

EXHIBIT F

GEORGIA SENATE
Reapportionment and Redistricting, Pt.2 on 12/04/2023

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10 REAPPORTIONMENT AND REDISTRICTING

11 GEORGIA SENATE

12 December 4, 2023 Part 2

13 Video Runtime: 1:04:43

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1 (Beginning of Video Recording.)
2 SENATOR ECHOLS: Thank you all for
3 being patient with us. I was trying to wait
4 on Leverett, to come be available, but he is
5 tied up with his committee hearing right now.
6 So right now, we're going to have public
7 comment on the House map. And so I had one
8 person, Susan Clymer (phonetic). And you can
9 come right up here to this podium right beside
10 you, and you can make your comments to the
11 committee. And just tilt the mic -- yeah,
12 perfect. Thank you.

13 MS. CLYMER: Can you hear me?

14 SENATOR ECHOLS: Yes, ma'am.

15 MS. CLYMER: Okay.

16 SENATOR ECHOLS: You're ready.

17 MS. CLYMER: All right. Thank you very
18 much. My name is Susan Dix Clymer, and I am a
19 resident of Gwinnett County. And I'm speaking
20 in opposition to the proposed Republican map,
21 which still violates the Federal Voting Rights
22 Act. It does not comply with Judge Jones's
23 order. That was to increase majority minority
24 district. It merely shuffles them like a
25 well-worn deck of cards.

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1 The proposed map also creates
2 unnecessary chaos and changes in areas well
3 outside of the judge's order, particularly in
4 Gwinnett County -- my Gwinnett County. For
5 example, House District 101 would move from
6 Gwinnett to DeKalb County and sets up a
7 disruptive race, one in which an incumbent
8 versus incumbent would be in House District
9 107. I deserve better. We all deserve
10 better. Thank you.

11 SENATOR ECHOLS: Thank you.

12 All right. Since no one else has
13 signed up to comment on the house map, I
14 believe it is -- it is the appropriate time to
15 entertain emotion. So what number --

16 (Inaudible conversation)

17 MALE VOICE: I'll make that motion,
18 ma'am. Motion do pass.

19 SENATOR ECHOLS: Okay. So we've got a
20 motion due pass on LC472575. That's --

21 MALE VOICE: No -- yes.

22 SENATOR ECHOLS: Yes. House Bill 1 EX.
23 That's correct, right? That is correct.

24 MALE VOICE: That's what's in -- that's
25 what's in the (inaudible).

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1 SENATOR ECHOLS: So that is the motion.

2 Do I have a second?

3 MALE VOICE: Second.

4 SENATOR ECHOLS: All right. Any
5 discussion?

6 MS. ANDERSON: You said you were
7 waiting on the chairman to Come and present
8 the map?

9 SENATOR ECHOLS: To come and be
10 available.

11 MS. ANDERSON: To present.

12 SENATOR ECHOLS: He presented it last
13 week.

14 MS. ANDERSON: Friday. Okay.

15 SENATOR ECHOLS: Yes. Yes.

16 MS. ANDERSON: So he's available for
17 questions. Do you want (inaudible) questions
18 or --

19 SENATOR ECHOLS: Do you have questions?

20 MS. ANDERSON: No. I'm asking why
21 we're waiting on him.

22 SENATOR ECHOLS: Well, if anyone had
23 questions, I was -- I was just giving him the
24 opportunity -- giving anyone the opportunity
25 to have him answer questions. But if no one

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1 has any questions --

2 MS. ANDERSON: No, I don't.

3 SENATOR ECHOLS: So we have a motion,

4 and we have it a second, and we're open for

5 discussion. Any more discussion? Okay. At

6 this time, I think it's appropriate to go

7 ahead and vote on that map.

8 All of those in favor of the motion do

9 pass on the House map, raise your hand.

10 You got it all?

11 Okay. All those opposed to the motion.

12 We have -- okay. So the motion passes.

13 Now I'm going to present the

14 congressional maps. I think that's what a lot

15 of folks are interested in today. I'll walk

16 through a presentation, district by district,

17 just as I did last week, and then we'll have

18 some discussion after -- well, actually, we'll

19 have public comment after I do the

20 presentation. We'll open up for public

21 comment. Then after public comment closes,

22 then we'll get down to the committee's work.

23 So the congressional plan -- you have a

24 copy of it in your in your folder. You've got

25 a map packet, and then I believe you also have

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1 the legislation. We began by carefully
2 reviewing Judge Jones's order, just as we have
3 before. The order was very specific about
4 what needs to be done for Congress, and I'll
5 quote, "The remedy involves an additional
6 majority black congressional district in West
7 Metro Atlanta." And that is found on Page 509
8 of his order.

9 We consulted with legal counsel and
10 then began drawing districts with Gina Wright
11 in her office. We relied on Ms. Wright's
12 extensive knowledge of Georgia as we put these
13 districts together. We first drew the new
14 majority black district required by the court
15 order. That is District 6 on your map. This
16 district is very similar to the proposed
17 District 6 in the Pendergrass case, which is
18 the congressional district litigation.

19 The plaintiff's expert in that case
20 included portions of Fayette, Fulton, Douglas,
21 and Cobb Counties in the district, and we have
22 covered basically the same area. We've also
23 moved the portion of Southwest Cobb County
24 that was in District 14 into the new District
25 6. To be very clear, we did not eliminate any

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1 existing majority black seats in drawing this
2 district. So District 6 is, in fact, a new
3 majority black congressional district.

4 We then had to begin making changes
5 around that district. Our proposed
6 congressional plan involves changes to nine
7 districts, all in north Georgia. Districts 1,
8 2, 3, 8, and 12 were not changed. All changes
9 happened within that north Georgia area.

