[OVERLAY 00:00:00-00:00:23]

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: All right, I'd like to call this meeting of the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee to order. It is February 9. Madam Secretary, if you would please call the roll.

MADAM SECRETARY: Senator Hewitt?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Present.

MADAM SECRETARY: Present. Senator Milligan?

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Present.

MADAM SECRETARY: Present. Senator Allain?

SENATOR R.L. BRET ALLAIN: Here.

MADAM SECRETARY: Present. Senator Foil?

SENATOR FRANKLIN FOIL: Here.

MADAM SECRETARY: Present. Senator Tarver?

SENATOR GREGORY TARVER: Here.

MADAM SECRETARY: Present. Senator Womack?

SENATOR GLEN WOMACK: Here.

MADAM SECRETARY: Present. Senator Reese.

SENATOR MIKE REESE: Here.

MADAM SECRETARY: Present. Senator Harris.

SENATOR JIMMY HARRIS: Here.

MADAM SECRETARY: Present. And Senator Price?

SENATOR EDWARD PRICE: Here.

MADAM SECRETARY: Present. That is nine in the quorum.

Hearing Exhibit
PR-63
3:22-cv-00211-SDD-RLB

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: All right. Thank you very much for that. Members, the first order of business is approval of the Minutes. You have Minutes in your folder. For February the 4th, Senator Tarver moves approval of the February 4th Minutes. Any objection to that? All right, seeing no objections, those Minutes are approved. You also have a set of Minutes from February the 7th. Give you a minute to take a look at those. Senator Price moves favorable on -- that we adopt the Minutes from February the 7th or during the objections to that. All right, then those Minutes are adopted as well. Thank you, members. All right, we have three items on our agenda today in terms of legislation. It's three Supreme Court bills that were presented yesterday and discussed. What we would like to do today is to provide for any input from the public and the public comment on that and then we'll give the authors an opportunity close on their bills and then we'll see what the will of the committee is in terms of how we move forward on those instruments. So to those of you here visiting with us from the public, we have cards on the table, red cards and green cards if you like to indicate on those cards your support or not of a particular bill and your interest in speaking or not. If you'll just

make sure you get those turned in to the Sergeant-At-Arms, we'll take these instruments up one at a time and give you an opportunity to speak on any bill that you would like to or again to register your support or your opposition to any particular instrument. Can you give the Sergeant-At-Arms a few minutes to collect the cards?

[OVERLAY 00:02:55-00:06:51]

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Okay, all right. I want to again make sure that we have an opportunity for those here today to turn in their cards. We're going to take these bills in order. We'll begin with Senate Bill 8 by Senator Fields. Again, we have -- he's presented the bill, we had debate within the committee yesterday on the bill. What I would like to do now and we did I think entertain public input yesterday as well, but we have different people here perhaps with us today that we did yesterday and I also want to give you all an opportunity to speak. All right, so on Senate Bill 8, I have who is Marja Broussard who is present and would like to speak in support of Senate Bill 8. If you would like to come to the table please?

MARJA BROUSSARD: Good morning.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Good morning. So if you would begin please by just introducing yourself and then the floor is yours.

MARJA BROUSSARD: My name is Marja Broussard, a lifelong resident of Lafayette, Louisiana, from the north side of Lafayette. My background is in the healthcare as an LPN and a respiratory therapist. I'm also an activist. A mother of five. I have three stepdaughters and three foster children. And I've been a community active for some time. Former president of the Lafayette NAACP now, Louisiana State Conference District D, Vice-President and also Louisiana State Conference Political Action Chairperson. I'm the past Grand Worthy Matron for the Order of the Eastern Star and currently a Worthy Matron. I'm also a member of the Imani Temple, the African-American Catholic Congregation and I work with the outreach ministry. I came to Baton Rouge today to sit before you, to sit before this committee, to give my opinion and my thoughts as a voter, taxpaying voter in the State of Louisiana. I believe it is unconscionable that -- it is unfair in 2022 that we to come here and beg fellow citizens like you guys for equal representation in the congressional delegation to Washington, D.C. As it

has been said, Louisiana has six congress persons and our population is at least 33% of the State of Louisiana. We should have at least two of the six Districts dedicated to the African-American community. I ask that before you leave and spend taxpayers' dollars in the special session, that you would do the right thing and you would approve getting a second majority-minority congressional seat.

