 107, 108, and 112 are all entirely within Miami-Dade. They also follow a lot of municipal lines in that area. For example, the western boundary of 108 and 112 in this iteration is actually the Hialeah City line. We don't cross the Hialeah City line there. In this area of the state, there's a lot of very vertical roadway, major roadways, but also a lot of city lines that are right up against each other.

Even opportunities where we might not be able to keep a city whole, because it either has too much population or because of where it's geographically located compared to other districts, we do try to use those municipal lines where we can to ensure that perhaps the city is split fewer times than it would be otherwise. Also, those municipal lines are more well-recognized than some of the other possible boundary lines in the area. We also, in Miami-Dade County, use, in addition to a lot of the major roadways that people are familiar with, there's also a great deal of canals and man-made waterways in Miami-Dade County. Similar to what you can see in different communities throughout our state, but there are a lot of them here in Miami-Dade County.

Where possible, we try to use some of those more recognizable ones to try to divide the districts. District 106 on the west coast, after you get past 107, 108, and 112. That is a district along the coast that contains, I believe, seven entire cities there in the beach communities, including the bottom. You see a little bump on the bottom of 106, that's actually the city of Miami Beach. We're using a lot of the municipal lines to create the district lines there in District 106. The next group of Districts, which include 109, 110, 111, 113, 114, 115, 116, and 119, are all protected Tier 1 majority-minority Hispanic districts.

Each one of them has had functional analysis performed on them to ensure that the minority group's ability to elect a candidate of their choice is maintained as is in the benchmark. All of those districts fall into that category. District 117 is actually a performing Black district where the functional analysis was

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performed to ensure the minority community's ability to elect a candidate of their choice. You can see here, there's two different versions of that. One, in Option A, looks a little bit more similar to the current benchmark district. The little hook on the bottom of that district is actually the entirety of Florida City, and we use the municipal lines of that city to, and include it within the district.

District 117 in Option B does not go into either Homestead or Florida City. It is a slightly more visually compact-looking district that is just a slightly different orientation, just to show that the committee, there's different options and the ability to do that. You can actually see the Homestead municipal line in the [inaudible] [01:31:56] district, which I'll get to later, that's district 120. By not splitting the city of Homestead with district 117, we're able to keep that district, that city whole within the [inaudible] district down below. You can see District 119 is a lot bigger in Option B than it is in one, in Option A.

That's another example of trying to use those less populated or unpopulated blocks in western Dade County as a way of showing how you can change compactness scores on the district simply by which district you include a lot of those non-populated blocks in. The next slide is District 120, which you can see our [inaudible] is that we've attached, which is considered part of Monroe County. In order to keep Monroe County whole, you have to include that with whatever district includes all of Monroe County and goes up into Miami-Dade County. As I said, in Option B, that actually has all of the city of Florida City and Homestead within it. That is both options. Chairman.

Chair Leek:

Thank you. We're going to turn to member questions now. I want to thank those of you who are still awake in the audience and those of you who are still awake up here. Believe it or not, members, that is the abbreviated version of the presentation because these are workshop maps. Yeah, we couldn't do the whole version.

As these are workshop maps, we try to keep it high level, stick to those things within the law that were being considered, and provide you with different options of how things can be considered. We've done that with the state maps. I'm going to remind everyone that while you may have a question that's specific to a district, we are not going to consider your incumbency or political makeup of any particular district. I don't care to know where you live. I don't know where you live. I don't care to know

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where you live, so keep your comments within the law, if you would, please. Up first, Representative Thompson.

Rep. Thompson: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to be sure that I understand the percentage of minorities that must be present in a district for it to be protected. I think I heard 52. Is that accurate?

Chair Leek: Actually, I think you're mixing things within the law. It's not the percentage of minorities who live within a district. It's whether the district performs. I'll turn it over to Ms. Kelly.

Leda Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Representative. That's actually a very good question. Whenever we perform our functional analysis and whenever we're addressing the question that you've posed, it is truly district by district.

Every district has different voting patterns, voting strengths, and a different amount of voting-age population that resides within that district. The courts have actually been very clear that there's no bright line test for if you're over 50%, you're in a performing district. They actually have struck down maps that try to apply those arbitrary thresholds. Unfortunately, it's not quite as cut and dry as that. It is truly a district-by-district analysis.

Chair Leek: Representative Thompson, you're recognized.

Rep. Thompson: Thank you. This is a follow-up. What are the actual performances in the districts that you have identified as protected minority or Black districts?

Chair Leek: Let me try to address it up front here. These are workshop maps. The maps, I think it's a great question, but probably for a different day when you actually get maps to vote on, right? When you see the districts that are going to come before you to vote on. With that said, Ms. Kelly, you want to chime in there?

Leda Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Representative, do you mind asking your question again? I don't quite understand what you're asking.

Rep. Thompson: Thank you very much. What I'm concerned about is if a district can perform as a minority district and therefore is protected. If the actual percentages are above whatever that performance threshold is, and you could shift some of those individuals into a different

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district, you would have more minority districts. That's my question.

Chair Leek: Yeah, let me take a stab at that because I think the premise is not quite on par with what we're talking about. The number of citizens within a district who are minorities does not determine whether it's performing. You can have a district that is not a majority-minority that performs and could be protected. We're kind of mixing apples and oranges there a little bit. Does that help? No, I can see that it doesn't. I'm trying, though. I don't think we can answer your question as it's posed. That's kind of my point.

Rep. Thompson: All right, thank you.

