SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Senate will come to order. Senator Henry suggests absence of a quorum members of the machines are open quorum call. Voter machines quorum call. Senator Luneau is here. Senator Boudreaux is here. Senator Harris is here. Senator Hensgens is here. Senator Connick is here. Close machines. 25 members at a quorum. Okay. Members, when we stood at ease earlier, we had sent over the BESE and the PSC Maps. I told you that tomorrow, we would be taking up the House map here in the Senate and the House would be taken up to Senate map. The congressional map was what was being discussed. There were some discussions held during the recess and I'm going to give Senator Hewitt an opportunity on personal privilege to discuss what the current map is, what the two Senate and House maps are that are in front of us, and to discuss a little bit about the difference in those. So, Senator Hewitt for the floor. Senator Hewitt, hold on one second. Okay. Members, Senator Hewitt is going to call Congressional Bill for this.

SECRETARY DIXON: Senator Hewitt now calls House Bill 1 by Representative Schexnayder. It's an act to amend Title 18 relative to

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1 congressional districts to provide for the
2 redistricting of Louisiana's congressional
3 districts.
4 SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ:
5 Senator Hewitt. Okay, Senator Hewitt.
6 SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Thank you, Mr.
7 President. Members, we're just calling this Bill
8 up just to have some discussion. We're not going
9 to take any action on this today, but I want to
10 give you kind of an update on where we are so
11 that you can participate to the extent that
12 you're able to. The map we have, I'm taking a
13 page out of Senator Fields' book here and doing a
14 little Vanna White with a few different maps so
15 that you can see. This map here to my right is
16 the current map with the current boundary lines
17 the way they're drawn in the 2020 census data.
18 And so, just to refresh your memory, you remember
19 that North Louisiana is where we've lost
20 population. We've gained it in the southern part
21 of the State. So, here is what we're trying to
22 solve for and I'm not going to go into all the
23 communities of interest and all of that. I'm
24 really just going to talk about population and
25 what the options are for us to solve those. In

District 4, beginning in the northwestern part of the State, we're short 48 -- I'm talking in round numbers. If you all just give me a little latitude here. We're short 48,000 people. District 5, we're short 37,000 people. District 3 and the southwestern part of the State, we're over by 9,000 people. In District 1 and the southeastern part of the State, we're over by 36,000 people. District 6, we're over by 40,000 people. And District 2 along the river, we're under about 1,000 people. So, that district was the closest to any to the ideal population.

[00:05:00]

So, the Senate and the House took those challenges and drew two maps. This first map to my left is the Senate solution. This is Senate Bill 5. So, I'll tell you what. Some of the changes are in looking at this map compared to the current map, and I'll start with District 4. District 4 picks up all of St. Landry, instead of splitting it between Districts 4, 5 and 3 as is in the current map. So, you'll see St. Landry kind of got chopped up in the current map. In this map, it picks up a sliver of Rapides and it keeps Union Parish. And I'm pointing this out

because at the end of this, I'm going to explain to you kind of what I believe are the three big differences between the Senate map and the House map. So, the Senate map keeps Union Parish in District 5 and it picks up a sliver of Rapides. So, it's keeping Rapides for the most part together. It picks up Pointe Coupee entirely in District 5. It picks up the rest of East Feliciana, the rest of St. Helena and more Tangie than the current map. So, District 5 picked up their population with Pointe Coupee and then going across into the Florida Parishes and picking up more real estate there. In District 3, going down into the southeastern part of the State, District 3 gave up their part of St. Landry. Remember that was the parish that was split up and they gave up a little portion of Calcasieu and Jeff Davis, which is about 6,000 people. That, you'll see in a minute. That is going to be one of the issues that we've talked about, one of the differences in the maps. The first difference in the map is how Union and Rapides here are handled in the two different maps. District 1. Let's talk about District 1. District 1 solved their population issues by