[00:10:00]

MARJA BROUSSARD: I know that you know that we, the African-American community does not have equal representation. You know that we don't have the equal representation that we deserve. I know that by us that you know by us not having our deserve representation, you the lawmakers continue the oppression of my people. You continue the racism, the systematic racism that haunts us every single day. You know, we know that what you do here is intentional. Your decisions are intentional. Your actions are intentional. It's to keep us oppressed. So, I will say, shame, shame. Shame on you and we expect you to do the right thing. We expect you to approve the second seat. What we want? We want fair

maps. And when do we want it? We want it now and I am Marja Broussard and I approve my message. Thank you.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Yes ma'am, thank you for being here. And again, just as a reminder. What we're done considering before this committee today, our Supreme Court bills. The Congressional bills were considered earlier this week. We passed a bill off the floor yesterday. And so that instrument will be moving over to the house. So, but again, you have certainly every right to say and to testify, as you choose at the committee, but just as a reminder, this is about Senate Bill 8 by Senator Fields with the Supreme Court proposal.

MARJA BROUSSARD: As you can say, we approved Senate Bill 8, doesn't we?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Okay, so, she says, she's still in support of Senate Bill 8. So, thank you for that. All right, here, present in support, but not wishing to speak in support of Senate Bill 8, Tosha White, Gregory Lawrence, Allen Semien, Pamela Thibault, Clyde Gabriel, Joseph Bonnet, Keturah Butler-Reed, I apologize. Ms. Viana Fabian, Demetrius Hatley. I'm going to really struggle with this last one. You all know my rule. You have to write it where

I can read it. From Monroe. Are you here? Tell me your name.

FANNIANNA SALISBURY: Fannianna Salisbury.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Thank you. Thank you very much. Okay. Not wishing to speak, present in support. All right. Thank you for being here. All right, do we have any other cards on Senate Bill 8? Okay. All right, Senator Fields. Would you like to close on your Bill?

SENATOR CLEO FIELDS: Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the committee. Senate Bill 8 in short creates two majority-minority Supreme Court justices. One in North Louisiana. That District is 53.4% Black and one in the New Orleans area at 54.4% Black. That's what the bill does. It complies with all state and federal laws and I tender to you for your edification and your approval.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Okay. All right. So Senator Fields has closed on this bill, Senate Bill 8. What's the pleasure of the committee? All right, Senator Tarver has moved favorable on Senate Bill 8, Senator Womack.

SENATOR GLEN WOMACK: I'd like to offer a substitute motion to defer.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Senator Womack offers a substitute motion to defer. So we'll take a vote on that. Madam Secretary of vote in favor would be to defer the bill of vote no would be to consider the original motion.

MADAM SECRETARY: Senator Milligan?

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Allain?

SENATOR ALLAIN: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Foil?

SENATOR FRANKLIN FOIL: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Tarver?

SENATOR GREGORY TARVER: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: No. Senator Womack?

SENATOR GLEN WOMACK: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Reese?

SENATOR MIKE REESE: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Harris?

SENATOR JIMMY HARRIS: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: No. Senator Price?

SENATOR EDWARD PRICE: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: No. And Senator Hewitt?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. That is six yeas, three nays. And the bill is deferred.

[00:15:03]

SENATOR GLEN WOMACK: Thank you Madam Chair and members.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Thank you, Senator. I just received another card that in support not wishing to speak with Senate Bill 8 from Katie Bernhardt. So, thank you for that. Okay, next bill on our schedule is Senate Bill 13. Does some cards on that? Okay. Okay, so cards. I have a number of people here present in support not wishing to speak on Senate Bill 13, Tosha White, Viana Fabian, Demetrius Hatley, Pamela Thibault, Greg Lawrence, Clyde Gabriel, Joseph Bane, Marja Broussard, Allen Semien, Keturah Butler-Reid, and I'm sorry I'm going to struggle with your name one more time. Say your name for me one more time the lady from Monroe.

FANNIANNA SALISBURY: It's Fannianna.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Fannianna.

FANNIANNA SALISBURY: Yes, it is.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: And your last name?

FANNIANNA SALISBURY: Salisbury.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Salisbury. Thank you. That's not so hard to say.

