

EXHIBIT 1

HEARING 4/19/2021

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1 BEFORE THE ILLINOIS
2 SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
3 REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
4 SOUTHWESTERN ILLINOIS

5 Hearing held, pursuant to notice, on the 19th
6 day of April, 2021, between the hours of 5:00 p.m.
7 and 6:40 p.m. via Zoom teleconference.

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1 A P P E A R A N C E S

2 COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

3 Senator Christopher Belt, Chairperson

Senator Rachelle Crowe

4 Senator Steve McClure

Senator Jason Plummer

5 Senator Doris Turner

6 Representative Jay Hoffman, Co-Chairperson

Representative Tim Butler, Republican Spokesperson

7 Representative Theresa Mah, Member

Representative Dave Severin, Member

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Representative LaToya Greenwood

9 Representative Katie Stuart

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Court Reporter

22 Lydia Pinkawa, CSR

Illinois CSR #084-002342

23 Alaris Litigation Services

711 North Eleventh Street

24 St. Louis, Missouri 63101

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1 CHAIRPERSON BELT: This meeting of the Senate
2 redistricting subcommittee on southwestern Illinois
3 is called to order. Clerk, please take the roll.

4 THE CLERK: Senator McClure.

5 SENATOR MCCLURE: Present.

6 THE CLERK: Senator Plummer.

7 SENATOR PLUMMER: Present.

8 THE CLERK: Senator Turner.

9 SENATOR TURNER: Present.

10 THE CLERK: Senator Crowe.

11 SENATOR CROWE: Present.

12 THE CLERK: Chair Belt.

13 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Present. There being a quorum
14 present, the following entities are seeking leave to
15 photograph and video the proceedings. Blue Stream;
16 Mark Maxwell, WCIA; Justin Ackerman, KTVI; and Derik
17 Holtmann, Belleville News-Democrat. If I could get
18 everyone to put their Zoom on mute, that should take
19 care of the background noise. Thank you.

20 Is there leave? Leave is granted. Senator
21 Crowe for a motion.

22 SENATOR CROWE: Thank you, Chair Belt. I move
23 that the hearing be transcribed by the court reporter
24 so that the committee can have a full transcript of

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1 this hearing, which the redistricting committee can
2 approve at a future hearing once members and staff
3 have had an opportunity to review the transcript and
4 make any needed corrections.

5 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Senator Crowe moves to allow a
6 court reporter to transcribe the hearing. Is there
7 leave? Leave being granted, the court reporter will
8 be allowed to transcribe the hearing. With that
9 being said, we're going to allow 30 seconds for Blue
10 Stream to be able to fill in the delay and then we'll
11 proceed with the hearing.

12 I now turn to Leader Hoffman to call the
13 House redistricting committee to order.

14 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: Thank you, Senator.
15 The House redistricting committee shall come to
16 order. I would just announce, because we are in
17 recess, there is no need for a roll call. I would
18 just announce the representatives who are here and if
19 we could at a later time, if they would like to say a
20 few words, I would appreciate that.

21 We have the representative from this
22 district, LaToya, Representative LaToya Greenwood.
23 All the way from the Chicago area, Representative
24 Theresa Mah, who is also a member with me on the

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1 House redistricting committee. We have, representing
2 the district just to the north of us, Representative
3 Katie Stuart. And we have the minority spokesperson
4 on the committee from Springfield, Representative Tim
5 Butler. And we have Representative Dave Severin who
6 is from a little bit south of us. Back to you,
7 Senator.

8 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Thank you, Leader Hoffman.
9 As the Senate redistricting committee receives any
10 written only testimony, that testimony will be made
11 part of the committee record and posted on the
12 redistricting committee's ILGA web site. The
13 subcommittee covers the following counties: Calhoun,
14 Jersey, Madison, St. Clair and Monroe counties, which
15 includes districts currently represented by Senators
16 McClure, Crowe, Plummer, Turner, Bryant and myself.
17 I will start with an opening statement. If Senator
18 Plummer has any opening remarks, we will go to those.
19 Then we will turn to our testimony for today.

20 Good evening. It is my pleasure to welcome
21 you to this joint southwestern Illinois redistricting
22 hearing between the Illinois House and Senate. This
23 is one of numerous public hearings the Senate
24 redistricting committee and the House redistricting

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1 committee is holding to gather input from communities
2 of interest across Illinois as we work to create a
3 fair map that reflects the geographic and racial
4 diversity of our state. It's an honor to be here
5 with our House colleagues tonight. And I'd like to
6 give special thanks to the Jackie Joyner-Kersey
7 Center for hosting us.

8 The Illinois constitution requires the
9 general assembly to undergo the redistricting process
10 every ten years to make sure our communities receive
11 fair and equal representation. The population of
12 Illinois is constantly changing. We all know that
13 our region of the state looks very different than it
14 did a decade ago. Our goal today is to learn about
15 those changes so that nobody is overlooked.

16 For those unable to provide testimony
17 today, you can visit our web site,
18 www.ILSenateRedistricting.com, where you can
19 submit comments and concerns and find more detailed
20 information about the redistricting process. We are
21 focused on encouraging as much public participation
22 as possible. And on that site you can even draft and
23 submit your own proposed legislation -- legislative
24 boundary maps which will be reviewed as part of the

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1 public record.

2 Historically, states have used data from the
3 U.S. Census Bureau to craft maps. Unfortunately, a
4 delay caused by the pandemic means the Census Bureau
5 is unlikely to get such data to the state until late
6 August or September. That's caused concern
7 nationwide, including here in Illinois. You see,
8 while the Illinois constitution does not require
9 census data for redistricting, our constitution is
10 very clear that we have a June 30th deadline to
11 complete this process. The means -- this means we
12 cannot put off this process until census data is
13 released, as some have argued we should.

14 Here's what's at stake. If the general
15 assembly misses the June 30th deadline, map making
16 will be turned over to a commission of political
17 insiders. The public will be cut out of the process
18 entirely. This is not an independent commission, as
19 some have wrongly claimed. It is a commission of
20 political appointees named by legislative leaders.
21 That's not democracy. That's a disservice to the
22 people we represent.

23 The only way to ensure fair mapping is to
24 allow for greater public participation, not less.

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1 That's why we are here today. We want to hear from
2 our communities because we know that no matter what
3 data is used in map making, data will only tell part
4 of the story. That's especially true when it comes
5 to the hard to count communities, including those who
6 are low income, racial and ethnic minorities,
7 renters, homeless, LGBTQ and children and youth. I
8 appreciate those who took the time to be here tonight
9 and I look forward to your testimony. Thank you.
10 Senator Plummer.

11 SENATOR PLUMMER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And
12 thank you to the Jackie Joyner-Kersey Center for
13 hosting this hearing and also to everyone who will be
14 participating today. This is our 16th redistricting
15 hearing in the last several weeks. And while
16 participation has been limited, we are hearing from
17 witnesses from across the state that there must be
18 more transparency in this process.

19 These witnesses have requested more robust
20 public engagement, which includes slowing the process
21 down. Despite what my colleagues might claim, we
22 don't have to pass a map by June 30th. The real
23 constitutional deadline is very clear and it is
24 October 5th. The last date politicians get to draw

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1 the map is June 30th. Let me be very clear. The
2 only people concerned about June 30th and providing
3 misleading information about that supposed deadline
4 are those very politicians who want to use this
5 process as a way to empower themselves to the
6 detriment of their constituents.

