

# Exhibit 2

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[00:00:00]

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, the Committee on Senate and Governmental affairs will come to order. Secretary Caldero?

**SECRETARY CALDERO:** Present.

**FEMALE 1:** Senator Miguez?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Right here.

**FEMALE 1:** Present? Senator Carter?

**SENATOR CARTER:** Present.

**FEMALE 1:** Senator Fesi?

**SENATOR FESI:** Present.

**FEMALE 1:** Senator Jenkins?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Present.

**FEMALE 1:** Senator Kleinpeter?

**SENATOR KLEINPETER:** Here.

**FEMALE 1:** Senator Miller?

**SENATOR MILLER:** Present.

**FEMALE 1:** Senator Reese?

**SENATOR REESE:** Here.

**FEMALE 1:** Senator Womack?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Present.

**FEMALE 1:** We have nine members.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Nine members present and a quorum. Senate we're going to take Senator Womack, is the staff ready for you yet?

**FEMALE 1:** No. 8, is that bill?

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**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Okay, then why don't we skip to -- I hate to get into the discussions of the courts, and then we have to -- all right, let's take the vice chair's Senate Bill. 9, and by the time we finish that bill, maybe we'll be ready to hear Senate Bill 8. All right, Senate Bill 9 by Senator Miguez provides relative to rank choice, voting and instant runoff voting. Senator Miguez.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If we could take up some Amendments to bring the bill in its proper posture. We had a little issue come up about ballot types with secretary of State's Office for our military that's overseas and how they handle runoffs, and we want to make sure that our military is exempted. So, if we could take up that amendment, get it on the bill, and then --

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, Senator Miguez, you would like to offer up this amendment to put the bill in the form in which you would like to discuss it, is that correct?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Yes, sir.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator Miguez, offer up Senate Amendment 37. Senate Amendment 37 to Senate Bill No. 9. Are there any objections to the adoption of the Amendments? I hear no objections. Those Amendments are adopted. Explain the bill as amended.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, this bill prohibits the use of ranked choice voting to determine elections or nominations of any candidate to any state or federal elected office in Louisiana. It outlines that any parish who uses ranked-choice voting will be responsible for the cost of that election and shall reimburse the state for any such cost. It also outlines that any municipality who uses ranked-choice voting method without the specific approval of their parish shall be responsible to reimburse the parish for those election costs as well. The bill does not violate any home rule charter authority or any local government because it does not prohibit them from adopting ranked choice voting. They would simply forfeit any ability to receive election funds from the state of Louisiana. Recently, five states have enacted a ban statewide and preempted local municipalities from adopting ranked-choice voting, which is Florida, South Dakota, Idaho, Montana and Tennessee. Ranked-choice voting guarantees that valid ballots are thrown into the trash. Voters are given an ultimate they can either vote for the people they dislike or who oppose their principles or risk having your ballot trashed. No voter should have their ballot discarded simply because they voted for the wrong candidate. Voting should be simple and the results should represent the decisions of the people. Under ranked-choice voting, voting is complex and the results are manufactured after ballots are thrown out. On the ranked-choice voting, it brings confusion which reigns supreme. One person, one vote is replaced by a complex process that makes voting more difficult for vulnerable voters like the elderly, who are forced to rank candidates by filling out lengthy ballots with vertical and horizontal columns. It's not reasonable to think that voters will be adequately educated on every single candidate to rank each of them, yet the burden is placed on them on the ranked-choice voting system. Ranked-choice voting erodes the trust by adding new layers of complexity to vote counting and eliminates transparency in the election process.

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The method of voting requires complicated rounds of tabulation would often delay results, sometimes for weeks or months. Ranked-choice voting has produced anything but fair outcomes for voters. The winner is not necessarily the candidate who receives a majority of the vote, but a majority of the votes that had been not trashed. Because ranked-choice voting undermines voter confidence, it leads to slower election results and increases irregularities in the election process. I ask you for favorable passage to prohibit this from being used in the State of Louisiana, and I also have several examples that's been used in current years that affected the outcome in a very negative manner. Be happy to answer any questions that the committee may have.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Okay, Senator, one question before I send the mic to the membership, can you just explain to the members of the committee what you mean when you say ranked-choice voting?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. So right now, you could have, let's say, three candidates, for example, a Republican, a Democrat, and a no party person running, and you would select the candidate which you choose to vote for. Well, let's say there's six candidates out there from each from a different party. You would have to rank each one of these candidates on a horizontal, vertically, who's your first, your second, your third, your fourth, your fifth, and your sixth choice. Well, a lot of voters are not up-to-speed on every single candidate, but they may be going there to support one particular candidate. But it's, for example, your elderly and you do not fill out all six, you missed one because -- sometimes it could be 15, I think our most recent governor had 15 people in the race, so if you miss one and they look at it, they would invalidate your ballot and throw it out. In some of these states, they've had as much as 10,000, 20,000 ballots thrown out and actually changed the results of the election. So, someone might have won the election based off of the actual vote because it was so complex for the constituent or the voter to figure out and to fill out properly, they were able to trash and invalidate a number of ballots, and it changes the results. And we have several examples of how that happened across the nation and state elections and also municipal elections.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** And ranked-choice voting, I think they use it in Alaska.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** That's probably one of the best-known places they use it. They've used it in Oakland and California for the mayor's election in 2010. They did it in Maine, I think in 2018 for the congressional district. New York City used it for their mayor's race, and he created some problems. And one of the biggest things that -- it slows down the process. Sometimes they even had a situation where they tabulated it incorrectly because it's very complex how they tabulate the votes. Basically, the person who's last, I think, gets rolled off and they retabulate and they retabulate. And sometimes the person who traditionally would win with a majority of vote does not win because they go with the second or third choice because they had more second place rankings than first place rankings. So, it's not traditional to what we've seen, and there's been a movement across the nation to go ahead and try to stay in a traditional aspect of where most of the states currently operate. And I'm asking the committee to consider whether we can

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prohibit this type of method from being used here in Louisiana, we stick to some of the traditional debates that we've been having on this committee, and we'll have in the future.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** And my final question is, even today, if we chose to use ranked-choice voting, we would have to pass a law to do that even today without the bill, correct?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** There is a buyout I would imagine so that there's a possibility, unless we look through and we find that any in conversation with the Secretary of State's office for that answer in particular. But unless there's any way that locals could use their own autonomy to develop their own method, which I've been on the phone with the Secretary of State's office recently, and they're under the impression that every municipality would have to follow our set of rules. So, if that's found to be the case, I'm definitely going to make sure the structure of the bill and the posture reflects what our current law is. And I'd be happy to work with any of those types of issues between here and the floor, because I want to make sure before this ever will receive a floor vote, it being the perfect structure and it matches perfectly within our laws. But I think this is making a statement to the nation that before you look at accepting any type of grants that may be in return for switching to this type of method, that we just have a public policy that we don't even consider ranked-choice voting.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Senator Fesi for a question.

**SENATOR FESI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How many states do you know of have already kind of outlawed doing this type of voting?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Currently I had listed the five states recently. Florida, South Dakota, Idaho, Montana and Tennessee have already taken action in the last 24 months. This is relatively a new issue across the Nation is developing. So, if we were to take action this year, we'd be in the forefront of what these states that have had success for their election system being prohibited here in Louisiana.

[00:10:10]

**SENATOR FESI:** Okay, and you mentioned maybe people giving grants or whatever. Are they people putting up major money to try to get states to do this?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Yeah, there are some federal initiatives and can't remember if it's a nonprofit or not that they've developed where they're offering grants out to states. We'll pay for your elections, but you have to do the election process the way we would like you to do it. And maybe they're trying to affect a certain type of outcome. We've seen this with other grants in the past, which we've prohibited here in Louisiana. It's been against our public policy, and we're just trying to stop. I guess our election system are being put up to bid. We don't want be --

**SENATOR FESI:** So, this would basically kind of help us just clean it up and not have to run through any problems in the future. If somebody wants to give us a bunch of money to start this?

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**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Yes. It would basically establish a public policy that we have run our elections in a more traditional aspect. Whether it's -- whatever primary system we elect, we decide to do is up to the legislature. But that's all traditionally and used across the nation in a multitude of states. But we're not going to switch to a new method because we're receiving some money, because some certain group is trying to affect the outcome of our votes, whether whatever party or type of special interest that may be.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Thank you, Senator. Senator Carter, for a question.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Senator Miguez, we had an opportunity to talk about this briefly throughout the course of today. Do we currently do rank file choice in Louisiana?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** We do not currently do ranked-choice voting.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Then that's why I asked, because I'm not familiar with it. I've been voting in Louisiana my entire life, ever since I could vote, and I never recalled this sort of system. And quite honestly, I had to research it in order to fully kind of get up to speed on it. I'm still doing that research, but I just want to make certain. Nowhere in the State of Louisiana do we currently do this.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** No, not currently. That's what I'm trying to --

**SENATOR CARTER:** I guess my next question is not to cut you off, but it will require some legislation by us, some act of this body, in order for Louisiana to engage in ranked-choice voting. Is that a fair understanding?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** We're not 100 percent that that would flow all the way down to the locals. That's presumptive at this point because there are state elections, there's local elections and sometimes home rule charters, they have some authority there.

**SENATOR CARTER:** I'm asking, I do not know the answer to it. Have any of our locals engaged in this rank file voting?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** There's been no examples here in Louisiana. And that's the reason why we bring in the bill is to prevent that. But I'll give you one example, and it's pretty compelling. New York City in 2021 had a mayor primary result in 140,000 trash ballots, which is nearly 15 percent of their total ballots cast. So think of a scenario where you.

**SENATOR CARTER:** That's in New York, though.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Yeah, a lot of people, right? Think of a scenario where you've had, well, some of the other states, like Alaska, had 15,000 trash. These are congressional districts, had 8,000 trash. So, imagine a situation where you've had 10,000 ballots trash in a congressional race that was 49, -- I mean, it was very tight. And the candidate you supported actually got -- if

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you counted all the ballots, actually got 50.1 percent. But because 10,000 ballots were invalidated because an elderly lady in your district couldn't figure out -- she didn't know who the fifth candidate was because she always goes to Senator Carter and says, "Senator Carter, who are we going with in this race?" And two good guys, but a lot of times they get six people running. So, she's going to vote probably based on your recommendation, but she doesn't understand who the other five candidates are because she doesn't fill it out properly. Then her vote gets trashed and basically, she has no voice in the process and it goes against the one person, one vote ideal. Very complex.