10 After drawing the new majority black
11 district required by the court order, we then
12 followed our existing traditional
13 redistricting principles to work on the
14 remaining districts. Those principles
15 include: maintaining district populations so
16 they are exactly the same, plus or minus one
17 person, which is higher than what is allowed
18 on legislative plans, so we comply with the
19 U.S. Constitution requirements of one person,
20 one vote; limiting additional split counties
21 as much as possible; drawing the new districts
22 utilizing the most recent precincts from
23 county governments; ensuring all districts are
24 contiguous; ensuring all districts are
25 reasonably compact in shape; ensuring

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1 communities of interest are protected as far
2 as possible.

3 Another goal was to ensure that
4 existing partisan balance of the congressional
5 plan remain the same so we maintain continuity
6 of representation as much as possible. To do
7 that, we utilize election return data from
8 2018, 2020, and 2022 that had been allocated
9 on the plan to understand the partisan impact
10 of this plan, which remains the same political
11 balance as it was in 2021.

12 So now I'll go through and talk about
13 each individual district that was changed.
14 Congressional District 6 -- as I've all
15 already referenced, Congressional District 6
16 is the new majority black district and has in
17 any part black voting age population
18 percentage of 51.75 percent. It's located in
19 the same location as the plaintiff's expert
20 district in the congressional case. It
21 includes the same highways and health care
22 systems Judge Jones relied on at Pages 325 and
23 326 of his order.

24 The district includes part of the city
25 of South Fulton and moves north into Austell,

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1 areas that Judge Jones found to share strong
2 connections at Pages 190 and 191. The
3 district connects a number of suburbs around
4 Metro Atlanta that are all experiencing growth
5 and are diverse communities.

6 Next, we'll discuss Congressional
7 District 5. Moving to the east, Congressional
8 District 5 shifted east to accommodate the new
9 majority black district. This district
10 remains centered in the City of Atlanta and
11 includes the airport as it has historically
12 been for a number of decades now. It has a
13 strong it has strong connections between
14 Atlanta and its suburbs and is a relatively
15 compact shape as it was in the 2021 plan. In
16 the process of drawing this district, it's
17 black VAP increased to 51.06 percent, and VAP
18 is voting age population.

19 Next is Congressional District 4.
20 Congressional District 4 also shifted east to
21 accommodate the new majority black district.
22 It retains a strong connection with I285 and
23 I85 along the eastern side of Atlanta and has
24 moved out of the farther eastern suburbs it
25 previously had to track up I85 and take in the

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1 Buford Highway Corridor.
2 It includes Dunwoody, Stonecrest,
3 Norcross, Duluth, Chamblee, and Doraville, all
4 suburban Atlanta communities that are growing
5 and share a number of similar interest and
6 issues. In the process of drawing this
7 district, its Black VAP decreased from just
8 over 52 percent to 50.59 percent, but we do
9 not believe that decrease will affect its
10 political performance.

11 Congressional District 13. Because
12 District 6 had to take so much of existing
13 Congressional District 13's territory to
14 accommodate the required new majority black
15 district, this district shifted significantly
16 to the east. Notably, the plaintiff's expert
17 had also shifted District 13 to the east but
18 had included a number of additional rural
19 counties that did not fit as well with the
20 metro Atlanta suburban character of District
21 13.

22 We have drawn a better District 13 that
23 begins with the portions of Clayton and Henry
24 that had previously been in 13 and stays in
25 the Atlanta suburbs by taking all of Rockdale

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1 and part of Newton Counties along with a
2 significant portion of Gwinnett County. This
3 configuration enables us to keep the district
4 anchored in Metro Atlanta instead of sending
5 it sending it far to the east in rural areas.
6 This configuration also keeps Conyers,
7 Snellville, and Lilburn whole, all of which
8 are suburban cities with some significant
9 shared interests, given their to Atlanta. In
10 draw drawing District 13, its black VAP
11 decreased significantly, but it remains a
12 majority black district at 51.45 percent.

13 Let me pause there for a minute and
14 just be clear. This plan increases the number
15 of majority black districts from the prior
16 plan based on the numbers, and it adds the
17 required majority black district in Metro
18 Atlanta as required by Judge Jones. This plan
19 includes four majority black districts, which
20 is about 29 percent of the districts in the
21 state. Moving to the other districts that
22 were affected, you can see the ripple effects
23 of these changes.

24 Next is Congressional District 14.
25 District 14 shifts north in Cobb County after

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1 removing the territory that was added to the
2 to the new majority black district. It
3 maintains its general shape, not crossing the
4 mountains at the north part of the district as
5 the plaintiff's expert had done, but instead
6 maintaining the western character of the
7 district.

8 Congressional District 11. District 11
9 also changes its split of Cobb to accommodate
10 the new district and takes in Gordon County
11 from District 14. In order to ease the burden
12 on election officials, the split of Cherokee
13 County that was previously in place remains
14 the same.

15 Congressional District 7. With all the
16 shifting in Metro Atlanta and the wrapping of
17 District 13 into Gwinnett County to maintain
18 it as a Metro Atlanta focused district,
19 District 7 shifts significantly north to
20 encompass much of the territory previously in
21 District 6. It includes North Fulton and
22 moves up to Lumpkin County.

23 As I indicated, the split of Cherokee
24 County is the same as the previous map, and
25 the split of Hall County recognizes an

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1 important community of interest around Lake
2 Lanier. The Forsyth Hall border is the lake,
3 and the people of both sides often share
4 similar interest. Hall County is my home
5 county. And so under this plan, the speaker's
6 home county and my home county are both now
7 split.

8 Congressional District 9. District 9
9 retains much of its prior character as a
10 mountain-focused district and puts Jackson
11 County back in the district, which is
12 Congressman Clyde's home county. Because of
13 the need for population after adjusting for
14 the new district seven boundaries, it includes
15 portions of Northern Gwinnett County, like it
16 did previously, but on a slightly different
17 boundary. Gwinnett County was split three
18 ways previously, but it's now split four ways
19 because it has a -- because it is a large
20 county, and a lot of the population changes
21 ended up landing in that area.