7 Extending the time period would allow us to
8 use the actual census data, not the ACS data that is
9 just a small sampling of the population. Experts
10 from around the country acknowledge that the ACS data
11 is not as near as accurate as the census data. The
12 use of this data has the potential to disenfranchise
13 voters and communities, especially several
14 communities of color that have changed dramatically
15 over the past ten years in certain parts of the state
16 of Illinois. This would be like basing our election
17 results on inaccurate poll numbers rather than truly
18 counting the votes.

19 It has been falsely claimed that the
20 Republicans want these hearings stopped. That has
21 absolutely no basis in truth. In fact, Republicans
22 along with independent groups from across Illinois
23 have asked for even more hearings than are currently
24 scheduled. What we should do is stop cramming all

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1 these hearings and all of this very important
2 decision making into a few weeks. Instead, we should
3 ensure the public has ample time to arrange their
4 schedules and participate in a truly meaningful
5 manner. Voters want this process to lead to more
6 choices at the ballot box. They want more
7 competition in elections. Instead, politicians could
8 use this process to simply protect their own
9 interests.

10 The Senate Republicans are committed to
11 obtaining a bipartisan solution to the problem of
12 politicians picking their voters, and so we
13 introduced the Peoples' Independent Maps Act. Senate
14 Bill 1325 uses identical language from an amendment
15 that was proposed by Senator Julie Morrison in 2019
16 and garnered 37 co-sponsors in the Senate, including
17 18 of her fellow Democrats. A similar independent
18 commission amendment co-sponsored by Speaker Welch
19 passed the house in 2016 with 105 yes votes. The
20 Peoples' Independent Map Act would take the
21 politicians, like everyone sitting at this table,
22 out of the map drawing process.

23 An independent redistricting commission has
24 long been supported by Governor Pritzker and more

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1 than a hundred members of the legislature, including
2 75 members of the other side of the aisle. We took
3 great care to introduce this legislation exactly as
4 it was when we had so much support from both parties.
5 We wanted to ensure it would be a bipartisan solution
6 to the real problem we have in Illinois of
7 politicians consistently picking their voters rather
8 than voters picking their politicians.

9 We look forward to further testimony from the
10 witnesses and a discussion with the members of this
11 committee on how we can help bring true change and
12 real transparency to this very important process.
13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Thank you, Senator Plummer. I
15 now turn back to Leader Hoffman for opening remarks.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: Thank you, Senator. And
17 I will attempt to be brief because I know you covered
18 much of the items that the House Democrats would have
19 brought forward. But the House Democrats have been
20 dedicated to transparency and public participation in
21 the redistricting process. While state law requires
22 a minimum of four public hearings throughout the
23 state, our committee has held around 24 of them. Our
24 goal is to hear from as many people as possible. Our

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1 staff has been making hundreds of phone calls to
2 encourage participation. Those who wish to
3 participate have been given an opportunity, period.
4 In addition, we have held a series of virtual
5 hearings because of the COVID-19 crisis. This, I
6 believe, is one of the only, first and only
7 House-Senate joint hearings and I appreciate Senator
8 Belt as well as Representative Greenwood hosting us.

9 While we are guided in the endeavor by the
10 United States constitution, the Federal Voting Rights
11 Act, the Illinois constitution and the Illinois
12 Voting Rights Act, we're also interested in any
13 relevant demographic information such as social,
14 political, economic, religious or any other
15 characteristics that are unique to our community.
16 As you know, Representative Stuart, Representative
17 Greenwood and I as well as Senator Belt and Senator
18 Crowe are proud to represent this area, as is Senator
19 Plummer.

20 This year for the first time, Illinois
21 residents will be able to participate in the process
22 from the comfort of their own homes. They have
23 participated. The public drawing portal where you
24 can draw your own maps is available at the Illinois

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1 HouseDems.com, slash, Redistricting, that's Illinois
2 HouseDems.com, slash, Redistricting portal and allows
3 any Illinois resident to draw districts, share those
4 maps with the committees for consideration. The
5 public may also submit written testimony, as Senator
6 Belt indicated, and that can be provided by e-mail to
7 RedistrictingCommittee@HDS.ILGA.gov. All written
8 testimony, public comments and maps submitted will be
9 made publicly available and part of the trans -- and
10 the transcripts and be made part of the record.

11 As for today, we will begin, I think turning
12 it over, back over to Senator Belt after there's a
13 brief statement from Representative LaToya Greenwood
14 and then from minority spokesperson Tim Butler.
15 Representative Greenwood.

16 REPRESENTATIVE GREENWOOD: Thank you, Leader
17 Hoffman, and thank you, Senator Belt, Chair. We are
18 here this evening to ensure that communities like
19 East St. Louis have their seat at the table, making
20 our voices heard in this extremely important
21 discussion on redistricting. Thank you to those who
22 are here in person from all over the 114th district
23 and other area districts and thank you to those who
24 are online for staying engaged in these very

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1 important conversations. To my colleagues, welcome
2 to the 114th district. Thank you.

3 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: Leader Butler.

4 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Thank you, Leader
5 Hoffman, and thank you, Representative Greenwood, for
6 hosting this evening and Senator Belt for hosting
7 this evening. I'm glad to be here in East St. Louis
8 for this important hearing tonight and such an
9 important part of our state in southwestern Illinois.
10 This is a great area of our state and glad we could
11 be on the road tonight to listen to folks in this
12 area of the state.

13 Let me just say, just respond to a few of the
14 things that have been said. The only way to ensure
15 that citizens have a role in actually drawing the
16 maps, not having necessarily the input here tonight,
17 which is great, but actually drawing the lines of the
18 map is to go to a commission form of process. If we
19 pass maps, if we, the legislature passes maps by
20 June 30th, that means the legislature, the
21 politicians will be drawing the lines, taking care
22 of themselves as we have often done in the past to
23 ensure maximum partisan advantage in the
24 redistricting process and that's what would happen.

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1 The constitution does not say -- does not
2 spell out the reasons why the legislature should go
3 past the June 30 deadline. It doesn't say just
4 purely for you don't have the votes in the chamber or
5 the fact that the governor and the legislature of
6 different parties, which has happened in the past,
7 but the constitution has had the foresight to realize
8 we might have issues in drawing our legislative
9 boundaries by June 30.

10 Today's issue, this year's issue is the
11 census delay. And the census data that we need, the
12 decennial census granular data to go down to the
13 block level won't come out until at least August, if
14 not September. The use of other data, American
15 Community Survey data, other private data potentially
16 will not truly represent the state of Illinois. We
17 have had, I think this is 24 or 25 hearings in the
18 House. We've had multiple people testify over the
19 last several weeks that ACS data undercounts minority
20 populations, undercounts rural populations. And
21 that's vitally important for us to realize, that if
22 we use data that is not the data that we have used in
23 the past every time to draw the maps under this
24 constitution, that we would be doing it wrong.

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1 And let me remind folks that we have gone
2 through this, the legislative redistricting
3 commission and constitution, I think three of the
4 last four times we have drawn the maps. The only
5 time that we have used the legislature to draw the
6 map was ten years ago where the majority drew maps
7 and then it was signed by Governor Quinn and we have
8 the districts that we have today.