FANNIANNA SALISBURY: Yeah.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Thank you very much and thank you for being here from Monroe. Did you drive down today or last night?

FANNIANNA SALISBURY: [INDISCERNIBLE 00:16:58].

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Okay.

FANNIANNA SALISBURY: [INDISCERNIBLE 00:17:00]

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Okay.

FANNIANNA SALISBURY: [INDISCERNIBLE 00:17:04]

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: All right. Well, thank you for being here. Okay, so no one has chosen to speak on this bill. Senator Fields, would you like to close on Senate Bill 13?

SENATOR CLEO FIELDS: Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the committee. Senate Bill 13 creates two majority-minority Districts for the Supreme Court. As you know, the Supreme Court has not been redistricted for 30 years. It create a minority District in the -- based in the Baton Rouge area, goes up the Florida parishes up into Monroe. That District population is about 56.3% Black. And it also creates a majority-minority District in the Orleans area. And that District is 54.3% Black. It complies with all state and federal laws and let me just say just for the record Madam Chair and members of the committee. I have had an opportunity to look at Senate Bill 15. On

yesterday, it was only 51% Black and I appreciate you increasing those numbers to, I think like 57% Black but it only includes one majority-minority District. Now, although we still have Subsection 5 of the Voting Rights Act, which is the preclearance section of the Voting Rights Act, but we don't have Subsection 4(b), which is really the enforcement part, which is the meat and potatoes of the Voting Rights Act. Louisiana is one of the full -- the one of the states that have a history of discriminating and falls under Subsection 5. And I just like to caution the committee, not to pass a plan that is not in full compliance of Subsection 5. Because although we don't have to submit the plan to the Justice Department, it doesn't mean that Louisiana is not under Subsection 5, we still under Subsection 5, it still exists. We just don't have Subsection 4(b) and I suggest to you that Louisiana is just making a full case for the courts to put us back on this -- to bring about Subsection 4(b), in other words, because there is no good reason not to pass a plan with two majority Black Districts for the Supreme Court.

[00:20:05]

SENATOR CLEO FIELDS: I've offered two plans, both of them make sense, both of them are compact,

both of them are in deviations and like I thank you Madam Chair for increasing the single Black District you have in your plan. It just does not, in my view, comply with Subsection 2 of the Voting Rights Act and therefore would not comply with Subsection 5. If we had Subsection 4(b) of the Voting Rights Act so I would ask for your favorable consideration of Senate Bill 8.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Senator, I know that you are on your close, would you accept a question?

SENATOR CLEO FIELDS: I'll be happy to accept any question from any member of the committee.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Okay, I'm going to ask a question because you kind of introduced you know some new information here when you're talking about Subsection 5 and 4(b). Would you just sort of clarify for the committee what those are?

SENATOR CLEO FIELDS: Well Subsection 4(b) basically gave the framework of what risk required in order to have a Subsection 5 which was the preclearance in order to have a violation. The courts in Shelby versus Alabama, Holder rather which ruled upon I think in 2013 and that was the basis of us not having a preclearance in 2022. Before we had Alabama versus Holder we had situations where nine states,

1 Louisiana being one of them, had certain criterias
2 they had to meet in order to have a plan implemented.
3 The Supreme Court of the Landrieu that the data that
4 the states were using were like 40 years old so they
5 said, "We can't use that 40-year-old data. That's too
6 old, you all talking about stuff that states use 40
7 years ago," and so they ruled that Subsection 4(b)
8 was unconstitutional, that data. Well, people don't
9 act that way anymore according to the Supreme Court.
10 Louisiana, they don't use those kind of
11 discriminatory tactics anymore. You don't have to do
12 that to that state. Louisiana don't act like that
13 anymore so don't do that to Louisiana. So when they
14 changed Subsection 4(b), it took the meat and
15 potatoes out of 5. There is no reason to pre-clear so
16 it just silenced Subsection 5 and so therefore the
17 State of Louisiana and the whole purpose of being
18 under Subsection 4(b) and 5 were states who had a
19 history of discriminating against Blacks. So
20 Louisiana had history of discriminating against Black
21 voters. They had intimidation factors that they use.
22 They had a history of discriminating against Blacks.
23 They denied Blacks the opportunity to the ballot box,
24 Legislatures pass bad laws to deny Blacks access to
25 the ballot box. Legislatures pass redistricting