22 Congressional District 10. This
23 district shifts to accommodate the changes
24 around as around it, as well. Its boundaries
25 in Henry and Newton do not change, but it adds

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1 a portion of Gwinnett and takes in Franklin
2 and Hart to account for Jackson going into
3 9th. This district retains its eastern
4 Georgia character, and elections officials
5 will not need to worry about changes on
6 southern or western sides because those
7 boundaries have not changed.

8 As with the legislative plans, we took
9 Ms. Wright's expertise into account in
10 creating this plan. We also took into account
11 the work on county election officials who have
12 to update the voter registration database. By
13 drawing them out this way, we are working to
14 minimize the amount of work required before
15 the 2024 elections where we can.

16 This plan does -- also does not
17 eliminate any existing minority opportunity
18 districts. Judge Jones was clear on Page 510
19 in the order that we cannot eliminate any
20 existing majority opportunity districts in
21 drawing the new majority black districts.
22 While he doesn't define that term, it's clear
23 he's referencing two existing majority black
24 districts. On Page 511, he refers to whether
25 plan provides black voters with additional

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1 opportunity districts. There are also
2 references to opportunity districts that
3 clearly refer to black voters on Page 106, 145
4 and 146, 211, 268, 417 through 20, and 427.

5 Further, in the context of Section 2, a
6 minority opportunity district must be a
7 district where a single racial group is a
8 majority. This congressional plan does not
9 eliminate any existing majority black
10 districts. Instead, it takes a district that
11 is not a majority black district and shifts it
12 north where it remains nonmajority black. To
13 be clear, the Voting Rights Act protects
14 distinct racial groups, not coalitions of
15 voters. District 7 was not a majority black
16 district on the 2021 plan, and it is not a
17 majority black district on this plan, so
18 there's no concern about eliminating a
19 minority opportunity district.

20 Finally, like the legislative plan,
21 it's important to remember that we believe our
22 2021 congressional plan complies with the
23 Voting Rights Act and are pursuing an appeal
24 of the judge -- judge's order. That's why you
25 will see language in this bill that reverts to

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1 the 2021 plan, if the appeal is successful.
2 This mirrors language used by the Democrat
3 majority in 2002 when the state senate plan
4 was not precleared in time for use in that
5 election.

6 But if anyone is upset with how a
7 district is configured, remember, we did not
8 draw these districts this way in '21
9 originally, and we did not want to withdraw
10 these districts. We're doing this because we
11 were sued by democratically-affiliated groups.
12 That concludes my presentation, so now we'll
13 move to the public comment portion of the
14 agenda.

15 I'll list who's up, who's on deck, and
16 we'll move forward that way. I have first,
17 Ken Lawler (phonetic), and then Ana Dennis is
18 after Ken.

19 FEMALE VOICE: Do you want (inaudible)?

20 SENATOR ECHOLS: Yeah. We don't have
21 to.

22 So, yeah, thank you for making your way
23 to the podium. And if you're on deck, Ana and
24 Dennis, if you'll just stand against the wall,
25 that way we can move through quickly. Thank

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1 you. All right. The floor is yours.

2 MR. LAWLER: Thank you, Chair Echols,
3 members of the committee. Glad to be back to
4 discuss our nonpartisan analysis on the
5 congressional map. Again, our principles in
6 looking at these maps are two things. Number
7 one is, did does the map implement the remedy?
8 And number two, does it contain changes for
9 political gain?

10 We have disagreements about some of
11 those principles, which we'll talk about. So,
12 again, we have it -- you have in front of us
13 our scorecard --everybody should have that --
14 with our two-part pass/fail test. On the
15 racial demographic test, we believe this map
16 fails the test, and I'll explain why.

17 First of all, we agree that the map
18 does implement new Congressional District 6 as
19 a black majority district. On a technical
20 matter, as the Chair mentioned in the
21 presentation, District 5 also has now gone
22 from below 50 percent to just above 50
23 percent, so it actually counts as a new black
24 majority district, but -- from where it was,
25 but it was already a very strongly performing

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1 black opportunity district, so it really
2 doesn't add in terms of participation for
3 black voters. So really, what you got here,
4 the map does add the one, as requested by the
5 court.

6 Our issue with the map and the reason
7 we say it fails the test is because of the way
8 District 7 has been treated. District 7 was a
9 minority opportunity district in our view.
10 Yes, it was a coalition, but it was very
11 strongly minority coalition at around 67
12 percent minority voters. The new map has it
13 at 33 percent. So we clearly believe that
14 this is in violation of the spirit of the
15 court's order, notwithstanding, Chair Echols,
16 your -- the interpretation, our view -- and I
17 admit I'm not a lawyer, not a Voting Rights
18 Act expert, but I -- my interpretation would
19 be that the purpose of the judge stating
20 the -- or -- the writing the order the way he
21 did was that he wanted the Voting Rights Act
22 Protections, which protect all voters of color
23 and language minorities, that -- that -- that
24 those -- those other minority groups should
25 retain their protections under the map.

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1 Our view is that District 7 does not
2 retain those protections as it was a strong
3 minority district -- well, with the coalition,
4 but it's no longer a strong minority district
5 at all. So by losing District 7 as a minority
6 district, we believe that this is -- this
7 is -- our view is that it does not pass
8 muster. It does not meet the requirements of
9 the court order. That's our interpretation.

10 The -- okay. On the political side,
11 again, we disagree with the objective, the
12 political design of the map. We've been
13 saying at the -- since the beginning of the
14 session that our belief is that this exercise
15 should be about implementing the remedy and
16 all political considerations should be off the
17 table. We know that -- we know that this is a
18 disagreement from the way the committee treats
19 this process, that you're trying to maintain
20 the political balance of the state. Our view
21 is that that consideration should not be in
22 employed here.