1 giving up more Tangie than in the current map.
2 And then, they did some swaps and in the
3 Terrebonne area along the coast. District 6, some
4 of this is redundant, right? Because I have
5 talked about it a little bit. District 6 gave up
6 the rest of East Feliciana and St. Helena along
7 the Florida Parishes to District 5, gave up
8 Pointe Coupee to District 5 and it swaps in
9 precincts with Terrebonne and with Congressional
10 District 1 and cleaned up some precincts along
11 the river with District 2. And then, same thing.
12 District 2, it was mostly cleaning up precincts
13 with the Central District -- Congressional
14 District 6. Okay. So, let's talk about the
15 solution that the House developed through House
16 Bill 1 and I'll try to point out some of the
17 differences and then I'll come back and summarize
18 for you. So, let's start again with District 4 in
19 the northwestern part of the State. It also
20 picked up all of St. Landry similar to the Senate
21 Bill. However, it handles Union and Rapides
22 differently. It splits Rapides by taking about
23 half of it from Congressional District 5 and it
24 gives up the Union Parish to Congressional
25 District 5. So, you'll see, that is one of the

first significant differences between the two maps. District 5 picks up Pointe Coupee entirely as it does in the Senate map. It picks up the rest of East Feliciana and St. Helena as it does in the Senate map and it picks up a little bit more of Tangie than the Senate map. District 3. District 3 addressed the issue that exists in the Senate Bill the issue being having a little sliver of Calcasieu and Jeff Davis split. So, instead of it all being in District 3 -- It is in District 3 solely in the House Bill where you'll see there's about 6,000 people that are pulled out in the Senate Bill. The other difference in District 3, there's in the Morgan City area in the House Bill Lower St. Martin and Eastern St. Mary are given to Congressional District 6. So, if you look at St. Martin and St. Mary, you will see differences there between the House Bill and the Senate Bill.

[00:10:00]

And again, as I mentioned earlier, in District 1, District 1 gives up more Tangie in the House Bill than the Senate bill. It picks up a little bit more in Jefferson Parish than the Senate Bill, and it also does some swaps in

1 Terrebonne. Okay. And in District 6, again the
2 most significant part of that is the differences
3 between in St. Mary and the lower part of St.
4 Martin that the issue there between 6 and 3 that
5 exists in the House Bill that does not in the
6 Senate Bill. District 2 again, it is swapping
7 precincts between two, primarily in 6. And just
8 to summarize for you a little bit about District
9 2. So, I will compare just for District 2 the
10 differences between the Senate Bill and the House
11 Bill because they're not obvious from the naked
12 eye; they're small, they look the same, but I'll
13 just, in very round numbers, I'll tell you some
14 of the differences. Senate Bill 5 has 6,000 more
15 people in East Baton Rouge than the House Bill.
16 It has a thousand less in Iberville than the
17 House Bill. It has 7,000 more in Jefferson. 1,500
18 less in Orleans. 4,000 less in St. Charles. A
19 thousand less in West Baton Rouge. And it treats
20 these parishes the same in both Bills, Ascension,
21 Assumption, St. John and St. James. So, the
22 differences don't show up to the naked eye but
23 there they're there and I just -- if you look at
24 the plan statistics that you were just given, you
25 will see the detail, the splits by parish, they

were accustomed to looking at in these Bills, the deviations, et cetera. And you got that for both the Senate Bill, the House Bill, and as the world exists today with the new 2020 data using the 2010 boundary lines. So, you have all the same information that I do.

SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Senator Hewitt, will you take questions?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Yes, sir. I will. Look, if I can just wrap up one.

SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Go ahead.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: The final summary statement. So, in summary, there is three -- in my view, three primary differences between the maps. The first is this issue in Calcasieu and Jefferson Davis. They are whole in the House map and there's slivers that are split out in the Senate map. Union and Rapides are handled differently in the Senate map. Union is in District 4 and then the majority of Rapides is in District 5. In the House map, Rapides is split more in half and Union Parishes in District 5. The third issue again is in the Morgan City area and how St. Martin and St. Mary are handled.

They're more kept whole in the Senate map but split out a little bit more in the House map to give Congressional District 6 a little more coastline. And so, those are the primary differences as I see it and what we have been working to address this morning and this afternoon. And so, yes, Sir. with that, I'll take any questions or certainly open to any comment or input from the members.

SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Very good. Senator Fields for question.

SENATOR CLEO FIELDS: Thank you, Senator Hewitt. It appears that this is the last redistricting plan. This is Senate Bill 5 and that's the speaker's plan, is that correct?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Yes, that's correct.