Chair Leek: Ranking Member Geller? That's good. All right, let me, Representative Skidmore is a guest with us today. Per our rules, we're gonna allow members of the committee to ask questions first. If there are no members with questions, then Representative Skidmore will recognize you. Any members with questions? Seeing none, Representative Skidmore.

Rep. Skidmore: Thank you so much, Mr. Chair. It's actually more of a technical question. Could you remind us of what the ideal population is for each House district and what the highest and lowest deviation you were able to create in either Workshop A or Workshop B?

Chair Leek: I think it's roughly 179,000 in each district, and the law precedent would say you could go plus or minus 10%. In Florida, typically, plus or minus 5% in the state of Florida, we have historically stayed under that. Any other questions? Representative Koff-Marcill?

Rep. Koff-Marcille: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think I understood what you were saying before about performing as opposed to, oh, it's not, performing as opposed to the actual people that are in the district. However, could you help me understand what you mean when you say majority-minority, but then you also say protected Black, protected Hispanic, and then you say minority-majority. You kind of interchanged with those. Can you just –

Chair Leek: I am going to kick this one to our legal experts over here. However, roughly the difference is one of residency versus how the district performs voting. However, Ms. Kelly?

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Leda Kelly: Perfect. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Representative. Majority-minority just signifies that it's over 50%. That's all.

Chair Leek: Recognized.

Rep. Skidmore: When you're using those terms, it can be a protected majority-minority, or it could be majority-minority, but not protected? Okay.

Chair Leek: Yeah, that's right. Majority-minority is not the determining factor of whether it's protected. It's performance. Any other questions? Representative, what do I call you now? Representative Schlossberg still?

Rep. Slossberg-King: Schlossberg-King.

Chair Leek: Okay, gotcha. Congratulations.

Rep. Slossberg-King: How many protected districts do we have in the state under these maps?

Chair Leek: The benchmark districts, you mean the ones that were protected last time, because we don't have maps yet, so.

Rep. Slossberg-King: Or under these workshop proposals.

Chair Leek: Ms. Kelly?

Leda Kelly: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm embarrassed to say, I actually don't know that number off the top of my head. May I follow up with you afterwards? Thank you so much.

Chair Leek: Representative Driskell?

Rep. Driskell: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could I get that information as well? Thank you.

Chair Leek: You may. Ranking Member Geller.

Rep. Geller: No, no, I want the same information.

Chair Leek: Oh, sorry, same information. Wants the same information.

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Rep. Geller: Thank you.

Chair Leek: You're welcome. Representative Omphroy, you're recognized. Same here. All right, just to hand out that information. Anybody else? Do any members have questions before we move into public comment? Thank you. Thank you, members, for those questions.

Now we'll hear from the public. I would remind you to keep your comments on topic and to the extent that your comments align with our constitutional standards. To be beneficial, the maps we must ultimately vote on have to be in alignment with these standards. As always, please address your questions through the Chair. We have one member comment today, Ms. Cecile Schoon, League of Women Voters. Ms. Schoon, you're recognized.

Ms. Schoon: Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Cecile Schoon. I'm president of the League of Women Voters of Florida. I have been taking notes and very much appreciate the staff's explanations which have helped me to understand what's going on every time a little bit more. Also, the questions back and forth. I do have some concerns and observations. It's my understanding that our Tier 1 requirements in our fair districts and the Voting Rights Act, which Tier 1 basically picks up the Voting Rights Act standards.

There's two ways that you look at minorities, and one is non-diminishment or non-retrogression. I think your staff has spoken to extensively. When I've heard them talk about functional analysis, it's with that first part of Tier 1 and the Voting Rights Act. What's missing is the responsibility and obligation to maximize the opportunities for language minorities and racial minorities to have an opportunity to select a representative of their choosing. In order to do that, you need to do the functional analysis not only on the benchmark districts, which have been determined by litigation in 2015, which you guys are doing with regard to non-retrogression.

You also need to look around the state at all the different places of population change and things that we know, because we got a new congressional seat. We know there's been movement. We know there's been change. However, since you're only using the functional analysis data and research for the non-retrogression, and you're not looking for opportunities where there could be more opportunities for racial and language minorities. You're not meeting the standards of fair districts or the Voting Rights Act.

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You're only doing one half of it. I think many of the questions that the representatives have raised are getting at that issue. How do people make sure that these opportunities are maximized, which is required by our Constitution and by the Voting Rights Act? I would ask you all to ask your staff, I know that's how it works, to do that additional analysis using data that they're able to use. I heard, I think it was correctly stated, that this committee and the legislators must use the census data. That's required.

However, as I also heard, there are times when additional data is used. It was stated that the voting patterns and history of different areas to make sure that adding into the functional analysis. There are opportunities for you to use buried data to add in. There would be opportunities for you to look at the information, however it was gleaned through the survey for Haitians or any other group. Other tools could be used to make sure that the other half of Tier 1 and the other half of the Voting Rights Act, which requires maximization of these opportunities, are done properly.

Every single time, and I was taking notes, every single time the comment about functional analysis and data usage was used, it was used only with regard to non-retrogression, which is the first step. However, there's the other step of maximizing opportunities, and it was never mentioned. It's clear that that has not been done. We would ask you to ask your staff to go through the maps with that eye and follow the full guidelines of the law, state, and federal. Thank you.

Chair Leek: Thank you very much for your comments. Members, that concludes our meeting for today. I appreciate it. I know that we have gone into some very technical things. I can tell you that the questions have gotten better and evolved over time. You can tell that now we're starting to get the material. We understand what those things are that we have to consider. With that, Representative Rommel moves that we adjourn. Thank you very much.

[End of Audio]

Duration: 78 minutes