23 And as a result, we give the map a fail
24 because of repurposing District 7 as a --
25 (inaudible) Democratic district, not a

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1 Republican. So we just disagree with the
2 principle here, and our analysis would show
3 that that's why we would fail the map.

4 Now let me explain one of the reasons
5 why we disagree with this principle. This is
6 something that we call mid-cycle
7 redistricting. Mid-cycle redistricting is
8 when a map is changed without waiting for a
9 census and without in direct response to a
10 requirement in a court order. Unfortunately,
11 Georgia has a very long and sordid history of
12 mid-cycle redistricting.

13 Just so you know, since 2006, there
14 have been 64 different districts altered in
15 mid-cycle redistricting without waiting for --
16 again, without waiting for a census and
17 without waiting for a court order. These
18 changes have always been done for political
19 purposes. And by the way, both parties have
20 been involved. This is not a one-sided
21 problem.

22 Our view is that mid-cycle
23 redistricting, frankly, is a practice that
24 should be banned. We should -- we should --
25 we would love to see that practice just taken

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1 off the table completely. The time to deal
2 with the partisan matters is when you redraw
3 the map for the census, not at any other time
4 and not -- certainly not in response to a
5 court order, which is focused on implementing
6 a remedy for, in this case, a violation of the
7 Voting Rights Act.

8 So our problem with this issue -- our
9 issue -- the reason we're objecting and with
10 the reason we are not raising the issue that
11 we raised two years ago about the partisan
12 balance of these maps at this time is because
13 we think that partisan considerations,
14 political considerations should be off the
15 table in this procedure. We simply disagree
16 with the principle. We understand your
17 principle is to do it that way. We believe
18 it's not.

19 Now, lest you think that we are doing
20 this -- we are making this statement sort of
21 as a protection to -- for Democrats, let me
22 explain a couple things. First of all, this
23 committee is probably not aware that last
24 week, we gave a failing grade to the
25 Democratic caucus proposal on the House map.

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1 That map failed, and we said that it failed.

2 We are equal opportunity critics. We have
3 criticized both parties when necessary.

4 Secondly, I'll remind that the
5 member -- many of the members of the committee
6 were here in 2021. When the congressional map
7 was debated in 2021, there were two proposals
8 on the table, the one that the committee --
9 the map that was enacted and a Democratic
10 proposal. At that time, I was the one who
11 testified for our group, and I said, I don't
12 like either one of those maps. Both of those
13 maps go too far in their respective partisan
14 directions. We said that the first map was
15 between the two.

16 Again, we did not reraise that point
17 here because we're not trying to relitigate
18 2021. We'll wait till 2030 to have that
19 conversation. We just think it should be off
20 the table here. So, again, we are doing our
21 best to be nonpartisan here. We're explaining
22 what we said our principles are for how we
23 evaluate the maps, and I would welcome any
24 questions you have about the scorecard, the
25 information in front of you.

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1 SENATOR ECHOLS: We've got one question
2 for Number 7.

3 MR. LAWLER: Okay.

4 MALE VOICE: So the -- and thanks for
5 being here and providing this for us. Could
6 you explain why this changed from last week to
7 today? The language on the flyers? The one
8 we got last week was worded differently than
9 this.

10 MR. LAWLER: We added to the court
11 mandate language and clarity around -- without
12 eliminating any minority opportunity
13 districts. We, quite frankly, missed that on
14 last week's flyers. We've actually updated
15 those on our website so they're all
16 consistent. You've -- you're correct that we
17 changed the language because we felt like we
18 did not pay enough attention to that last
19 week. We have updated the flyers on our
20 website so that they all now have consistent
21 language.

22 MALE VOICE: Thank you.

23 MR. LAWLER: You're welcome.

24 SENATOR ECHOLS: Any more questions?

25 Okay. Thank you. Next step is Anna Dennis

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1 (phonetic). And After Anna is or maybe Ana

2 (phonetic) -- I apologize -- Cindy Battles

3 (phonetic).

4 MS. DENNIS: Thank you. Good day,
5 y'all, or good morning. I'm Ana Dennis, and
6 it's good to see you all again, Chairwoman and
7 Committee. I'm the executive director of
8 Common Cause Georgia. And for many decades in
9 cycle -- sorry. I am really short. So I'm
10 going to --

11 SENATOR ECHOLS: Just adjust it.
12 You're fine.

13 MS. DENNIS: Yeah. I'm trying to
14 figure out the mic here.

15 So for many decades, Common Cause
16 Georgia has been on the hills of engaging in
17 redistricting through many cycles, mid-cycle,
18 through traditional redistricting. What we've
19 noticed with these maps is that there's this
20 blatant disregard of traditional redistricting
21 principles. Something that Common Cause is a
22 network we work on across the country is fair
23 redistricting practices. And we also work on
24 creating independent redistricting commissions
25 because we definitely do believe that if we

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1 can come together as advocates, community, and
2 electeds, we can definitely get redistricting
3 right, and we can make it look a little bit
4 different here, especially in Georgia.

5 But to talk more about, this map, there
6 seems to be a blame disregard of what the
7 court is actually asking us to do or asking
8 you all actually to do. There has been a
9 disregard that we have a county that has a
10 four-way split, and this county is Gwinnet
11 County, and this county is one of the most
12 diverse counties in the Southeast of the
13 United States. And this would definitely
14 negatively impact voters of color and minority
15 voters. So we're definitely concerned about
16 that. And we're also concerned that there
17 actually was not a new drawing of a minority
18 district.

19 So we are really urging the committee
20 to relook at these maps, and let's try to get
21 this right. And then as we move forward in
22 the future, let's work on independent
23 redistricting commissions altogether. That's
24 it. Thank you.

25 SENATOR ECHOLS: Thank you. Next is

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1 Cindy, and then after Cindy is Stephanie Ali.