**SENATOR CARTER:** And it seems complex, but if I'm hearing you correctly, you gave an example in New York and Alaska, and I'm not familiar with it here, but those are my questions. I'm still concerned about it, just to be honest, given that I'm not aware of it happening in Louisiana before. We haven't really studied it in great detail. So, I'm a little cautious about it, especially given the fact that it would take from my understanding some act on our part for this to happen in Louisiana. I understand the municipalities may have orders, but we're still not even aware of any of them engaging in it. But I certainly appreciate what you're doing.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** If we have any kind of complications with the Secretary of State is something that this does not match up, I will not move this bill on the floor until -- if I was given the opportunity to make it to the floor, until we had all that worked out, because I want to make sure this bill is in the proper posture. Our Secretary of State's office has an opportunity to weigh in. We're starting the conversation today on this. It's not an issue that's on your radar but could become on our radar.

**SENATOR CARTER:** And that's exactly the point. That's the good way of putting it. It wasn't on my radar until I saw your bill and I read it and thank you.

[00:15:05]

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** And they've had a lot of unsuccessful results in other states that we want to avoid here in Louisiana. And I think I talked to a few members on the committee that had heard about it before and had some similar experiences on the research that they had done.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Thank you, senator. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Thank you, Senator Carter. Are there any other members who wish to be heard? All right. Do we have any -- Senator Miller?

**SENATOR MILLER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Senator Miguez, just for ranked-choice voting, I don't believe that we are using that in Louisiana. I don't believe the election -- do you have an answer as to whether -- even a home rule charter or any local could use ranked-choice voting absent and act of the legislature?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Like I mentioned before, I want to double and triple check that with the Secretary of State's office. But if I'm given the opportunity to get out of this committee today,



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because time is short, I will not bring this up for a floor vote until I have that ironed out. And that worked out.

**SENATOR MILLER:** And I'm intrigued by making sure that we learn about it. I mean, this is kind of a new deal. We didn't even know what was going to be in the call outside of the scope of the congressional and Supreme Court races until now. It's just one of these things that we're very short time schedule, and it's certainly something that we could hear during the regular session. Is that correct?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Yes, definitely. And I wanted to start that conversation today. It's very important issue across the nation. It's something we don't want to see here in Louisiana. And when I saw the call, when I saw the opportunities there and when I saw the call expand outside of just redistricting Congress, and we started talking about what are we going to do with the Supreme Courts? And then the governor talked about debating a closed primary system in the legislature, I thought it was an opportune time to start the discussion on ranked-choice voting here. And that's the goal here, is to get you thinking about this issue and using your expertise, Senator Miller, and you as well, Senator Carter, to try to start perfecting this bill. If it doesn't become a product of this session, I think with your input, it could become a more perfected or greater product in the regular session. If that's what we end up doing, if we run out of time or if I'm not able to bring this up for a floor vote.

**SENATOR MILLER:** Just a follow-up. I don't think any of us were able to vote on the Heisman Trophy, but isn't the Heisman trophy ballot a sort of ranked-choice voting?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** I'll leave that one to you. I'm staying within the political arena.

**SENATOR MILLER:** So, thank you.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** The next thing, you might start asking me who's my favorite football team, and I got a lot in my district.

**SENATOR MILLER:** I wouldn't do that to you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, Senator, we do have two individuals from the Secretary of State's office. I'm going to come to you next. Mr. Carter. Yeah. Two members from the secretary is Lani Boyd and Nick Meyers. Does any member wish to hear from this -- why don't the two of you come forward, please. And you can certainly stay there, Senator. Please identify yourself for the record and Senator Jenkins for a question after you identified.

**CATHERINE NEWSOME:** Hi, Catherine Newsome. First, assistant Secretary of State. Ms. Boyd is upstairs actually working on an amendment at this moment.

**NICK MEYERS:** Nick Meyers, Secretary of State.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Senator Jenkins.



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**NICK MEYERS:** All right, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for bringing the bill as being stated up here. It's a case of first impression for some of us. So, I'm just trying to get a little bit more information. I'm not aware of anyone here, any cards at this point that's been turned in to give it any kind of opposition. So, I'm not asking that, but I am asking for some information. Tell me a little bit more about this. One, are we seeing some movement towards this as an election tool in our state? Secondly, has the Secretary of State's office been able to look at what has occurred in other states that has employed this method? And then thirdly, I'm just trying to get some idea of how would it really work. I'm hearing some about ranking and ballots, so it almost sounds like a caucus type situation. But help me out here, okay.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** So, there's not been a ton of interest in bringing that to Louisiana. So, I haven't done a ton of research on it. But the way I understand it to work is, as Senator Miguez was saying --

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-- if you have six candidates, you would mark them basically one through six, and then they would tally all the people, and then you would eliminate the last place person. Then they would go tally again, then they would eliminate. They would do it in rounds until they ended up with one candidate. I'm sorry?

**NICK MEYERS:** How is that being done?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Most places, it's on -- yeah, most places in the country have paper ballots to go with every single vote, and we're headed in that direction. Whether it's generated by a ballot marking device or hand-marked, that's a whole other conversation, but they fill out their ballot, whether it's on a machine or on paper, and then it comes out in a ranking. And then they go through a process to tabulate it, and they end up with one winner. And it's to avoid extra elections. It's to avoid -- it's defined also in the bill as an instant runoff election. And so, that's the whole purpose of it is to not have second election. You get everything done in one election. Now, as Senator Miguez's evidence, it shows there are some issues with the complexity. And so, that has been seen in the jurisdictions he's mentioned.

**NICK MEYERS:** So, those go through, so paper ballots, seven, eight candidates marked their choices, go through some reading machine, that have come out in ranked, who came at first in that process?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Correct.

**NICK MEYERS:** Does that person win because he came out first?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** So, it's more about eliminating the last placed candidate, and then it will go through again, and eliminate the next last placed candidate. And will go through again,

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eliminate the next last placed candidate. So, it goes in rounds. And as -- and it eliminates the last placed candidate until you're left with one. That's the way I understand that to happen.

**NICK MEYERS:** And that person won the election?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Is the winner. Yes. There is no runoff. That's the end.

**NICK MEYERS:** So, I'm pushing this envelope a little bit more. If we had closed primaries, how does that work? Each party would do that to try to produce a candidate? I'm just -- honestly, I'm really trying to get an idea how does how does this work? I mean, is it going to be all Democrats and Republicans?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Honestly, I prefer not to find out how it works. So, in the closed party primary, you know, in 08 and 10, we had a closed party primary, and then a closed party runoff, and then a general election, where the two parties and everybody else met in general, and it was a plurality and whoever won that won the thing. So, in theory, the rank choice ballot would eliminate that closed party runoff part. So, you would have a closed party primary, and instead of the top two vote getters go into a closed party runoff in the 08 and 10 model, you would do a ranked-choice voting, and then it would go through the cycles of all the different candidates and come up with one nominee for each party. And then they would advance to the general election in that model.

**NICK MEYERS:** Would that actually be in-person voting runoff election, as opposed to this paper, this machine?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** So, you can do this method in-person, absentee, however you want to do it, it's just a different style of ballot, the ballot itself.

**NICK MEYERS:** Just for clarity. Now, just for clarity. Let's say if we had the close primaries, you got the Democrat, you got the Republican, what happens at the end with those two? Is this going to be rank choice at that point?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** In the current --

**CATHERINE NEWSOME:** It's not currently provided for in the law. So, it would depend on what the legislature proposed in order to implement this. But ranked-choice voting is not currently allowed in our election code. So, we're talking hypotheticals.

**NICK MEYERS:** Right. And that's what it sounds like to me and uncertain to it right now. I mean, Senator --

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** It would -- so, just to answer that you are getting into closed primaries, open primaries, just kind of put that aside, whatever primary system you had, you want to go down the closed row, because on that one, if you had five Democrats, for example, and five Republicans running, they would have five -- the Republicans get five choices, they have ranked

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one through five, and the Democrats will get five choices in their ballot one through five. And then when it got to the end, if they'd say it was a Republican, a Democrat, maybe there's a green party candidate, maybe there's a no party that got on the ballot. So, you'll say you have four candidates, because it will just always be -- we think, in the traditional sense of Republican and Democrat but we forget, there's a lot more parties out there, and particularly one of the largest batch of people being the no party group. So, let's -- for hypothetical purposes, let's assume we have three or four, after the primary system on the runoff ballot or the general election, well, they go through the same methodology. So, it wouldn't necessarily be whoever got the plurality or the majority 50 plus one, whatever this legislature decided to do with a closed primary system, it would go off the ranked-choice voting. So, those four people, they would go in there eliminate the bottom one, then they re-tabulate again, and they eliminate the last one, then they re-tabulate again. So, the voters only voting one time. So, in the original example I gave you where you had 15 people running for governor, and they made 15 different selections from 1 to 15. The voter makes one vote. The issue is that complexity. It tabulates and knocks off number 15, re-tabulates knocks off number 14, all the way down until it gets to one candidate.

[00:25:07]

One example was in Maine we talked about earlier, where there was one candidate, they got 46.33% of the vote. And then another person had 45.58. They were very close. But they the Secretary of State they threw out 8,250 votes, and it resulted in the person had the 45, instead of the 46, being a declared winner at 50.62 percent of the remaining ballots when they only got 49.2 percent of the total ballots, because there's just so much complexity in the balloting process and they provide some testimony on Hamburg ballots that you're throwing out a segment of the voters. And it's not necessarily you're throwing out Republicans or Democrats, you're throwing out the most vulnerable voters, the ones that don't understand exactly how the process works. I'm sure Senator Jenkins, you have some constituents, particularly the elderly community that has trouble with the current process of deciding who they're going to select. And let's not fool ourselves, if we went back and we had -- if we went back to the last election, and we had 15 candidates that ran for governor, the lot of the elderly voters in your district don't know all 15 candidates. So, after they may know two or three, and they may have a ranking there. But after that, how do they fill out the ballot, if they miss one of those marks, their ballot gets invalidated. So, the whole idea of one person, one vote, which our election system is based upon, gets thrown out the window for those 8,500 people in that particular instance, in another instance, in New York was 140,000 people. It's just not good. It tears away and voter confidence. It's not good for our election process, across the board, and that's why we do our elections the way we do them now.

**NICK MEYERS:** Right. So, what your bill is trying to do is -- so, let's not go down that road --

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** We're never going to -- we're going to make it -- the legislature is going to take the position of public policy that we won't go down the road of allowing ranked-choice voting. We're going to stay within the bounds where we are. And we're going to have some debates in the future, the governor has brought a bill to talk about whether we should do, jungle, open or close primaries, or whether we're going to do a pull rally of vote or a majority of

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vote in this whole debate. That's all traditional in the aspect. There's a lot of states that do it that way. And they've had successes for a long time. And that's what you know, best. You know a lot about all those different primary systems. Introducing this different method is just putting a whole different spin on things. It's been very unsuccessful in other states, and we don't want to bring that unsuccessful and that complication into this process here in Louisiana.

**NICK MEYERS:** Okay. All right. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Thank you, Senator. Let's try to dispose of this item one way or the other. You have a comment, Senator Carter?