9 So you know, we have real concerns about the
10 ACS data, interested in hearing what people have here
11 to say tonight and I look forward to an engaging
12 hearing. Thank you.

13 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: Senator, back to you.

14 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Thank you, Leader Hoffman.
15 We're just going to pause.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: We're going to now go to
17 a short presentation that describes the redistricting
18 process that is put together by the House Democratic
19 staff.

20 MR. REINHARDT: My name is Darrin Reinhardt.
21 I'm an employee with the Illinois House of
22 Representatives and I'm here to give a brief overview
23 of the state's redistricting procedure. I'll briefly
24 discuss the background of redistricting and the

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1 redistricting process in Illinois and I'll also be
2 going over federal and state redistricting
3 requirements and guidelines. Finally, we'll be
4 looking at what preliminary data reveals about
5 population trends in the state and region.

6 Redistricting is the process that ensures all
7 Illinois residents are afforded equal representation
8 in the state legislature and federal Congress as
9 guaranteed by the United States constitution. The
10 U.S. Supreme Court held a series of rulings in the
11 1960's that congressional and state legislative
12 districts in each state must be of approximately
13 equal population, establishing the principle of one
14 person, one vote. As a result, states redraw their
15 congressional and state districts every ten years to
16 reflect changes in population.

17 The timeline for redrawing the legislative
18 maps are based on the Illinois constitution. The
19 constitution gives the Illinois legislature the
20 initial responsibility of passing the new legislative
21 map. Both the state House and the state Senate must
22 pass a plan which then must be signed by the
23 governor.

24 If a new map does not go into effect by the

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1 constitutional deadline of June 30th, responsibility
2 for creating a new map passes from the legislature
3 to a legislative redistricting commission. The
4 commission would consist of eight members, with two
5 appointed by a legislative leader and no more than
6 four from the same political party. A majority vote
7 of five or more commission members would constitute
8 final approval of a new map.

9 However, if the commission does not agree to
10 a map by September 1st, the Illinois Supreme Court
11 will submit two names, one from each party, to the
12 Illinois secretary of state, who will then choose one
13 name at random to serve as the ninth member of the
14 commission. Five of the nine members of the
15 commission must agree to a plan no later than
16 October 5th.

17 In order to understand the process of
18 creating new districts, we must look at some legal
19 guiding principles. First among these is equal
20 population. Congressional districts must be nearly
21 equal in population, while state districts must be
22 substantially equal. Federal and state law also
23 requires that all districts be contiguous, which
24 means that all parts of a district must be next to

1 each other unless connected by water. Annexations
2 and unincorporated areas and municipalities and
3 counties sometimes mean that communities are
4 discontinuous. However, congressional and state
5 districts must be adjacent or connected at all
6 points.

7 A more difficult requirement to define is
8 compactness. There are at least 30 different
9 scientific ways to measure how compact a district is,
10 but no statute or court precedent identifies standard
11 criteria of compactness. In theory, compactness
12 focuses on the shape of a district's boundaries, how
13 spread out a district is from a central core or where
14 the district's population center of gravity is. In
15 practice, compactness is hindered by geography and on
16 the ground realities, so often interpretation of
17 compactness involves more than a visual test.

18 Illinois is one of 14 states that nests its
19 House districts, also called represented districts,
20 inside one of its Senate districts, also called
21 legislative districts. Map makers will look, where
22 possible, to follow existing political and geological
23 boundaries in ways that maximize the community's
24 opportunity to have its interests represented. As

1 you know, however, county, municipality, township and
2 natural geographic boundaries are not always compact
3 or contiguous.

4 By studying population data and holding
5 public hearings like this to listen to the thoughts
6 of residents across the state, law makers look to
7 identify what are known as communities of interest.
8 A community of interest is a group of people
9 concentrated in a geographic area who are socially,
10 culturally, ethnically, economically, religiously or
11 otherwise alike can be joined in a district to most
12 effectively have their voices heard. The factors
13 contributing to any particular community of interest
14 will vary throughout the state.

15 Federal law requires redistricting plans to
16 reflect minority representation. The principles of
17 the federal Voting Rights Act are in place to prevent
18 the reduction of opportunities for minority
19 populations to participate equally in the electoral
20 process. However, districts cannot be drawn solely
21 on the basis of race.

22 Illinois also protects representation of
23 racial and language minority groups. The Illinois
24 Voting Rights Act helps to prevent minority

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1 fracturing or dividing a concentration of minorities
2 among two or more districts by requiring map makers
3 to consider creating crossover district, coalition
4 districts or influence districts. A crossover
5 district is one in which a large minority group can
6 elect the candidate of its choice with the help of
7 voters from the majority group. Coalition districts
8 bring multiple racial or language minority groups
9 together to elect a candidate of their choice. An
10 influence district allows a group to influence the
11 election outcome without being the majority
12 population in a district. These state law
13 requirements come into play only after compliance
14 with the federal law and U.S. and state
15 constitutional requirements on redistricting.

16 In addition, the law ensures transparency and
17 public participation by requiring public hearings
18 across the state, one of which we are having here
19 right now. At the end of the presentation, we will
20 display an e-mail address on the screen Leader
21 Hoffman already provided where you can submit your
22 ideas. The committee will also be accepting written
23 testimony today.

24 Now that we've covered the redistricting

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1 process, let us discuss what preliminary data shows
2 about Illinois' population. The U.S. Census Bureau
3 has delayed much of the release of the decennial
4 census data by more than six months until this fall.
5 However, the U.S. Census Bureau's annual population
6 estimates show some trends that can help inform the
7 work ahead.

8 The census 2019 population estimates shows an
9 overall decline in state population over the past
10 decade. There are, however, areas that are projected
11 to have population gain. Communities with the
12 largest population by percentage increase since 2010
13 are Kendall, Monroe, Champaign and Kane counties.
14 Demographically speaking, the state's white
15 population is projected to decline, while
16 African-American population statewide will likely see
17 a smaller overall decline. The Hispanic and Asian
18 population across Illinois are projected to see
19 growth.

20 Locally, Madison County, St. Clair County are
21 projected to lose population. St. Clair's white and
22 African-American populations will likely decrease,
23 while Hispanic population stands to increase. In
24 Madison County, white population is projected to

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1 decline, while African-American and Hispanic
2 populations will likely grow.

3 Thank you so much for your attention and for
4 coming out to share your thoughts today. As the
5 Chair mentioned, you will be able to find testimony
6 from this and other hearings on ILGA.gov and on
7 ILHouseDems.com, slash, Redistricting. The
8 redistricting web site offers additional ways to
9 engage with the process, including our public drawing
10 portal where you can draw and submit your own
11 district maps. You can send further written
12 testimony and suggestions to the committee at any
13 time by e-mailing Redistricting Committee at
14 HDS.ILGA.gov. Thank you.

15 REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMAN: Senator Belt.

16 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Thank you, Leader. Our first
17 witness today will be the mayor of East St. Louis,
18 Robert Eastern. Mayor, I would ask that you come to
19 the witness table and when you get there, un-mute
20 yourself before you start your testimony.