2 MS. BATTLES: Good morning, Committee.

3 Thank you all so much for the opportunity to

4 be here today. My name is Cindy Battles, and

5 I am the director policy and engagement for

6 the Georgia Coalition For the People's Agenda.

7 I'll echo what Ken Lawler said. We managed to

8 make both political parties angry with our

9 thoughts, including when we presented the

10 unity maps during the 2020 redistricting

11 cycle, which no one liked.

12 I want to talk a little bit about the

13 congressional maps that are being presented

14 today. We do not, in fact, feel like this

15 meets the judge's order. You mentioned that

16 coalition districts aren't protected by

17 Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. I'm going

18 to point out that the 5th and 11th districts

19 actually disagree with that and have said that

20 coalition districts are protected by Section 2

21 of the Voting Rights Act because they're a

22 voting block that are impacted in similar

23 fashion when we talk about housing, when we

24 talk about education, when we talk about

25 voting and election bills.

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1 These -- this diverse county, Gwinnett
2 County, is equally impacted by these things,
3 even up to the point where we still don't have
4 an opportunity way on our QBE. So they --
5 they do have similar interests. They are a
6 community of interest. So dividing this
7 county up in four different ways is
8 diminishing their voting capacity.

9 Additionally, the moving of Lucy McBath
10 from another district. We are nonpartisan but
11 watching someone be removed from her district
12 for a -- or her district change for the third
13 time -- if we're going to tell voters that
14 their vote counts, we can't just tell them,
15 hey, your vote counts if you vote Republican.
16 If you are trying to convince voters to vote
17 for you, then you can't tell them that they
18 have to vote for your party, even if it's
19 against their interest.

20 And what we have seen in the state of
21 Georgia is that There's about a 49 percent, 51
22 percent voting population in this state, and
23 that is not reflected in the way that these
24 maps have been drawn. So what I would ask
25 this committee to do is -- I know we're on a

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1 short timeline. I understand that. But let's
2 draw maps in a way that really reflect what
3 the voters of Georgia want and need. And I --
4 and I know that this has been done by
5 Democrats. We talk about this all the time.
6 I understand what the history of this state
7 is. I understand what the history of the
8 Civil Rights Movement is.

9 So let me ask this. What in the world
10 are we saying when we are saying never in the
11 history of this state have we set aside
12 partisan interest to let the voices of
13 Georgians be the number one priority when
14 we're drawing our districts? This could be
15 the first time in the history of the state
16 that politicians looked at people in Georgia
17 and said, hey, you know what? What you want
18 and need as a voting block or a person who
19 cares about your state is more important than
20 whether or not we retain power. And that's
21 what I would ask you to do in this process.
22 Thank you.

23 SENATOR ECHOLS: Thank you. I think
24 you have a question.

25 MALE VOICE: Has your group drawn a map

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1 that accomplishes what you want?

2 MS. DENNIS: Yes, sir. And we
3 presented it in 2020. It was the unity maps,
4 and I emailed it to everybody and shopped it
5 around. And I had a Democrat tell me that
6 his -- he had a duty to his constituents to
7 stay in power.

8 MALE VOICE: And so even the Democratic
9 Party would not accept your proposed map?

10 MS. DENNIS: Exactly.

11 MALE VOICE: All right. Thank you.

12 SENATOR ECHOLS: Okay. Next up is
13 Stephanie and then Rashida Hassan (phonetic).
14 I apologize.

15 MS. ALLI: All right. Morning, y'all.
16 So, again, I'm Stephanie Ali. I am the policy
17 director with New Georgia Project Action Fund.
18 And first off, condolences to everyone over
19 the weekend. We deserve better. We deserve
20 better as a state. (Inaudible).

21 Anyhow, on to these maps. So like
22 everyone said, these maps are built on
23 partisan breakdowns. They are not built on
24 community interest. We -- we've already kind
25 of discussed that District 7, specifically,

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1 now breaks what was once a coalition district
2 now splits up into majority white district.
3 Specifically, this is a heavy AAPI district at
4 the --right now in a heavily Latinx district.
5 And the -- like the people before me have
6 said, the judge in this case specifically said
7 we -- that these new majority Black districts
8 cannot be created by eliminating minority
9 majority districts or minority opportunity
10 districts.

11 These are -- this is the same area that
12 was in 2020 one's redistricting targeted on
13 the senate maps to break up AAPI coalition
14 districts and to remove currently sitting AAPI
15 representation. As the mother of an AAPI
16 child, the wife of an AAPI voter, I find this
17 insulting. This is a growing community. This
18 is growing at one of the fastest rates in our
19 state and has a bright future in the state.
20 But to say that one group of people has to
21 suffer at the benefit for another is not what
22 the point of these maps was for. We don't
23 have to break up a growing population in North
24 Fulton and North Gwinnett, just to see the
25 rebranding of other districts in Western and

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1 Central Atlanta.

2 Further, we see at least in just the
3 metro area alone, six county seats that would
4 be split up, that would be broken into
5 multiple districts. And that shows just a
6 refusal to keep communities together. We
7 talked about, McDonough already being hit
8 pretty hard in the house and in the senate
9 side and now in the congressional side. I
10 don't know what the poor city did to this
11 committee, but McDonough deserves to stay
12 together at least in one map.

13 But we are seeing county seats all
14 along the metro area split by these
15 congressional districts, which means that
16 these cities will have very little power to
17 weigh in when they need something from their
18 congresspeople. They will have to share that
19 along multiple issue areas to multiple
20 congressional seats.

21 Finally, I -- while we are talking
22 about the fact that there were majority black
23 districts created. I ask you to look at this
24 from another angle that there are still nine
25 majority white districts. That is an angle

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1 that I think the judge is going to look at,
2 and that it's going to be important for this
3 committee to think about if we don't want to
4 spend more taxpayer money in court, if we
5 don't want to have to be seeing it redrawn by
6 a special master. And those definitions are
7 important to be thoughtful of.