SENATOR CLEO FIELDS: And the speaker's plan has a deviation -- overall deviation of a 128 and Senate Bill 5 has an overall deviation of 54, is that correct?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Yes, sir that's correct.

SENATOR CLEO FIELDS: And I think Senator Price had an amendment in committee which was the

same amendment I had on the floor. It had a better deviation than that, did it not?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: I'll take your word for it though I don't recall the details.

SENATOR CLEO FIELDS: So, it had a better deviation and it was more at a split less parishes, did it not?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: I honestly -- we heard so many Bills, Senator. I don't recall. Again, the point of this is not to re-hash the maps that did or didn't come out of committee. The point of this is really to help members understand the differences between the two Bills that we have that are still alive, Senate Bill 5 and House Bill 1, and to try to kind of compare and contrast those. They both meet the deviation.

[00:15:02]

They both have one minority district and I'm trying to discuss the differences and how they handled the population changes compared to the current map.

SENATOR CLEO FIELDS: And I understand that but I guess the point I'm trying to make, did you know that there was a plan that had a better

1 deviation, split less parishes, more compact, and
2 it created two minority districts. Did you know?
3 SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Well, if it was that
4 easy just to look at the statistics, then we just
5 let computers draw the whole thing and be done
6 with it. But it's not just the statistics as you
7 know. It is about communities of interest and
8 other traditional redistricting principles. And
9 so, you have to look at the totality of
10 everything and I think that's what our committee
11 did and the House committee and how we got to
12 this point.
13 SENATOR CLEO FIELDS: Yeah. I just wanted
14 you to be aware of the fact that the Bill that
15 Senator Price had, the amendment rather that
16 Senator Price had in committee and the amendment
17 that I had on the floor about a week ago, I think
18 it was, was a more compact plan, split less
19 parishes, filled within the deviation a lot
20 better than both of these Bills, and it also
21 created a second minority district and it held
22 all the community of interest that did everything
23 that you are doing, and I want to thank you for
24 your work. You did a good job, a very good job.
25 With the exception, in my view, it doesn't comply

with Federal Law, and I just think that we need to do that. And the question has been asked. Have you given any effort at all to create the second minority district? And I don't want to ask that question. But at the end of the day, we have given you a plan that actually provided for a second minority district and it was compact and it was in fact more compact than the two plans that you have before you did [PH 00:17:06] know.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: And I appreciate that. You, as well, have worked very hard and I think that both the committees as well as this body have had opportunities to consider all of those proposals and that is why we are where we are here today. Thank you.

SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Thank you, Senator Fields. Senator Luneau for the floor on the Bill.

SENATOR W. JAY LUNEAU: Thank you, Mr. President. Members, I rise to talk about the two districts, Districts 4 and 5, and the Compass Central in North Louisiana. Before I talk about that, though I want to regress just a little bit and talk about what we did with the Senate Bill that came through that we passed earlier in this

week is the deals with Rapides Parish, my home parish. Rapides Parish historically throughout the years have been comprised primarily of one senatorial district until about 10 years ago when redistricting came around and then we increased that to four. We were rewarded this year with that by letting Rapides Parish up to have six senatorial districts now. Six. So, it is imperative to me that we don't do that same thing with the congressional maps. So, let's talk about this a little bit. The Senate map, first of all. The Senate map does not keep Rapides Parish whole but it's very close. What it does in the Senate map, it leaves Union Parish in District 4 where it's now -- a part of District 4. So, there would be no change there. The difference in the House map that's being offered is that district other than Union Parish would now be in District 5 and Rapides Parish would be cut in half and would be in both of those districts. I'm asking you to consider that. One of the things that we try very hard to do, and this is a tough job, I admit that. And Senator Hewitt has worked very hard and lots of other people too to try to keep parish as whole. But I'm going to ask you, don't split

Rapides Parish into two and then these two districts and split it in half and make it even that much more difficult for us to deal with the issues that are presented when you have numerous representatives in these bodies. Thank you.

SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Thank you, Senator Luneau. We have members of the floor, but Senator Reese, did you want to ask questions or did you want the floor? You want the floor? Okay, Senator Bernard for the floor at this time.