**SENATOR CARTER:** Quick for the Secretary of State's office. Is it possible? Do you all know -- I don't know if you know or not off the top of your head. Is it possible for any municipalities to engage in rank file voting, whatever how it's phrased currently?

**CATHERINE NEWSOME:** I think that that's one of the things that we were researching. It would depend on what each home rule charter for that municipality said. And we just didn't have enough time to go through everyone in the state.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Fair enough. Thank you. That's it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, thank you, Senator Carter. All right. We've heard the testimony on Senate Bill 9 but Senator Miguez. There are no cards in support or opposition. Members, what's your pleasure? Senator Miguez moved that we report Senate Bill 9 favorable, as amended, wherever. As amended. Are there any objections to report the bill as amended? There are no objections. This bill was reported as amended. Let's now take up congress so we can get to the Supreme Court. Is Senator -- are you ready, Senator? We ready? All right. We're going to take Senate Bill by Senator Womack, Senate Bill 8. Senate Bill 8 by Senator Womack provides for redistricting of the Louisiana congressional districts.

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Members of the committee, I have an amendment.

[00:30:00]

If I could pass out, please. If I could, I'll begin with my opening.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator Womack, you're recognized and you may proceed, sir.

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Thank you. As you know, Louisiana congressional districts must be drawn given the federal Voting Rights Act litigation that is still ongoing in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana. The map is the bill that I'm introducing, which is the product of a long, detailed process achieved several goals. First, as you know, all are aware, Congresswoman Letlow, Julia Letlow is my representative in Washington, D.C. The boundaries in this bill I'm proposing ensure that Congresswoman Letlow remains both unimpaired with any

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other incumbents and in a congressional district that should continue to elect a Republican to Congress for the remainder of this decade. I have great pride in the work Congresswoman Letlow has accomplished, and this map will ensure that Louisianans will continue to benefit from her presence in the halls of Congress for as long as she decides to continue to serve our great state. Second, of Louisiana's six congressional districts, the map and the proposed bill ensures that four of our safe Republican seats, Louisiana Republican presence in the United States Congress has contributed tremendously to the national discourse, and I am very proud of both. Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Mike Johnson and U.S. House Majority Leader Steve Scalise are both from our great state. This map ensures that the two of them will have solidly Republican districts at home so that they can focus on the national leadership that we need in Washington, D.C. The map proposed in this bill ensures that the conservative principles retained by the majority of those in Louisiana will continue to extend past our boundaries to our nation's capital. Finally, the maps in the proposed bill respond appropriately to the ongoing federal Voting Rights Act case in the Middle District of Louisiana. For those of you who are unaware, the congressional maps that we enacted in March 2022 have been the subject of litigation since the day the 2022 congressional redistricting bill went into effect. And even before we enacted it, after a substantial amount of prolonged litigation, the federal district court had heard, to its view, that the federal law required that the state have two congressional districts with a majority of black voters. Our Secretary of State attorney general and our prior legislative leadership appeal but have yet to succeed and we are here now because of the federal court's order that we have a first opportunity to act. The district court's order that we must have two majority black voting age population districts, combined with the political impurities I just described, having largely driven the boundaries of district two and district six, both of which are over 50% black voting age population. Given the state's current demographics, there is not a high enough black population in the southeast portion of Louisiana to create two majority black districts and to also comply with the U.S. constitution one person, one vote requirement. That is the reason why district two is drawn around New Orleans Parish, while district six includes the black population of East Baton Rouge Parish and travels up I-49 to include black population in Shreveport. While this is a different map than the plaintiffs in the litigation have proposed, this is the only map I reviewed that accomplished the political goals I believe are important for my district, for Louisiana, and for my country. While I did not draw these boundaries myself, I carefully considered a number of different map options. I firmly submit the congressional voting boundaries represented in this bill best achieve the goals of protecting Congresswoman Letlow's seat, maintaining strong districts for Speaker Johnson and Majority Leader Scalise, ensuring four Republican districts and adhering to the command of the federal court in the Middle District of Louisiana. I'll be happy to take any questions.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, thank you, Senator. Just a couple of questions. Do you know how many parishes -- I tried to do a count. How many this district here -- can you put it back up, it appears to split about 15 parishes. Senate Bill 8.

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Right. It does split.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** And you were here, and you heard the testimony of Senator Price, with Senate Bill 4.

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[00:35:03]

Senate Bill 4 split only 11 parishes, as I appreciate it, and it created two majority minority districts. What was the predominant reason for you to create the sixth district, the way it looks now, versus just going with Senator Price's bill, which created a more compact district?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** It was strictly -- politics drove this map because of the Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Scalise, and my Congresswoman, Julia Letlow, predominantly drove this map that I was a part of.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, so is it safe to say that your confection of District 6, race is not the predominant factor?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** No, it's not the predominant factor. It has a secondary consideration in that, because that was the district that we were trying to encompass, but it wasn't the primary.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** So, I guess it's kind of difficult when you got a speaker of the House. We're very fortunate in Louisiana, but when you got two members of your congress that are the two top ranking members of the U.S. House of Representatives, being a speaker and a majority leader, how much did that weigh in on your decision in drawing this map?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Well, it had a lot to weigh in. Not only that, but you have Congresswoman Letlow, that sits on ag and appropriation, which is a big part of my district. So, when you put them all together, that's a lot of -- I call it muscle that we were able to look at and put in for the State of Louisiana, for all of Louisiana.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Okay. So, your minority population in District 2, voter registration is 52.6, and your population is 53.1 and in the sixth district, it's 54.3 in registration and 56.1 in population. And this was -- looking at all of the issues you were dealing with, this was the best you could come up with?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Yes, sir. They perform well. When you look at the performance base, when you look at the District 6, the performance of it appears to be positive for the minority district.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Are there any things that bring these communities together in District 6? I guess that would be considered the Red River District.

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Well, you got the Red River, but you also got I-49 that goes through this district from Shreveport down to Lafayette. Follow the law of the Red River through there.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Questions from members of the committee. No questions. You have some amendments you had, Senator?



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**SENATOR WOMACK:** I do. Did you all have the amendments?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator Carter for questions.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry, senator, I did have a question. Before we move to the amendment. You said that the district performed. You were asked a question from the chairman a minute ago about District 6 and whether or not it performs as an African American district. You remember that question a second ago?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** I do.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Same question for District 2. If I'm looking at District 2 in your map, we have a total African American population of 53.121 percent and we have the registered African-American vote for District 2 at 52.69 percent. Did I read that correctly?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Yes.

[00:40:00]

Were any performance test or analysis conducted to see how District 2 performs as an African-American majority district or not?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** The democratic incumbent wins over 60 percent of the time in that race. Okay, I'm sorry. 60 percent of the vote.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Wait, I think my microphone. Can you repeat? I'm sorry. Well, let me ask. So, my question was, how does district two perform? And you just gave me a figure. What was it?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Sixty percent of the vote on the democratic nominee.

**SENATOR CARTER:** We heard earlier, when we were considering Senator Price's bill, that the legal defense fund had conducted an analysis of the performance of that district. They conducted multiple different elections based upon that district, and they had 100 percent performance rates as coming in as an African-American seat and I guess I'm curious to know, what would be the comparable number in terms of a performance of the District 2 of this particular map, the District 2 and your map that's being proposed here. Am I asking the question where you get what I'm asking?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Yeah, I think what the senator is requesting, have you done any kind of performance tests for either District 6 or District 2? Any performance analysis?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** I have not.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Okay.



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**SENATOR WOMACK:** I have a report here printed off on a congressional map. In District 2, a democratic candidate could win 100 percent of the time.

**SENATOR CARTER:** A democratic candidate, but not necessarily an African-American candidate, regardless of party. So, you said a democratic candidate. So, I'm asking about an African-American candidate. You said that a Democrat candidate performs in that district, but my question is whether or not it performs as an African-American district.

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Okay. Our analysis is on party, not race.

**SENATOR CARTER:** No analysis done to determine whether or not district two, for this map of your map, performs as an African-American district?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** No.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Thank you, Senator Carter. The board is clear. Do you have amendment, Senator?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** I do. It's Amendment 34.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Senator Womack brings up Amendment No. 34. Senator Womack, on his amendment.

**[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]**

**SENATOR WOMACK:** This is amendment. What we did on that in Avoyelles Parish, we took out -- split Avoyelles Parish, put those into Rapides around Alexandria. Rapides Parish and then we moved into -- that's Rapides there where we moved it to and then we moved into Ouachita Parish and took Ouachita West Monroe and Calhoun into that.

**[00:45:09]**

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Okay. Any other. All right, so how many parishes would that amendment would the bill overall split?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** It goes from 15 to 16.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** So, it splits one additional --

**SENATOR WOMACK:** One extra parish.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** And that would be Avoyelles Parish.

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**SENATOR WOMACK:** That would be Avoyelles Parish.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, questions, members of the -- and the percentages pretty much stay the same in the second district?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Yes.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** And 6th?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** And 6th, yeah, the numbers are the same.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Are there questions for members of the committee? All right. I do have a card. You don't need to fill out no card from Senator Heather Cloud. If you wish to be recognized, you please come and take --

**SENATOR HEATHER CLOUD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to make a simple statement. As a Republican woman, I want to stand here -- or sit here rather, and offer my support for the amendment to the map, which I believe further protects Congresswoman Julia Letlow. She is the only woman in the Louisiana's congressional district. She is a member of the appropriations committee in the US House as Senator Womack stated and also a member of the agricultural committee in the US House. It's important to me and all of the other residents of our area to have these two representatives from our crucial region in our state. I think that politically, this map does a great job protecting Speaker Johnson and Congresswoman Julia Letlow as well as Majority Leader Scalise. It keeps CD 5 in the northern Louisiana area and allows Congresswoman Letlow to keep doing the great job that she's been doing. So, I just sit here and offer my support of the amendment. Thank you, members.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Thank you. So, we could be clear, Senator, just to be -- like they say, on what is a few good men, crystal clear. So, this map, with this amendment, there are other ways we could perfect a second minority majority district, majority minority district, that's more compact, eleven parishes split. This one splits 16 parishes. The reason you are offering this amendment is for protecting f-- I hate to say, but protect incumbents, members of congress. But race is not your predominant reason for drawing and perfecting this map.

**SENATOR HEATHER CLOUD:** Mr. Chair, I have both Congresswoman Julia Letlow and Congressman Mike Johnson in my district. I work well with both of them and I want them to continue to be able to do the great job that they do on behalf of all of the constituency in my district.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Okay, so basically you are attempting to comply with the federal court, but yet protect members of the U.S. Congress, be it a female and be it two of the most powerful members of the U.S. Congress?

**SENATOR HEATHER CLOUD:** Yes, sir.

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**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, Senator Reese for a question.