8 I thank you for your time. I think
9 this map is not going to pass muster, and I
10 hope that our -- our committee can and will do
11 better, and we still have time to make these
12 adjustments. Thank you.

13 SENATOR ECHOLS: Thank you. Next is
14 Rashida Hassan, and then on deck is David
15 Garcia. And I apologize if I've mispronounced
16 your name.

17 MS. HASSAN: All right. Good morning,
18 Madam Chairwoman, Committee Members. My name
19 is Rashida Hassan. I have been a resident of
20 the State of Georgia for over 25 years and
21 have resided in DeKalb County 15 of those
22 years. I am here today to represent the
23 League of Women Voters of Georgia. I am a
24 former board member and am currently an active
25 member of the DeKalb County chapter.

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1 We have several concerns on SB3EX, the
2 proposed congressional maps. Throughout the
3 inception of this process, we have
4 consistently sought and continue to request,
5 number one, changes to the maps be limited to
6 those required to address the remedy ordered
7 by the court; number 2, the committee should
8 reject any and all attempts by members of
9 either party to incorporate other changes for
10 partisan political purposes.

11 When reviewing this map, it is clear
12 that SB3EX does not comply with the judge's
13 order. As an organization dedicated to voter
14 education, we are concerned about the large
15 number of voters whose U.S. representative and
16 potentially polling location will change in
17 such a quick time frame. Once again, we ask
18 you to review and revise this map to give all
19 voters in Georgia an equal voice. Georgians
20 deserve a redistricting process that inspires
21 trust and confidence from all Georgians.
22 Thank you so much for your time.

23 SENATOR ECHOLS: Thank you. Our last
24 speaker is David Garcia.

25 MR. GARCIA: Good morning, chairwoman

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1 and Members. Thank you for having us here.
2 I'm David Garcia. I work for an organization
3 named Galil Latino Community Development Fund,
4 and we advocate for the Hispanic community
5 throughout Georgia, and I'm here to oppose the
6 proposed Republican map.

7 It is concerning that although they
8 added a majority black district in Congress,
9 the map drawers -- the map drawers dismantled
10 Congressional District 7, a majority black and
11 Hispanic district, once again targeting Lucy
12 McBath, a member of color. To do so, Gwinnett
13 is now split in four ways. It's very
14 concerning to us because our office is located
15 in Gwinnet, and Gwinnet has a very large
16 Hispanic population. And we oppose the
17 proposed map. Thank you.

18 SENATOR ECHOLS: Thank you. I'm sorry?

19 MR. MOY: (Inaudible).

20 SENATOR ECHOLS: Sure. That's fine.

21 What is your what's your name for the record?

22 MR. MOYE: Yes, good morning. My name
23 is John Moyer. I'm the senior director for
24 policy for the Urban League of Greater
25 Atlanta. I certainly apologize. We're --

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1 we're on the House side, and I didn't have an
2 opportunity to do that.

3 But Madam Chairperson, you know, the
4 Urban League really has a long history, and
5 we've really embraced the vision of a
6 multicultural, pluralistic democracy. And we
7 call, at this time, on every state legislator
8 to approach redistricting with the same
9 vision. Let me also add that we will continue
10 to fight for democracy and fair redistricting
11 for all.

12 And we are doing this because
13 redistricting is foundational to American
14 democracy. It determines funding for vital
15 services in institutions like schools, roads,
16 hospitals, and our elected leadership. When
17 we draw fair maps, our communities are
18 represented by leaders who know us, who
19 represent our needs, and fight for the
20 resources that our children and families need
21 in order to thrive.

22 And if I can also add, I --
23 additionally, I'm also a resident of Gwinnett
24 County, and so this is certainly of a personal
25 interest for me, as well. But let me just say

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1 that, in conclusion, redistricting is hard,
2 and we acknowledge that. It's a very
3 difficult process, but we are certainly asking
4 you all to certainly be mindful of these maps
5 as you move forward. And I thank you very
6 much.

7 SENATOR ECHOLS: Thank you.

8 MS. COLEMAN: Excuse me, Madam Chair?
9 May I also address the committee? I was with
10 Mr. Moyer over with the House (inaudible).

11 SENATOR ECHOLS: Sure.

12 MS. COLEMAN: Thank you.

13 SENATOR ECHOLS: I know it's difficult
14 when we're both having hearings at the same
15 time. So I'll --

16 MS. COLEMAN: Thank you. I truly
17 appreciate your consideration.

18 SENATOR ECHOLS: Sure.

19 MS. COLEMAN: So good morning. I'm
20 Octavia Coleman. I am a Henry County
21 resident, here on behalf of the Central
22 Georgia Democracy Center and advocating for
23 the constituents of Congressional District 13.
24 Originally -- or previously, our district was
25 Cobb, Clayton, Douglas, Fayette, portions of

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1 Fulton, portions of Henry County. And the new
2 proposed map will shrink our district down to
3 just simply Clayton -- or parts of Clayton,
4 Henry, Rockdale, and Newton County.

5 Initially, the red flag is that almost
6 all of the agriculture has been removed from
7 the district. And I'm a bit concerned about
8 that because, as a Henry County resident, one
9 thing that brought us to this county within
10 this congressional district was the -- was the
11 agriculture. And I'm concerned that when we
12 take that out of the district, we will lose
13 the diversity in industry. We're already
14 dealing with an increased population as Henry
15 County is one of the fastest growing counties
16 in the state, and we're looking for jobs, you
17 know, jobs that will maintain a living wage to
18 combat the growing homeless population that's
19 going on in Henry County, as well. So initial
20 red flag is that virtually all of the
21 agriculture has been removed from
22 Congressional District 13.