21 Go ahead, Mayor.

22 MAYOR EASTERN: So first of all, I want to say
23 thank you for the opportunity of allowing us to
24 speak -- for me to speak on behalf of the city of

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1 East St. Louis. I would like to make sure that
2 there's special consideration in relationship to this
3 redistricting in our area. You know, we have an
4 insurmountable thing, this is the first time in
5 100 years we got hit with the COVID-19, have an
6 inability to be able to affect the census here in our
7 area, enhanced practice as far as being able to reach
8 out to those people that is always undercounted. We
9 understand here in our community that, in the black
10 and brown community more specifically, that we tend
11 to get undercounted when the census, when it's time
12 for census. We did have a good push.

13 I would be remiss if I didn't say that I
14 think that there should be some special consideration
15 for the East St. Louis area as well as St. Clair
16 County, you know, in relationship to the census. You
17 know, we understand that the impact that it will have
18 on the city, it will be very traumatic if it's
19 anything other than what we are used to as far as
20 like home rule and things of that nature, the public
21 funding for educational systems, the streets and
22 roads, the sewers and the overall ambience of trying
23 to get people to come in and do development in this
24 area as well. So I implore upon this committee, this

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1 hearing committee to take that in consideration and I
2 could take any questions at this time.

3 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Mayor Eastern, we thank you
4 for your testimony. At this time we're going to
5 proceed with the witness testimony. Thank you, sir.

6 MAYOR EASTERN: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Before I proceed to the next
8 witness, just to make sure that we're doing our due
9 diligence, were there any questions for Mayor
10 Eastern? Hearing none, next, our second witness
11 today is Stanley W. Franklin, second vice president
12 of the NAACP for the state of Illinois and the
13 president of East St. Louis branch of the NAACP.
14 Please proceed.

15 MR. FRANKLIN: To the Chair of this committee,
16 Chairman Christopher Belt, to the other senators and
17 to my representative, LaToya Greenwood and all those
18 who assembled here this evening, good evening. My
19 name is Stanley Franklin. I am the second vice
20 president of the Illinois state conference which
21 consists of 35 branches throughout the state of
22 Illinois and I'm also the president of the East
23 St. Louis branch NAACP.

24 I would like to address three areas of

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1 primary concerns that we have with redistricting
2 process. One is transparency. Two is the Illinois
3 Voting Right Act of 2011. Three is the attempt to
4 gerrymandering black votes.

5 We want transparency in the process of
6 refining the political boundaries of representatives,
7 senators and congressional districts. We want a
8 chance for input before the final map is decided
9 and not after it's finalized, but the draft.
10 Transparency will restore the confidence in the
11 government.

12 We believe that the Illinois Voting Right Act
13 of 2011 is a fair redistricting process for all race
14 minorities. It is properly -- when it's properly
15 implemented. The law encourages law makers involved
16 in this redistricting process to draw lines around
17 communities instead of through communities. The
18 Illinois Voting Right Act of 2011 allows for the
19 creation of crossover districts, coalition districts
20 and influence districts. As you all heard the
21 definition of all those, the three districts, I'm not
22 going to bore you with that information that I had
23 already did my due diligence and going to share that
24 with you, but the young man stole my thunder.

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1 But the purpose of those acts, and it talks
2 about the racial minorities and the language of
3 minorities is either, whether it's either singular or
4 plural, means the same class of voters who are
5 members of the race, color, language, minority groups
6 receiving protection under the Federal Voting Right
7 Act.

8 The Illinois Voting Right Act of 2011 created
9 those three districts. The NAACP position is
10 the Illinois Voting Right Act of 2011 served as
11 protection against gerrymandering black votes.
12 Perhaps the most constant form of gerrymandering in
13 the United States has been racial gerrymandering,
14 where districts are drawn to prevent the racial
15 minorities from getting representation. Racial
16 gerrymandering isn't just a coincidental side effect
17 on general gerrymandering, but it's an intentional
18 attempt to suppress, if not the vote of racial
19 minorities, then the impact of the vote. As you
20 know, gerrymandering is the act of changing
21 boundaries of districts and states to manipulate the
22 voting demographics within the districts, thus
23 helping a political party maintain the power there,
24 even if the statewide demographics don't necessarily

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1 suggest a majority.

2 Two forms of gerrymandering is packing and
3 cracking. They do different things to voting
4 districts to achieve similar goals. Packing is when
5 the boundaries are changed in such a way that the
6 opponent's voters are confined to a smaller number of
7 districts. Cracking is when they change in a way
8 that the opponent's base is spread out over more
9 different districts. The Illinois Voting Right Act
10 serves as a protection against those two attempts on
11 black voters.

12 I would like to conclude by saying that the
13 NAACP call on legislators to formulate an equitable
14 redistribution plan that includes to blacks and
15 people of color. Blacks and people of color who live
16 in a particular area should get a fair chance to
17 elect a person of their choice. The East St. Louis
18 branch NAACP is looking forward to participating in
19 future hearings. I would like to thank you for your
20 time for allowing me to participate in this public
21 hearing. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Thank you, Mr. Franklin, for
23 your testimony. Do we have any discussion? Seeing
24 no discussion -- next we have Mike Parkinson, mayor

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1 elect of Granite City.

2 Okay, next we have Rima Kamran with the

3 Illinois Muslim Civic Coalition. Is Rima here?

4 Okay. Next, then, we'll go to Stephanie Taylor with

5 Community Development Sustainable Solutions.

6 Ms. Taylor, please proceed.

7 MS. TAYLOR: All right. Thank you folks so much

8 for the opportunity to address this committee. Thank

9 you so much, Senator Belt, to my representatives here

10 in the southwest central region and the rest of you

11 from across the state.

12 You know, I don't want to go into too much.

13 Stan Franklin gave a lot of pertinent information

14 that I would like to agree with. I represent

15 Community Development Sustainable Solutions, my

16 friends and neighbors here in East St. Louis,

17 Illinois, St. Clair County and the Illinois GOP

18 committee as I speak with you today.

19 Compact, contiguous and substantially equal

20 in population, I understand that that is the

21 prescript that we use as we work to redistrict. I

22 understand that there's been previous challenges to

23 redistrict -- to the redistricting plan under current

24 constitutional guidelines, and that is because of the

1 basic structure and it happens to be a sound
2 structure.

3 The only thing that we're not experiencing
4 here is the equity. I mean, because we know that the
5 basic participation in the process by hard count,
6 hard to serve rural and farm communities and
7 ultimately under-serviced populations is very low
8 when it comes to getting them to participate in the
9 census. And therefore, that leaves them effectively
10 denied in that process when it comes to considering
11 how we really go about that redistricting process.

12 So I don't want us to get caught up in
13 anything political. I need us to get caught up in
14 solutions and that's equitable solutions. And I know
15 there's a lot of talk about what is equity and just
16 versus equality. But I want us to stay on that word
17 equity. That means you're going to take a diverse
18 and an equal look at what it takes to produce equity.
19 Because equity means we're equal, with just a few
20 variations or helping points that are needed to these
21 areas that are historically underrepresented.

22 Now, when it comes to the census, I believe
23 we need to go ahead and move forward with the
24 redistricting process. Because if we have to take

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1 a look and say, hey, we can't change this
2 constitutionally, you guys are bound to look at this
3 equitably. And you know, southern Illinois is always
4 a trickle down effect. So you are taking into
5 consideration COVID-19, but then you have to look at
6 the roll out of the census in general. If we're at
7 the bottom of the state, it didn't come to us till
8 the end, which means our reaction and response time
9 was heavily decreased.