1 proposals when they knew that a minority District
2 could be created but they didn't do it anyway and so
3 the Justice Department stepped in and they said,
4 "Listen, those nine states are bad actors. They
5 shouldn't do that." And the people in Louisiana and
6 the other eight states said, "Listen, we can't get
7 any help from the legislature and in a real sense we
8 can't even get real help from the courts. We got to
9 have somebody who can help us." And the Justice
10 Department said, "We'll do it," and so the Congress
11 passed the law and it said, "Now those bad states,
12 nine in particular, any time they pass any laws they
13 must get it pre-cleared from us," and so Louisiana
14 fall within one of those states and so that's why
15 every time we pass the law, we had to get it pre-
16 cleared.
17 [00:25:04]
18 CLEO FIELDS: So that's why when we pass
19 redistricting plans in Louisiana, we had to go to the
20 Justice Department to have those laws pre-cleared
21 until 2013 when Alabama v. Holder came about. And
22 that's the whole purpose of preclearance because the
23 Justice Department is there to protect the rights of
24 the people, because they felt that those nine states
25 would not put the legislatures of those nine states

wouldn't protect the rights of those people. So I just say to you today, listen we can do better you know, because we are better than this and I just ask for your final approval.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: I appreciate the additional words and additional clarification and so then again just to be clear, we are not under preclearance and we have not been since 2013.

SENATOR CLEO FIELDS: That's correct, Madam Chair.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: All right. Thank you, Senator for that. All right, what's the pleasure of the committee? Senator Price moves favorable on Senate Bill 13. Senator Milligan?

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Ma'am Chair, I will offer a substitute motion to defer.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: All right, Senator Milligan offers a substitute motion to defer. We'll take a roll call vote. Madam Secretary, so a vote yes, is to defer, a vote no would be to consider the original motion.

MADAM SECRETARY: Senator Milligan?

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Allain?

SENATOR R.L. BRET ALLAIN: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Foil?

SENATOR FRANKLIN FOIL: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Tarver?

SENATOR GREGORY TARVER: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: Senator Tarver said no. Senator Womack?

SENATOR GLEN WOMACK: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Reese?

SENATOR MIKE REESE: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Harris?

SENATOR JIMMY HARRIS: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: No. Senator Price?

SENATOR EDWARD PRICE: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: No. Senator Hewitt?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes, that's 6-3 and the bill is deferred.

SENATOR CLEO FIELDS: Thank you very much, Chair members.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Thank you very much, Senator. All right I apologize I'm seeing this card late. I do have a card present and would like to speak on Senate Bill 13 Katie Bernhardt, would you like to speak? I apologize. Okay. All right. Okay, the last bill is Senate Bill 15, which I have

authored and so I'm going to turn the chair over to Senator Milligan and then close. You know what? We should offer to do cards first. If you have cards.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Yes. Okay on Senate Bill 15, do not wish to speak present opposition. Is it once again, it's Fannianna? Fannianna Salisbury. We are working on it, thank you. Marja Broussard. I hope I got that right. [PH 00:28:47] Allen Savir, Ms. Viona Fabian, Ms. Pamela Thibault, Tosha White, Joseph Bonett. Let's see. Is it Demetrius Hatley?

DEMETRIUS HATLEY: Yes, it's Demetrius.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Thank you. Greg Lawrence, I believe, and Clyde Gabriel and then we've got present would like to speak, Ms. Butler-Reed. Good morning.

KETURAH BUTLER-REED: Good morning.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Welcome back.

KETURAH BUTLER-REED: Oh, you remember me. Good morning, everyone. I am Keturah Butler-Reed, the Louisiana regional organizer for the Black Voters Matter Fund and I oppose Senate Bill 15. So I'm also happy to have joining with us some local grassroots organizations from North and South Louisiana.