**SENATOR REESE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For Senator Womack. First of all, as we continue to contemplate these alternative maps, I've got to say that I continue to move forward cautiously, as I have been concerned that we may indeed be taking some action that the courts may not have necessarily directed us to take yet. We do know that there was an alternative to ultimately end up with a hearing on the merits. But I'm also conflicted in that because I know that the person charged with the responsibility of representing the decisions we make in this legislature is our attorney general. Our attorney general has certainly declared that she thought it was the best action for us to take at this time to contemplate a different map structure. The reason we've not done that in the past is because of the difficulty, I believe, in managing what the Voting Rights Act would ask us to do and avoiding other pitfalls in the Voting Rights Act, like gerrymandering, to ultimately come up with the districts. And so, I appreciate what you're charged with trying to present here.

[00:50:00]

Would you say that, predominantly, in the remaining districts that are not majority-minority districts, you've tried to really adhere to the continuity of representation in those districts? And it appears, perhaps, that you're really trying to not bust up the kind of communities of interest, crack or split or divide those communities of interest?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Yes.

**SENATOR REESE:** So in the fourth district, for instance, I noticed that you've kept together major military installations in that fourth district. That kind of speaks to communities of interest that it looks like you're attempting to preserve with this map while you still attempt to comply with the objective of the courts in terms of creating another majority-minority opportunity district there?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** It's exactly right.

**SENATOR REESE:** The numbers. We're on your amendment now, all right, Mr. Chairman?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Yes.

**SENATOR REESE:** We've not adopted the amendment yet.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** No, we have not.

[BACKGROUND NOISE]

**SENATOR REESE:** Yes, because if you need to be, want to --

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**SENATOR WOMACK:** Yeah. Just in opposition.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Okay. Yeah. Your opposition be noted for the record, there are no other cards that I see. Senator Reese has moved that the amendments be adopted. Are there any objections to the adoption of the amendments? There are no objections. Those amendments are adopted.

**SENATOR REESE:** Thank you, committee members, and Mr. Chairman. Close on my bill?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Yes. Before you do, I wanted to just show you an amendment that -- Bill, can you pull up? Initially, when I saw, you know, I'm a stickler for keeping parishes together, trying to make districts as compact as possible. And I had tried to put something together, and I just want to get some comments from you about it as soon as Bill pulls it up. I want to know if this amendment would impact any of the considerations you have made in perfecting the one we just passed. Is it working? I tried to keep as many parishes whole as possible in the whole state, but I particularly want to concentrate on the second district and the sixth district. Would that satisfy you? If we were to adopt that amendment, would that interfere with your concerns about helping some of the members of Congress?

[BACKGROUND NOISE]

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Do we have the amendment prepared? Okay, let me offer up the amendment. I want to offer up an amendment. I'm going to offer it up.

[00:55:00]

[BACKGROUND NOISE]

Give you a quick second to look at this amendment. This amendment splits only 15 parishes. Would you have a problem with adopting this amendment?

**SENATOR REESE:** Well, Mr. Chairman, all due respect, if we could get a few minutes to look at it, if you could go maybe 10 or 15 minutes recess to look at it and kind of see, I can see where I could have some issues with it on the north end.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** For example, it keeps evolves whole. And under your, the amendment we just adopted, it splits of all Avoyelles. Senator Miguez?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To save a little bit of time, if you don't mind, if you have this information readily available, if you can, give us the split comparisons to the author's current version till now, and then give us some, maybe the African American voting population numbers as it relates to congressional district two and six in both, and any other notable differences in his map that's readily available. It didn't have me digging through the entire bill trying to cross up multiple papers, if you have any of that.

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**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Yeah, the amendment actually shows the split with the senator's amendment, and it also shows the splits with the amendment we're discussing. I'm trying to show that we can create this district more compact, even trying to protect members of Congress. And I just want to know, could you be for that amendment? And if the answer is no, that's fine.

**SENATOR REESE:** At this point, I would have to say no.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, I'm going to withdraw the amendment. And are there any further discussions on the bill? Oh, Senator Carter?

**SENATOR CARTER:** No. Are we doing any other amendments right now or just the bill?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** If there is an amendment, now is the time because we're going to vote one way or the other in a few.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Give me one second.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Are there any further amendments on the bill?

**SENATOR CARTER:** Yeah.

[BACKGROUND NOISE]

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator Carter?

[BACKGROUND NOISE]

All right, Senator Carter, you are recognized.

[01:00:00]

**SENATOR CARTER:** Give me a second. I'm coming. Looking at them already. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members, this amendment swaps 1, 2, 3, 4 precincts between what is listed as District two, the current congressional District to and District six. It moves approximately I believe it's 3,000, approximately 3,000 or so voters, but what it does though, is it increases the very slightly, the registered Democratic African-American vote in District two by increasing that number to 52.823%, which is a very slight increase. It's an increase of right around an additional 1,000 or so votes for District two and it barely has any implications with the new District six. It doesn't involve and it's my understanding from staff that it doesn't affect any other Districts other than District two and District six. It doesn't affect any of the other congressional Districts proposed in the map.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator how many additional parishes would this amendment split?

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**SENATOR CARTER:** Well, it does. It was split West Baton Rouge Parish, but I believe West Baton Rouge Parish is currently in District two. And also very slightly in Iberville Parish, there will be one, two, three parishes in those, for very minor adjustment but it increases the African-American population in District two by an additional couple of thousand votes or so.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** So it splits two additional parishes.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Very slightly. Yes.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator Jenkins?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** I'm just trying to see. So what -- where, if you picked up some votes in two, which I don't inherently have a problem with it, but what is it? Where does those votes come from?

**SENATOR CARTER:** It came from District six. So if you look at map that -- at the map that's proposed by Senator Womack, it moves precincts 1C, 1B, 8, and 6 from West Baton Rouge. And in Iberville Parish, it will move those precincts from District 2 into District 6. Precincts 20, 22, and 26. So it's very, very small and minor in terms of an adjustment. Small, but very important. Very significant. It increases the African-American vote in District 2 with a swap between 2 and 6.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** How much of a decrease in 6?

**SENATOR CARTER:** So, with 6, 6 will maintain a registered African-American percentage of 54.189 and then for District 2, it will be 52.823.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Okay. 6 is not contiguous with this amendment. I don't know if the author knew it or not.

**SENATOR CARTER:** I just heard from staff that there was a problem with one of the areas being not contiguous that they just pointed out to me, that we didn't discuss during the recess, perhaps that's something we could quickly adjust in the next few minutes or so.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Or we could do it on the floor.

**SENATOR CARTER:** I would prefer to handle it in committee, of course, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, so. You're splitting two additional parishes, Senator.

**SENATOR CARTER:** And that's also my understanding that, in addition to that, it also is supposed to take into consideration the previous amendment that was inserted on from the previous amendment from Senator Womack.

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**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right.

**SENATOR CARTER:** So those are some technical revisions that to consider the amendment that was just passed by Senator Womack, and also deal with the one issue that they just mentioned regarding the contiguous nature of it.

[01:05:03]

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Were supposed to take that?

**SENATOR CARTER:** Supposed to take both of those things into consideration, the amendment.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Okay. Senator Miguez?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a clarification, and you may have just addressed this, the Womack, I'll call it the amendment that Senator Cloud just testified upon and it just got onto the bill, your new amendment doesn't contemplate those changes in Avoyelles Parish, you're going to have to rework that. Because I'm looking, I may have the wrong amendment, I'm looking at Avoyelles Parish being completely within the new, within Congressional District 6. Is that right?

**SENATOR CARTER:** [INDISCERNIBLE 1:05:41]

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** So you had the--

**SENATOR CARTER:** Amendment. The [INDISCERNIBLE 1:05:50] was getting on. So it should not affect the previous amendment that was in effect.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** You have to rework your amendment to contemplate the change, basically?

**SENATOR CARTER:** Yeah, that's correct. That's what they're working on.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Okay. Then we're not ready to really review it at this point until we can see that. The version I have is based on the original version of the bill.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator, have you concluded, Senator?

**SENATOR KLEINPETER:** Yes.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator Kleinpeter.

**SENATOR KLEINPETER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Senator Carter, with all due respect, I'm not in favor of this. This is from -- two of my hometown parishes growing up in Iberville and



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West Baton Rouge. And part of this is my old council District that we're already chopped up as it is between Senator Price and I, as far as on the state level, and we're definitely going to be cutting West Baton Rouge and Iberville up. I just wanted to go on the record and voice my opinion based on this new map that has been presented to us.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator Miller?

**SENATOR MILLER:** Thank you. Just two quick questions again. What was the voting age population splits for two and six with these amendments in your map? Voting age population. Black.

**SENATOR CARTER:** [INDISCERNIBLE 01:07:07]

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Here it is. VAP, the African-American voting age population for District 2 would be 51.132% and African American voting age population for District 6 would be 53.612%.

**SENATOR MILLER:** Okay. And last question, did you have any information of how these would perform?

**SENATOR CARTER:** It's my understanding it will help it better perform because it is an additional increase of African-American voters. Even though it's a small amount of individuals, it's a small but significant change.

**SENATOR MILLER:** But you didn't run any performance tests on it.

**SENATOR CARTER:** No.

**SENATOR MILLER:** Okay. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Thank you, Senator. Senator Jenkins?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Well, I'm just trying to be sure here. I mean, I fundamentally don't have an issue. I'm just trying to see what's happening here in North Louisiana.

**SENATOR CARTER:** It shouldn't affect northern Louisiana at all. It's just a swap between six -- sorry, I'm not on. It should not affect Northern Louisiana. This is just a swap between District 2 and District 6. At the very bottom, if you're looking at Iberville and West Baton Rouge Parishes, right there towards the bottom, it has no bearing or no effect on Northern Louisiana.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Well, I'm looking at the configuration. I mean.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Well, I think the difference is we're looking at the configuration from the previous amendment from Senator Womack that should be incorporated into the amendment that I'm offering. So, that's a technical thing that they're fixing, it doesn't have anything to do

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with the swap that I am. So there was the previous amendment that was offered by Senator Womack with Senator Cloud testifying at the table that got adopted, this amendment doesn't undo that, doesn't touch it, whatsoever. This is just a very slight. swap between District 3 and District 6.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** I see that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Okay, Senator Jenkins.

**[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]**

All right. Any of the members who wish to be heard on the amendment

**SENATOR CARTER:** Yes [Indiscernible 01:09:41]. We don't have the amendment. Can we do it in concept or no?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator Carter, why don't we move the bill out the way it is now. The amendment is not ready. And you're talking about 3,000 people.

**[01:10:04]**

**SENATOR CARTER:** I know. We had the conversation earlier about doing a haul work at committee and making certain we have the amendments that we need here. I did not realize that it didn't contemplate the previous amendment that got on. It was my understanding it was supposed to and I just heard about the issue about the contiguousness.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** I hate to oppose one of my distinguished colleagues in committee --

**SENATOR CARTER:** Well, I hope you don't.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** But I do think we have an obligation to make sure that anything we do and pass is not for -- race is not the predominant reason. Can you give us the reason for split into parishes other than race?