10 And if I say we have to look at that, I would
11 say go ahead and put that in a drawer and close it up
12 and go ahead and get counts so we can go ahead and
13 look at these people. Because we were dealing with
14 what does the president want to do, start it, stop
15 it, go, don't, gather, no, you can't gather, no, you
16 can't use your normal resources when it comes to
17 outreach and engagement.

18 And I'm very concerned about keeping the
19 leadership that we have and gaining momentum. Those
20 leaders that are in our area are strong and they keep
21 their boots on the ground. And after dealing with
22 the budget impasse of Rauner, we're devoid of
23 services. And we don't want to take anything from
24 the north, but Lord knows we need it down here at the

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1 bottom of the state.

2 So you know, discrimination, inequity, you
3 know, being slick about how you go about not getting
4 our numbers, I don't know what the case was. But
5 we didn't get the same amount of time to count as
6 everyone else did. Therefore, we don't want to lose
7 or depend on that count in order to determine who our
8 leaders are. We don't want to lose them. We need
9 more resources in our area and we love the leaders
10 that we have currently. So thank you very much for
11 that.

12 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Ms. Taylor, thank you for your
13 testimony. Do we have any discussion? Senator
14 Turner, go ahead.

15 SENATOR TURNER: These hearings give us a great
16 opportunity to hear directly from minority
17 communities and communities of interest and people
18 like Ms. Taylor. And I really appreciate her comment
19 about the census and waiting for the census numbers
20 based on her very apt description of what happened
21 and how the federal government, well, President Trump
22 played around with the census and gathering those
23 numbers. And that's something that we had no control
24 over and it was definitely playing politics with

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1 minority communities and communities of color.

2 So while Republicans have suggested and we've
3 heard here tonight, moving forward without census
4 data could lead to a situation in which minority
5 communities aren't properly represented, I think
6 Ms. Taylor hit the nail on the head and I agree with
7 her that that suggestion is offensive, especially
8 after the blatant attempts of the Trump
9 administration to undercount and put communities of
10 color in a position where they could not complete
11 their count in a timely manner. So you can't support
12 these policies to exclude black and brown communities
13 one day and then position yourself as a defender of
14 those same communities the next.

15 So I really appreciate what you had to say,
16 Ms. Taylor, and I think that it really does shine a
17 light on the dilemma that we find ourselves in and
18 the reason why we're in that dilemma. So thank you
19 very much.

20 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Thank you, Senator Turner.
21 Hearing no other testimony, debate, discussion, we'll
22 go to Mark Snyder. Mark, would you please proceed?
23 Okay. Next, then, we will go to Willie Preston
24 representing Green Zones. Mr. Preston.

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1 Okay, next we'll go with Sharon Gill,
2 representing herself. Please proceed.

3 MS. GILL: Karen said we only had to put down if
4 we're representing somebody. I wasn't, but it
5 wouldn't let me complete the form without --

6 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Ms. Gill, would you put
7 your --

8 MS. GILL: Put the ear buds in?

9 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Yes, ma'am.

10 MS. GILL: I've never used ear buds. Okay.

11 CHAIRPERSON BELT: You are good to go.

12 MS. GILL: All right. Admittedly, waiting until
13 the census results are out could cause problems as it
14 may be near November. We all know 2020 was not a
15 normal year. And as a former census worker, I can
16 attest that the efforts stop before the work seems
17 complete. They've been, the census has been working
18 to fix the data as best as possible. Per my boss,
19 East St. Louis and Collinsville were particularly
20 incomplete at the time that our former president
21 stopped the counting process.

22 There is a process to allow redistricting
23 to occur after 30 June which has been discussed by
24 several folks here within the constitution, Illinois

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1 constitution. Most important, the process needs to
2 be nonpartisan and independent. That the current
3 districts are compact is laughable. I heard the
4 briefing. A reasonable person would not view our
5 current serpentine districts to be compact.
6 Gerrymandering must stop.

7 The proposal set forth by Change Illinois
8 makes sense and is similar to that Senator Plummer
9 described from Senate bill 1325, create a nonpartisan
10 independent committee to draw the district's
11 boundaries. That's the basics.

12 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Okay, you're done?

13 MS. GILL: Questions?

14 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Any discussion? Seeing none,
15 thank you, ma'am. Next we'll bring Jeff, is it
16 Ebelot, Ebelsizer? Jeff? Okay. Finally, our next
17 witness is Joel Funk and we will bring Joel up.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He's in, I guess.

19 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Proceed, Mr. Funk.

20 MR. FUNK: I'd just like to thank the committee
21 for bringing this opportunity to the community. This
22 is incredibly important. A special thanks, I would
23 be remiss if I didn't give a special thanks to my
24 senator, Senator Belt, my representative,

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1 Representative Greenwood for hosting this event.

2 I've had many labels in my life, you know,
3 farm boy, student, soldier, cadet, Army aviator,
4 special operations aviator and more recently,
5 disabled veteran and farmer. But I come to you
6 tonight in a slightly different capacity, and that is
7 someone who spent most of their life, more of their
8 life dealing with conflict and security and trying to
9 understand why I was in places like Iraq and Syria
10 and Afghanistan, why we were there, what causes a
11 community to crumble, how to rebuild, how to bring
12 people back together.

13 And for me, you know, and I don't think I can
14 say it more plainly than say that our country is in
15 crisis, our country is in conflict. We are divided.
16 And I don't have to go into details of why and how.
17 We see it on the news, we see it in conversation, we
18 see the disinformation out there. Everything is
19 binary, zeros, ones, black, white, blue, red, mask,
20 no mask, vax, anti-vax. We are so divided and so
21 broken apart that we run the risk of continuing to go
22 down that path.

23 Now, by no means am I going to speak in
24 hyperbole and think that we're going to turn into

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1 Afghanistan tomorrow. And I'm not going to say that
2 how we draw, how you all draw these lines is going to
3 automatically change things and bring us all back
4 together, but it's a part of that process.

5 And so I ask that the committee, as you go
6 forward, build districts that bring us back together,
7 build districts that are representative of the people
8 of Illinois and that we can elect representatives
9 that will bring us back together. That is my hope,
10 that is my concern. That is my plea to the committee
11 as you go forward. Bring our state, bring our
12 country back together. Thank you for doing this
13 committee. Thank you for everything you do for our
14 great state. And I yield.

15 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Thank you for your testimony,
16 Mr. Funk. Would there be any discussion for
17 Mr. Funk? Hearing none, thank you, sir.

18 MR. FUNK: Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Next we have, help me out
20 here, Samer Aldroubi representing himself.

21 MR. ALDROUBI: I'm Samer Aldroubi. I'm calling
22 in from Peoria, but obviously I met someone who loves
23 my community. I certainly know we have many things
24 in common with the East St. Louis area and what some

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1 of the important things might be here. So thank you
2 to all the members of both legislative bodies that
3 are here and taking their time to listen. It's very
4 much appreciated.

5 That said, as an Illinoisan, as a state we
6 have a reputation and it generally isn't a good one.
7 With regularity, Illinois is sort of a punch line of,
8 oh, what's the state with the corruption? What's the
9 state that is broke? Illinois. And it isn't an
10 unfair characterization, unfortunately, so many
11 times. And we need to work at dealing with the
12 underlying issues that drive that and the appearance
13 that makes people think that of our state that I'm
14 truly happy to be a citizen of. We need fair,
15 consistent, transparent redistricting as a key part
16 of this.