23 Secondly, with the City of McDonough,
24 McDonough is 68 percent identifying as Black
25 or People of Color, African American

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1 population. And with the shrinking, I'm
2 concerned why wouldn't McDonough be put into
3 Congressional District 13 and not be popped
4 up. And again, as a community advocate, many
5 of the concerns is, especially if you're in
6 the Kelleytown area, we have a hard time
7 identifying who's our representative, who is
8 in Congressional District 10, who's in
9 Congressional District 3, who's in
10 Congressional District 13. It would -- to me,
11 it seems like it would make more sense to just
12 keep McDonough in one district and not
13 portioned and chopped up three ways.

14 So if it's a -- if it is a majority
15 black populated city, why not be in
16 Congressional District 13? Because with the
17 new proposed map putting it in Congressional
18 District 10, I fear that this city will not
19 get adequate representation. So I thank you
20 for your time.

21 SENATOR ECHOLS: Thank you. All right.
22 Thank you to everyone who came to voice your
23 opinion. I greatly appreciate you taking the
24 time to be here and be involved in the
25 process. It's important that we hear from

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1 different perspectives. And again, I

2 appreciate you being here to do that.

3 I think now is the appropriate time.

4 MS. ANDERSON: (Inaudible) I have a
5 question.

6 SENATOR ECHOLS: Okay.

7 MS. ANDERSON: (Inaudible) repeating
8 what we did the other day. You avoided
9 questions from the committee (inaudible).
10 So --

11 SENATOR ECHOLS: So the time to ask the
12 questions is when we have discussion, and
13 that'll -- that's coming up.

14 MS. ANDERSON: Okay.

15 SENATOR ECHOLS: So I'll -- I'll open
16 it again for discussion after -- after motions
17 are made. All right.

18 MALE VOICE: Are you prepared for a
19 motion?

20 SENATOR ECHOLS: I'm prepared for a
21 motion. What number are you?

22 MALE VOICE: Number 10. Madam
23 Chairman, I move that we do pass substitute to
24 SB3EX LC Number 472586S.

25 SENATOR ECHOLS: Okay. I have a

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1 motion.

2 MALE VOICE: Second.

3 SENATOR ECHOLS: Second. Okay. Now
4 we'll open up for discussion. And what number
5 are you?

6 MS. ANDERSON: I'm Number 2. My
7 question is on Congressional District 10. I
8 don't remember -- or I don't recall hearing
9 you give the details on Congressional District
10 10.

11 SENATOR ECHOLS: Sure. I'll be glad to
12 read what I read earlier on --

13 MS. ANDERSON: That's fine.

14 SENATOR ECHOLS: -- on Congressional
15 District 10. I said earlier, this district
16 shifts to accommodate the changes around it,
17 as well. Its boundaries in Henry and Newton
18 do not change, but it adds a portion of
19 Gwinnett and takes in Franklin and Hart County
20 to account for Jackson going into the 9th
21 district. This district retains its eastern
22 Georgia character, and election officials will
23 not need to worry about changes on its
24 southern or western sides because those --
25 because those boundaries have not changed.

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1 MS. ANDERSON: So I have a second part
2 to the question because it looks like it did
3 with the Henry County portion. So this really
4 does diminish the black voice and the black
5 vote. And it's all over this map from 10 to
6 Congressional District 7 to -- it's just all
7 over this map, and it's really not a good
8 representation of where we are in Georgia and
9 where we are going. But thank you for
10 expounding on Congressional District 10.

11 SENATOR ECHOLS: Thank you. Any more
12 questions? What -- you're 12.

13 MR. JONES: Excuse me. Number 12.
14 Just trying to get clarification. Are we
15 saying that District 7 is or is not a minority
16 opportunity district? The current -- from
17 where it was.

18 SENATOR ECHOLS: Are -- are you talking
19 about the old district?

20 MR. JONES: Old district. That's
21 correct. Are we saying that it was a minority
22 opportunity district?

23 SENATOR ECHOLS: Well, I think in this
24 order, Judge Jones doesn't find a minority
25 opportunity district, but he reference --

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1 references that as a majority black district.

2 So based on that definition, it -- I don't

3 believe it was.

4 MR. JONES: And can I also follow-up?

5 Can I get the --

6 SENATOR ECHOLS: Sure.

7 MR. JONES: -- because you said

8 those -- you said those page numbers, and I

9 can get them all down. Can you give them the

10 page numbers again where he references those?

11 SENATOR ECHOLS: Uh-hum. I sure will.

12 MR. JONES: Thank you.

13 SENATOR ECHOLS: Okay. So those --

14 what I said earlier, I'll reread it.

15 MR. JONES: That's fine.

16 SENATOR ECHOLS: While he doesn't

17 define that term, it's clear he's referencing

18 existing majority black districts. On Page

19 511, he refers to whether the congressional

20 plan provides black voters with additional

21 opportunity districts. There are also

22 references to opportunity districts that

23 clearly refer to black voters on Page 106,

24 145, 346, 211, 268, 417 through 20, and 427.

25 MR. JONES: So and I just -- my last

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1 one just for kind of like for clarification.

2 So the way it's being looked at is that Judge

3 Jones is citing the minority opportunity

4 district has to be a majority minority

5 district?

6 SENATOR ECHOLS: A majority black

7 district.

8 MR. JONES: Majority black district.

9 SENATOR ECHOLS: Correct.

10 MR. JONES: Okay. I understand.

11 SENATOR ECHOLS: You have a question?

12 MS. BUTLER: It's 3.

13 SENATOR ECHOLS: Okay.

14 MS. BUTLER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

15 This one question, is it more important to you

16 that black voters cast votes that matter or

17 that political balance remains the same?

18 SENATOR ECHOLS: The most important

19 thing to me is to comply with the judge's

20 order.

21 MS. BUTLER: So do you agree that

22 political balance was a consideration in

23 drawing the maps?

24 SENATOR ECHOLS: Well, there were

25 several things that we considered when -- when

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1 drawing the maps, and that was one of the
2 things.