[00:30:02]

KETURAH BUTLER-REED: Some of us are over here, some of us are in the house. So, shout out to them because during the roadshow map hearing, many of them could not testify because we did not have it in their area. So, I'm just glad they're able to use their voices. So, little bit about me. I was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but I moved to Georgia about 10 years ago, and I recently decided to come back not just because of the food but the rich history and culture. But one of the main reasons I asked my mom all the time, why did you want to leave? And her answer is always simple; better jobs, better education. Maybe sometimes it's just a little bit safer in Atlanta for Black and Brown people. And so, coming back, Of course, I came back, I already told you I came back the reason why I stayed is because I wanted to continue to build political power in Black communities. And recently about a year or so ago, I attended the Census Summit for college students when I was still in college and something interesting came up. They presented some maps and a lot of those maps were dated back to the Census of 1860 showing the distribution of the enslaved population in southern states. That also showed a direct correlation to poverty lines as recently as 2010. And I do not think

that that's a coincidence. Poverty is having little resources and little income as previously stated. That is not a coincidence. We deserve maps that do not disenfranchise Black people. Voting maps are a source of power when voting Districts don't reflect the communities that are meant to represent. They rob communities of that power and the ability to wait in on important issues from public safety and education to jobs and healthcare. The very reason why my mom wanted me to leave Louisiana. As elected official, it is your duty to serve us, the people. You were voted in but please remember that election season is around the corner. Today, we are holding you all accountable because we deserve that representation. We deserve to be recognized. Thank you.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Thank you for your testimony and thank you for coming, and thank you for coming back. That's our only card speak, Madam Chairwoman, if you take table. Madam Chairwoman, we have an amendment on your SB 15.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Yes, we do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, yesterday we presented this bill and I was not happy with the draft that we presented. I think it could be improved and specifically, it wasn't strengthening District 7 as a majority-

1 minority District. I want the Black voting age
2 population number and the Black registration numbers
3 to be stronger, and Senator Price agreed with that.
4 And so, we had a discussion yesterday about preparing
5 an amendment and working together on that to make
6 that much stronger majority-minority District. So,
7 like to offer up that Amendment said. I don't say the
8 number is --
9 SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: 121.
10 SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: 121, Set 121.
11 SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Before we do, Senator
12 Harris with the question.
13 SENATOR JIMMY HARRIS: Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair.
14 Senator Hewitt, one, thank you for bringing this
15 amendment and bringing the numbers up. I just wanted
16 to make sure that the committee understand something
17 that in reference with Supreme Court District Number
18 7, it was ultimately created via lawsuit. We refer to
19 it as a Chisholm case. And what happened with that
20 case, Justice Revius Ortique was the first person
21 that represented that particular seat. The Supreme
22 Court added Justice Ortique to the court, which
23 ultimately put him at the eighth person on the court;
24 however, the court would rotate in numbers of seven.
25 So, you have the seven. As we all know with judges,

when you get to a certain age of 70, you're pretty much roll off of the court and the 7th District was a result of that lawsuit.

[00:35:03]

SENATOR JIMMY HARRIS: So, I just want to make sure that we put on a record that everyone understands that that was created via lawsuit and we have to make sure that we have the integrity of that District to where someone of color, such as myself, can get elected to that seat. So, again, I don't want to belabor. I had this conversation with the president. I let the chairlady know as well, but I just wanted to make sure that we all understand that that was not something that was done legislatively. That was done via a lawsuit so I just wanted to make sure that the committee was aware of that.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Thank you. So, your next step is going to be Supreme Court. You got them on record? That got them on record. Thank you, Senator Harris. It looks like the 7th District was greatly strengthened in the amendment, so. Any other questions for Senator Hewitt on the amendment? Senator Price?

SENATOR EDWARD PRICE: Yes, I'll just follow up on that also. Senator Hewitt, Madam Chairman and I

had the conversation and we want to make sure that this was strengthened. I'm still in support of two minority District, but when we see what's been happening here in the committee, so I felt the necessary that we at least take this District to more minorities in that District. I'm thankful for you for working with me to say that we're going to do that because under the other map, it was kind of --

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: I didn't like it either, Senator.