17 People in groups in power tend to work to
18 stay in power. It isn't always this horrible,
19 nefarious thing, but you know, if an elected official
20 genuinely believes they are the best person for the
21 job, they work to stay in power to strive to continue
22 that work. But over time, whether it's, you know, an
23 elected official, the administrative function for
24 that group, a political party, it's corrosive. And

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1 the vital check we have on corruption is our
2 electoral process.

3 But when you have biased maps, which we do,
4 drawn to maintain or consolidate power, we short
5 circuit that check on our leaders. If we, the
6 people, believe we have biased maps, that, too, is
7 corrosive because it discourages folks to choose not
8 to vote and they stay less engaged within the
9 government and their community. We need a process
10 that is good, fair and trusted, which includes a
11 transparent and clear process, a well defined process
12 and calendar.

13 For example, you know, after these hearings,
14 which are great, you know, what are the next steps?
15 If the legislature will be setting these boundaries,
16 you know, when will draft maps be out? What will the
17 sort of review period be in the process for getting
18 additional input be before things are finalized? We
19 need very strong outreach.

20 I think it's great that these meetings are
21 occurring, but I stay fairly well plugged into things
22 and I only learned of these hearings last week. You
23 know, that's not one person's fault or anything like
24 that, but you know, I guarantee you I could go into

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1 my neighborhood and people would have been like what
2 are you talking about?

3 And so we need to make sure that outreach
4 work is strong and that there aren't issues of very
5 short notice sessions, especially once proposed maps
6 are released. You know, releasing a draft and then
7 voting on it in a very short period of time just
8 makes people feel like people are ticking
9 administrative boxes. So we need multiple weeks
10 between when a proposal is made and a vote so the
11 people trust the process.

12 Ultimately, the process needs to be, one,
13 a culture of enfranchisement. Groups that have a
14 common interest should not be watered down by
15 spreading them between multiple districts. And most
16 obviously, this is racial and ethnic minorities, but
17 it is so many groups potentially as we look at a
18 process that would serve us well into the future.
19 We need people to feel empowered and engaged to
20 strengthen the protections that, you know, things
21 like the Illinois and federal Voting Rights Act
22 employ or are supposed to guarantee.

23 And ultimately in all this, you know, this
24 year is, COVID-19 threw a wrench into it. And I

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1 don't know exactly what this will look like, what it
2 needs to look like other than stating those ideals I
3 just shared. But ultimately, I would ask this group
4 of representatives to consider how can you lead as we
5 go out of this process as well towards perhaps a
6 constitutional amendment or whatever is necessary to
7 make sure that there is a truly nonpartisan process
8 for the next decade so that this isn't coming down to
9 things of people who are in power choosing, you know,
10 how to play the cards they're dealt but instead can
11 be a process that people trust.

12 And just ultimately, it takes that burden
13 also off of the legislature so that, you know, each
14 ten years when this comes around they get, you know,
15 this is what this committee says we're going to do
16 and it's not something that they even have to deal
17 with in any major way. You guys can spend your time
18 or your successors ten years from now can spend their
19 time doing other work for the citizens of the state.

20 Like I said, I live in Peoria. I love my
21 community. And we have our challenges, as so many
22 communities in the state do. And the truth is, many
23 of those have at least some part that's been driven
24 by state leadership over the years and decades. And

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1 I've seen some improvement the last few years, we can
2 talk about all that stuff. But at the end of the
3 day, I guess what I'd just ask is for everyone to
4 remember, regardless of the partisan interests and
5 things that may be there, the communities of the
6 state need this to be a good process that makes us
7 come out stronger.

8 And so I just thank you all for your time and
9 ask your help in ensuring we have the most
10 transparent and representative redistricting process
11 we can, both in this cycle and in the future. Thank
12 you.

13 SENATOR CROWE: Thank you, sir, for your
14 testimony. Chair Belt had to step away for a moment.
15 While we're waiting for him to return, I want to say
16 you said it very well, the communities need this to
17 be a transparent and safe process. So thank you for
18 that. All right, is there any discussion for this
19 witness?

20 SENATOR PLUMMER: Senator Crowe, I have a
21 question.

22 SENATOR CROWE: Senator Plummer.

23 SENATOR PLUMMER: Thank you, Senator Crowe.

24 Thank you, Samer, for your testimony. I appreciate

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1 it. Peoria is a great community, so thank you for
2 Zooming in today.

3 Throughout the course of these hearings,
4 several different advocacy groups from across the
5 state, from across the political spectrum have
6 requested that legislators commit to a two week
7 period of time at minimum after maps are introduced
8 in Springfield and before a vote is taken so that the
9 public can comment on those proposed maps. We have a
10 terrible habit in Springfield of introducing very,
11 very important things and voting on it less than
12 24 hours later, often in the middle of the night.

13 And for something this consequential to the
14 state and for something this consequential to so many
15 different groups is a proposal like that, a waiting
16 period between the introduction of a map and the vote
17 on the map so the public can have input, is something
18 like that something you would be supportive of like a
19 lot of the other witnesses? And is it something you
20 would like to see legislators on the record on
21 whether or not they support that? Because when it
22 comes to transparency and when it comes to some of
23 these issues that are discussed, you're either
24 serious about it or it's just rhetoric. And I want

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1 to see who's serious and who's just, you know, being
2 politically correct when it comes to true
3 transparency on the maps.

4 MR. ALDROUBI: Yes, I would say absolutely, I'm
5 in favor of there being a window of, I think two
6 weeks is a good timeline. The exact time isn't that
7 important. The other piece, though, I would put with
8 that is that ultimately, I think we need to have a
9 plan to get out of the partisan process. So I'd much
10 prefer seeing a proposal that delegates this to an
11 administrative group without partisan interest on top
12 of that.

13 SENATOR PLUMMER: Thank you. Thank you for the
14 follow up, Samer. To your point, I just want to
15 point out I won't speak for my colleagues in other
16 chambers or on the other side of the aisle, but
17 Senate Republicans stand unanimously for a waiting
18 period between the introduction of a map and the vote
19 on the map so that the public can truly have input.

20 And to your point about removing politicians
21 from the process, as I outlined in my opening
22 statement, we have introduced legislation that would
23 do exactly that. It would take the politicians out
24 of the process and it would insert an independent

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1 commission into the process so that the voters truly
2 have a voice.

3 Mr. Funk earlier gave some interesting
4 testimony. And by the way, I think everyone would
5 like to thank him for his service to the country.
6 But he gave very interesting testimony about some of
7 the places he's been. And you know, what's
8 interesting about some of those place, I was an intel
9 officer in the Navy and these are all places where
10 power is consolidated amongst very few. And those
11 people that have power make the rules and those
12 people that have power control the processes. And we
13 don't want to see that in Illinois, we don't want to
14 see that anywhere. We want the people involved in
15 the process. And Samer, if you look at what we've
16 introduced in the Senate, 1325, that's exactly what
17 it does. Thank you.