**SENATOR CARTER:** Well, one, I think hearing the testimony of my previous colleagues, Senator Womack and [PH 01:10:58] Senator Cloud, this increases the odds of District 2 performing as an African-American district. Given the importance that our congress person has performed in District 2. I think it's very important that that District remains strengthen where I can perform as an African-American District. That is a factor, is not the predominant factor. It is also consistent with the principles outlined with the federal judge and it's also consistent with communities of interest and all the other factors that we previously considered.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** So, lastly what's the predominant factor you used into split the two parishes that the 3000 people?

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**SENATOR CARTER:** It's very important. We talked about very earlier when this hearing started, we talked about many of the storms and hurricanes that we've had. It's very important you look at what happened in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina making certain we had congressional representation to deliver for the City of New Orleans for not just the City of New Orleans, but for the whole area, the call second congressional district. A similarly during hurricane, but the pandemic with the COVID making certain we have congressional representation that's can continue to deliver for our district.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Okay, members, you've heard the discussion by Senator Carter that amendment can't be adopted because it's not ready. We do have other bills we have to hear. I would plea to the gentlemen to let us past the bill and if we can perfect the amendment on the floor, we can do just that.

**SENATOR CARTER:** But my only concern we're doing it on the floor as it opens it up to -- it's important that we do the hard work in committee, I thought.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right.

**SENATOR CARTER** So, if we can perhaps give staff an opportunity to finalize the amendment so we can get that hopefully considered by the committee.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Well, we got to pass over. Senator, if you -- we could pass over your bill for now and get to the rest of these bills because --

**SENATOR CARTER:** It shouldn't take long. It's a very small -- I believe it's less than 3000 voters. So, it should be easy and quick to fix.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Let's pass over Senator Womack. The US first to pass over your bill for now?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** That's good.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Bill you have --

**[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]**

**SENATOR CARTER:** I believe we have the revised amendment. So, don't go too far.

**[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]**

Let's just contemplate the previous Amendment from that one from Senator Womack and Senator Cloud. The one that's already passed. Yes, yes. It doesn't undo any of the previous amendments. It maintains the revisions that was --

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[OVERLAY]

Okay, good. I believe Mr. Chairman that the amendment is now being finalized that solves both of those issues where it doesn't undo the previous amendment that was offered by Senator Womack and Senator Cloud.

[01:15:04]

It wasn't intended to do that and it fixed the one part of the amendment that wasn't contiguous.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Okay, the staff is -- is the staff ready? Staff? I'm up lean on the gentlemen one last time. Will the gentleman deferred to the Chair and allow us to pass it now and we will have discussions between now and the floor? You can have discussions with the -- between now and the floor.

**SENATOR CARTER:** Sounds good, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Thank you, gentlemen. All right. Thank you, Senator Carter. Are there any further discussions on the bill? Senator Reese has moved that Senate Bill 8 be reported favorable, they reported as amended. Are there any objections to reporting Senate Bill 8 as amended? Heard no objections, that bill is reported favorable.

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Let's get into Supreme Court so we can get to the floor. State Senate Bill 1.

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]

All right, Senate Bill 1. Please proceed Senator Pressly.

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** Thank you, Chairman Fields and members. I know it's been a long day and we're going to pivot a little bit from the congressional maps over to the State Supreme Court. Of course, we know that the State Supreme Court has seven justices that are voted on by the people of Louisiana. The last time that we did redistricting of the State Supreme Court, I was in elementary school. It is time to look at Supreme Court. Even then the districts were not the last time that they were drawn, they were not drawn proportionally, and they had wide population discrepancies. Today, the proportionality is significantly off. The difference between the biggest and smallest districts is over 360,000 people. This map will more evenly divided the population amongst the seven districts of the Supreme Court. The ideal population for a statewide seven district map is 665,393 people. This map, as amended, will range from a 6.965% over the ideal population to 6.5% less than the ideal population. It also maintained the communities of interest throughout the state and splits the minimum amount of parishes possible. We'll only split five parishes, Orleans, Jefferson, Tangipahoa, East Baton Rouge and Washita. It will also create two

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majority-minority districts. One with 52.325% and one with 53.4% Black VAP. With that, I'll take any questions from members.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Questions from the members?

**[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]**

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Here we go. All right. Senator Miller?

**SENATOR MILLER:** Thank you, Senator Pressly. I appreciate the work that you're doing. You have two bills, correct?

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** That's correct.

**SENATOR MILLER:** And is it your intention to try to move both of those bills to the floor?

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** It is. I want to give the full body of the Senate, the opportunity to review multiple bills on this important issue. We need two-thirds of the legislative bodies in order to pass a Supreme Court map. And I think it's important that everyone have the opportunity to voice the important issues that are facing at their regions and their areas that they represent.

**SENATOR MILLER:** And I just want to express that this is not my favorite one of your bills, but you have another one that also that will have an amendment that will certainly greatly improve my ability to try to support it.

**[01:20:03]**

But I'd like to see your bills get through the, at least move out of committee. But I'm not committing to you that I would support this on the floor.

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** Sure. Thank you, senator.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator Fesi?

**SENATOR FESI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Senator, from what I understand, we had discussed, I had an amendment for Senate Bill 1.

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** I believe that's correct. It was for Senate Bill 1.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Senator Fesi brings up Amendment 36. Senator Fesi?

**SENATOR FESI:** Okay. Basically, in my district, it kind of helps out St. Charles Parish. We take in a little bit of St. Charles Parish and a little bit of just St. Charles Parish. And basically

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that's what it does. It puts it more contingents with what's going on in, like, neighborhoods and everything there. And Senator Pressly, are you good with that?

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** Yeah. I have no objection to your amendment set, as we've discussed, and I think that might actually address some of Senator Miller's concerns as well.

**SENATOR FESI:** Senator Miller, I was just wondering, does that fix your problem?

**SENATOR MILLER:** Obviously, it creates challenges -- yeah, I mean, obviously, you go from one frying pan into a fire, but this is the preferred source of heat for this situation.

**SENATOR FESI:** Thank you. Okay. I'd like to propose this amendment.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Senator Reese, for a question.

**SENATOR REESE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Senator Fesi, I guess maybe this would apply to your amendment, if indeed that's we're going to adopt. But what is the percent total population variation amongst those districts? I know there was some testimony this morning in-house that the goal would be not to exceed 5%.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Well, certainly there's competing thoughts on that. There is no requirement under judicial redistricting guidelines for it to be a certain percentage. What Senator Fesi's bill would do -- what his amendment would do is change the biggest and smallest districts and the proportionality. So it would make it so that the largest range above the ideal population would be 6.965%, and the smallest district would be a range of 6.5%. Currently, our Supreme Court is over 362,000 people off from the idea.

**SENATOR REESE:** Certainly has no bearing on what we're doing.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** But as opposed to Congress and the legislature, when you're looking at redistricting up the judiciary, there's no requirement that it be in proportionality to the same level.

**SENATOR REESE:** All right, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Senator Fesi.

**SENATOR FESI:** I would like to ask this amendment be put onto SB1.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Senator Fesi sends up Amendment 36 and moves that those amendments be adopted. Are there any objections to the adoption of the amendments? Here are no objections. Those amendments are adopted. Senator Pressly. Do we have any cards on this bill? Ms. Celeste, do we have any cards? Senator Pressly Presley, close.

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** Ask for your feral passage. Thank you, members.

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**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Do we have a motion? All right. Senator Fesi moves that we report Senate Bill 1 as amended.

[01:25:06]

Are there any objections to reporting the bill as amended? There are no objections. That bill is reported as amended. The next bill. You insist on taking this next bill? Right?

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** I'd like to address both of them for the exact reason that Senator Miller brought up.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senate Bill 2 by Senator Pressly provides for the redistricting of Louisiana Supreme Court. Senator Pressly?

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** Yeah. So, senators, again, we are trying to address the issue of proportionality of our Supreme Court districts. This is another option that's provided. It would provide a deviation of the largest district, which would be 4.893% in district two, which would be above the ideal range, and district three would be 4.695% below the ideal range. There are no substantial changes to district one, nor the two north Louisiana districts. Again, it maintains the communities of interest throughout the state and tries to limit the number of parishes that are split. And in this map, it would be limited to 11 parishes that are split. Ask for your favorable passage.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, Senator Pressly in two there is Angola, is located in Supreme Court justice district five under this map, right? And the voter registration under district five is -- what is the voter registration in district five? I see population. I saw it online last night and -- here we are. All right, it's 52.6. 52.6 is district five and 54.5 is district seven. Have you taken into account the prison population?

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** I did not, Chairman Fields, I will tell you again, my goal is to give options to the body and to have more conversations to address some of the concerns that you certainly have brought up, not only in this hearing, but privately with me. And certainly I'll be willing to work with you between here and the floor to address those concerns and issues that you have.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Any further discussion? We do have one card from Chief Judge John Michael Guidry, representing self, who would like to speak. Welcome back to the Senate, senator. Please proceed.

**CHIEF JUDGE JOHN MICHAEL GUIDRY:** It's good to be back. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, my name is John Michael Guidry, to judge in Louisiana First Circuit Court of Appeal. I come with respect to information only, of course, and to talk about some of the things that I believe affect the administration of justice. My concerns with this particular piece of legislation, number one, as the chairman pointed out, is about 22,000



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individuals that are in Angola and that are in hunts and in surrounding prisons that are made a part of that, that's made a part of this bill. And, of course, we know those are not going to be actual voters that's going to show up on election day. So that's one problem with the bill. Another problem with the legislation, as we've analyzed it is there's another piece of legislation that was unanimously passed out of the House and Governmental affairs committee, House Bill 8 by Mr. Johnson. And that bill is a bill that has the support of our Supreme Court. A majority of our Supreme Court, five justices of the Supreme Court support that legislation. The African-American judges that are part of Louisiana Judge Council, National Bar Association here in East Baton Rouge Parish. We've met and we have looked and analyzed that bill and think that that bill better furthers the goals that are going to help the administration of justice in terms of the Supreme Court. You're working on a very short timeframe.