SENATOR EDWARD PRICE: Thank you. But anyway, thank you for doing that. Thank you for working with me to make sure that this happened.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Thank you. If you would like for me, Mr. Chairman, I can just sort of highlight for you a little what the differences are between the original bill and the amendment that Senator Price and I worked on. Basically, we were looking along the river for the most part these small changes were along the river in adding more precincts into District 7. So, for example, if we look in Ascension, we moved some precincts from District 5 to District 7. You know, similarly in Iberville, we moved some precincts from District 6 to District 7. Again, because we've got to always make all the

numbers all match up in both Jefferson and St. Charles, we had to swap a few precincts from 7 to 6. And then we did a little bit of cleanup work, which is really kind of unrelated to this, but in St. Landry, we moved some precincts from District 6 to District 3. And so those were the changes, they're very small changes, but I had a dramatic impact on District 7 in terms of Black voting population. Black voting age population went from 51.9 in the original Bill to 55.2 in the amended version and similarly the Black registration number now is 57.88 in the amended version. So, I think that we did a better job with just a few changes.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: I appreciate that. I appreciate you and Senator Price working together to strengthen that District, and thank you for the work. Any questions by the members on the amendment? Senator Hewitt has offered up Amendment 121. Any objections to adoption of the amendment? No, we will adopt Amendment 121. Senator Hewitt, back on the bill.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: All right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, you know, just to close on this bill, we have used a number of redistricting principles in drawing this map. The first of course is adherence to

the Voting Rights Act by maintaining the one minority-majority District

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Senator Hewitt, Senator Price has notified us that we have another amendment.

SENATOR EDWARD PRICE: Yes, part of [INDISCERNIBLE 00:39:25].

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Okay.

SENATOR EDWARD PRICE: That amendment is on the thing, right? Okay, thank you.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Senator Price?

SENATOR EDWARD PRICE: Yes. This is Amendment Number 123. I'm offering it on behalf of Senator Luneau, who's going to come to the table and explain it.

[00:40:00]

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Thanks, Senator Price. Good morning, Senator Luneau.

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: Good morning again. Thank you very much, Mr. Vice Chair. And members, I appreciate the opportunity to present this amendment. Louisiana Supreme Court has not been redistricted in approximately 30 years. There's been a lot of changes in the population in Louisiana in those 30 years. Probably more so than any other governmental entity, the courts should reflect the population of the

State. There's no question about that. It is just the most basic principle of fairness that anyone can engage in, and certainly we should be cognizant of that. That is why I'm bringing this amendment which would create an additional majority-minority District. I want to point out a few things to you about this District. First of all, when you look at the map, I think it's pretty obvious just from a glance at it that the Districts are very compact. This creates a new District which would majority-minority District, which would be District 4 that you see in blue on the map that's being shown now. The numbers are not perfect as they rarely are in these instances, but they are sufficient for purposes of creating another District. First of all, the District 7, which is the current majority minority District does not change, but the District 4 that would create the new District has a total Black population of 52.7, and it has other minority population of just under 4%. So it does create a reasonable number of minorities in that particular District. So what's different about this offering than the others you've seen before? Frankly, the numbers are a little bit better for a minority majority District. The compactness is a little bit better. But again, I'm

not suggesting that it's perfect or that is the one that's shines above the other. What I'm suggesting to you is that the time has come for us to redistrict the Supreme Court. It is imperative that we don't shun this task that we are obligated to do. The time has also come to give adequate representation to the citizens of the State of Louisiana and this map does that. Be happy to take any questions, Mr. Vice Chair.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Any questions for Senator Luneau? Senator Reese?

SENATOR MIKE REESE: Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair. Senator Luneau, so in the Black voting age population for your amendment, what is the --. So in the current amendment that we adopted on Senator Hewitt's bill, District 7 has a Black voting age population of 55.1%. Am I seeing that in your bill, you'd lower that to 52.1%?

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: Actually, in my bill, what I've requested to be done is that it not changed, that it's left where it is now. I don't have a problem with changing that. If we can improve those numbers to get a higher percentage there, I don't have any problem at all with that.

SENATOR MIKE REESE: When you make that statement, you're referring to her bill prior to her amendment?

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: My request was that the way the current population is in District 7, not change, not from anybody's bill, but what it actually currently is.

SENATOR MIKE REESE: I see what you're saying. And then the other District in your amendment would just be 50.42% Black voting age population.

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: Of the Black voting age, that's correct. But there's also other minorities that are involved in that, too. The number is what about another 1.7%? Like I said, these numbers are not perfect. But the fact of the matter is we have to start somewhere. We can't continue to kill these bills to create another District because it's not perfect. Seldom are they perfect. So that's my thought is that we do the best we can in this situation because it's difficult to draw these maps. As you've heard, everybody just about this testified here, we realize the enormity of this task. It is difficult.

