

# **EXHIBIT 1**

HEARING 4/19/2021

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BEFORE THE ILLINOIS  
SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE  
SOUTHWESTERN ILLINOIS

Hearing held, pursuant to notice, on the 19th  
day of April, 2021, between the hours of 5:00 p.m.  
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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9 Representative LaToya Greenwood  
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

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](http://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

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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

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.

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

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

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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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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

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,

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  
24

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

3

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

8

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

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