18 SENATOR BELT: Any further discussion for Samer?
19 Hearing none, I want to circle back and make sure
20 that Brooke Smith is not here. Okay. Mark --
21 Ashleigh Stewart, is Ashleigh here? Okay, no
22 Ashleigh Stewart. And finally, panel four is Syamala
23 Krishnamsetty with Change Illinois. Is she here? So
24 they're not here. Is there any other testimony at

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1 this time? Oh, I'm sorry. Mrs. Taylor, go ahead.

2 MS. TAYLOR: Yes, everything was wonderful.

3 Again, representing Illinois Juneteenth, national
4 Juneteenth, you know, the state of Illinois is really
5 looking good as leaders. So I would just say to the
6 point of Senator Jason, and I apologize, I can't see
7 your last name, sir, respectfully, but to your point,
8 you know, when you're saying what we would like to
9 see a committee, I would like to say, you know, if
10 we're starting, or if we're having a conversation
11 here, since you know there's maps on the table, can
12 we not just go ahead and form that committee?

13 And we need to make sure that it's
14 represented as well here in the southwest central
15 region because again, we do get choked out per capita
16 when it comes to Chicago and the other areas,
17 although we love them, but we do need a committee to
18 take a look at those maps. And we also, when I went
19 into the link, that link wasn't open. We need to
20 reopen it. Because even when it came to the hearing,
21 we always say that the newspapers are guilty of it,
22 but even when it came to getting the witness slips,
23 when it came to knowing about the hearing, our
24 newspaper didn't get that information out until, what

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1 was it, maybe today, yesterday. So we've got to do
2 better when we're talking about systems in place.
3 And again as someone pushing Juneteenth and as a
4 pillar of excellence for the state of Illinois, when
5 it comes to structures that are in place and
6 outdated, let's get the committee together so that we
7 can get the true voice and you can have those numbers
8 to count, please. Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Thank you, Mrs. Taylor.

10 SENATOR PLUMMER: Chairman Belt, may I follow up
11 on that?

12 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Oh, by all means. Go ahead,
13 sir.

14 SENATOR PLUMMER: Thank you, Senator Belt, and
15 thank you to witness Stephanie Taylor for the follow
16 up there. Just first off, I agree with everything
17 that you said, witness Taylor. And I just want to
18 point out that what we've described that would solve
19 the concerns of, I think you and a lot of the other
20 witnesses we've heard from today but also the
21 witnesses we've heard from across the state
22 throughout all these hearings, those things can be
23 solved. All we have to do is have the majority party
24 call Senate bill 1325 to a vote in Springfield. They

1 could do it next week. It received massive
2 bipartisan support in years previous. And so we can
3 solve this. All we have to do is take a vote on
4 1325.

5 I want to also dive a little deeper into the
6 concerns that -- very, very valid concerns that I
7 think that you represented in your previous comments,
8 concerns about the data and groups that are
9 overrepresented and groups that are underrepresented.
10 I think we need to drill down on the stats there and
11 the facts there just so everyone is operating off of
12 the correct information.

13 So this census, as messed up as it was from
14 the federal level because of COVID, because of a
15 variety of other factors, I think a lot of people saw
16 the concerns. So the state of Illinois invested over
17 \$50 million, \$50 million, unprecedented, to make sure
18 that we maximized turnout, especially turnout in
19 these groups that are traditionally under
20 represented. We had the highest turnout ever from a
21 census in the state of Illinois, this past census
22 because of that massive investment. In fact, after
23 the turnout numbers came out, we had politicians from
24 across the state and across the political spectrum

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1 issuing press releases and talking about how
2 phenomenal the turnout was, how Illinois was leading
3 the nation.

4 So a question that I would have, I believe
5 the ultimate turnout in the state was around 71 or
6 72 percent. The Metro East area, which this
7 committee is supposed to be representing, actually
8 had an even higher turnout. So if we use that census
9 data, we're actually going to make sure that we're
10 using the best, most accurate data to cover those
11 underrepresented groups.

12 The ACS data that's being proposed is a
13 snapshot in time. It's not as near as accurate. It
14 doesn't have the safety valves in place to make sure
15 those traditionally underrepresented groups are
16 represented by following up multiple times at their
17 house and by making sure the counts are accurate.
18 So I couldn't be more in agreement with you about the
19 concerns about groups that are underrepresented,
20 whether that's because of where they live or whatever
21 other factor.

22 What's most important, and I think everyone
23 should be able to agree on this, is that we use the
24 best data available. And the best data available,

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1 acknowledged by everybody, is the census data.
2 And if we rush this and we use the ACS data, we're
3 only going to perpetuate the groups that are
4 underrepresented continuing to be underrepresented
5 when it comes to their government in Springfield,
6 Illinois. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON BELT: To Senator Plummer's point,
8 again those numbers, that 71 percent, I don't know if
9 I'm misquoting you or not, but those numbers for the
10 Metro East would be an average of the number -- of
11 all the communities brought in together. And so I
12 would say again that the underserved communities of
13 East St. Louis, of Venice, of Centreville, of
14 Brooklyn, of which those three, Centreville, East
15 St. Louis and Brooklyn are three of the top ten poor
16 cities in Illinois, Centreville having the dubious
17 distinction of being the poorest city two years ago
18 in all of Ill -- in the country, not just Illinois.
19 I would say an underserved community with
20 historically, that has historically been
21 undercounted.

22 You add to the equation a pandemic that
23 disproportionately impacts those brown and black
24 people in those communities. I just can't see how

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1 those numbers are the greatest that we've ever had.
2 Because I was on the ground in East St. Louis. I've
3 been on the ground in Venice, I've been on the ground
4 in Brooklyn and I know how hard it was, beyond what
5 is the normal case, this year in particular because
6 people were afraid of the pandemic to come out and
7 take part in the census.

8 And so I understand the point that you're
9 trying to make, but I would take exception with the
10 rule that in underserved communities that are
11 traditionally always undercounted because they don't
12 open -- you send people to their doors that don't
13 look like them and they open the door -- they're not
14 going to open the door. You send people to the door
15 and in those citizens' mind, they believe that
16 they're going to get arrested or someone is going to
17 get evicted out of their apartment if they give you
18 the true number of people who are residing in their
19 home. It may be two people on the lease but five or
20 six living there. You're not going to get that
21 number. And so they're traditionally historically
22 undercounted. But that didn't change. That part
23 didn't change.

24 Now, add to that a once in a lifetime

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1 pandemic that killed in historical numbers black
2 people, brown people, more, disproportionately more
3 than any other group. Again, that 71 percent that
4 you quoted, I don't argue with that. But those
5 numbers are brought up by the surrounding
6 communities. That would be my argument to you on
7 that.

8 SENATOR PLUMMER: Senator Belt, may I follow up
9 on that?

10 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Yes, sir.

11 SENATOR PLUMMER: Thank you. I understand that
12 that's your argument. But the fact of the matter is
13 groups from across Illinois, from across the
14 political spectrum have testified countless times at
15 these hearings and they all disagree with you. The
16 fact of the matter is we can have feelings. I'm
17 operating off of facts.

18 And I'm not going to say we think these
19 counties had this sort of turnout or we think these
20 counties had that sort of turnout. You can look at
21 the data. And if look at the Metro East,
22 specifically Madison and St. Clair County, they came
23 in above state average. We can say, well, this
24 community or that community or this county or that

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1 county, right, but the fact of the matter is,
2 regardless of whether we're plus five basis points or
3 south five basis points or whatever, the fact of the
4 matter is we know and experts who do this for a
5 living have all testified that the ACS data will be
6 inferior to the census data.