[01:30:00]

I was a member of the House, a member of the Senate. I went through the reinforcement process. I went through the conference committee process. When you're working on tight timeframes, as you're working in this session, I think the worst thing we can do is to come out of this session with nothing. And the problem is you have a bill, I think, that's going to move quickly out of the House of Representatives that accomplishes compliance with the Voting Rights Act, will end the litigation that is presently pending before the Middle District Court. And this particular legislation, if you look at the numbers, you're talking 52% here. The House bill has 56%. We've talked all day about districts performing. Certainly a 56% voting age population of minority citizens is going to perform much better than a 52% district. And, of course, the ability to settle the litigation in a middle district based on the Voting Rights Act, 56% district is going to have a much better chance of doing that. If you look at the spread, the minority spread, black, white spread, you're talking under this legislation, probably about 7%. You're looking at a 19% spread when you're looking at House Bill 8. So as a practical matter, if we are trying to comply with the Voting Rights Act, we're trying to save the millions of dollars that are going to go into continuous litigation with regard to that lawsuit. If we want to save that money for the citizens of Louisiana, if we want to make sure that we have a district that's going to actually perform, then House Bill 8 is the bill. And particularly in a compressed session like this, to move this legislation to the floor, to move it through the process, ended up going into a conference committee between the House and the Senate, you may come out with nothing. The only thing you're going to come out with is a continued ballooning litigation bill. You're going to miss an opportunity where you have the attorney general, the governor, five justices of the Supreme Court, and the fact is that this is a rare opportunity. The other thing is that justice delayed is justice denied. If we don't get this passed, we're not going to be able to elect an African-American to the Supreme Court this fall. That means the first opportunity under this bill is not going to be until 2028. And so, again, when you put that into the mix and you put that in front of the court in terms of trying to settle this litigation, delaying it for five years, continuing the cost, having a district that doesn't really perform, that's really the concern that I have in terms of analyzing this legislation vis a vis House Bill 8 that again came out of the House committee unanimously. I believe it's going to get through the House. If we can get it through the Senate, then I think you will have a resolution that's going to save the taxpayers, comply with the Voting Rights Act and do what I think the governor talked about doing the other day, which is to do the

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right thing. This has been ongoing for quite some time, over 107 years since we've looked at the Louisiana Supreme Court. And now you have the justices, the majority of the justice of Supreme Court on board in doing something. And I think if I were in the legislature today, I would consider this idea. I know that the power to redistrict is that of the legislative branch, but there should be some consideration for a co-equal and coordinated branch of the government who by majority of their members have spoken that this is in the best interest of that institution. And I'll be glad to answer any questions, if you have any.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** There are no questions. Thank you, Chief Judge for coming down to give your testimony.

**CHIEF JUDGE JOHN MICHAEL GUIDRY:** Thank you, sir.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, senator -- hold up, you do have one question. You do? Okay. Senator Pressly to close. Senator Jenkins for a question.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** All right. So on this particular bill, I didn't get a chance to get this in because I was kind of analyzing it. But now we got seven members of the court. There is some desire for at least two of those to be seats that a minority could win. Am I right?

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** Yeah, and that certainly was the thought process on drafting the two pieces of legislation, both Senate Bill 1, which we've now moved to the floor, as well as this piece of legislation which it does create two majority minority districts. There's new information that I'm learning about as I sit here and certainly talking with Senator Fields as well as the Chief Judge of the circuit court down here. And certainly those are things that I'd be willing to work with anyone to try to come up with as good of a map as we possibly can.

[01:34:59]

What I'm concerned about, and I know you join me in, is that our area in Shreveport is not only taken from our sister city in Bossier, but Caddo Parish is divided in half. And in fact, the city of Shreveport is divided in half amongst two different Supreme Court districts. In the House bill 8, which the chief judge brought up, that certainly is deeply concerning to me as well as the justice that represents our area, Justice Creighton, who has put out letter saying his concerns which pair mine and I think most of our community up in northwest Louisiana.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Now, your Senate Bill 1, it keeps Caddo whole.

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** It does. And this one would keep Caddo whole as well.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** But this is what my concern is.

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** Sure.

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**SENATOR JENKINS:** Senator, if you talk about the present population that you've heard, and I'm looking at your black voter age population in this one, it's only at 50% now. Don't you think that we are putting ourselves in a position where you may not have a second majority-minority seat?

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** Well, certainly --

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Those numbers don't seem to perform to get us to that particular point. So I guess part of my question is why not just try to look at the bill that has come out instead of trying to bring in this bill that could.

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** Well, I think the general ideas of the two different maps are, as you can see, very different. And certainly, I think we can tweak along the edges of this piece of legislation to see which one of the majority of our, excuse me, the supermajority of our legislature would agree with. And I think when you're trying to get to two-thirds of the legislature on any bill, particularly one on our courts, it's important to have options. And that was my goal. That certainly was my goal in bringing both pieces of legislation and giving the members of this body, as well as the House, an opportunity to review and do our duty, which, with respect to our courts, including the chief judge here today, as well as our Supreme Court, who has put out their thoughts on a map, the duties of redistricting belong to the legislature, and I think that's a really important responsibility that we have as members of this body.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** I'm just very concerned if we're already at just 50% and we take it in consideration that you may have some population there, a pretty significant number there. Even if they, I mean, they cannot vote, look like we're putting ourselves in a position with this particular bill as opposed to your first one.

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** And I think that's an important piece of information. They cannot vote. I certainly didn't take into account that issue, but I certainly would be willing to work with you, with Senator Fields, as well as the entire body, to try to do our responsibility, which is to try to come up with the best map possible for the people of Louisiana.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Well, you know how much we work together. But I'm very concerned about putting my vote behind a bill like this that would, I mean, to me, we are really setting ourselves up not to have what I think the ultimate goal is. Now, your first bill is different from what you have presented.

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** Sure. I certainly understand your thoughts and considerations on this.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** You're putting yourself in a position where it could actually dip below and take us to a point where we really don't have the two districts that we want to be a part of this whole process. So if you're not willing to withdraw it, I just don't know if I can go with you on this one.

**SENATOR PRESSLY:** I understand where you are. Thank you, sir.

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**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. There are no other questions. Are there any cards? Any other cards? There are no other questions. Members, you've heard the testimony on Senate Bill 2. What's your pleasure?

**[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]**

Senator Miller moves that we report Senate Bill 2 as favorable. Are there any objections?

**[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]**

Sure. Senator Jenkins object. Secretary will call the roll.

**FEMALE 1:** Senator Miguez?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** If you're in favor of passing Senate Bill, you vote aye. Senator Miguez votes aye.

**FEMALE 1:** He said yes?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Votes yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yay. Senator Carter? Nay. Senator Fesi?

**[01:40:00]**

**SENATOR FESI:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** I'm so sorry. Okay, you all forgive me about that. Senator Jenkins? Votes nay. Senator Kleinpeter? Votes yay. Senator Miller? Yay. Senator Reese? Yay. And Senator Womack?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yay. Senator Fields, excuse me.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** I'm going to vote no.

**FEMALE 1:** Votes nay. I have six yays and three nays.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Six yeas and three nays. The bill is reported. All right, we got a few more bills here. We got Senator Miguez, you want to take your statewide real quick?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Yeah.

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**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** We're going to go to Senate Bill three by Senator Dominguez provides for the statewide election of the supreme court justices.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. Committee members, I appreciate the time I'm bringing before you SB 3. Louisiana has one of the most mal-apportioned state supreme courts in the entire country. Every other state with districts that have redistrict their courts after the most recent census. But in Louisiana, we have only redistricted our court once in the last 100 years. We have one district with 476,000 people, and we have one with over 838,000 people. That means that the votes in one area of the state count for half the value of the votes for the other part of the state. That is not fair to the people of Louisiana. I bring before you a constitutional amendment that'll make the Supreme Court a statewide election. And this constitutional amendment fixes two problems. It ends the litigation that is hanging over our head, and it fixes the unfairness of our unequal districts. It provides a statewide election of the Supreme Court in a map that looks exactly like the breakdown of the people of Louisiana and ensures we never have to reapportion Louisiana Supreme Court ever again. Every citizen's vote will have the same value no matter what part of the state you live in. I like to point out that only a handful of states. Let's hear this again. Only five states use districts similar to Louisiana. Of the 22 states that elect supreme court justices, roughly 17 elect them by statewide vote. That's an overwhelming supermajority. The remaining states handle their Supreme Court justice selection process through [INDISCERNIBLE 01:42:39] appointments. That's 26 of those states. And in two states, they do it through legislative appointment. The Louisiana Supreme Court handles state matters only, so it's only appropriate that we elect them statewide. As you can tell, the redistricting process is not an easy topic to legislate. I ask that we save this headache from future legislators and fix this problem once and for all. I ask for your favorable passage of this constitutional amendment, and be happy to answer any questions that the committee members may have?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Any questions for members of the committee? Senator Jenkins?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Tell me again, how many members of the court will that be under your bill? Will that still be seven?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** It remains. It keeps the same amount of members on the court. It doesn't change that that's currently in the constitution. The only thing that it does is it says that the justices shall be elected for a term. Well, it already says that for ten years. It just says elected by statewide. And it deletes the portion of the Constitution Section 4 which contemplates districts, so everything else will remain the same. The only change is that we will no longer have seven individual districts. We will have seven individual Supreme Court justices that were run on a statewide election, which is done in 17 of the 22 other states that elect justices. We in Louisiana are one of the outliers. We're one of five. And I'll give you for the committee's information. The five states that use districts are Illinois, Mississippi, Kentucky, Oregon, and our state. Our governor, I was listening to his speech, and he talked about bringing in a new era for Louisiana. He talked about learning from other states, not reinventing the wheel, finding things

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that work in other states. I thought this is a great opportunity to start to bring something that works in other states that's been adopted in the majority of the states.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Well, I guess my concern would be so, just given how the population is in our state, that's a good potential that all seven of our justices could come from New Orleans Baton Rouge area. But just because of the way the population is composed in our state.

[01:45:00]

That doesn't concern you?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Well, the main issue that I have is to make sure that every individual's vote counts. And I think that if the voters are going to vote for the most capable judge, and we currently have this process in place, think about it. On a statewide vote for all of our statewide elected officials. And does every one of our statewide elected officials come from New Orleans?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** No. But this is our, this is our justice system. Do see it a little bit differently than the executive. And I'm not trying to belittle your bill or your concept, these are legitimate concerns that I've heard from people who have had the opportunity to see the bill. They're not here to ask you this, so just hear me out. The concern we have up north is that we could have all seven justices out of Baton Rouge and New Orleans just based on how the popular vote in this state may go based on population. So I was just asking, was that a consideration that you had when you went forth with this bill?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Well, my consideration was trying to resolve the issues, trying to get rid of the litigation, trying to make sure we resolve this issue going forward. And there's been a lot of disagreement. I mean, we've saw several maps. I think we saw two today from Senator Pressly. And there's been disagreements on this committee as well as be further through the process, how the district goes. Should it have this breakdown or that breakdown? Well, this thing is, I hate to use the word perfect, but is a perfect representation of the diversity breakdown, whether its age, race, party, population changes. Once you make this, you enact this type of sweeping reform and you make it statewide, it will work in perpetuity just like it's worked in other states. And I encourage you to look at the numbers and look at where we stand. We're only one of five states. And I understand some of your concerns, but this just deals with the constitutional aspect. You could always, through statute, address your concerns, but this is a very simple constitutional amendment that just removes the districts altogether as the voter, not as the candidate. If you wanted, Representative Jenkins, you could bring a statute that potentially just dealt with where candidates could run from. But this just deals with the voting aspect, the statewide voting aspect.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Okay, now what about -- so this takes a constitutional amendment?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Yes, the constitutional amendment. You know, the voter threshold for that.