SENATOR LOUIE BERNARD: Thank you, Mr. President. Members, I won't belabor the points that Senator Luneau so ably made. But in a perfect world, everybody would like to have one senator, one representative. Those days are gone because of all the parameters that are needed and used for redistricting that all of you familiar with.

[00:20:04]

But I want to just reiterate what Senator Luneau said about Rapides. They do have six senators. And of course, I've heard the other side of the argument that some people make that, well, that's more people down there advocating

for you. But in a perfect world, most people like to have a one on one with their senator or their representative. So, I'm asking you, please, today also to consider not splitting Rapides Parish any more than it has been already and give them just the tiny portion that would be in Congressional District 4. I think they would be very appreciative of that and I thank you for your time.

SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Thank you, Senator Bernard. Senator Reese for questions.

SENATOR MIKE REESE: Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Hewitt, is a continuity of representation an important factor in traditional redistricting principles?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Yes. It was one of the redistricting principles that we adopted.

SENATOR MIKE REESE: And can you confirm for me, as we talked about Central Louisiana and in particular Union Parish and Rapides Parish, confirm for me again in terms of continuity representation where those currently exists, our congressional makeup?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Yes. Thank you. So, currently, our Congressional makeup Union Parishes and Congressional District 4 and Rapides 99% of it is in Congressional District 5. And so, similarly that is what's represented in Senate Bill 5.

SENATOR MIKE REESE: Thank you. So, you've spent a lot of time with all of these maps in a lot of versions, not just Congressional Maps, but all the other maps, and I suspect, just like the President mentioned his schooling up in geography, Louisiana geography in this process, you're probably pretty familiar with some of the populations that exist between some of those parishes. And basically, all of that region than it compasses for the fourth and the fifth district. Do you believe there are opportunities that we have to make some of those adjustments it had honored the continuity representation and still be able to make the population adjustments to get those just close to even districts as possible?

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: It's kind of a long question Bu, but I will say that, Union, I didn't know, Union Parishes around 21,000 people and we

have looked at, because again, the competing maps have Union Parish in two different congressional districts. So, we have asked the question, are there other places between Districts 4 and 5 where you could swap things out that would be less disruptive than cutting Rapides right in half and we had -- because there's not as much population in those areas, we really haven't been able to identify a way to do that and try to keep parishes together to the extent possible. Was that a response?

SENATOR MIKE REESE: Oh, it is. I mean, I think I understand that we could honor the continuity of representation was what it sounds like you're saying and achieve the small deviation percentage that we need to achieve between those two districts without splitting the Parish Rapides in the manner which it split in that map, that version of the map.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Yeah. As you know, I mean, you've sat through all the same hearings I have on committee. The challenging part with the congressional district maps is that you have to be plus or minus 100 people of the ideal number so even though we're talking about districts with

just under 700,000 people to get within 100 people is a challenge. We have so much more flexibility and all the other maps that we do. And so, it's not as simple as trading precincts because of course, precincts are all different numbers of population. And so, Rapides, unfortunately, has become the place where people have used to make up or take away to balance the numbers out. And so, taking 21,000 people out of Rapides to be able to flip Union one side or the other is very disruptive in my opinion to the people of Rapids.

SENATOR MIKE REESE: Thank you very much for your time and effort.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Yeah.

SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Thank you. Senator Robert Mills for question in the Bill.

SENATOR ROBERT MILLS: Thank you, Mr. President. And Senator Hewitt, I'd echo some of those same points. I'm kind of old fashioned. It's based on my age, I'm afraid. But I see the existing map and I'm looking at Union Parish includes Union Parish in District 4. Your proposal is also to keep Union Parish in District

4. And again, that reinforces, as I understand, the continuity and is there any reason to think that Union Parish has not been served, I believe Congressman Mike Johnson? I would suggest they have been.

[00:25:00]

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Yeah. I mean, I certainly don't -- I'm not aware of any issues or complaints. I mean, to be fair, the point has been made that perhaps Union Parish is sort of an agriculture type area and maybe it does fit in with Congressional District 5, but it has been represented in part of Congressional District 4 for some time now and I'm not aware of any reason to change it other than just the fact that you want to change it and -- but you have to make up the population someplace else.