7 So we can knock around the census data, we
8 can sit here and say, well, the state of Illinois had
9 the highest census turnout of any high population
10 state but then knock it. We can say that the state
11 of Illinois had the seventh highest turnout of all
12 the states in the country and then knock it. We can
13 sit here and say the Metro East had the highest
14 turnout than the state as a whole and then knock it.
15 We can ignore the \$50 million we've invested, we can
16 ignore the press releases that we issued. But when
17 we get, when you get to the end of the trail here,
18 the fact of the matter is Illinois still had a great
19 census performance, it's the best census performance
20 we've ever had. And the experts acknowledge,
21 regardless of how the census performance was, that
22 data is better than the ACS data specifically for
23 rural and minority communities. That's not Senator
24 Plummer saying that. That's experts.

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1 And so why, if we care about transparency and
2 if we care about making sure people are best
3 represented, why would we acknowledge that we're
4 going to use the less accurate and the more prone to
5 mistakes number? We need to use the best data on
6 hand and experts acknowledge that's the census data.
7 I can go into a million reasons why, but we've heard
8 it a hundred times in these committees. Census data
9 is superior to ACS data specifically for rural and
10 minority communities. That's not Republican or
11 Democrat, that's not north or south. That's a fact.
12 And so when we're talking about making sure these
13 groups have a voice in Springfield, why would we not
14 want to use the best data?

15 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Senator Plummer, that sounded
16 so good. But let me tell you this again. You paint
17 with a broad stroke and a big brush. You keep saying
18 what the experts say and you keep saying all these
19 wonderful things, but they're general in nature. I
20 don't argue with you that Millstadt in my district
21 did phenomenal. I won't argue with you that
22 Mascoutah in my district did phenomenal. But don't
23 tell me that these underserved communities that are
24 always underserved, always not counted and then on

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1 top of that, again a pandemic came to town and they
2 did great, I just don't see how you can say that.

3 Again, you say you go to all these hearings
4 and they say it. They? This is the first one in
5 southwestern Illinois that I've attended. And so
6 you've got a mayor over there that was on the ground
7 with us, trying to drum up support. And every single
8 time we tried to do something, we were lucky if we
9 got 14, 15 people to come out because they were
10 afraid for a host of reasons. Then I go to Fairmount
11 City, a largely Hispanic Latinx community, and they
12 are afraid that the Census Bureau is going to act as
13 a law enforcement agency and send them back, so they
14 don't come out. And so they don't take part in it.

15 And you again tell me time and time again and
16 you say it's emotions. It's not emotion. I'll give
17 you that Fairview Heights had a banner year, which is
18 in my district. I will give you that Freeburg
19 knocked it out of the park, which is in my district.
20 But I am speaking to you specifically about
21 underserved communities. And not just for this
22 census year. Historically. The fact that some of
23 these communities are in the condition that they're
24 in is because they don't take -- they don't

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1 participate in the census. And so those dollars that
2 flow miss these communities. That didn't change.

3 And so when you look at the -- and this is
4 part of the problem. So when you look at the bigger
5 picture, you see that 71 percent for the Metro East
6 and you say doggone it, we knocked it out of the
7 park, we did our job. And then you come down here
8 and those same communities are suffering, probably
9 more so than ever because there, again there was a
10 pandemic, a killer outside their windows that jumped
11 on and hopped on preexisting conditions and choked
12 the life out of them, killed them, put them in the
13 hospital, lost loved ones. I can go on and on like
14 you can.

15 And I just find it hard to believe that that
16 71 percent in the Metro East is indicative of East
17 St. Louis, Brooklyn, Venice and Centreville, Cahokia,
18 all the areas I walked trying to drum up support and
19 get people out. You are right when you say
20 Edwardsville, which is not in my district, let me put
21 that out there, but I guarantee you they probably hit
22 it out of the park, right, or wherever. But these
23 communities that I speak of, Senator Plummer, I was
24 on the ground. It's not emotional. It's empirical

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1 evidence because I was there.

2 And so with that being said, though, I
3 respect your opinion, I hope you respect mine and
4 we'll move on. Next we have Senator Crowe to speak.

5 SENATOR CROWE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do want
6 to address one other issue that continually arises at
7 these hearings. And it is this false choice that
8 continually gets put up before these groups where
9 people think that there's this Republican bill out
10 there that's somehow going to create an independent
11 group to create a map. This is truly a false choice.
12 Republicans know that this bill is nothing but a
13 smoke screen. A bill cannot trump the constitution.
14 There's no ifs, ands or butts about that. A bill
15 cannot trump the constitution. Our constitution is
16 very clear. We have a June 30th deadline to draw a
17 map. If we fail to meet that deadline, we, Democrats
18 and Republicans have failed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

19 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Thank you, Senator Crowe. Any
20 other debate?

21 REPRESENTATIVE STUART: If it's okay, Senator.

22 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Sure, Representative Stuart.

23 REPRESENTATIVE STUART: Thank you. I would like
24 to point out that there are times that, you know,

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1 members on the other side of the aisle from myself
2 frequently rely on the ACS data when it seems
3 convenient. So I would like a little consistency.
4 It's either good data or it's not. So you can't
5 point to it when you choose and then tell us it's
6 inferior when you don't want us to use it. Minds,
7 you know, need to be made up.

8 In terms of the investment in the census,
9 census data is used for lots of other purposes
10 besides the redistricting purpose. It's how we
11 allocate resources, federal assistance and lots of
12 other important things. I would say that that is
13 highly worth our investment as a state. So the idea
14 that we've wasted money on getting census data is
15 just a ridiculous proposition, in my mind, because
16 it's valuable for lots of other things. I just
17 wanted to make sure that we made that clear.

18 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Thank you, Representative
19 Stuart. We continue our discussions on
20 redistricting. I ask those that testified today and
21 those listening to please engage with the committee
22 as we work to make sure community voices are heard.
23 If you have any further documents, information or
24 questions, please feel free to send them to

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1 RedistrictingCommittee@SenateDem.ILGA.gov. If you
2 are interested in drawing legislative maps, please go
3 to our web site, https, colon, back slash, back
4 slash, ILSenateRredistricting.com, back slash. Or
5 you can draw Senate and House maps as well as
6 communities of interest, then submit them to the
7 committee. That being said, I will now turn it over
8 to Representative Mah to adjourn the House
9 redistricting committee.

10 REPRESENTATIVE MAH: I want to thank everyone for
11 participating tonight. Your input is really
12 important. And seeing no further business before the
13 House redistricting committee, the committee is
14 adjourned to the call of -- excuse me, is recessed to
15 the call of the Chair.

16 CHAIRPERSON BELT: Thank you. There is no
17 further business to come before the committee. This
18 meeting of the Senate redistricting committee of
19 southwestern Illinois stands adjourned. Thank you
20 all.

21 * * *

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23

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1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS.
2 CITY OF SPRINGFIELD)

3

I, LYDIA B. PINKAWA, a Certified Shorthand Reporter, do hereby certify that the meeting aforementioned was held at the time previously described.

8

9 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
10 hand and seal.

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