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**SENATOR JENKINS:** So when would an election on the constitutional amendment take place? Would they have to be in the fall sometime?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** It's currently written where it would be in November 5, 2024. But I'm open to ideas. If we have a timing issue that this could be potentially moved up into a, don't we have some April elections coming up? What's our next election?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Okay, that's mighty quick. But I guess some of the concern was trying to go ahead and fill these Supreme Court seats or whatever election that is coming up on the Supreme Court trying to get it done sometime this year. We'd have to wait for this constitutional amendment and see what the outcome of that was before we could even have an election.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** If you cut the districts, however you elected to select the districts through statute, this would just, at a certain point in time, at the constitutional amendment, change. It would just basically say that instead of the voters inside that particular district only voting, only those individuals voting, it'd be the whole state that would vote on behalf. If you decide to leave the statutes in place.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** That would only be that one justice that had to run statewide at this particular point?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** No. Every justice after the constitutional amendment took place would be run on a statewide basis. The legislature would legislate based on the statute.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** So we'll be waiting for the constitutional amendment to pass. Now, if the constitutional amendment does not pass, does that not put us right back to where we are now with the seven districts?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Well, the constitution requires that the state shall be divided into six supreme court districts. This would just take away that requirement and say that after the constitutional amendment passes, whether, however this legislature legislates, if this legislature decides to, let's say, pass Senator Pressly's bill and create a different set of districts, up until this constitutional amendment passes those districts, only the people in those districts would vote. But once this constitutional amendment passes, if that instrument were to stay in place, hypothetically pass, and every election after that would be a statewide election. So you wouldn't have to necessarily worry about the numbers and apportionment because the electorate would be the entire state because they deal with statewide issues.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** What if the constitutional amendment doesn't pass? I'm trying to see the other side.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** If the constitutional amendment doesn't pass and things would remain in place as whatever the expression of the legislature was after this session if we decided to express a different will than the previous separate districts.



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[01:50:05]

This is just making a statewide election. After the date of the constitutional amendment. It just doesn't require districts anymore. I hope I'm not representing this incorrectly from staff, but this doesn't necessarily expand the districts. It just says who votes in every particular district on statewide.

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]

**SENATOR JENKINS:** I didn't quite get to ask what was --

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator being -- this does eliminate the requirement for districts.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** The requirement. But if the statute was still in place, which I don't have the statute number, but the statute number, let's say 101 stayed in place, then those districts would stay in place if the legislature decided to keep them there.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** That's correct, sir.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** So, my constitutional amendment only makes the electorate statewide, doesn't necessarily make the qualifications for the candidate statewide unless the legislature took action through the Pressly bill or a different instrument.

**SENATOR MILLER:** Come from a certain area, but just will run statewide? Is that what you're saying?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** And I'm going to allow staff to correct me if I'm giving you the incorrect information, but let's run the hypothetical that my constitutional amendment is the only thing that passes this session. Hypothetically speaking. The current districts would stay in place, which are currently out of whack on population. It would solve that immediately because they're divided amongst the state. But only individuals that live in that district could run, but they'd have to run on a statewide ballot after this amendment took effect. Is that correct? Correct. That's what my constitutional amendment does. It's the decision of this body to determine how they want to set the districts, the qualifications for candidates to run. I'm only dealing with the electorate and how they are elected, which means that everyone in the state, and that's a change in number all the time and a different breakdown. They get to decide on statewide who is elected to the Supreme Court justice districts or non-districts that the legislature decides in the governor.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** You conclude, senator.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Thank you, Senator Jenkins. Senator Miller.

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**SENATOR MILLER:** Thank you. This isn't going to cause us to have a different litigation, is that correct?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** No, I'd say that I'd have to get someone who's actually dealing with the litigation. I don't know if that's the AG's office, not to get into the particulars of that. I won't go there. But it's my position that this would relieve the litigation because you'd always have the perfect breakdown, the perfect numbers, but the electorate would match the state's population and demographics. So, we relieve all those issues instantly, and keep in mind the idea that this is done in so many other states. There's a reason for that, because it relieves these problems. That's why I'm bringing it forward. I'm bringing this as a solution to all the disagreement and the fact that we haven't redistrict once in the last 100 years and this provides a solution that lives on past this legislature.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Thank you.

**SENATOR MILLER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Thank you, senator. All right, the board is clear. We do have cards in opposition but do not wish to speak. Carlos Pollard, Jr. with the Power Coalition, Victoria Wenger with the Legal Defense Fund and Sanjay Mason with Daughters Beyond Incarceration. All in opposition, do not wish to speak. Members, you've heard the testimony on Senate Bill 3. What's your pleasure?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** I'd like to make a motion to move favorably.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator Miguez has moved that we report Senate Bill 3 favorable. Are there any objections?

**SENATOR MILLER:** Yes.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** There are objections. Secretary will call the roll. If you in favor of the bill, you would vote aye, yes, and if you oppose to the bill, you would vote no.

**FEMALE 1:** Senator Jenkins.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator Jenkins, object.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Object.

**FEMALE 1:** Senator Fields.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Calling me first? No.

**FEMALE 1:** I don't want to forget you. I'll go on. Senator Miguez.

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**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Carter?

**SENATOR CARTER:** No.

**FEMALE 1:** Nay. Senator Fesi?

**SENATOR FESI:** Yes. Senator Jenkins?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** No.

**FEMALE 1:** No. Senator Kleinpeter.

**SENATOR KLEINPETER:** Yes. Senator Miller?

**SENATOR MILLER:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Reese?

**SENATOR REESE:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Womack.

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Fields?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** I've already voted. All right. So, what's the count? I voted. You called me first. So, what's the count?

**FEMALE 1:** I have six yeas and --

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Three nays.

**FEMALE 1:** Three nays.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Six ayes and three nays and the bill is reported.

[01:55:04]

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Mr. Chairman, thank you so much for the time today. I appreciate it.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** No problem. So now we have Senator Seabaugh as the last -- Senator Seabaugh, let's take Senate Bill 5, which provides for statewide districts for the

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Louisiana Supreme Court. Senator Seabaugh, is there any difference between this bill and the bill that the committee just passed?

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I'll be very quick. This is a very similar bill to Senator Miguez's bill, with the difference being it does not do anything to the districts, and it specifies that in order to run, you have to live in the districts. Whatever those districts look like, however the legislature has drawn them. You have to reside in the district, but you run statewide, and effectively, it's a similar, except it's a little more clear and it specifies who can be a candidate in the race is you must live in the respective districts. That's the only difference?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Yes, senator.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** And it alleviates Senator Jenkins' concern about making sure they're all from New Orleans or not all from New Orleans or Baton Rouge.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, do we have any cards on this bill? The board is clear. Members, you've heard the testimony from Senator Seabaugh. What's your pleasure on Senate Bill 5?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Make a motion in favor.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator Miguez moved that we report Senate Bill 5 favorable. Are there objections? Senator Jenkins object. Secretary will call the role.

**FEMALE 1:** Senator Miguez?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Votes yes. Senator Carter.

**SENATOR CARTER:** No.

**FEMALE 1:** No. Senator Fesi?

**SENATOR FESI:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Jenkins?

**SENATOR JENKINS:** No.

**FEMALE 1:** No. Senator Kleinpeter.

**SENATOR KLEINPETER:** Yes.

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**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Miller? Senator Reese?

**SENATOR REESE:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Womack.

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Fields?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Chair votes no.

**FEMALE 1:** I have five yeas and three nays.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Five yeas and three nays and a bill is reported favorable.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Senator, let's take Senate Bill 6.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Okay. The other two, six and seven go together. Six is essentially a separate, different way of attacking the issue. On district of the Supreme Court. Six is a constitutional amendment moving the Supreme Court from seven justices to nine, whereas Senate Bill 7 is an actual map of the nine different districts. One difference is, if you look at the map, the two majority minority districts are at 56% and 57% so they're more likely to perform than the maps in the other districts. With one swing district, which is 54% white, but with districts, I mean, Senate Bill 6, the constitutional amendment itself is similar to a bill that came out of this body, I think, two years ago, trying to go from seven to nine. And we can. The more complicated bill is number seven, which is the actual map. But six is simply a constitutional amendment going from seven to nine.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Chair would like to bring up, offer up technical amendments. Technical amendments No. 30. Staff has offered. Told me those are technical. It deletes. Have you seen those amendments?

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** I have, but I don't have a copy of them. But I was showing them earlier.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** It gives, Senator, copy of the amendments on page two, it deletes line 17 through 20. And on page two, line 21, change section four to section three. Those are technical amendments. Any objection to the adoption of the technical amendments? Hearing objections, those amendments are adopted. Members, the board is clear. Senator Fesi.

**SENATOR FESI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Adding these extra judges and all the extra cost. What's the fiscal note on adding extra judges?

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**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** There is a fiscal note and it looks like it's zero. I do find that hard to believe.

[OVERLAY]

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** There is a fiscal note that looks like it's zero. That seems odd to me, but that's what it says.

**SENATOR FESI:** Well, that's why I'm questioning it, because I just can't believe you're adding a lot more people to our cost of our state and there's no cost to it.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** I would suggest that between. If this bill were to make it out, I would ask for a revised fiscal note before it gets to the floor. I saw it today for the first time. I was a little surprised by it.

**SENATOR FESI:** Yeah.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** I was expecting there to be a fiscal note.

**SENATOR FESI:** Okay. All right. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, Senator Jenkins.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[02:00:04]

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So what would be the motivation for expanding the court? Why would we want to add some more justices?