SENATOR MIKE REESE: Yeah. Thank you, Senator Luneau.

[00:44:55]

[OVERLAY 00:44:55-00:45:13]

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Okay. Yeah, I just wanted to get here and ask a question, and we can try to follow a little bit of protocol. So you said that your intent was for this amendment to keep the Black voting age population for District 7 the same as it is today? Is that what you said?

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: That was my request. Yeah.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Okay. So I think the Black voting age population in District 7 with the 2020 census and the 1997 lines is 54.7. And I think the amendment that you presented has the Black voting age population significantly less than that.

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: I didn't change those numbers, Senator. They changed in census. I kept the District as it is. Currently, I requested the District to stay the same as it is because quite frankly nobody asked me to increase or decrease that. I didn't want to play with that District because apparently, it's working pretty well. And so that's where I left it out. But again, I'm not opposed to a further amendment that would change those numbers to increase them and make them better.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: So when you say you want to keep the District like it is, are you talking about its current population of 400,000, whatever that exact number is?

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: I'm talking about geographically, the way the District is set up now, I did not seek to change that.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: So you want to keep it geographically the way it was for the numbers to be, whatever they are? I'm trying to understand. I really am seeking to understand.

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: I'm really trying to explain it to you, too. I requested that District not change. That was my request. Now, the population has changed. Yeah, that's true. But again, if we need to change that to make the population numbers better, I'm not opposed to that.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: All right. Again, I'm trying to understand exactly what it is that you're working to accomplish. So you want to keep that District the same, change all the other Districts, which you've greatly reconfigured compared to what they look like today. But you want to keep the boundary lines of District 7 exactly as they are today.

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: Okay. For about the fifth time, I asked that the District stay geographically like it is now so it's not to change it. The census has changed. It is what it is. But again, if those numbers are too low and we can improve that District and make the numbers better, I'm fine with that. I don't have a problem at all with that.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Senator Foil.

SENATOR FRANKLIN FOIL: Thank you, Madam Chair. Senator Luneau, in the proposal by Chairwoman Hewitt, East Baton Rouge appears to be all in one District and all the alternative maps to create a second minority District looks like they all split East Baton Rouge approximately in half. Is that the only way that you know of to create a second minority District or is there another way you could draw the map to do that?

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: Unfortunately, Senator Foil, sometimes we have to split parishes in these maps. For example, in the Senate map that this committee passed, Rapides Parish, my home Parish will have six senators. Six.

SENATOR FRANKLIN FOIL: Sure.

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: So it happens. I can't really be too upset about a Parish being split in

1 half in a District. They'll have two representatives
2 in that Parish. But again, sometimes that's what's
3 required of the maps and that's what we had to do in
4 this instance.
5 SENATOR FRANKLIN FOIL: I'm not asking you to be
6 upset. I represent this area. And of course, as you
7 know, the judges aren't representatives, but that's a
8 concern of mine. But look, I appreciate your work.
9 SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: And listen, and I understand
10 completely how you feel because that is an issue and
11 that's something has to be looked at. But sometimes
12 it's just necessary because what I'm trying to do
13 here is to make the courts reflect the population of
14 the State of Louisiana. Because like I said before,
15 more so than any other governmental entity, the
16 courts should reflect the population. And that's
17 because they make decisions that affect our lives on
18 a daily basis, not just like us when we're in
19 session, they deal with it every single day.
20 SENATOR FRANKLIN FOIL: You and our attorneys who
21 are well aware of that. And once again, I understand
22 what your goal is. I was just wondering if you had
23 seen some other alternatives besides the way you were
24 going. And apparently this is what you have. So I
25 understand that.

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: Okay.

SENATOR FRANKLIN FOIL: Thank you, Senator Luneau.

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: Thank you.

SENATOR FRANKLIN FOIL: Thank you, Mr. Vice Chairman.

[00:50:00]

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: Let me correct myself because what the bill is telling me now is that we did District 7, is not the same as it was in the 1997 plan, but it's based on the concept that Senator Fields had in his bill. So I apologize for that. It does change that. I wasn't aware of that, but it does change District 7 in that amount. But again, please don't let that be the deciding factor in this because we can work on that with another amendment and I'm not opposed to that at all. I'm happy to work on the amendment that anyone would want to bring in that regard. In fact, I could even do it myself.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Thanks Senator Foil.