SENATOR ROBERT MILLS: Thank you, ma'am. And I will remind you that there is quite a bit of farming in District 4 in Caddo-Bossier Parish as Webster Parish is where I'm from. And so, we welcome the Union Parish people in the Congressional District 4 and I suggest that they would be happily served staying exactly where

they are. Thank you. I appreciate your work on this.

SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Thank you, Senator.

SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Thank you, Senator Mills. Senator Morris for the floor on the Bill.

SENATOR JOHN MORRIS: Thank you, Mr. President. Members, for the reasons that the other Senators have so ably put, I'd support Senator Hewitt's version of the Bill right now. Rapides Parish being right in the middle of the State, a lot of -- everybody, they're surrounded by the whole State. And so, a lot of times, these districts at first glance they get drawn right through the middle of it and -- but in some circles in Rapides, there is a sense that they've been chopped up. And I understand their concern with respect to the Senate map but I don't want to send that message that we don't care about the people of Rapides Parish and they really seem to want and I think I can speak for them. At least 100% of the people I've heard from want to see it kept as whole as possible. And they've been represented in the fifth. I believe ably, Dr. Abraham and now Congresswoman Letlow and that's

why I rise in support of the Senate version. The house version is not bad. It keeps the District's relatively the same, but I just like to keep it more the same go on the record for my support. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Thank you. Senator Cloud for the floor on the Bill.

SENATOR HEATHER CLOUD: I, too, rise in support of the Senate version and concur with Senator Morris and that the House Bill is not a bad version. What hasn't been mentioned is you guys are talking about not splitting up Rapides. But also, with Rapides and Caddo, those people should have the ability to continue to be represented by the Congress people that they know, that they have voted for and not unnecessarily shift them into other Congressional Districts. They have a rapport established with their congressional candidates with Congressman Johnson, and now with new Congresswoman Letlow, and those people deserve to continue that rapport and be represented by that particular candidate that they voted for. Thank you.

SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Thank you, Senator Cloud. Senator Womack for the floor on the Bill.

SENATOR GLEN WOMACK: Thank you, Mr. President. As one of the six Senators that serves that Rapides District, too, want to join with my colleagues on that point of having one District 5 take in that Rapides Parish as a whole. It's been that away. It's worked well that way and Congresswoman Letlow is sitting in a position that we can all work with her and make it happen. So, I'd appreciate the support on that. Thank you.

SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Okay. There are no other questions and no other members to the floor on the Bill. Senator Luneau with the point of order.

SENATOR LUNEAU: Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, my rising for a point of order that I'm trying to inquire as to whether or not Senator Reese went to law school during the off time with that question, those questions he was asking. You know if he did that?

PRESIDENT CORTEZ: He has told me privately that he feels like sitting on Senate Governmental

1 Affairs. He has been a law school in and of
2 itself.
3 SENATOR JAY LUNEAU: Okay. Thank you. Thank
4 you, sir.
5 SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: And
6 somewhat of a history class, based on Senator
7 Fields' presentations of his Bills. Okay, Senator
8 Hewitt. There are no other members to the floor
9 or questions on the Bill.
10 SENATOR SHARON HEWITT: Members. This was a
11 little bit unconventional step, but we wanted to
12 give you kind of an update on where we were. We
13 are having great discussions with our colleagues
14 in the House and I'm very thankful that they have
15 offered a different idea on how to solve the
16 exact same population challenges. And so, there's
17 many ways to skin a cat and I think that their
18 proposal has lots of merit and there are other
19 parts of it. I mean, there was a lot of energy on
20 this side on North Louisiana, but I think that
21 some of the other two issues that they have
22 raised are good issues and are worthy of
23 discussion -- continued discussion as well. And
24 so, we're going to continue to work with them and
25

we appreciate your help and your input and your patience as we do that. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Okay. Return into the calendar. Announcements. Any announcements? Okay, members. Senator Talbot for a Motion.

SENATOR KIRK TALBOT: Thank you, Mr. President. I'm making a Motion we adjourn and convene tomorrow at 10:00 a.m.

SENATE PRESIDENT PATRICK PAGE CORTEZ: Without objection.

[00:31:23]

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