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** We went through this exercise two years ago, and the bill passed the Senate by two thirds majority. And I think it came one vote shy of passing the House. And it's essentially the same motivation we had then. A, it's much easier to draw the second majority minority district, the map, which is Senate Bill 7. The districts are 56% and 57%, which are, again, much more likely to perform to elect an African-American. And also, it doesn't divide the state up. Again, if you look at the map on number seven, it's much more geographically contiguous. I think the areas of interest are a little better. And it's not quite as -- you don't have the spider web looking district or something that spreads out across the state, you can keep things a little more tight and it just looks better. Again, I haven't had anybody complain to me about the map. I've had people complain saying they didn't like the idea of going from seven to nine, but I haven't had anybody yet look at the map and tell me that they didn't like the map if it were to be enacted. So again, the idea is going from seven to nine makes it easier to draw the districts. And our area in northwest Louisiana is not divided in half as it is in House Bill 8 and alleviate some of the same issues that Senator Pressly addressed in his bill. And I just tried to do it from a

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different perspective. I liked the idea of going to nine. I supported that bill two years ago. I was sorry that it didn't pass, and I thought since we're here, we'd maybe give it another shot. I do think it solves a lot of the issues that we seem to be struggling with on the other map.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** I tell you, I just got fundamental and I'm being consistent about it has nothing to do with who authors it or whatever. I just have fundamental issues with that expansion. All of a sudden now, when there is some discussion about adding another minority seat, now we want to expand. To me, it just fundamentally looked like we're getting around the compactness of the court as we have it now with the seven seats and just getting it where decision making can be made by that seven people, because now you're going to bring in a couple of more decision makers, if I could put it that way. Representative Seabaugh, I respect and understand what you're trying to do. I have fundamentally had an issue with why we want to expand all of a sudden instead of add to what we already have.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Again, a lot of states have nine. In fact, I think Texas has 18. They have a nine for criminal and nine for civil. It's not unusual to have nine. The U.S. Supreme Court has nine. There's nothing fundamentally that different about seven and nine, except for the fact that -- one of the reasons I ended up there was because it was just easier to draw the districts. Each area of the state would essentially have the opportunity to elect its own justice. And then it gives much easier to draw the 57% and 56% majority minority districts with one that is 54% wide, which would be a swing district. So I'm really looking at it as six, two and one necessarily. So it's just from that perspective, it was just easier to draw it.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Right. I'm certainly not questioning your motives or anything. I know when it came up the last time, that was my concern was that we've had this seven-member court all this time. Now when we start talking about bringing a little bit more diversity to the bench, now there's a reason to expand it. And you're not saying that -- I'm not trying to put any kind of words in your mouth. This is what my concern has been. Why not have that diversity on the seven-member bench that is already making decisions in our justice system?

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** I understand your concern, and I know I just got to the senate and this might be the only time I propose an expansion of government, but I thought I'd give it a shot from the jump.

**SENATOR JENKINS:** Right. Absolutely. Thank you for answering my question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Thank you, senator. [PH 02:04:34] Senator D'Amico, I guess we go to you next. But just real quickly, have you taken into consideration the impact this bill would have on the litigation at present?

**SENATOR D'AMICO:** I have, and I can answer that question. It does draw a second minority district. That's pretty clear. I mean, again, the two districts will be 56% and 57% with the other one 54% white, which I could think you could call a swing district. I think it would eliminate the litigation, but I can't speak for sure.



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[02:05:01]

I'm not inside the judge's mind, but I think it would.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** The litigation now is dealing with seven.

**SENATOR D'AMICO:** Yes.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** And the fight is about increasing from one to two in a seven-member district.

**SENATOR D'AMICO:** That's correct.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** I'm not so sure that this will end the litigation, but I respect the gentleman for bringing legislation. Senator Miguez, you have a question?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm trying to understand maybe the packages, bills and totality. So we just recently -- you brought a constitution amendment, very similar, I think, to mine. It's just you actually run from the districts and then you have a map that has nine districts.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** The bill we're on is the amendment, the constitution amendment, going from seven to nine. The map would be separate.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Yeah, so is your end goal to go from seven to nine and have them on a statewide election?

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Well, again, both were to pass. That would be the effect. But that's - I'm kind of looking at it as an either or.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Okay, let me run this through. Is this the correct way to think about this bill? Because I haven't got a chance to digest it fully yet. But if I look at, let's say, the Pressly options, which were Senate Bill 1 and 2, and then I look at the Supreme Court 9 that you put forward, I have to make a decision whether the fiscal note, which is 1.1 for one year, and I guess so five years, 8.6 million is worth the ease of writing the districts. That's my juggling act.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** And those bills would be in conflict. They would be in conflict with House Bill 8 and both of Senator Pressly's bills.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** And I know you're a Stalwarts conservative. Anybody hadn't realized Representative Seabaugh it's a compliment.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Senator. Thank you.

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**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Excuse me, senator. I'm still caught on the other side. I really apologize. But tell me this. Tapping that again, you don't generally bring bills that require more government spending. I'm not picking on you right now, but is the compelling interest that it makes the districts that much easier to write, that it's worth the fiscal note?

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** It does. And it doesn't cut any area divide -- I've talked to people in Jefferson Parish. They liked it. I've talked to people in the northeast Louisiana, northwest Louisiana, Lafayette, Lake Charles. Everybody seems to like it because it keeps the areas of interest together. It doesn't divide any geographic area. Well, I mean, obviously it does, but it doesn't do it very badly.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** That's purely from a political standpoint, right? Let me know if you -- I don't have a ton of expertise in the litigation or the voters' right act specifically as it relates to the Supreme Court. Do you know if the tests are different in the Supreme Court versus Congress? I know in Congress you're elected to represent people. In the Supreme Court, you are there to just adjudicate non-bias based on the state issues, on state law.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Yeah. The reason the Supreme Court hadn't been redistricted in so long is because the principle that one man, one vote does not apply to the judiciary. And that's what we've been told through redistricting. I've been through it twice now. I was here in 2011 and 2022, and in fact, we had a judge actually came to committee in 2011 and said, "One man, one vote does not apply to the judiciary. Please leave us alone." And we did. So essentially, that is the reason it hasn't been done so the test is different.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** So the prevailing argument on the congressional maps and the reason we're in session have to deal with a second majority minority district based on demographic breakdown. Those specific requirements are not necessarily in effect on a Supreme Court map.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** That is correct.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Okay. I just don't want members to get mixed up in that because you do have a constitutional amendment very similar to mine.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Yes.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** That deals with statewide elections.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Yeah. The difference is mine requires them to live within the district in order to run. That's really the only difference. And I would suggest at some point, before we get through the finish line, if they both were to make it, we work that out and only blend the language and only put one of them before the voters. I like mine better.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** But mine has a better author. But what Senator Jenkins brought up, I'm glad you brought the instrument because it kind of shows him that you can do it by -- you could

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use districts to do a statewide vote through the constitution, or you can require by statute, like mine does if you elected to do so.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** That's correct.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Okay. I'm just trying to get understanding on it. I appreciate the information.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Thank you, senator. The board is clear. We have no cards. Members, what's your pleasure on Senate Bill 6? There is no motion?

[02:10:00]

All right, it seems like your bill is about to die without a motion.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** It looks like it.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. There is no motion on the floor? Senator Miguez?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Let's keep us many options in play as possible and we'll sort it up when we get to the floor. So, I'll make a motion to move favorable.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Senator Miguez has moved that we report Senate Bill 6 favorable. Are there objections? There are objections. Yeah, reports the bill as amended. We did put the technical amendments?

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Correct.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** I heard a lot of objections on this side. Secretary, we'll call the roll. If you're in favor reporting the bill as amended, you would vote "Aye" or "Yes". If you oppose, you would vote "No". Secretary, call the roll.

**FEMALE 1:** Senator Miguez?

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Carter?

**SENATOR CARTER:** No.

**FEMALE 1:** No. Senator Fesi?

**SENATOR FESI:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Jenkins?

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**SENATOR JENKINS:** No.

**FEMALE 1:** No. Senator Kleinpeter?

**SENATOR KLEINPETER:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Miller?

**SENATOR MILLER:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Reese?

**SENATOR REESE:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Womack?

**SENATOR WOMACK:** Yes.

**FEMALE 1:** Yes. Senator Fields?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** No.

**FEMALE 1:** No. I have six yeas and three nays.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Six yeas and three nays and that bill is reported as amended.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Thank you very much. Senate Bill 7 is simply the map that goes along with Senate Bill 6 and you all should have access to it. Again, I've touched on it a couple of times. It draws two districts. The new districts are numbered 8 and 9, District 2 which is currently in Northwest Louisiana. It's actually moved to become the new minority district. So, that election would take place in 2024 which the District 2 is scheduled to be up in 2024. So, that would elect one of the two new minority judges and District 7 stays in place. And then, it draws 8 and 9. 8 would essentially be a new majority White district around Baton Rouge whereas District 9 is the swing district I was talking about which is Northwest Louisiana down to Vernon.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** I guess, is this a technical amendment?

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** I'm going off of those technical amendments. Amendment No. 29 which on page 6, line 7 after no and before of change to 6. Off of those amendment, their technical amendments, are there any objections to the adoption of the amendments? If you have no objections, those amendments are adopted. Any questions for members of the committee? Senator Miller for question.

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**SENATOR MILLER:** Thank you. Senator Seabaugh, you said, “Hey, nobody had any problems with the map.” I hadn’t really been paying attention to this particular map because I think the biggest thing I’ve been worried about is and concentrating on is the congressional maps and then working with Senator Fesi and Pressly on the Supreme Court maps but this puts St. Charles Parish in a district that I don’t think shares -- we’re splitting St. Charles which we’ve done. We’re right kind of smack in the territory that needs to be gone through to reach up River Parishes. So, I’m willing to help you get out of committee but I’m not committing without some changes on here.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** And I thank you for that. You and I actually did talk and I’ve really tried to draw supreme court district in just St. Charles Parish but it was difficult but I appreciate it. I will certainly work with you. If we can do an amendment to move it to another district, I’m more than happy to work with St. Charles Parish.

**SENATOR MILLER:** Yeah, and just for the record, I’m not interested in that supreme court position.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Thank you.

**SENATOR MILLER:** Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right. Thank you, Senator Miller. Are there any other questions from members of the committee? No other questions. Senator, you can close on your bill.

**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Thank you. I appreciate you and I appreciate you all staying late. I know it’s been a long day. This bill is just a map that goes along with the constitutional amendment. It draws a second majority-minority district that is one is 56%, one is 57%. So, they’re much more likely to perform than the others with third swing district which is 54% white. So, it’s essentially a six to one map and I think with the possible exception of St. Charles Parish, it keeps areas of interest together, divides them around the state in an equal distribution and provides each area of the state the opportunity to elect a justice from their area.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** All right, members, you’ve heard the testimony on Senate Bill No. 7. What’s your pleasure? Senator Miguez?

[02:15:10]

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Mr. Chairman, I move favor with the caveat that the author works very closely with the members because they didn’t get a full time. I really digest the very specifics but the concepts out there with this package to provide additional options to the whole body and through this whole process but doesn’t necessarily mean it’s going to actually become laws but I want you to --

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**SENATOR SEABAUGH:** Absolutely. You have a commitment. I've already made the commitment to Senator Miller.

**SENATOR MIGUEZ:** Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN CLEO FIELDS:** Thank you, senator. Senator Miguez is moved that we report the bill with amendment. Are there objections? Any objections? I hear no objections. The bill was reported with amendment. All right, members, being no more business before the committee, let me thank each of the members for enduring all of these bills today. Be of no further business before the committee, Senator Miguez moves that the committee stands adjourned.

[02:17:04]



I, Anders Nelson, hereby certify that "011624sg2" is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a true and accurate transcription in English.

Anders Nelson  
Anders Nelson (Feb 15, 2024 13:33 EST)

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