SENATOR FRANKLIN FOIL: I'm done.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Okay, on the Amendment 123. So any objection? Someone wants to move it. Okay. Senator Tarver moves adoption of 123, is there any objection? Senator Foil object to the movement of

123. Madam Secretary, let's take a vote. A vote yes will adopt 123. A vote no will not.

MADAM SECRETARY: Senator Milligan?

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: No. Senator Allain? Senator Foil?

MADAM SENATOR FRANKLIN FOIL: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: No. Senator Tarver?

SENATOR GREGORY TARVER: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Womack?

SENATOR GLEN WOMACK: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: Senator Reese?

SENATOR MIKE REESE: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: No. Senator Harris?

SENATOR JIMMY HARRIS: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Price?

SENATOR EDWARD PRICE: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. And Senator Hewitt?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: No, that is three yeas, five nays and the amendment is not adopted.

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: Mr. Vice Chair committee, thank you for your time and I do want the record to reflect that my vote was better than Senator Fields. I did one better.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: You certainly did.

SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: Thank you. Thank you very much.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Thank you for your good work. Senator Hewitt, back on your bill.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: All right. Mr. Chairman, thank you. Members, I think that this bill, Senate Bill 15 accomplishes a number of our redistricting principles, it adheres to the Voting Rights Act by maintaining the one minority-majority District in District 7. It balances the District's plus or minus 5% by population which as we know is not required by law, but I believe is good policy and a fair expectation from our constituents. It minimizes the number of split parishes and split precincts and it maintains the core of the prior Districts, which really none of the other maps that we've seen have done that. So for those reasons, I do believe that now is the time to re-district the Supreme Court and that this map is the best way to do that. So I would ask that you move this bill favorable with amendments.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Very good. Senator Hewitt has moved favorable with amendments. Any objection?

SENATOR EDWARD PRICE: I object.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Senator Price objects. Madam Secretary, vote. Yes, we move favorable. No, we do not.

MADAM SECRETARY: Senator Milligan?

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Senator Allain? Senator Foil?

SENATOR FRANKLIN FOIL: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Tarver?

SENATOR GREGORY TARVER: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: No. Senator Womack?

SENATOR GLEN WOMACK: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Reese?

SENATOR MIKE REESE: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. Senator Harris?

SENATOR JIMMY HARRIS: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: No. Senator Price?

SENATOR EDWARD PRICE: No.

MADAM SECRETARY: No. And Senator Hewitt.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Yes.

MADAM SECRETARY: Yes. That will be five yeas, three nays and it is supported with amendments.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: So this committee will move SB 15 as amended. Any other business before the committee?

SENATOR EDWARD PRICE: I move to adjourn.

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Senator Price moves to adjourn. Any comments?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: [INDISCERNIBLE 00:54:19]?

SENATOR BARRY MILLIGAN: Yes.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Okay before we adjourn, just to give you guys sort of a look ahead to what's next. I want to thank the committee. You all have worked -- heavy workload this week and last week. So far, you've worked very hard and I appreciate that. I think we have met every day as a committee since we have been in special session. So thank you to your commitment to that. At this point, we will have moved out of this committee all of the senate bills that have been asked to have been heard. We have one house bill now that has been referred to our committee and that is a BESE bill.

[00:55:01]

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: I am not inclined for us to hear that right away. I think we could wait for a couple of other bills and so how about we take the day off tomorrow as a committee and I will work with the president and the speaker on the other side to anticipate what their schedule might look like and sending us some additional bills? But thank you for

your commitment. We might meet on Friday morning, but I will get back to you on that. But tomorrow, we'll take the day off as a committee and focus on some of the other work before us. So thank you very much and thanks to staff. You guys have been doing a yeoman's job and I really do appreciate your work. All right, motion from Senator Womack to adjourn. Thank you.

[OVERLAY 00:55:40-00:56:01]

TRANSPERFECT

I, Anders Nelson, hereby certify that the document "F889607-louisiana-redistricting_020922sg-1" is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a true and accurate transcription from English to English.

Anders Nelson
Project Manager

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