3 MS. BUTLER: That was one of them?

4 SENATOR ECHOLS: Uh-hum. Uh-hum.

5 MS. BUTLER: Thank you.

6 SENATOR ECHOLS: Any more? Okay. 12.

7 MR. JONES: On the new District 6 --
8 and only because I'm not really familiar with
9 a lot of these areas not being from this area.

10 SENATOR ECHOLS: Sure.

11 MR. JONES: I keep hearing about, like,
12 county splits. How many county splits does
13 this new map have, I guess, even overall?
14 Does this -- the map is being presented today,
15 how many county splits are existing. Do we
16 know?

17 SENATOR ECHOLS: I believe there are
18 only two new county splits, and mine is one of
19 those.

20 MR. JONES: And one last one, how do
21 we -- how do we kind of, like, determine
22 compactness for the new District 6 of the
23 African American population?

24 SENATOR ECHOLS: Yeah. So you know,
25 that's one of those things that we relied on,

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1 Gina Wright's expertise in helping us to draw
2 those maps.

3 MR. JONES: All right.

4 MR. ECHOLS: Any more questions? Any
5 more discussion?

6 MS. ANDERSON: I do have one more.

7 So --

8 SENATOR ECHOLS: Let me get you on.
9 Hold on.

10 MS. ANDERSON: I'm Number 2.

11 MS. EHCOLS: Okay. Without eliminating
12 a minority opportunity district, which --
13 which district is the new district?

14 SENATOR ECHOLS: So that's what we
15 said. 6 is the new --

16 MS. ANDERSON: 6? Okay.

17 SENATOR ECHOLS: -- majority black
18 district. So if -- just to be clear, the
19 majority black districts in this in this map
20 are 6, 5, 4, and 13. Anything else?

21 MR. JONES: (Inaudible)?

22 SENATOR ECHOLS: Sure. Let me get you
23 on.

24 MR. JONES: Thank you, Madam Chair.
25 And just, just a couple of quick comments. It

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1 appears that a lot of this is going to come
2 down to how we're actually going to be defined
3 in minority opportunity district. And whether
4 the assertion that minority opportunity
5 district has to be majority black, or can it
6 be a coalition district? And I think that's
7 going to be where the debate is going to have
8 to be had.

9 It's a serious question about whether
10 minority opportunity districts come within the
11 Section 2, and I think there's many
12 authorities to say that it does, and I think
13 that's where the debate will -- will lie. And
14 so I think we have eliminated a minority
15 opportunity district, which goes completely
16 against the judge's order, and that's one of
17 the principal reasons why I'd be against this
18 particular map.

19 And secondly, I do want us to be kind
20 of careful in our language as far as, like,
21 saying, like, different groups are bringing
22 this. It's not my fraternity, but Alpha Phi
23 Alpha Incorporated is -- is basically an
24 African American fraternity. It was the first
25 African American fraternity found in the

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1 United States. They are one of the plaintiffs
2 in this particular case. They're nonpartisan.
3 They do tremendous work in the African
4 American community and basically for the whole
5 community. And I do think we want to be a
6 little bit with our language to say that
7 Democratic groups brought these particular
8 cases and things of that nature when you
9 realize who some of these groups actually are
10 and the benefit that they've given to not only
11 African Americans, but to society in general.

12 SENATOR ECHOLS: Thank you. Thank you
13 for your comment.

14 MR. HATCHETT: (Inaudible).

15 SENATOR ECHOLS: All right.

16 MR. HATCHETT: And just to follow-up,
17 the Alph Phi Alpha did not challenge the
18 congressional maps, correct?

19 MR. JONES: They're part of it.
20 They're -- they're one -- they're part of
21 this. And the -- the statement's been made
22 earlier on all maps. The same statement's
23 been made.

24 MR. HATCHETT: I just wanted to make
25 sure they -- they're not --

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1 MR. JONES: Yeah. Yeah. Same state --

2 MR. HATCHETT: -- (inaudible) challenge
3 these congressional maps.

4 MR. JONES: Same statements have been
5 made for other maps, too, that they're
6 Democratic, left-wing maps.

7 MR. HATCHETT: Yeah, thank you.

8 SENATOR ECHOLS: All right. Any more
9 questions?

10 MR. RHETT: Just thought of one, Madam
11 Chair, if you don't mind. And I was just
12 looking at the recommendation from the
13 nonpartisan organization that the gentleman
14 who spoke earlier. Is there any concern at
15 all that they are saying that 64 districts
16 have been done for political purposes, and
17 that politics -- politics should not be on the
18 table in this regard. What -- why do you
19 think there's so much disparity about what
20 they're looking at and what we apparently
21 going to offer to Judge Jones.

22 SENATOR ECHOLS: I'm -- I'm not sure.
23 I just got that fired this morning when the
24 committee convened. I haven't looked at it,
25 nor -- the only discussion I've had is -- is

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1 when they were up here. All right. Any more

2 questions or comments?

3 Okay. Seeing that there are no more

4 questions or comments from the committee,

5 we've had a motion. We've had a second. So I

6 think it's time to call for a vote. All of

7 those in favor of the motion as due passed for

8 LC 472586S, which is the substitute to Senate

9 Bill 3X, please raise your hand.

10 Okay. And all of those opposed, please

11 raise your hand.

12 Do you have those?

13 Okay. The motion carries.

14 All right. Is there any other --

15 Yeah. So I -- you know, I have not

16 received a proposed plan other than this one.

17 So there's --there's no further business of

18 the committee at this time. So we will move

19 this meeting to be adjourned.

20 Thank you all for your attendance. I

21 appreciate you being here.

22 (End of Video Recording.)

23

24

25

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1 CERTIFICATE

2

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

6

7

8

DATED this 15th day of December, 2023.

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WENDY SAWYER, CDLT

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